



MISSOURI ASSESSMENT
FIELD
GUIDE

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A practical reference for Missouri assessment and curriculum leaders navigating Reading Success Plan requirements before the June 19, 2026 reporting deadline.



ABOUT THIS GUIDE

Missouri districts must tell DESE which state-approved reading assessment they will use in 2026–27 by June 19, 2026.

That notification is one step. A related question is whether the tool you choose covers everything your Reading Success Plan requires. Districts that work through this before August will be better positioned when school starts.

This guide covers what requires, how to evaluate any approved tool against those requirements, how to fund a compliant assessment, what to ask DESE directly, and a checklist your team can use before June 19.

A note on this guide: Amira Learning publishes this guide, and Amira ISIP Assess is one of four DESE-approved reading assessments. We have tried to make this a genuinely useful resource regardless of which tool you choose.

PART 1: WHAT SECTION 167.645 REQUIRES

The Law In Plain Language

Missouri's Reading Success Plan law, Section 167.645 RSMo, has several requirements relevant to assessment selection.

Districts must screen all K–3 students for reading difficulties, including signs of dyslexia, using a state-approved assessment. Newly enrolled students in grades 1–5 must also be assessed using a tool from the state-approved list.¹

Reading Success Plans are required for students who are one or more grade levels behind in reading, have been identified as at risk of dyslexia through statewide screening, or have a formal dyslexia diagnosis. Each RSP must include specific goals, intensive interventions, progress monitoring at least four times per year, and regular communication with parents and guardians.¹

The law requires dyslexia screening specifically, not just general reading benchmarking. When evaluating any approved tool, confirm that dyslexia screening is included in the base product and does not require a separate purchase. This affects both cost and documentation.²

Districts must notify DESE of their chosen assessment by June 19, 2026, by completing the Foundational Reading Assessment form at dese.mo.gov. Ask DESE directly for the link if you do not have it.¹

What an RSP Actually Requires

Understanding what goes into an RSP clarifies what your assessment tool needs to support. According to DESE's RSP Implementation Checklist, a complete RSP includes:

- Baseline data from a state-approved assessment covering phonological awareness, phonics, fluency, vocabulary, comprehension, morphology, syntax, and orthography
- Identification of specific skill deficits driving the plan
- Growth targets with rate of improvement goals and short-term benchmarks
- Documented intensive interventions matched to specific skill deficits
- Progress monitoring at regular intervals with data-driven decision points
- Parent and guardian communication at least four times per year, in a language the parent understands
- End-of-year assessment results and plan updates

When evaluating any tool, consider not just whether it produces a score, but whether it produces the skill-level data your teachers need to build and update RSPs.

The Compliance Timeline

2022

Law takes effect. K-3 screening, dyslexia identification, and Reading Success Plans become statewide requirements.³

2024-25 school year

Districts begin implementing Reading Success Plans for identified students. Screening data drives plan development and progress monitoring.⁴

June 19, 2026

Notification deadline. Complete the Foundational Reading Assessment form at dese.mo.gov. This is also a good point to confirm your chosen tool supports all RSP documentation needs before school starts.¹

August 2026

Full implementation. K-3 screening, dyslexia identification, RSP documentation, and progress monitoring should all be running with your reported tool.

2022	2024-25	June 19, 2026	August 2026
Law takes effect	RSPs begin	Complete form at dese.mo.gov Confirm full RSP coverage	Full implementation

What "Approved" Means

DESE approval confirms a tool meets baseline legal requirements. Before finalizing your selection, confirm it covers your specific documentation needs, including dyslexia screening, skill-level progress monitoring, and bilingual assessment if applicable, at the price level being quoted.

Citations -- Part 1¹ Section 167.645 RSMo. Verify the current law and DESE guidance before making procurement or legal decisions. ² DESE Approved Reading Assessments list, dese.mo.gov. Confirm dyslexia screening inclusion with each vendor at time of contracting. ³ Section 167.645 RSMo, effective 2022. ⁴ DESE RSP Implementation Guidance, dese.mo.gov. Confirm current guidance at dese.mo.gov.

— PART 2: THE FOUR APPROVED ASSESSMENTS —

As of April 2026, DESE has approved four foundational reading assessments for RSP compliance. All districts must report which assessment they are using for 2026–27 by completing the Foundational Reading Assessment form at dese.mo.gov by June 19, 2026.⁵

- Amira ISIP Assess (Amira Learning)
- mCLASS DIBELS 8th Edition (Amplify Education)
- i-Ready Reading Assessment (Curriculum Associates)
- STAR Assessments (Renaissance Learning)

What each tool includes varies by product and pricing level. Part 3 gives you a consistent set of questions to ask about any of them. Always confirm with each vendor exactly what is included in the package they are quoting. DESE's approved list at dese.mo.gov is the authoritative source for compliance questions.

