



COMMONWEALTH of VIRGINIA
Department of Education

DATE: February 22, 2019

TO: Division Superintendents

FROM: James F. Lane, Ed.D., Superintendent of Public Instruction

SUBJECT: **Early Intervention Reading Initiative for the 2019-2020 School Year**

The purpose of the Early Intervention Reading Initiative (EIRI) is to provide early reading intervention services to students in kindergarten through the third grade who demonstrate deficiencies reflected in their performance on a diagnostic literacy screening tool. Participating divisions are required to use the state-provided diagnostic screening instrument, Phonological Awareness Literacy Screening (PALS), or a diagnostic screening instrument approved by the Virginia Department of Education (VDOE). Attachment A outlines the proposal requirements for use of an alternative diagnostic screening instrument.

Funding for the EIRI is based on the state's share of the cost to provide two and one-half hours of additional instruction each week for an estimated number of students in each school division at a student-to-teacher ratio of five-to-one. The estimated number of students in each school division shall be based on the actual percentage of students who are determined to need services based on the result of the diagnostic screening assessment administered in fall 2018 for kindergarten and in spring 2019 for first through third grade. Funding shall be based on 100 percent of the estimated number of eligible students for kindergarten through grade 3.

Divisions using PALS as the assessment for EIRI must use the complete battery of PALS-K or PALS 1-3 components as provided free of charge by the state. A chart outlining the PALS screening requirements for EIRI participants is on the following [PALS website](#).

All PALS screening results must be entered into the [PALS website](#). VDOE works with the PALS office to ensure that all students screened with PALS will have their Student Testing Identifier (STI) included in the data collection process. Student PALS accounts will need to be created only for students who do not have a PALS score history.

The collection of data relative to compliance with the Standards of Quality (SOQ) and other miscellaneous reporting requires school divisions to certify whether they will participate in the EIRI for 2019-2020. If school divisions are participating, they must indicate that the PALS

screening instrument will be used or a request must be made for approval from the VDOE for an alternative diagnostic screening instrument. This information is to be provided through the Single Sign-on for Web Systems (SSWS) “SOQ Compliance” application, during the data collection period, which occurs during the summer of each year. School division staff member responsible for EIRI should contact the SSWS contact for their division for further directions on how to provide the data.

If you have questions regarding EIRI funding, please contact the Budget Office by email at doebudgetoffice@doe.virginia.gov or by telephone at (804) 225-2025. Questions regarding EIRI programmatic issues should be addressed to Carmen Kurek, Elementary English/Reading Specialist, by email at Carmen.Kurek@doe.virginia.gov or by telephone at (804) 225-3203. Questions regarding the PALS online services should be addressed to Ellen Shrum, PALS Project Manager, by email at PALS@virginia.edu or by telephone at (888) 882-7257.

JFL/CK/pk

Attachment

- a. [Proposal Requirements for Use of a Local Diagnostic Screening Instrument](#) (Word)