Guidance for Conducting Acadience® Assessments

During the COVID-19 Pandemic

Overview and Context

In this time of uncertainty, we need to be especially clear about our purpose(s) for conducting assessment. We want to be explicit regarding the decisions we wish to make and the questions we need to answer with assessment data.

What follows are guidelines from Acadience Learning for conducting Acadience assessments during the COVID-19 pandemic where remote testing or modified scenarios may be necessary. This guidance will describe the purpose for benchmark data collection, practical and equity considerations related to conducting assessment, and directions for our research that will examine the impact of COVID-19 on student performance, including the impact of adjustments made to assessment. These guidelines are provided in response to requests for information regarding conducting assessments during these unprecedented times.

The primary purpose of collecting assessment data is to determine student instructional needs so that instructional planning may occur to ensure growth and development. As such, benchmark assessments are not just screening for risk. We understand that assessing may be particularly challenging in our current pandemic context and may be impossible for some schools. However, we find that in order to provide the best instruction for students after disrupted educational situations, districts need to be able to identify, support, and evaluate students in need of additional instruction in order to become proficient in critical academic skills. It is best not to make assumptions about learning loss. Not all students will experience skill loss. Expect that school disruption will have varying impacts on student skills. Some students may have experienced growth, while others may have fallen behind in their skills.

The focus of our assessment given this purpose is to answer the following questions:

1. **What are the students' skills now, and are students on track to becoming successful in their academic skills (e.g., reading, mathematics)?** There is a need to determine students' present levels of performance relative to benchmark expectations as soon as practical for planning purposes. This information will help us make good decisions about which students need additional instructional support and in what skill areas.

Corroborate findings with other available data sources. The benchmark data will also give us important information for goal setting.

2. **Is the student making adequate progress toward important reading and math outcomes?** For example, use Acadience Reading K–6 benchmarks and Pathways of Progress to set individual student learning goals and monitor students' progress toward those goals. Use progress monitoring in a more targeted and strategic fashion. This may mean monitoring some students less frequently depending upon resources. Consider an interim check-in for students between benchmark assessments. Out-of-level monitoring may be needed for some students. Consider how to best leverage the use of Acadience Reading Survey and Diagnostic assessments to be very strategic. More information about progress monitoring is available here.

These questions are consistent with our Outcomes-Driven Model, but here we need to approach answering them more strategically and with greater efficiency. Given these questions, conducting a benchmark assessment as soon as possible at the beginning of the year and as efficiently as possible is a high priority. We recommend that follow-up diagnostic assessment be used very judiciously and only for those students with greatest need *when/if* educators are unclear about what to target for instruction.

Practical Considerations

Schools across the nation are planning for a wide range of instructional delivery models during this time. These models will require teachers to alter many of their typical teaching strategies and routines. Students will learn new protocols and procedures (e.g., social distancing, virtual meeting, a hybrid of remote and in-person learning, and altered schedules or calendars). For this reason, we advise giving both teachers and students some time to assimilate to these new routines and work out any challenges before universal screening begins. We recommend initiating your assessment plan after students have been in school for enough time to establish a rapport and comfort with their new tools or procedures. For example, you may wish to wait to begin assessing students until after 7-10 days of instruction in the new "classroom" situation. The need for this adjustment time must be balanced with the need to determine current levels of performance and make instructional and resource allocation decisions quickly. Making assessments a routine part of what is done at the school and not a big deal (e.g., creating an atmosphere of normalization) will help.

Assessment conditions will likely mirror the options for schooling this year. As such, assessment may be in person, online, or may be a hybrid approach. Conditions may shift pending spikes in the virus outbreak, so it is best to consider how to prepare for each option. We recommend that educators prioritize the assessment of critical skills (i.e., reading/language arts and math) and work toward completing assessment accurately, quickly, and efficiently. Adequate training and pre-planning will maximize the likelihood that this will occur.

With respect to using data to plan instruction, we recommend addressing instructional gaps through a combination of Tier 1 adjustments and small group intervention. In instances where large percentages of students are Below or Well Below Benchmark, Tier 1 intervention is the most practical and efficient target of opportunity. Provide targeted intensive support only for those students with the greatest needs.

