



STATE OF SOUTH CAROLINA
DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION

MOLLY M. SPEARMAN
STATE SUPERINTENDENT OF EDUCATION

MEMORANDUM

TO: District Superintendents
District Test Coordinators

FROM: Elizabeth Jones, Director
Office of Assessment

DATE: August 19, 2015

RE: *Developmental Reading Assessment[®], 2nd Edition PLUS* (DRA2+) for 5K

This memorandum provides the most up-to-date information regarding the *Developmental Reading Assessment[®], 2nd Edition PLUS* (DRA2+) that will be administered to 5-year-old kindergarten (5K) students in the fall of 2015 and spring of 2016. Additional information will be provided as it is available. Information about the tests for pre-kindergarten (4K) will be provided in a separate memorandum.

Proviso 1A.77 was passed as part of the South Carolina 2015–16 Appropriations Bill. An excerpt of Proviso 1A.77 regarding the readiness assessment of 5K students is provided below:

...administer the Developmental Reading Assessment(r) 2nd Edition PLUS to implement the progress monitoring system required by the Read to Succeed Act of 2014 and to evaluate the early literacy and language competencies of each child entering kindergarten in the public schools. The assessment of kindergarten students must be administered at a minimum of once during the first forty-five days of the school year and once during the last forty-five days of the school year with the results collected by the department. The results of the assessments and the developmental intervention strategies recommended or services needed to address each child's identified needs must also be provided, in writing, to the parent or guardian. The assessment may not be used to deny a student admission

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to kindergarten. Districts are given the option of designating up to two days of the 180-day school calendar to administer the assessment to kindergarten students...

Student Participation Guidelines

All public school students enrolled in 5-year-old kindergarten must be tested with the DRA2+, including students with IEPs and 504 Plans, ESOL/LEP students, public charter school students, and virtual school students.

Parent Notification

Preparing students and parents for the DRA2+ is important. Schools should make sure that parents or guardians are notified in advance about the test and the testing schedule for administration.

Testing Environment

Planning for and providing an appropriate test setting is essential to ensuring a standardized testing condition for all students. The testing area should have good lighting and ventilation with a reasonable temperature. Tests should be administered in a familiar classroom or setting to reduce student test anxiety and simplify test security.

The area in which each student is tested should be quiet and free from interruptions or distractions of any type. The assessment should be administered in an area that allows for one-on-one observation and conversation so that other students cannot overhear the stories being read aloud or retold.

Test Administration Guidelines

A brief set of steps for School Test Coordinators (STCs) and teachers to follow when administering the DRA2+ is attached.

Test Security

The DRA2+ is a formative assessment and does not require the formal test security procedures that are implemented with the statewide assessments administered by our Office of Assessment. Districts are not required to have teachers and the STCs sign a confidentiality agreement, however districts may choose to use the agreements, at district or school option.

Schools do not have to return the kits. When not in use, teachers should keep the kits in a locked closet, drawer, room, etc., so that materials are not lost, copied, destroyed, or distributed outside of school. Schools must take care of the kits and keep all parts of the kits together in the event that the DRA2+ is administered by the state next year.

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Access to the data entry system must be kept secure because student personal identification information is recorded and only the student's teacher and school administrators should have access to this information.

Overview of the DRA2+

The DRA2+, published and distributed by Pearson, Inc., is a formative reading assessment used to determine a student's instructional level in reading. Students read a selection (or selections) and then retell what they have read to the examiner.

All 5K students attending public schools must be assessed with the DRA2+ (DRA *Word Analysis* and the Benchmark Assessment) during the first 45 days of the 2015–16 school year and again during the last 45 days. Districts may administer the DRA2+ during the middle of the year as an option.

The DRA2+ is administered individually to students by teachers and/or reading specialists who have been trained on how to correctly administer the assessment. The South Carolina Department of Education (SCDE) recommends that the students' classroom teacher administer this assessment.

Administer the DRA *Word Analysis* assessment first. The *Word Analysis* component contains 10 tasks for 5K. DRA2+ directions indicate that teachers are to stop administration when students do not respond correctly to a certain number of the tasks. Teachers are to disregard these directions and administer, at a minimum the six tasks listed below. Teachers may, however, administer additional tasks as needed, up to and through the first grade level, to determine appropriate instructional next steps for students.

- Task 1: Rhyming;
- Task 3: Phonemic Awareness;
- Tasks 4 and 7: Concepts of Print; and
- Tasks 5 and 6: Letter Recognition.

