

Universal Screening for Math

Model Policy | Frequently Asked Questions | 2024

What is a universal screener and why is it important?

A universal screener is an assessment that evaluates student proficiency with grade appropriate math concepts and flags concepts that students have not mastered. Universal Screeners act as a “first alert.” Teachers use the student level data that screeners generate to tailor instruction to individual learning needs. Teachers should then rely on ongoing formal and informal progress monitoring tools, such as observations, interviews, and benchmark assessments to determine student progress. A universal math screener is not a kindergarten readiness assessment—universal screeners focus on measuring math proficiency while kindergarten readiness assessments measure multiple academic content areas.

What are the benefits of universal screeners?

Universal screeners provide critical information to teachers and parents, enabling them to work together to intervene early and consistently to support students' math success. When teachers use data from universal screeners to personalize lesson planning and interventions and engage parents and caregivers in at-home support, it leads to better student outcomes.

Who should receive a universal screener and when?

Because new math content is introduced each academic year, it is vital that schools administer screeners to all students up to three times a year at the beginning of each year in kindergarten through grade 8. Teachers and parents should receive information about student performance no later than 30 days after the screener is given. When the screener indicates that a student needs more support, the school should provide parents with resources to support their student at home.



Spotlight on Rhode Island

[Rhode Island](#) requires schools to develop a math screening process to identify students in need of additional support in math starting in kindergarten and extending through 12th grade. Rhode Island has done extensive work to provide evidence-based guidance so that schools can make informed choices about selecting a screener and developing a screening process.



Spotlight on Florida

[Florida Statute](#) requires schools to administer the Florida screener within the first 30 instructional days of the school year and requires teachers to deliver student results to teachers and parents in a timely manner. Florida requires teachers to provide intervention for any student who is identified as needing math support through a screener.

Learn More

ExcelinEd [Comprehensive K-8 Mathematics Policy](#)

Contact

Lindsey Henderson

Policy Director, Mathematics

Lindsey@excelined.org