Health and Safety Considerations

The need for safety precautions might change as we learn more about the virus. Assessments should be conducted in as safe a manner as possible. The best approach for in-person assessment is to follow school and/or district policy regarding social distancing and wearing of masks. It may take some time to become accustomed to the use of masks, and assessors may want to try clear masks and face shields. Sitting 6 feet apart is new to assessment. Typically, the student and assessor are close to each other. Under social distancing and/or remote assessment conditions, we recommend assessors monitor students and consider the impact of distance on student performance.

Equity Considerations

We want to ensure equity and access for all students. As such, we recommend that schools provide maximum flexibility with assessment options. Considerations include what type of equipment, internet service, adult supervision, and privacy is needed for the assessment options that will be used. Some options may present concerns related to access for many of the children who need additional school support and whose home situations are unable to provide the equipment required to conduct remote assessment. Schools/districts should consider alternative ways to accomplish the assessment, or provide the necessary equipment and materials to families so the assessment may be completed.

Options for Conducting Assessment

In-Person Assessment (face to face). If schools are open with face-to-face instruction, we recommend conducting the benchmark assessments in person. We recommend flexibility with the benchmark windows. The benchmarks will provide important information for support decisions and will assist in planning for the school year. This benchmark assessment data will provide educators with information about student needs and the impact of school closures on student skills. If availability of in-person assessment is limited, we recommend prioritizing the use of in-person assessment with those students for whom you have the greatest concern and assessing remaining students using remote assessment.

Remote Assessment (not face to face). We have received requests for information regarding remote or online testing. There is no way to control all of the factors that will impact the assessment results due to vast differences across

households with regard to technology and availability of an adult to supervise/monitor the assessment. That being said, we value the fact that educators wish to keep their assessment going and we would like to be supportive. As such, we offer a number of ideas for accomplishing assessment remotely. Options are described in greater detail with the information specific to each of the Acadience assessments that follows this overview. For each option, parent/caregiver support is recommended, at least for setting up the environment, but also for monitoring to help the assessment goes smoothly. Basic set-up options might include:

- Screen sharing where the student is on a computer or tablet with sound via computer, tablet, or phone. With computer screens and an internet connection, some tests may be conducted by showing student materials on a computer or tablet screens, similar to how a Kindle book may look. Assessors may use a mouse cursor or remote pointer for tracking assistance during the assessment when screen sharing.

- Paper/pencil assessment provided to the student at home, with the student on a smart phone or other device using tools such as FaceTime or Skype.

- With Acadience LNF and NWF measures, you may also want to consider taking these steps to ensure you can see where students are pointing as they read:
  o Download the student materials for the appropriate grade and time of year from [here](#).
  o Put the student materials file into your videoconferencing tool's chat box.
  o Ask your student to share their screen. Caregivers may need to help, especially when you're assessing young students.
  o Ask your student or the caregiver to open the file and scroll to the appropriate form.
  o Explain to your student that they should use their cursor to point to the words as they read.

Hybrid Approach. A hybrid approach means that some assessment might be conducted face to face and some might be conducted remotely. This option would most likely be used if schooling is conducted via a hybrid approach (e.g., some in person and some online). If the availability of in-person assessment is limited, we recommend prioritizing in-person assessment with those students for whom you have the greatest concern and assessing remaining students using remote assessment.

How to Conduct Remote Assessment

Logistical considerations for remote assessment include management of materials required to conduct the assessment, scheduling the meeting time, and

understanding and communicating the roles of the people involved in the assessment process.

Materials needed for remote testing with paper/pencil include the following:

- Assessment booklets and scoring booklets
- Timer
- Pen or pencil
- Computer with camera and speaker for video conferencing
- Virtual meeting software (e.g., Zoom, Google Meet, GoToMeeting, FaceTime, Skype, Join.me, Adobe Connect, or any other district/school recommended and supported meeting platform)

Materials needed for remote testing with Acadience Learning Online (ALO) include the following:

- Touch screen tablet administration and scoring device equipped with the ALO app
- Computer with camera and speaker for video conferencing
- Virtual meeting software (e.g., Zoom, Google Meet, GoToMeeting, FaceTime, Skype, Join.me, Adobe Connect, or any other district/school recommended and supported meeting platform)

We recommend creating a schedule for assessment meeting times. Consider creating a sign-up via Google Docs or offer parents/caregivers at least three possible times to choose from. Once a time is determined, send a meeting invitation with the link.

