

TOPIC:

Expression of Interest for Piloting and Field Testing of the B.C. Early Literacy Screening Tool

PURPOSE:

The piloting and field testing phases of the B.C. Early Literacy Screening Tool development are intended to test and refine the tool in current K-3 classroom settings to ensure it is practical, relevant, and responsive to the needs of schools, teachers, and B.C.'s diverse student population.

The Ministry is looking for school districts with an interest and willingness on the part of classroom teachers, school leaders, and district administrators to support and engage in this important work.

Details of the piloting and field testing phases, including the types of tasks and potential time commitments, are listed below in Appendix 1.

SELECTION CONSIDERATIONS:

Expressions of interest will be reviewed with consideration for:

- Teachers, school administrators, and district administrators who are committed and willing to participate in this project.
- Willingness of school district leadership to engage with their local Teachers' Association to:
 - Maintain an ongoing dialogue and keep them informed on the timing of planned screening tool piloting/field testing; and
 - Consider input from the local union or teacher members as they work through piloting and testing the screening tool.
- School district capacity to provide participants with release time or other supports to enable them to take part in required training or other activities needed as part of piloting and/or field testing. *(Please note: no additional Ministry funding will be provided.)*

- Willingness to exempt any participating classrooms from other district screening efforts in place (e.g., Acadience, Dibels) to ensure that students are not overly screened.
- Ability to identify classrooms for piloting and field testing that are representative of the wider student population in their district, such as ensuring appropriate representation of students from rural and urban schools, students with diverse abilities and disabilities, Indigenous students, and English Language Learners.
- Ability and expertise of district staff to develop a Privacy Impact Assessment, provide parent consent information, and other documentation needed to support release of data to academic researchers while ensuring the protection of student and teacher privacy.
- Provide opportunities for teacher feedback on screening tool piloting directly to the Ministry as well as their school or district.

HOW TO SUBMIT AN EXPRESSION OF INTEREST:

For your district to be considered for participation in the piloting and field testing phases, please submit your expression of interest to the email listed below. The Ministry will establish an eligibility list and communicate directly with selected school districts regarding next steps.

Email: Literacy.Supports@gov.bc.ca

There is no template for districts to provide their expression of interest. However, to be considered for participation, your email must clearly and concisely:

- Confirm your school district meets the Selection Considerations for participation as listed above.
- Confirm who will be the district lead and primary contact for this project from your school district.
- Confirm which school years (2025/26, 2026/27, and 2027/28), grade levels (Kindergarten to Grade 3) and program (English and/or French Immersion) your school district is able to participate in during piloting and field testing. *(Please note: this can be a single classroom or multiple classrooms in your district.)*
- Confirm the screening tool(s) currently in use in your district.

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- Confirm the level of familiarity with screening tools of the teachers who will be participating in piloting.

SUBMISSION DEADLINE:

The Ministry will accept expressions of interest beginning immediately, with submissions accepted until end of day on **April 24th, 2026**. *(Please note: A 30-minute meeting will held by the Ministry on April 13, 2026 at (insert time) to provide a brief overview of the piloting and field testing requirements and to answer school district questions.)*

IMPORTANT NOTES:

Please note that submission of an application does not guarantee participation in either phase. The goal is to involve as many school districts as possible; however numbers may need to be limited to ensure engagement that meets research and development time requirements. Selection is subject to specific participant criteria and sample size requirements, as well as the need to ensure regional and demographic representation of B.C. and the province's diverse student population.

The Ministry appreciates the strong interest in participating in literacy development activities and will involve any interested districts who are selected in other literacy development activities, including supports for screening implementation.

QUESTIONS:

For questions regarding this call for expressions of interest, please contact the K-12 Literacy Supports Initiative Team at Literacy.Supports@gov.bc.ca.

Appendix 1

PROJECT PHASES:

1. B.C. Early Literacy Screening Tool Development and Piloting

The goal for the pilot phase is to support the development of the B.C. Early Literacy Screening Tool by testing draft components and providing feedback to support the refinement. The school districts participating in the pilot will test the measures, methods, procedures, administration, and useability of the Tool to ensure it functions as intended and is appropriate for B.C.'s student population.

Teachers will be required to administer the Tool in real time within their regular classroom settings and will be asked to provide both quantitative and qualitative feedback. Teachers will be asked to identify errors and issues, and to comment on the Tool's feasibility, administration procedures, instructions, developmental and cultural appropriateness, and related considerations. Teachers may also be required to collect anonymized, student-level screening results. This feedback and data will inform revisions and refinements to the Tool and its measures prior to field testing and broader implementation.

Piloting Sample:

The piloting sample will consist predominantly of public school students from Kindergarten to Grade 3, in both English and French immersion programs, and will also include students from First Nations and independent schools, who will be selected through a separate process with FNECS and FISA.

Training:

Teachers from selected districts participating in the pilot phase will be required to attend a 2-hour virtual training session. *(Please note: the training session will be scheduled outside of school hours.)*

Time Commitment:

The exact length of the time commitment will be determined in cooperation with the research team. When discussing with teachers, ensure they understand the times are to be determined and are likely to remain fluid. Time requirements for each piloting session may

be up to two days per classroom (e.g., 20-45 minutes per student which includes pre-screening preparations, screening administration, scoring, and documentation of screening results, feedback, and reflections, as well as any other such documentation required as part of the screening tool development). Time requirements will be confirmed by the researchers and provided as soon as possible. Please note that time requirements are to support the development of the tool and does not reflect the time that will be required to administer the Tool, once it is required for use in public schools – the intent is still to have a final tool that is quick and simple to administer.

2. B.C. Early Literacy Screening Tool Refinement and Field Testing

Field testing involves trialing the Tool with a smaller group of participants who are representative of the B.C. student population and reflective of the province's diverse communities and cultures, including First Nations and Indigenous populations. The purpose of field testing is to evaluate the Tool's performance and level of difficulty, identify issues, assess reliability, and establish normative data.

Teachers will be required to administer the Tool in real time within their regular classroom settings at three points during a school year. Teachers, or other qualified educators or school staff, will also be required to administer a set of criterion measures alongside the third and final administration of the Tool. In addition, teachers will be required to provide quantitative and qualitative data, including anonymized, student-level screening results. This feedback and data will support revisions and refinements to the Tool, the establishment of normative data to inform benchmark development, and the validation of the Tool.

Field test Sample:

As field testing involves the establishment of norms, the student sample for this phase will be diverse and representative of the broader B.C. Kindergarten to Grade 3 student population, and will include students from public, independent and First Nations schools.

Training:

Teachers from selected districts participating in the field testing phase will be required to attend a 2-hour virtual training session on the administration of the Tool ahead of the first screening. In addition, teachers, or other qualified educators or school staff administering the criterion measures will be required to attend a 2-hour virtual or in-person training session ahead of the third and final administration of the Tool and administration of the

selected criterion measures. *(Please note: all training sessions will be scheduled outside of school hours.)*

Time Commitment:

The exact length of the time commitment will be set by the research team. When discussing with teachers, ensure they understand the set times are to be determined and are likely to remain fluid. For the purposes of the field test, time requirements may be up to 45 minutes per student for the first and second screening, and up to 90 minutes per student for the final screening (this includes pre-screening preparations, screening administration, scoring, and documentation of screening results, feedback, and reflections, as well as any other such documentation required as part of the screening tool development). Time requirements will be confirmed by the researchers and provided as soon as possible.