



## The Universal Screening Process and Georgia's Assessments

Universal Screening is a general outcome measure used to identify underperforming students and to determine the rate of increase for the district, school, classroom, and student in reading and math. A Universal Screening will not identify why students are underperforming; rather it will identify which students are not at the expected performance criteria for a given grade level in reading and mathematics.

For a screening measure to be useful, it should satisfy three criteria (Jenkins, 2003):

- It needs to identify students who require further assessment.
- It needs to be practical.
- It needs to generate positive outcomes (accurately identifies students without consuming resources that could be put to better use).

Purpose of a Universal Screener from NASDSE (2005):

- Identify individuals in need of further assessment and possible movement to Tier 2 interventions
- Provide feedback about class performance to help school leadership identify when a teacher might require support
- If implemented on a regular basis across grade levels, it will identify false negatives; students who slip through the screening at one level but are then identified at later points in the year.

As of the date of this addendum, the Georgia Department of Education does not endorse or provide a particular universal screener to districts. The following websites will be helpful to districts identifying universal screeners:

National Center on Response to Intervention Screening Tools Chart

[http://www.rti4success.org/index.php?option=com\\_content&task=view&id=1091&Itemid=139](http://www.rti4success.org/index.php?option=com_content&task=view&id=1091&Itemid=139)

National Center on Progress Monitoring

<http://www.studentprogress.org/chart/chart.asp>

GaDOE website:

[http://www.gadoe.org/ci\\_services.aspx?PageReq=CIServRTI](http://www.gadoe.org/ci_services.aspx?PageReq=CIServRTI)

The following documents are located on the GaDOE website:

- National Center on RTI - Choosing a Screening or Progress Monitoring Tool
- National Center on RTI - Technical Review Committee on Screening Tools: Technical Standards Defined

The Georgia Department of Education recognizes that districts are working diligently to identify students needing additional support based on assessment data. While the assessments below are not universal screeners, the summative reports provided may be useful to data teams during their review of student achievement. It should also be noted that these summative assessments may not be used for progress monitoring purposes since they are not sensitive to short-term gains. If a summative assessment is used to identify students in need of further assessment or students in need of interventions, then an appropriate progress monitoring instrument needs to be used to track progress and determine whether or not the intervention is working.

The information below should be used as a guide for districts' data analysis efforts.

### **Data Analysis Resources – Georgia's Assessments**

#### **GKIDS**

- The primary purpose of GKIDS is to provide ongoing diagnostic information about kindergarten students' developing skills in English Language Arts, Math, Science, Social Studies, Personal/Social Development, and Approaches to Learning. GKIDS will also provide a summary of student performance in English Language Arts and Mathematics at the end of the kindergarten school year. GKIDS should serve as one indicator of first grade readiness. GKIDS will serve both a formative and summative role in assessing kindergarten students and may be used as part of the screening process for rising first graders. As part of the data analysis process, the GKIDS assessment may be used to identify kindergartners needing additional instructional or behavioral support.

#### **CRCT**

- The CRCT is designed to measure how well students acquire the skills and knowledge described in the Georgia Performance Standards (GPS). The assessments yield information on academic achievement at the student, class, school, system, and state levels. This information is used to diagnose individual student strengths and weaknesses as related to the instruction of the GPS, and to gauge the quality of education throughout Georgia. CRCT data may be used as part of the universal screening process. Schoolwide data teams should review progress in relation to district expectations and identify areas in need of additional support. The data team should consider whether the identified area is a curriculum issue, instructional issue, or a student who needs additional support. Teacher data teams should review student performance to identify areas for instructional support and individuals needing additional assessments in order to target instruction. As part of the data analysis process, the CRCT may be used to identify individuals and groups of students requiring additional assessments to determine the specific need for intervention support.

#### **WIDA – WAPT**

- The W-APT is used as an initial measure of a student's English language proficiency in order to determine if the student is in need of English language instructional services and if so, at what level. The W-APT is aligned to the WIDA English language proficiency (ELP) Standards and ACCESS for ELLs. As part of the data analysis process, this tool

can be used in evaluating the performance levels (PL) for each domain to determine the areas where students are struggling and the composite performance level (CPL) for the overall assessment to determine the student's proficiency level.

### **ACCESS for ELLs**

- ACCESS for ELLs<sup>®</sup> stands for Assessing Comprehension and Communication in English State-to-State for English Language Learners. This large-scale test addresses the academic English language proficiency (ELP) standards at the core of the WIDA Consortium's approach to instructing and evaluating the progress of English language learners. ACCESS for ELLs is the state approved assessment for measurement of annual growth and proficiency in English. As part of the data analysis process, this tool can be used in evaluating the performance levels (PL) for each domain to determine the areas where students are struggling and the composite performance level (CPL) for the overall assessment to determine the student's proficiency level.

### **Lexiles**

- An educational tool that links text and readers under a common metric, Lexiles allows educators to forecast the level of comprehension a reader is expected to experience with a particular text. A Lexile is a standard score developed by MetaMetrics that matches a student's reading ability with difficulty of text material. The Lexile range for a student may be used to select instructional support materials on the student's level in order to make the content more accessible. As part of the data analysis process, schools may use Lexiles to set goals, measure the effectiveness of instruction, and measure individual and group growth over time.

### **Grades 5 and 8, and GHS GT Writing Assessments**

- Georgia's performance-based writing assessments are administered to students in grades three, five, eight, and eleven. Student writing samples are evaluated on an analytic scoring system in all grades to provide diagnostic feedback to teachers, students, and parents about individual performance. The writing assessments provide information to students about their writing performance and areas of strength and challenge. This information is useful for instruction and preparation for future writing assessments. As part of the data analysis process, the writing assessments may be used to identify areas of instructional focus for students needing additional support.

### **EOCT**

- The End of Course Tests (EOCT) align with the Georgia curriculum standards and include assessment of specific content knowledge and skills. These assessments provide diagnostic information to help students and teachers identify strengths and areas of need in learning, therefore improving performance in all high school courses and on other assessments, such as the GHS GT. As part of the data analysis process, the EOCT may be used to help identify students needing additional assessments to determine the need for intervention support. Additionally, the EOCT provide data to evaluate the effectiveness of classroom instruction at the school and system levels.

### **Georgia High School Graduation Test (GHS GT)**

- Georgia's graduation tests provide valuable information for students, educators, and parents about student strengths and areas for improvement. The tests identify students who may need additional instruction in the concepts and skills required for a diploma. As part of the data analysis process, the GHSGT may be used to identify students needing additional assessments to determine the need for intervention support.

### **PSAT**

- The PSAT/NMSQT *Score Report Plus* that is returned to high schools following the annual October administration of the PSAT to all sophomores contains easy to interpret percentiles in Critical Reading, Math, and Writing Skills that counselors, administrators, and classroom teachers may use to identify sophomores scoring below the 50<sup>th</sup> percentile in any of the three areas of the PSAT. As part of the data analysis process, the PSAT may be used to identify students needing additional assessments to determine the need for intervention support.

### **NRT**

- The norm-referenced test or NRT is used to compare a student's achievement score against the scores of a group who have already taken the same test, assessment, or evaluation. The assessments yield information on academic achievement at the student, class, school, system, and state levels. As part of the data analysis process, the NRT may be used in the automatic referral process to identify students needing additional assessments or further modifications to determine the need for gifted education services.