Everyone involved (e.g., school personnel, students, and parents/caregivers) has a role to play. We recommend specifying and communicating the expectations for those roles so that an optimal experience occurs. We recommend that schools/districts attempt to standardize their approach within the school or district. In order to create an optimal testing environment, the roles of each participant are described here:

> ***School personnel/assessor role.*** We recommend that school personnel provide information and notification regarding remote assessment to parents/caregivers in advance of conducting the assessment. Consider sending home a letter explaining the caregiver/parent role in assessment. Ask parents/caregivers to provide a space with minimal distractions for the student and to have the computer or tablet device ready along with a phone on hand. A sample letter is provided in this guidance.

Before starting the assessment, be sure the student has any necessary assessment materials. Materials should be placed in a sealed envelope marked to indicate that it should not be opened before the assessment. Materials may be sent home via mail or delivered to families via school-based pick up.

If screen sharing, check that the format of the document will fit the available screen. Keep in mind that while the student materials may be made available digitally/electronically, the assessor needs to have either paper/pencil scoring booklets or a tablet for scoring purposes (e.g., Acadience Learning Online). Finally, when entering data, note if the assessment was completed in person or remotely.

Parent/Caregiver role. A parent/caregiver/adult in the home may need to assist with set-up. A quiet, distraction-free space for the student to complete assessment tasks without interruption is best. Families should plan for 15 minutes per student. Many assessments include the support of a proctor - someone to help with all technology issues and help the student to do their best. Parents/caregivers together with the assessor should identify who the proctor is.

The assessor will need to explain the assessment process and inform the parents/caregivers of the limits of the support they may provide. Listed below are suggestions for explaining the parents'/caregivers' role in the assessment.

- Explain that the purpose of the assessment is to gather accurate information about the student's essential early literacy and reading skills. The information will be used to help plan instruction for their student.
- Inform the parent/caregiver that the assessment is standardized. This means that it is a requirement of the assessment that specific directions be given, timing be exact, and that any directions and prompts to the student be provided by the assessor. It is important that the student respond independently, without any additional help or prompting from observers.
- Acknowledge that it is natural to want to help their student. Reassure parents/caregivers that if their student performs differently during the assessment than what they see the student do at home, you will document their comments about any differences they notice once the assessment is completed.
- Provide time for the parents/caregivers to ask questions related to the assessment.
- If the parent/caregiver provides prompts or assistance to the student after the assessment begins, you may need to provide a gentle reminder to the parent (e.g., "Remember Mr./Ms. _____, we need to let _____ respond without any help.")
- Thank the parent/caregiver for their help. Let the parent/caregiver know that you will score the assessment after the meeting, so will not provide immediate results. (If the assessment results will be provided at a later time, for example during an upcoming parent-teacher conference, or in a parent letter to be sent out after the assessment, you can let the parent/caregiver know that.)

Child role. We want students to do their best during the assessment. During remote assessment, students must let the assessor know if they cannot clearly hear and/or see during the assessment, just like during an in-person assessment.

Configurations for remote scoring may vary by the assessment (see assessment-specific guidance) but may include the following:

- Scoring on an ALO touch-enabled tablet while using another computer device for the meeting to see the student and to screen share.
- Scoring with paper/pencil while using a computer device for the meeting to see the student and to screen share.
- Either of the above plus a phone for audio. If using a phone, it is ideal for both the assessor and student to be hands free. The child should not need to hold the phone but rather use the speakerphone option or earbuds/headphones.

Maximizing Assessment Fidelity and Validity

To maximize the likelihood of obtaining useful assessment data, aim to limit or minimize departures from standardization as much as possible. Document any departures from standardization for consideration when interpreting the assessment data. Consider how adjustments made to administration conditions may impact the reliability and validity, and appropriately adjust conclusions or recommendations adding notes of caution where needed. The standards (i.e., benchmarks) used for interpretation will remain the same.

For all assessments, we recommend that assessors review the information in the Assessment Manuals relevant to accommodations used during the assessment. For each assessment the information is located in a section labeled "Approved Accommodations." These sections explain accommodations that may be provided to students. For example, enlarged print for students with visual impairments. Accommodations that are unapproved and may impact interpretation also are discussed. In instances where unapproved accommodations are used, intra-individual comparisons may be considered more appropriate than comparing student data relative to benchmarks.

