



September 23, 2020

## Early Childhood Screening and COVID-19 Questions and Answers

### Guidance for Early Childhood Screening Programs

Guidance for Early Childhood Screening Programs including the distance, hybrid and in-person models may be found under the Early Learning section of the Minnesota Department of Education (MDE) 2020-21 Planning Guidance for Minnesota Public Schools, on MDE [COVID-19 Updates](#).

### Questions and Answers

#### What developmental screening tools and training are needed to complete distance or virtual/online screenings?

Districts may collect the parent or caregiver report of their child's development, and the Ages and Stages Questionnaire: 3 (ASQ: 3) may be used to meet the developmental screening requirement as the observational tool is waived during distance or virtual/online screenings per [Executive Order 20-82 \(30\)](#). Distance screening may be by mail, phone or an online platform. Many district Early Childhood Special Education (ECSE) teams have the ASQ: 3 license, so screening programs may also use it at no additional cost. Free online training for the virtual ASQ: 3 is offered. If the district does not have the ASQ: 3, it may be ordered for \$295, as well as a training DVD for \$49 through [Brookes publishing](#). Elementary and Secondary School Emergency Relief (ESSER) funds may cover this additional expense.

#### Has there been a change in the kindergarten screening requirement?

The early childhood screening requirement for kindergartners has been extended from 30 to 90 days after first attending during the 2020-21 school year per [Executive Order 20-82 \(31\)](#).

#### Which model do screening programs follow if our elementary school is hybrid?

If the district elementary school is in hybrid then the screening program could provide in-person screening. Decisions about which model to follow would be made at the district level and not the program level. Screening programs would provide distance screening if requested by a parent even if the model is in-person or hybrid. Further information may be found under the Early Learning section of the MDE 2020-21 Planning Guidance for Minnesota Public Schools, on MDE [COVID-19 Updates](#).

## How will our district receive state aid in 2020-21?

[Minnesota 2020 Education Finance Legislation Chapter 116/HF 4415 COVID-19 Formula Adjustments](#) directs MDE to calculate the aid for FY 2020 and FY 2021 using the formula amounts set in statute for each age group and the 2018-19 school year counts of children screened for each age group.

## Do districts still need to complete the annual screening report given the new finance legislation?

Yes, school districts still need to complete the annual screening report in [Early Childhood Education Outcomes](#) with an extended due date of October 1, 2020, if early childhood screenings were completed between July 1, 2019, and June 30, 2020. EDIAM access should be requested through your district Individual Official with Authority as a “screening user role” for coordinators and a “screening approver role” for superintendents.

## How will districts complete the screenings which were delayed last spring due to COVID-19?

Districts may coordinate with parents and Head Start, Child and Teen CheckUps, public health and clinics to request copies of screenings completed within the past year as they include the same components as early childhood screenings. Districts may also plan to schedule more calendar days of screening in order to complete as many screenings as possible including those which were delayed in the spring. Districts now have 90 days instead of 30 days to complete the screenings for kindergarteners, in accordance with [Executive Order 20-82 \(30\)](#).

## How will districts complete the vision and hearing portion of screening by distance?

The MDE 2020-21 Planning Guidance for Minnesota Public Schools, Pages 72-74 on MDE [COVID-19 Updates](#), provides alternative ways to collect vision and hearing screening information including the completion by distance of a [vision history](#), [hearing assessment and history](#) with the parent and or collection of screening results from the child’s primary health care provider. A district rescreen may be set up in the future when in-person screening is available. Or the child may be screened at their next medical appointment.

## May we use plexiglass table top shields?

In the [Minnesota Department of Health \(MDH\) 2020-2021 Planning Guide for Schools](#), under the social distancing and minimizing exposure section, recommends that districts consider the use of transparent dividers (e.g., plexiglass) to separate people. The six foot distance is still required as much as feasible. Districts may consult with State Fire Marshal [Thomas.Roessler@state.mn.us](mailto:Thomas.Roessler@state.mn.us) if they are installing a large amount as a room divider. MSFX 807.2.1: “Moveable/portable walls and partitions exceeding 10% of the wall/ceiling area are considered interior finish and must comply with minimum flame-spread and smoke requirements.” In existing fully sprinkled buildings, up to 20% is allowed before movable/portable partitions and walls are considered interior finish. [Suspended fabric and plastic film partitions for COVID-19 Separations](#) and [Rigid Partitions and Barriers for COVID-19 Protection](#) offer further information.

## How can I learn more or get more information?

- Links to upcoming screening webinars, online learning modules and recorded conference calls are on the [MDE Screening Professional Learning site](#). Live MDE screening training is not offered at this time.
- Short free [virtual training videos on the ASQ:3](#) and the ASQ:SE-2 are available through the publisher.
- Observational screening tool training webinars or DVD's are offered by the publishers listed on [MDH Recommended Screening Instruments](#).
- [Vision and hearing screening training](#) is currently offered through recorded online modules through the Department of Health (MDH). Live vision and hearing training is on hold.