

Literacy Screeners and Diagnostics RFA

Statement of Purpose

Literacy instruction grounded in the Science of Reading is a central priority for Louisiana’s efforts to ensure that all students can meet high academic expectations. As literacy demands increase across grade levels, students must be supported by the [Louisiana Tiered Pathways for Literacy Support Framework](#), which enables educators to accurately identify literacy skill needs and respond with evidence-based instruction.

In support of this priority, the Louisiana Department of Education (LDOE) is issuing this Request for Applications (RFA) to identify and approve organizations with demonstrated expertise in literacy skills screening for grades 4-12, literacy diagnostic assessment for grades K-12, and professional learning to support implementation of literacy screeners and diagnostics in Louisiana school systems. To ensure a shared understanding across applicants, the Department defines the following assessment types:

- Literacy skills screeners are brief assessments designed for universal administration to identify students who may be at risk for reading difficulties. Screening data provides an initial indication of risk and is used to determine which students require additional diagnostic assessment, intervention, or progress monitoring.
- Literacy diagnostic assessments are assessments used by teachers to evaluate students’ strengths, weaknesses, knowledge, and skills in order to identify targeted areas for instruction. Diagnostic assessments are typically low-stakes and do not contribute to a student’s overall grade or report card. These assessments are administered to students who score below benchmark on a universal screener, perform at the basic level or below on state assessments and/or demonstrate difficulty with grade-level ELA content, and are used to inform targeted instruction, intervention, and progress monitoring.

The purpose of this RFA is to establish a vetted pool of providers capable of supporting school systems in implementing coherent, evidence-aligned literacy assessment systems and strengthening educator capacity to use assessment data to inform instruction and intervention. Organizations interested in applying to this RFA may access the application at the [Louisiana Department of Education Submission Portal](#). Approved vendors will provide professional learning and direct support that strengthens schools’ ability to:

- Implement literacy skills screeners in grades 4-12 to identify students who may be at risk for reading difficulties
- Use literacy diagnostic assessments in grades K-12 to determine skills-specific literacy needs for students identified as “at risk” by the literacy screener
- Support accurate administration, interpretation, and instructional application of assessment data
- Align assessment practices to evidence-based literacy instruction and high-quality instructional materials

Organizations approved through this RFA will be eligible to partner directly with Louisiana school systems to provide assessment tools, diagnostic supports, and professional learning services aligned to the Department’s literacy priorities. Information regarding organizations approved through this RFA will be provided to school systems for informational purposes only. Any contractual agreements that result

from this RFA will be between Louisiana schools or school districts that choose to enter into contracts with approved vendors, and the schools or school districts are responsible for ensuring that their contracting processes comply with any applicable federal procurement law, state procurement law, and local school/school district procurement policies. To provide consistency in measurement and results, as well as alignment to grade-level standards, all screeners and diagnostics should be fixed-form assessments that can be administered in person by a trained literacy professional uniformly across students.

Statement of Need

Despite continued progress in early literacy outcomes, school systems require stronger assessment systems to ensure that all students receive instruction aligned to their specific literacy needs across grade bands.

Grades K-3: Need for Literacy Diagnostic Assessments

In kindergarten through grade 3, early literacy instruction is foundational and time-sensitive. While universal screening practices are well established in the early grades through the state-wide universal literacy screener, school systems report a continued need for high-quality literacy diagnostic assessments that provide deeper insight into students' specific skill strengths and needs. Diagnostic assessments in grades K–3 are essential for identifying the precise sources of reading difficulty, including phonological awareness, phonics, fluency, vocabulary, and language comprehension, and for informing targeted instruction, intervention, and progress monitoring.

Without access to validated, developmentally appropriate diagnostic tools, instructional responses may lack precision, resulting in missed opportunities to address literacy gaps early and prevent long-term reading difficulties. School systems, therefore, require diagnostic assessments that support accurate interpretation and direct alignment to evidence-based early literacy instruction.