Everyone must be trained to administer and score with high fidelity. We recommend having your Acadience Mentors in the school/district use the Assessment Accuracy Checklists to support training needs, provide booster training sessions, and conduct fidelity checks. Assessment Accuracy Checklists can be found in Appendix A of the Acadience Reading K-6 Assessment Manual. Examine fidelity of data collection in an ongoing fashion.

Pre-correct for parents/caregivers providing too much support during the assessment. We recommend communicating the purpose of the assessment to parents and other caregivers (see previous section). Consider the use of an analogy. For example, at regular physical health check-ups, parents want an accurate estimate of where their child is at so that the doctor knows whether or not the child needs intervention to improve their physical health. The same is true for these educational check-ups. Without accurate data, needs may not become known and addressed. Obtaining accurate data helps us to know where we are at so we

can move forward from there. Parents/caregivers need to understand the important role they play and the scope of that role. Make sure the parent knows that the data will not be a part of the student's grade.

Finally, we realize the challenge of doing an assessment remotely that would have normally been done in person. Assessors may miss the opportunity to obtain information that would have been observed during an in-person assessment.

Resources to Use Data Effectively

Resource needs with respect to data interpretation and use will depend on the experience of teachers/educators. Some of your best resources are going to be the experienced teachers and Acadience Mentors in the school/district. We recommend that educators use the assessment data to set meaningful, ambitious, and attainable goals. Pathways of Progress, currently available for Acadience Reading K–6, will be very useful in this context. Additional information about Pathways is available [here](#).

Other Resources

We recommend the Acadience Reading Lexile Report to provide information that parents and families can use to access reading resources online. The Lexile Report provides a Lexile level for each student, which provides a good estimate of books that would be at an appropriate reading level. An online resource to help find appropriate books based on the student's Lexile is available [here](#).

Parent-friendly information about choosing books for children can also be found at [Reading Rockets](#). The Reading Rockets website also has a section dedicated to [parents](#).

In addition, the Institute for Education Sciences Regional Educational Laboratory Program has a website [here](#) devoted to resources for families and caregivers in support of children's math skill development.

Research on Impacts

Acadience Learning will continue to examine the data obtained throughout this period for patterns. We are implementing ways to track the manner in which assessment data were collected (e.g., in person or remote) as those data are entered into Acadience Data Management (ADM) or Acadience Learning Online (ALO). We may consider a more longitudinal examination of student growth, such as measuring growth over a two-year period. Finally, we will have the opportunity to examine differential impact across skills.

Conclusion

If you choose to conduct assessments during this time period, these are our guidelines for this present time. As data are collected and we learn more about the types of experiences and outcomes that result from these implementations, our guidance may evolve to create recommendations aligned with optimal testing experiences. Note that these recommendations are nonstandard accommodations for most Acadience Learning assessments in a nonstandard time. As such, caution is urged in the interpretation of these data and we encourage notation of the experience (e.g., via remote meeting or any other modification). Because all of your data will likely be collected in this same format, the reports can be useful to inform instruction and identify students who may need additional support compared to other students in the classroom or school. Data collected using remote assessment procedures and aggregated for use at a school, district, or state level for important system-wide educational decisions should be identified clearly as remote assessment data to describe the conditions under which the assessments were given.

Both Acadience Data Management and Acadience Learning Online will provide a data entry field to indicate when testing was conducted remotely.

Our purpose, to improve student outcomes, remains the same and we are committed to supporting educators and educational systems in working to achieve that goal. We will continue to provide resources as we learn from this process. If you have additional questions regarding this guidance document or need further assistance with Acadience assessments, please contact us at info@acadiencelearning.org.