The results from the *Word Analysis* will provide classroom teachers with a systematic means to observe how each student attends to and works with the various skills required to support reading, whether they are emergent readers, struggling readers, or advanced readers.

After completion of *Word Analysis*, teachers will administer the Benchmark Assessment. This component is comprised of 80 books covering a variety of topics and ranging in difficulty from Emergent (Levels A-3) to Intermediate/Middle School (Levels 40-80). The Benchmark Assessment addresses three dimensions of reading: reading engagement, oral reading fluency, and comprehension. Teachers must complete tasks in these three areas for each student. Once

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all steps of the assessment have been completed, teachers use the DRA2+ *Continuum* to evaluate student performance. The scores from the DRA2+ can assist teachers in determining each student's independent (or instructional) reading level.

School and District Assessment Materials

The SCDE will pay for and order all DRA2+ assessment materials (including kits, reports, etc.). Through a survey, our Office of Early Learning and Literacy collected the number of 5K classrooms (including self-contained classes) in the districts. This information is being utilized to determine the number of DRA2+ kits needed for each school. If the number of K5 classrooms submitted by your district is incorrect, the District Testing Coordinator (DTC) should contact Susan Creighton in the SCDE Office of Assessment, in writing (screight@ed.sc.gov), to place additional orders.

All DRA2+ assessment materials will be shipped to each district. Assessment materials will not be boxed by school. For planning purposes, districts should note that the DRA2+ kits are large and heavy. DTCs must work with the STCs to ensure the distribution of the appropriate number of kits to each school.

Two kits for use in training sessions should have arrived in districts by Friday, August 14. Kits for distribution to schools are scheduled to arrive in the district office by Friday, August 21.

DRA2+ Online Management System

Each district will have access to the Web-based *DRA2+ Online Management System*, to help in organizing, managing, reporting on, and archiving DRA2+ results. Student assessment data are stored and managed centrally, with access for both teachers and administrators. The *DRA2+ Online Management System* also provides the method for the SCDE to electronically collect DRA2+ test data from the districts.

Using the *DRA2+ Online Management System*, teachers and administrators at the school and district level can check on the progress of a particular student or see the progress of a whole class, grade, school, or district. District administrators can review their district's reading performance against district-level benchmarks. School administrators can view the reading performance of their entire school population. Teachers can use the *DRA2+ Online Management System* to keep track of student information and generate focus reports for individual or group instruction.

The DRA2+ K-3 App

The DRA2+ K-3 App cannot be used for this assessment because it does not allow the type of data retrieval needed to generate district and state data files.

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Training and Resources

A train-the-trainer model is being used for DRA2+. Training began on July 14 and additional dates are scheduled as needed. DRA2+ training for teachers typically takes one day; districts may choose to train teachers all at once or in smaller groups over several days. Training dates, locations, and registration information can be found online [here](#).

Here are additional training resources:

- DRA2+ Online Management System (OMS) demo account—Test coordinators/teachers can access a free demo site by connecting to www.draoms.com (see the link on the right-hand side). Test coordinators and teachers can navigate the OMS and enter their own made-up data.
- There is also a demo site with dummy data/reports. Test Coordinators and teachers may view the site [here](#).
- A pre-recorded OMS training is located on MyPearsonTraining.com [here](#).
- A “getting started” guide for the OMS is found on the home page of www.draoms.com (on the right-hand side).

Precode and PowerSchool

Districts must submit K5 PowerSchool data to the SCDE by 9:00 a.m. on August 25th. It is vital that each district submits its data on time, since delays by individual districts could delay access to the assessment.

Districts/schools must upload their data into the OMS system because of specific security measures required by the contractor. For this reason, the SCDE Office of Assessment will extract and format the data submitted by districts via precode and post the completed district files to the “Assessment” folder in ADTS by August 31. Districts will retrieve the district file from ADTS and upload the file into the contractor’s OMS system. Within several hours of uploading the file, districts will be able to enter student data for reporting purposes.

Test administrators will use paper score sheets during testing to record students’ responses. Therefore, testing can occur before the district’s data are uploaded into the OMS system.

Enrich

As part of its contract with the state, VC3 will provide the platform for loading the DRA2+ data into the Enrich database system.

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Accommodations

The SCDE is working with the test publishers about the participation of students with disabilities in these formative assessments and will provide information to districts as soon as it is available. If you have any questions about the DRA+, please contact Susan Creighton at screight@ed.sc.gov, (803) 734-8535.

Attachment