Grades 4-12: Need for Literacy Skills Screeners and Diagnostic Assessments

Despite progress in early literacy, many students in grades 4–12 continue to struggle to access grade-level text due to unidentified or insufficiently addressed foundational and language-based literacy skill gaps. As literacy demands increase across content areas, educators require tools that efficiently identify students at risk for reading difficulties and diagnostic measures that pinpoint the specific skill breakdowns interfering with comprehension and academic success.

In the absence of appropriate screening and diagnostic measures, instructional decisions may rely on incomplete or imprecise information, leading to generalized literacy supports that fail to address students' underlying needs. Even when assessments are available, school systems often face challenges related to assessment literacy, including inconsistent administration, misinterpretation of results, and weak connections between assessment data and instructional planning.

To advance literacy outcomes for students in grades 4–12, school systems require access to high-quality literacy skills screeners and diagnostic assessments, along with sustained professional learning that supports educators in using assessment data to make targeted, evidence-based instructional decisions.

Application Process

The Department will accept applications from organizations seeking approval to provide literacy skills screeners, literacy diagnostic assessments, and related professional learning to Louisiana school systems serving students in grades K–12. Applications will undergo an initial screening to ensure

alignment with the scope and priorities outlined in this RFA. Applications that meet the initial screening requirements will be reviewed to determine whether they meet the established eligibility criteria for inclusion as an approved provider. Organizations that do not meet eligibility criteria will be notified.

Organizations that meet all required criteria will be notified via email that their application has been approved and that they are eligible for inclusion as an approved provider. Approved organizations may partner directly with Louisiana school systems to provide services aligned to this RFA. The Department may provide guidance and support to school systems to facilitate effective use of approved providers. Applicants must clearly indicate the area(s) for which they are applying and demonstrate relevant expertise. Applications will be accepted for the following areas of specialized support:

- **Literacy Skills Screeners (Grades 4-12):** Literacy skills screeners that build the capacity of educators and school systems to identify students who may be at risk for reading difficulties with progress monitoring capabilities. Services in this area should support accurate administration, interpretation, and instructional use of screening data aligned to the Science of Reading, including but not limited to:
 - Word recognition and decoding
 - Reading fluency
 - Language and vocabulary development
 - Comprehension-related foundational skills
 - Written expression (as appropriate for screening purposes)
- **Literacy Skills Diagnostic Assessment (Grades K-12):** Literacy diagnostic assessments that support school systems in identifying specific literacy skill gaps that underlie reading difficulties. Diagnostic assessments may include standardized assessments or informal tools (including additional skills-specific screeners as described in [Bulletin 1903](#)). Services in this area should support educators in using diagnostic data to inform targeted instruction and intervention aligned to evidence-based literacy practices, including but not limited to:

Kindergarten and Fall Semester of Grade 1

- Phonological awareness including onset and rime, rhyming, and syllable manipulation
- Rapid automatic naming skills of colors, objects, and/or numbers

Spring Semester of Grade 1 - 3rd Grade

- Phonological/phonemic awareness including blending, onset and rime, rhyming, syllable manipulation, phoneme segmentation, phoneme manipulation
- Rapid automatic naming skills of colors, objects, and/or numbers
- Encoding skills using spontaneous spelling
- Oral and written language skills
- Letter sound association

Grades 4-12

- Advanced phonics and word reading patterns
- Encoding skills
- Automaticity and fluency breakdowns
- Vocabulary knowledge
- Comprehension processes
- Syntax skills
- Writing skills and conventions

- **Professional Learning on Assessment-Informed Literacy Instruction:** Professional Learning designed to build educator capacity to use screening and diagnostic assessment data to inform instruction, intervention, and progress monitoring. Services in this area should emphasize:

- Purposeful use of assessment data to guide instructional planning
 - Alignment between assessment results and evidence-based literacy instruction
 - Integration of assessment practices within high-quality instructional materials
 - Ongoing monitoring of student progress and instructional adjustment
- If application is denied, partners have the opportunity to submit one additional time within the next open application period.