The following pages describe specific recommendations for the following Acadience Learning assessments:

- **Acadience Reading K–6**
- **Acadience Math**
- **Acadience Reading Diagnostic**
- **Acadience Reading 7-8**
- **Acadience Reading Pre-K: PELI**

Guidance Specific to Acadience Reading K–6

1. For measures that require student materials (*LNF, RAN, NWF, ORF, Retell*), the assessor does the following:

    a. Download the appropriate student materials from [Acadience Learning](#).
    b. Have your scoring booklets ready (either purchased from [Voyager Sopris Learning](#) or downloaded from [Acadience Learning](#)), or if using ALO, have the tablet ready to score the selected measure.
    c. When you are face-to-face online with the student and audio and video are established and working, take a few minutes to establish rapport with the student and describe the purpose of the session.
    d. Pull up the appropriate student materials for that student on your computer screen.
    e. When you have the appropriate student materials on your screen, give the standardized directions.
    f. At the point in the directions where it says to show the form to the student, share the window with appropriate student materials with the student.
    g. Follow along and score on the printed scoring booklet or touchscreen tablet device.

2. For measures that do not require student materials (*FSF, PSF*), the assessor does the following:

    a. Have your scoring booklets ready or, if using ALO, have the tablet ready to score the selected measure.
    b. When you are face-to-face with the student with audio and video working, give the standardized directions.
    c. Follow along and score on the printed scoring booklet or touchscreen tablet device (ALO).

3. The *Maze* assessment may be administered to the student using paper/pencil or ALO.

    a. When conducting the Maze assessment remotely with paper/pencil,an adult proctor will be required to (a) give the form to the student, (b) sit with the student while the form is being administered, and (c) take a picture of the form and text or email the picture to the assessor or return the completed form to the school in a sealed envelope provided by the school.
    b. When conducting the Maze assessment remotely using ALO, the assessor must provide the student with the appropriate [login page](#) and the unique 4-digit code. The student must enter the 4-digit code and then select their name to signal the assessor they successfully logged in. The assessor will then give the standardized directions to the student and instruct the student to begin.

c. When assessing the student with paper/pencil, enter the scores into Acadience Data Management (ADM) and indicate in the appropriate field that the assessment was administered remotely. When assessing the student with ALO, indicate that the assessment was administered remotely when prompted. All scores are already entered and reports are available.

Guidance Specific to Acadience Math

1. For measures that require student materials (**BQD, NIF, AQD, and MNF**), the assessor does the following:

    a. Download the appropriate student materials from [Acadience Learning](#).
    b. Have scoring booklets ready (either purchased from [Voyager Sopris Learning](#) or downloaded from [Acadience Learning](#)).
    c. When you are in a virtual face-to-face meeting with the student with audio and video working, pull up the appropriate student materials for that student on your computer screen.
    d. When you have the appropriate student materials on your screen, give the standardized directions.
    e. At the point in the directions where it says to show the form to the student, share your screen with the student.
    f. Follow along and score on the paper/pencil scoring booklet.

2. For measures that do not require student materials (**NNF**), the assessor does the following:

    a. Have your scoring booklets ready (either purchased from Voyager Sopris Learning or downloaded from Acadience Learning).
    b. When you are in a virtual face-to-face meeting with the student with audio and video working, give the standardized directions
    c. Follow along and score on the paper/pencil scoring booklet.

3. Computation and Concepts and Applications:

    a. Conducting the paper/pencil version of the **Computation and Concepts and Applications** assessment remotely will require an adult proctor to (a) give the form to the student, (b) sit with the student while the form is being administered, and (c) take a picture of the form and text or email the picture to the assessor or return the completed form to the school in a sealed envelope provided by the school.

4. Enter data into Acadience Data Management (ADM) and indicate in the appropriate field that the assessment was administered remotely.

Guidance Specific to Acadience Reading Diagnostic Assessments (PA, WRD and CFOL)

1. For measures that require student materials (***PA Sections A1, A2, D1, D2, E1, E2, E3; WRD QS, WRD Forms 1 – 5 (all sections); CFOL Sections A1, A2, C1 – C4, D1 – D4, E1, E2, F1 – F3, & G***), the assessor does the following:

    a. Download the appropriate student materials from Acadience Learning.
    b. Have your scoring sheet(s) ready (purchased from Voyager Sopris Learning).
    c. When you are face-to-face online with the student and audio and video are established and working, take a few minutes to establish rapport with the student and describe the purpose of the session.
    d. Pull up the appropriate student materials for that student on your computer screen.
    e. When you have the appropriate student materials on your screen, give the standardized directions.
    f. At the point in the directions where it says to show assessment materials to the student, share the window with appropriate student materials with the student.
    g. Follow along and score on the scoring sheet(s).

