

User Questions and Answers from the 10/10/2014 Iowa TIER Support Webinar

We had a wonderful turnout for our final fall screening window webinar. Many thanks to all who attended!

There were lots of great questions asked by our users. Here is a recap of some of those questions and answers –

Iowa TIER Support Webinar Questions

No questions at this time.

Single User Access Role Type Assignment and Staff Management

No questions at this time.

A&A (EdPortal) Account Setup

No questions at this time.

Accessing Iowa TIER via the Iowa EdPortal

No questions at this time.

Reporting

Q: “How is it coming with the color reports? As of right now, some reports are still in B&W and some are in color.”

A: At this time, we’re still working with our programmers to fix this issue. We’ll keep everyone posted.

Q: “At some point in time will there be a one page report to print off that we can give to parents that will explain the testing and progress monitoring?”

A: There are some parent letters available on the Iowa Reading Research Center website, and there are links that can be found in the Knowledge Base. This is not the letter that will be required for the Early Literacy communications. The first time this will be required will be after the winter testing window, because we are going to need to have two measuring periods with two consecutive scores below benchmark, thereby identifying a substantial deficiency. The official communications will be coming later, but you can use the letters that are available now for a general communication.

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Q: "When will statewide data be available?"

A: We are currently waiting on our developers to finish getting the summary reports up and running, and when they are, we will post everything in TIER. These reports take up some server resources, so we were waiting for the screening window to close so we wouldn't tax the system.

Testing and Measurement

Q: "We've been told that if a student who must be progress monitored is above benchmark for 3 consecutive weeks, we can choose to stop progress monitoring that student. Is this correct? Does the TIER system automatically notice this and take them out of progress monitoring, or is there something that we need to do in the system to make this happen?"

A: No. This is not correct. If you have a look in ELI Guidance documentation, it will show that PM must continue until the next testing window. Make sure that you proceed with what the ELI guidelines state.

Q: "So if a student is "at-risk" they must be progress monitored weekly regardless of their performance?"

A: Yes. ELI states that it must be done until they show improvement in their benchmark scores in the next testing window.

Q: "I understand the default PM for K is letter sounds. What is the default PM for 1st grade?"

A: The default PM for first grade is Grade 1 CBM-R. This is mandatory as per state requirements, but additional PM measures may be added on from the aReading list. Additional details may be found in the TIER Knowledge Base.

Q: "There are some other measures available for PM which we don't have the materials yet. What should we do?"

A: There have been some additional PM stimulus materials that have been posted in the TIER Knowledge Base recently. If these don't work, then it is alright to continue using the default materials.

Q: "We have a new family starting on Monday they are from another state. Should we test them? Also getting other new students in 2 weeks. Should we test them as well?"

A: If you're getting new students from out of state, it doesn't hurt to test them. The tests can be made available by an internal coach. As far as other new students coming, if they are coming from another district in Iowa, no further testing should be required as they should have their current scores transfer along with the rest of their student info.

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Q: "Does the state have a site where we can find a bank of accepted research-based interventions for internal coaches to enter into the FAST system?"

A: Not quite yet. There is a group that is in the process of reviewing all of the submitted interventions, which will sometime wind up in the fall. As soon as this is done, we will post this info and share it with everyone.

Q: "Once that state bank of interventions is available to us, will those be the ONLY interventions we can use, or will we be able to continue adding our own interventions?"

A: The requirement for students that have a substantial disability is that you use a research validated intervention. We're not sure at this time if this would mean using one from the approved list or creating a custom intervention. We'll be getting an answer on this soon when we get together and review the research information.

Q: "Can it be commercial programs, such as Rewards or Read Naturally?"

A: Yes, possibly. Some of these may be reviewed, but it will depend on the actual research on effectiveness of the programs. Keep an eye on the ELI page, and we'll have some news coming soon.

Q: "If a student is absent the day progress monitoring is scheduled or just didn't get the test done on scheduled day, can the student do the test another date?"

A: Yes. You can make the changes in the PM schedule. See the TIER Knowledge Base for further details.

Q: "What timeline do we have to begin progress monitoring? We finished testing on 10/2."

A: Once you have identified students who are at-risk, you should begin scheduling PM as soon as possible. ELI states that students are monitored once screening is completed. Think of what's best for the student's needs.

Q: "Is it correct that in terms of progress monitoring and interventions, teachers have complete control of setting that up except for permissions and the intervention bank?"

A: Not entirely. Only Internal coaches will have access to set up an intervention bank, but teachers and site users will be able to modify interventions and PM's. This includes student and staff scheduling.

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Q: "If we want to progress monitor using another assessment besides the default, is this possible? Are there instructions for this?"

A: Yes you can, and yes, there are instructions. You must use the default PM for the grade level. You can however add on additional measures as needed. There are directions on how to do this in the TIER Knowledge Base.

Q: "In some cases, we may want to do weekly progress monitoring for students that were ABOVE benchmark. My teachers have told me that they were trying to set this up, but the system didn't allow them to do this. Is this possible? "

A: Yes, it is possible. The trick here is to make sure you start by scheduling the intervention first, as the PM's can't be scheduled until the intervention is. You can use the intervention labelled "Progress Monitoring – No Intervention (PM-No I)".

Q: "So whose job is it to schedule progress monitoring and interventions? The teacher or the internal coach?"

A: Both. Although the internal coach is the only one who can build an intervention bank and assign permission to use intervention, teachers and site users schedule the actual interventions and can also set up custom interventions. It depends on the needs of the students, and what will meet those needs the most effectively in your current situation.

Staff Training and Certification

No questions at this time.

Student Management

No questions at this time.

SIS (Infinite Campus, JMC, and Power School) Functionality

No questions at this time.

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Technical Requirements

Q: “One frustration we have had is knowing if freezes or slowness is on the local network end or that the state site is swamped or experiencing sluggishness.”

A: One thing that you can do is to test your network speed by going to www.speedtest.net. If your download speed comes back as less than 5MBps, you may want to contact your local tech person for follow up. We always advise making sure that your testing time is done with no other apps running on any of the testing machines as FAST can be a bit resource intensive on both local machines and the network.

Iowa TIER Support Ticketing System

Q: “Where should we turn for support now that these webinars are ending?”

A: You will always have the ability to access the TIER Knowledge Base. If you have a question, you can either go to the chat forums or submit a support ticket. If you are unable to access the TIER Knowledge Base, you can email tiersupport@iowa.gov Please only email if you are unable to access TIER. Further webinars may be scheduled if the need arises.

If you would like to get access to the latest Q&A documents, please go to the DE website at <https://www.educateiowa.gov/early-literacy-implementation>, click on “A to Z index”, click on “E”, and find “Early Literacy Implementation”. Scroll down to find “Supporting Documents” and other documents that deal with setup.

If you are still unable to get into Iowa TIER, please contact us at TIERSupport@iowa.gov

For all other Iowa TIER issues, please contact an internal coach and have them submit a support ticket.