Applications will be accepted on a bi-yearly basis in the spring and fall. For inquiries about application windows, email louisianaliteracy@la.gov,

Required Application Components and Format

Applicants must submit a complete application here. No cover letters, executive summaries, or organizational marketing materials will be accepted. Applications that do not adhere to the required format or omit required components may not be considered.

Applicants must respond to all required sections outlined below. Applications will be evaluated based on the completeness, clarity, and quality of the information provided.

Section	Section Title	Required Section Components
1	Organization Information	<p>Applicants must submit the following organizational information and clearly indicate the assessment category(ies) for which they are applying.</p> <p>Assessment Category Selection:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Grades K–12 Literacy Skills Diagnostic Assessments ● Grades 4–12 Literacy Skills Screeners ● Combination Approval <p>Organizational Information:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Organization contact information ● Organization overview, including: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Mission statement ○ Founding year ○ Relevant experience in literacy assessment and/or professional learning aligned to the selected assessment category(ies) ● Organizational structure, including roles related to: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Assessment development and validation ○ Professional learning design and delivery ○ Implementation and instructional data use support
2	Organizational Goals and Background	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Description of organizational goals related to literacy assessment and instruction

Section	Section Title	Required Section Components
		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Summary of prior experience supporting literacy skills screening, diagnostic assessment, and/or assessment-informed instruction in grades K–12 • Description of how the organization measures the quality and effectiveness of its services, including specific data sources or indicators
3	<p align="center">Description of Literacy Screening and Diagnostic Assessments</p>	<p>Applicants must provide a detailed description of each literacy skills screener and/or diagnostic assessments for which approval is sought, descriptions must align to the grade band(s) and assessment type(s) selected in the application.</p> <p>All proposed screeners and diagnostic assessments must:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Be aligned to the science of reading and evidence-based literacy practices • Be fixed-form; computer-adaptive assessments are not permitted • Not include leveled assessments, or practices aligned to three-cueing, in accordance to ACT 517 • Clearly describe the literacy domains assessed (e.g., word recognition, decoding, fluency, language, comprehension, writing) • Clearly distinction between screening and diagnostic purposes • Describe how assessment results are used to inform instruction, intervention, and progress monitoring • Provide evidence of validity and reliability for each proposed assessment <p>Grades K–3: Literacy Diagnostic Assessment Expectations</p> <p>Applicants seeking approval for K–3 literacy diagnostic assessments must describe how the assessment:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Is designed for use in grades K–3 • Measures foundational and language-based literacy skills, including phonological awareness, phonics, word recognition, fluency, vocabulary, and language comprehension • Provides precise, skill-level diagnostic information to inform targeted instruction, intervention, and progress monitoring

Section	Section Title	Required Section Components
		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Supports early identification and prevention of persistent reading difficulties ● Describes the amount of time to complete the assessment ● Describes the availability of appropriate accommodations for students with specialized plans. <p>Grades 4–12): Literacy Skills Screener and Diagnostic Assessment Expectations</p> <p>Applicants seeking approval for grades 4–12 literacy skills screeners and/or diagnostic assessments must describe how the assessment:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Is designed for use in grades 4–12 and appropriate for content-area reading demands ● Assesses adolescent literacy skills, such as: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Advanced word recognition and automaticity (e.g., multisyllabic word reading, morphological awareness) ○ Language comprehension (e.g., vocabulary, syntax, background knowledge) ○ Reading comprehension of complex literary and informational texts ● Clearly distinguishes between screening purposes and diagnostic purposes ● For screeners, is intended for universal administration, ideally three times per year ● Provides actionable, skill-specific data that supports instructional planning and targeted intervention in both ELA and content-area classrooms ● Describes the amount of time to complete the assessment ● Describes the availability of appropriate accommodations for students with specialized plans.
4	<p>Professional Learning and Implementation Support</p>	<p>Applicants must describe the professional learning and implementation support provided to school systems, including:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Professional learning designed to support accurate assessment administration ● Guidance for interpreting assessment results