2. For measures that do not require student materials (***PA Sections B1, B2, C1, & C2; CFOL Sections B1, B2, D5, & E1***), the assessor does the following:

    a. Have your scoring sheet(s) ready for the selected section(s) of the assessment.
    b. When you are face-to-face with the student with audio and video working, give the standardized directions.
    c. Follow along and score on the scoring sheet(s).

Guidance Specific to Acadience Reading 7-8

1. The Maze and Silent Reading measures may be administered to the student using paper/pencil.
    a. When conducting the Maze assessment remotely with paper/pencil, an adult proctor will be required to (a) give the form to the student, (b) sit with the student while the form is being administered, and (c) take a picture of the form and text or email the picture to the assessor or return the completed form to the school in a sealed envelope provided by the school.
    b. When assessing the student with paper/pencil, enter the scores into Acadience Data Management (ADM) and indicate in the appropriate field that the assessment was administered remotely.

2. Oral Reading
    a. Download the appropriate assessment materials from acadiencelearning.org.
    b. Print the needed pages from the scoring booklets.
    c. When you are in a virtual face-to-face meeting with the student with audio and video working, pull up the appropriate student materials for that student on your computer screen.
    d. When you have the appropriate student materials on your screen, give the standardized directions.
    e. At the point in the directions where it says to show the form to the student, share your screen with the student.
    f. Follow along and score on a printed scoring booklet.
    g. When assessing the student with paper/pencil, enter the scores into Acadience Data Management (ADM) and indicate in the appropriate field that the assessment was administered remotely.

Sample Parent/Guardian Letter

Dear [parent/guardian name],

The teachers and administrators at our school are committed to supporting students' educational needs. As part of this commitment, our teachers will be meeting individually with all students to do a brief assessment as a progress check on their reading skills. The purpose of this assessment is to find out what students have learned and can do independently and what we still need to teach. With the changes in our past school year your child may have forgotten some things and that's typical. We typically do this assessment with each student in person, but this year we will be doing the assessment through a virtual meeting. To make this happen we will need help from an adult at your home. The meeting will take approximately 15-20 minutes including set up. Please select the best time for you and your child on this Google Doc link [insert link or hyperlink].

Here are the materials you will need:

1. Computer, laptop, or tablet. Headphones or earbuds, computer speaker and microphone are fine too. Alternatively have a phone available for audio.
2. Internet connection
3. Quiet space free from distractions as much as possible
4. If you have received a packet of materials identified for use during this session please have that available. It contains a few papers you will leave with the child. The packet of materials for the meeting session should not be opened before the session.
5. If your child wears glasses or hearing aids please make sure they have them for this session.
6. If your child has a 504 or IEP that includes testing accommodations, please contact the school for further guidance on accommodations.

Laptop, desktops and tablets are all great options. A mobile phone will be too small for the student to complete the tasks, but may be workable for those tasks that only need audio. You may need to stack a laptop on books or some other creative solution so please take a few minutes before our meeting to have that ready. If using a tablet please have a stand or a way for the child to see it upright.

Here is what you (or the adult who will be helping) will need to do:

1. If possible, please set up your computer and phone in a space with minimal distractions.
2. Make sure the internet connection, microphone/speaker or headphones and computer camera are working, and that the camera is in a position to see the student and for the student to be able to see the screen at eye level
3. Standby for a quick audio and camera check before we get started.
4. If a packet of papers has been provided for the meeting, set the papers face down in front of the student. (If you need papers they will be provided before the meeting.)
5. If your child is in kindergarten or first grade, or if you think your presence will help your child to stay focused and pay attention, you are invited to stay for the assessment. During the assessment, you may help your child to pay attention, but it is important that the student answer all of the questions and do all of the reading independently, that is, without any help. By seeing what students can and cannot do independently your child's teachers will better know how to tailor their instruction to meet your child's needs.

If you have any questions please feel free to reach out by phone or email.

