



News for Teachers: Frequently Asked Questions on Formative Assessment

Arlington Public Schools (APS) awarded [CORE K12](#) with a contract for an aligned, electronic formative benchmark assessment system (K-8) in reading and mathematics.

Q1: What is the anticipated testing schedule for the ipGrowth and VA SOL benchmark assessments?

Participating schools in the partial roll-out (i.e. Hoffman Boston, McKinley, Oakridge, and Kenmore) will follow the test administration schedule described below. A full year calendar will be developed for all schools beginning in fall 2012.

January	February	March	April	May	June
January 9-31 <i>ipGrowth</i> Mathematics Grades 3-8	January 30-February 10 <i>Benchmark</i> in Mathematics		April 12-27 <i>Benchmark</i> in Mathematics		June 4-16 <i>ipGrowth</i> Mathematics Grades 3-8
January 9-31 <i>ipGrowth</i> English Language Arts Grades 3-8	January 30-February 10 <i>Benchmark</i> in English Language Arts		April 12-27 <i>Benchmark</i> in English Language Arts		June 4-16 <i>ipGrowth</i> English Language Arts Grades 3-8

Q2: Who is required to participate? Are there any criteria for exempting students?

There have been a number of conversations with the personnel in both the offices of ESOL/HILT and Special Education as well as site-based personnel to discuss testing exemptions during the partial roll out. Guidelines are listed below:

Assessment	Elementary K-2	Elementary 3-5	Middle School
ipGrowth Mathematics Grades 3-8		All students Exemptions: English Language Learners (ELL) identified on a WIDA level 1 proficiency	All students Exemptions: English Language Learners (ELL) identified on a WIDA level 1 proficiency
ipGrowth English Language Arts Grades 3-8		All students Exemptions: English Language Learners (ELL) identified on a WIDA level 1 proficiency	All students Exemptions: English Language Learners (ELL) identified on a WIDA level 1 proficiency
Benchmark Assessments Mathematics English Language Arts (ELA)	All students Exemptions: English Language Learners (ELL) identified on a WIDA level 1 proficiency	All students expected to take the Standards of Learning (SOL) assessment Exemptions: Students taking the VGLA	All students expected to take the Standards of Learning (SOL) assessment Exemptions: Students taking the VGLA or VAAP

Q3: Do we have to provide makeups?

Yes, all students identified as participants in the testing must complete the assessment.

Q4: Are the formative assessments timed or untimed? How long are the assessments?

Assessments are untimed. Typically the assessments are between 25 and 30 items and take a single class period or approximately 40 minutes to administer.

Q5: What accommodations are offered?

Testing accommodations should follow the IEP for individual students. Tests should be untimed, and the technology allows enlarged print. If a student requires an accommodation that is not offered online, arrangements can be made through consultation with the special education case manager for the student's participation. This may include a paper pencil administration of the assessment.

Consistent with the guidelines from the VDOE, the read aloud accommodation is not standard and will not be permitted for the ipGrowth assessment in English Language Arts (ELA) or the VA SOL formative benchmark assessments. If you have a student with a substantial documented deficiency in decoding, please contact your special education coordinator for guidance. Read aloud may be used for the mathematics benchmark assessments if stipulated in the student's IEP.

Q6: Could the growth assessments and/or benchmarks replace classroom assessments that teachers would be giving during the quarter?

Elementary: Yes, at the elementary level the benchmark and ipGrowth measures will serve in place of the quarterly math assessments and SOL released tests. They do not currently substitute for the Developmental Reading Assessment or the Phonological Awareness Literacy Screening (PALS).

Middle: At the middle school level, the CORE K12 formative benchmark assessments can be substituted for the quarterly mathematics assessments; however, they cannot be used as a grade. Teachers should also continue to use common units of study assessments to measure student progress.

Planning and Evaluation: The assessments required by Planning and Evaluation including the Degrees of Reading Power (DRP), Stanford and Standards of Learning (SOL) will remain in place.

Q7: How will the benchmark and ipGrowth assessments be administered in classrooms?

The CORE K12 formative assessments may be administered on an ipad, laptop, or desktop. They may be administered in a computer lab or on a class set of ipads or laptops during a classroom period.

At the elementary level, however, it is not necessary to administer the assessments as a whole class; rather, small groups of students can cycle through a computer station to take the assessment during the testing window.

Q8: Will there be an influx of technology support (i.e. computers, laptops, and/or ipads)

APS has agreed to purchase ipads for student use at a 10:1 ratio to implement the formative assessment system in reading and mathematics. The ipads will also be available for students' instructional use. Schools will also receive ipad cases and storage carts dependent on the number of ipads.

Each ipad will be customized (at the elementary and middle school level) to have a starter set of applications (apps). Currently, Pat Teske, Jeannine Richardson, and selected ITCs are working not only to identify the set of applications, but also to develop brief, consistent turn-around training modules on the *instructional applications* which will be available to students.

Q9: How are the CORE K12 Formative Benchmark Assessments aligned? Do they align with the course (i.e. grade 6 math)? Do they align with the VA State Standards (SOL)? Do they align with the APS Pacing Guides?

APS is the first school division in the state to use CORE K12 Benchmark Assessments; therefore the assessments are being created for our use. APS provided our pacing guides in mathematics for grades K-8. It is our expectation that the benchmark assessments will be aligned with both the VA State Standards and the APS Pacing Guides.

Q10: Are there CORE K12 Formative Assessment benchmarks in Algebra and Geometry at the middle school level?

APS will not use COREK12 Formative Assessment benchmarks in Algebra and Geometry at this time. Students in Algebra and Geometry classes will not be required to take the benchmark assessment in mathematics; however, they will be required to take the ipGrowth assessment in mathematics.

Q11: What is the difference between the ipGrowth assessment and the VA SOL benchmark assessments?

ipGrowth Assessment (CORE K12)	VA SOL Formative Benchmark Assessments (COREK12)
Online administration	Online administration
Approximately 25-30 items	Approximately 25-30 items
Approximately 40 minutes or a class period to administer	Approximately 40 minutes or a class period to administer
Measures application and critical thinking in reading and mathematics in grades 3-8	Measures performance on grade level specific SOL objectives in English Language Arts (ELA) and Mathematics, grades K-8
<p>Adapts to a student’s performance level by test administration form.</p> <p><i>The first test is administered according to grade level. For example, all third grade students will take the third grade assessment in mathematics. The second administration is automatically assigned by the CORE K12 system based on the student’s performance on the first assessment. All administrations are scored on the ipGrowth scale of 200-1299.</i></p>	Preconfigured static forms based on grade level and year-long pacing
Provides scores based on a nationally normed scale	Provides scores based on percentage correct

Q12: Please describe the ipGrowth Scale.

The ipGrowth scale ranges from second grade to twelfth grade. It follows from 200 to 1299. Increments of 100 represent a grade level. For example, students performing between 400 and 499 are working within fourth grade proficiency level. A score of 450 would be midyear fourth grade. The scale has been nationally normed and is specific to CORE K12. Please review the ipGrowth Class Performance Report Quick Guide.

Grade	iScore Range
Grade 3	300-399
Grade 4	400-499
Grade 5	500-599
Grade 6	600-699
Grade 7	700-799
Grade 8	800-899
Grade 9	900-999
Grade 10	1000-1099
Grade 11	1100-1199
Grade 12	1200-1299

For additional information please feel to contact:

Michelle Picard, EdD

Director of Early Childhood and Elementary Education

michelle.picard@apsva.us

703.228.2413