Section	Section Title	Required Section Components
		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Support for translating assessment data into instructional and intervention decisions ● Adult learning approach and delivery methods (e.g., in-person, virtual, hybrid) ● Description of any ongoing coaching, follow-up support, or implementation guidance <p>Authorization Requirement: If an applicant proposes to provide professional learning, or implementation support, for an assessment that the organization did not develop, or does not own, the application must include a written authorization from the assessment publisher, or owner, confirming that the applicant is approved to deliver training and implementation support for that assessment.</p>
5	Alignment and Instructional Coherence	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Alignment to grade-level standards used in Louisiana schools ● Connection between assessment results and instructional planning, intervention, and progress monitoring ● How assessment data supports teacher decision-making within literacy instruction
6	References	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● One letter of support from the head of the organization ● At least one additional reference demonstrating evidence of successful implementation or results with school systems or schools
7	Appendix	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Proposed pricing and fee structures, if applicable ● Sample assessment items or tasks (as appropriate) ● Sample assessment reports or data outputs provided to educators and families ● Sample professional learning agendas or materials

Evaluation Criteria

Each application and submitted accompanying materials will be scored according to criteria set forth by LDOE’s Literacy team. All determinations of whether or not an application meets these evaluation criteria will be indicated on a “Pass / Fail” basis. The LDOE will interpret these evaluation criteria as indicated in the table below.

Eligibility Indicators	How the Eligibility Indicators will be Assessed: Evaluation Criteria
Indicator 1: Program Description	1a) Vendor’s organizational mission aligns with the goals of at least one area of specialized support. 1b) There is a clear plan to measure the quality and effectiveness of services. 1c) Vendor has a history of effective completion of work and/or favorable reviews.
Indicator 2: Design	2a) Vendor’s methodology and approach to foundational skills instruction and/or given content area are evidence-based in the Science of Reading, and free of three-cueing, in accordance with Act 517. 2b) Vendor is qualified to conduct high-quality professional development or support in the area of specialized support for which they are applying. 2c) Vendor will align services to the high-quality curriculum used in Louisiana schools. 2d) Vendor is committed to serving all learners, including students with disabilities, English Learners, and families with cultural or language differences. 2e) Vendor includes a plan for support, including partnership services that vary in duration, and intensity of support.
Indicator 3: Communication and Delivery	3a) Clear objectives are defined for participants and are addressed throughout the presentation materials. 3b) The provider uses multiple modalities to communicate and engage with participants and/or families. 3c) Vendor offers flexible options for in-person delivery and/or virtual delivery.
Indicator 4: Logistics	4a) Proposed rate(s) is/are at fair market value considering material, activities, and qualifications. 4b) The fees, if any, associated with the provider’s services are reasonable and appropriate. (If no fees, mark this criterion as “pass.”)

Evaluation Process Notes

The LDOE evaluation team will evaluate each application based on the Evaluation Criteria.

- Applications must “pass” all four eligibility indicators to be accepted. In order to “pass” a standard, the provider must meet each criteria of that indicator.
- A provider’s application package will be accepted and listed as an approved provider if:
 - the application achieves a “pass” on all four eligibility indicators; and
 - the application conforms with all of the RFA’s administrative and legal requirements.

- No appeals will be considered at any stage.
- Unsuccessful applicants are encouraged to submit new proposals during future RFA application processes.

RFA Selection Process

The table below outlines the RFA selection process for the Literacy Screeners and Diagnostics Vendor Guide.

	Literacy Screeners and Diagnostics RFA Process	Timeline
Step 1	Vendor applicants submit an application via LDOE Professional Learning Platform here .	April 30 - May 30 October 1 - October 31
Step 2	The LDOE schedules and convenes review panels to review applications. Rejected applicants receive ratings.	Reviewed by the LDOE panel by June 30 and November 30
Step 3	Approved applicants will be added as approved vendors in the Vendor Catalog.	Within 7 days after notification

For inquiries about the application timeline, contact louisianaliteracy@la.gov.

Related Resources

- [Louisiana Tiered Pathways for Literacy Support Framework](#)
- [Comprehensive Literacy State Plan](#)
- [Professional Learning Partner Guide](#)