Guidance Specific to Acadience Reading Pre-K: PELI

Materials

<u>Assessor</u>

- **Computer with camera and speaker**.
- **Software for video conferencing.** Ideally, you will want to use a remote platform in which you can see the child on your screen at the same time as you are sharing your screen and the slide presentation with the child. <u>Specific instructions for Google Meet and Zoom are provided in separate documents.</u>
- **PowerPoint or other PowerPoint compatible presentation software**. (e.g., Google Slides, Keynote) (Note: if you convert the PowerPoint to other presentation software, the animations and/or sound may not work. We recommend that you use PowerPoint within your video conferencing platform.)
- **PELI Remote Assessment Slide Deck** for the PELI form you will be administering (download slide deck from https://acadiencelearning.org/remote-testing-acadience-peli-materials-download)
- **Score form and directions**. We have made minor modifications to the assessment directions for remote assessment. To minimize the number of papers you will need during the assessment, we developed a 3-page document for the book that contains the directions and the score form in a single document. There are two options you can use for score forms and directions. You can use either: a) the Notes on the slide deck along with the standard PELI Score Form or b) the Remote Assessment Score Form with Directions.
  - o Option a: The remote directions are included in the Notes on the slide deck. If you have two displays (e.g., a laptop and external monitor) or are using a remote platform that allows you to see the notes as you present, you will be able to read the directions from your computer as you conduct the assessment. You can then use the standard PELI score form for the book you are administering.
  - o Option b: If you cannot see the notes on your monitor as you present, you will need a hard copy of the PELI remote directions and score form for the PELI book you are administering (download directions/score form from https://acadiencelearning.org/remote-testing-acadience-peli-materials-download)

<u>Family and Child</u>

- **Computer with camera and speaker**
- **Virtual meeting software**

Schedule the assessment

- If regular one-on-one meetings are a part of the school routine, the PELI assessment may be done during one of the regularly scheduled sessions. Otherwise, a meeting time will need to be scheduled for the assessment.
  - We recommend waiting to conduct benchmark assessments after the child and family have time to get used to the school routine and technology that is being used for remote/distance learning.
  - Plan for at least 30 minutes for the assessment. This allows enough time to get set up, establish rapport, and get the child and caregiver comfortable with the process.
  - If scheduling multiple assessments on the same day, build in buffer time between meetings. This allows for ample time if a session goes long and also provides time for you to score the assessment and make any notes you wish to capture following the assessment meeting while the interaction with the child is still fresh.
- Your school may already use calendar/scheduling software and have a process for scheduling parent teacher meetings. Such software significantly simplifies the scheduling process.
- Once the meeting is scheduled, send a meeting invitation with a link.
- Send a reminder the day before the meeting, with contact information (or a link) in case the parent/caregiver needs to reschedule.

Send meeting information to parents/caregivers

- Send a letter to parents/caregivers (via email, snail mail, or other communication networks used by the school). The letter should contain the day/time of the meeting as well as any other information that will be helpful in facilitating a positive virtual assessment experience including:
  - The purpose of the assessment
  - How the assessment will be conducted
  - How long the assessment will take
  - Expectations for parents'/caregivers' role during the assessment
  - Technology needs
- A sample letter is included in this guidance document.

Prepare for the Assessment

- Download the appropriate PELI Remote Assessment Slide Deck for Benchmark 1 (Beginning of Year), Benchmark 2 (Middle of Year), or Benchmark 3 (End of Year):
  - PK 3 /4 Benchmark Form 1: *Time for Bed* (for children who are two years away from kindergarten entry)
  - PK 4 /5 Benchmark Form 1: *Cooking with Mom* (for children who are one year away from kindergarten entry)
  - PK 3 /4 Benchmark Form 2: *A Day at the Playground* (for children who are two years away from kindergarten entry)

- o PK 4 /5 Benchmark Form 2: ***Show and Tell at School*** (for children who are one year away from kindergarten entry)
- o PK 3 /4 Benchmark Form 3: ***On the Farm*** (for children who are two years away from kindergarten entry)
- o PK 4 /5 Benchmark Form 3: ***A Day at the Beach*** (for children who are one year away from kindergarten entry)
- Download the corresponding PELI Remote Assessment Directions-Score Form or get the score form (if you have two monitors) for the book you will be administering.
- Adjust your settings for PowerPoint (if using Google Meet – see attached document) and/or the remote platform so that you will be able to see the child while you are also showing your screen.
- Plan logistics for the assessment. You will need to run the PPT, give the directions, and score as you go.
  - o We recommend using a clipboard or other thin hard surface to hold the score form on your lap.
  - o The PowerPoint is set up so that you can control it with a simple click of the key to animate or advance the slide. The only time you may need to use your mouse will be if you discontinue a subtest and need to advance the slide. Thus, consider using your nondominant hand to click the key to animate/advance slides, and your dominant hand for scoring.

Practice

- Become familiar with the remote platform that you will be using.
- Review the PELI benchmark form you will be administering, including all of the items for each subtest.
- Review scoring procedures for each subtest, including the Scoring Guides for Picture Naming (Appendix F), Tell About (Appendix G), and Comprehension (Appendix H) in the PELI Assessment Manual.
- Open up the Slide Deck on your computer in presentation mode. Click through the slides to be sure the slides and all of the animations work.
- Click through the slides again, this time saying the directions as you click through the slides. Practice marking the score form as you go.

Conduct the Assessment

- Have the PELI Remote Assessment Power Point open on your desktop. If you are not using the directions in the notes on the slide, you will need to have a hard copy of the Remote Assessment Administration Directions accessible. It is a good idea to close any other documents you have open on your desktop.
- Check the settings on the remote platform you are using to enable you to see the child at the same time you are showing your screen.
- Log into the meeting platform that you will be using a few minutes before the scheduled meeting. Check your video and audio.

- When the caregiver logs in, greet the caregiver and child. Chat for a few minutes and help the caregiver to trouble shoot any technology issues.
- Explain the assessment purpose and process and remind the caregiver that you want the child to participate in the activities independently, without any help other than helping the child to stay focused on the activity at hand. A sample script is provided below:
    - We are going to be looking at a story and doing some activities on the computer today. I am going to show some pictures and ask (child) some questions. It is important that (child) do all of the activities without any extra help. You can help (child) to stay with me and to pay attention to what is on the computer screen. I will let you know if there is anything else I would like you to do.
    - I want you to know that we don't expect (child) to know everything that I am going to ask. Children at this age are still learning these things. We do this assessment so that I have a good idea about which things (child) and all of the other children in the class need to learn this year.
    - I also know that this is a new and different situation, and children don't always act the same in this situation as they do at home, so when we are all done, you can let me know how you think it went.
    - Do you have any questions before we begin?
- Consider recording the assessment if that is allowed by the district or your preschool program. This will allow you to go back to the recording (as needed) as you complete scoring.
- When you and the caregiver and child are ready to begin, share your screen.
- In most platforms will be given various options for sharing such as sharing your full desktop or an individual document. Select the PELI PowerPoint slide deck.
- Open Slide Slow mode in PowerPoint.
- The first slide is a picture of cats. It is there so that you can tell if the screen share is working. Follow the directions for the slide.
- Click to the first slide – the cover of the book – and begin. Follow the administration directions provided and score along on the PELI score form as you go.

PELI Sample Parent/Guardian Letter

Dear [parent/guardian name],

The teachers and administrators at our school are committed to helping children learn skills that will help them become successful readers in the future. As part of this commitment, our teachers are meeting individually with each of the children in the class to do a brief assessment called the PELI. PELI stands for Preschool Early Literacy Indicators. This assessment will help us to know how the children in our program are doing in learning important early literacy skills.

Your child is scheduled for a PELI meeting with your child's teacher at (time) on (day), (date). The meeting will take about a half an hour, including set up.

During the meeting we will use the computer to show pictures, tell a story and ask questions about the story, and have your child do some activities such as name letters.

What you will need:

- Computer with camera and speaker. Laptop, desktops and tablets are all great options. Headphones or earbuds, computer speaker and microphone are fine too. You could use a phone for audio instead of the computer if that works better.
- Internet connection.
- Software for videoconferencing: (Insert software that you will be using and, if necessary, include the link for downloading the software)

What you will need to do:

6. If possible, please set up your computer and phone in a space with minimal distractions.
7. Make sure the internet connection, microphone/speaker or headphones and computer camera are working, and that the camera is in a position to see the child and for the child to be able to see the screen at eye level.
8. Standby for a quick audio and camera check before we get started.
9. You are invited to stay for the assessment to support and encourage your child. During the assessment, you may help your child to pay attention and stay focused on the activities on the screen, but do not assist your child with answering questions. For your child to receive the very best instruction it is important that your child do all of the activities without any extra help.

If you have any questions please feel free to reach out by phone or email.