Citations -- Part 2⁵ DESE Foundational Reading Assessment Vendors, April 2026, dese.mo.gov. Verify directly with DESE before making a final decision.

PART 3: HOW TO EVALUATE ANY APPROVED TOOL

Use these questions to evaluate any tool against your district's RSP requirements, including Amira ISIP Assess.

Does it cover the legal requirements?

Question	What to look for
Is it on DESE's approved list?	Check dese.mo.gov before going further. ⁵
Does it include oral reading fluency screening?	Required under Section 167.645. ¹
Does it include dyslexia screening in the base product?	Confirm that dyslexia screening is included without a separate purchase. Standard dyslexia screening typically includes tasks measuring rapid naming, phonological awareness, and overall risk. Ask your vendor to walk you through what their screening covers. ²
Is dyslexia screening an add-on?	Add-ons affect cost and documentation. Get the answer in writing before signing a contract.

Does it produce the data your RSPs need?

DESE's RSP template requires skill-level data across phonological awareness, phonics, fluency, vocabulary, comprehension, morphology, syntax, and orthography. A tool that produces only a composite score may not give teachers what they need to write specific RSP goals.

Question	What to look for
Does it report results by skill area?	Teachers need to know where a student is struggling, not just that they are behind.
Does it map to DESE's RSP template fields?	Ask to see a sample report alongside the RSP template and confirm the data lines up.
Does it support rate of improvement tracking?	DESE's RSP growth targets require rate of improvement goals. Your tool should make it straightforward to track whether students are on pace.
Can it identify deficits across the skill areas in Section 167.645?	Phonological awareness, phonics, fluency, vocabulary, comprehension, morphology, and syntax. Your assessment data should speak to each.

Does it cover your students?

Question	What to look for
What grades does it cover?	Confirm it covers your full K-3 population, including PreK if needed.
Can it assess English learners in their home language?	If your district serves a significant English learner population, find out whether the tool assesses in Spanish rather than presenting translated English materials. These produce different results. DESE's RSP checklist calls for evaluating students with limited English proficiency in their home language before determining whether a reading deficiency exists.
Has it been tested on students like yours?	Ask for research on a population similar to yours in income level, English learner percentage, and grade levels studied.

How much teacher time does it require?

Question	What to look for
How long does screening take per student?	Ask how long screening takes per student with a teacher present, then multiply by your class size and the number of screening windows per year. The total adds up faster than expected.
Does a teacher need to sit with each student?	Tools requiring one-on-one administration pull teachers away from the rest of the class. Tools that run independently do not.
How do other districts your size handle scheduling?	Ask the vendor for references from districts with similar class sizes and staffing.

Does it support progress monitoring?

Section 167.645 requires progress monitoring updates at least four times per year. DESE's RSP template includes data-driven decision points at regular intervals. Your tool should make frequent check-ins practical, not just possible.

Question	What to look for
Does it track progress over time, or only take snapshots?	Ongoing tracking helps teachers adjust instruction between benchmark windows.
How do teachers see the results?	Ask to see the actual teacher dashboard, not a sample report.
How quickly can a teacher tell if a student is not responding?	DESE's RSP template includes regular data-driven decision points. Your tool should support that cadence without significant manual effort.
Can it generate the data needed for RSP updates?	The RSP template requires documented progress monitoring scores at multiple intervals. Confirm your tool produces data that can be recorded there.

Is there proof it works?

Question	What to look for
Is there independent research showing reading improvement?	Ask for third-party research, not vendor-produced studies. The federal standard for strong evidence is ESSA Level II or higher.
What were the results, and for which grades?	Overall averages can hide variation at specific grade levels. Ask for results by grade.
Was the research done on students like yours?	Results from one type of district may not predict outcomes in yours. Ask about the population studied.

What does it actually cost?

Question	What to look for
What is the total per-student cost?	Get one number covering dyslexia screening, bilingual screening if needed, progress monitoring, and training and support. Compare that number across vendors.
Are there required add-ons?	A lower base price with required add-ons may cost more overall.
What training and support is included?	First-year setup costs are often larger than expected. Ask what comes with the base contract.

A note on Amira ISIP Assess

Amira ISIP Assess includes dyslexia screening in the base product with no separate purchase required.⁶ It covers PreK through grade 3, assesses in both English and Spanish using spoken language rather than translated print materials, and tracks student progress continuously. A full class can be screened at the same time without one-on-one teacher administration.

Amira reports results at the skill level across the areas required by the RSP template, including phonological awareness, phonics, fluency, vocabulary, and comprehension, so teachers can use assessment data directly when writing and updating RSPs.

Research: An independent study examined 79,084 students across 12 Louisiana school districts, 75% economically disadvantaged and 10% English learners. Students using Amira showed statistically significant reading gains at every grade level from kindergarten through grade 5. The study was conducted by Shah, Scanlan, and Wall for the Instructure EdTech Collective in June 2025 and is available in full from Amira Learning.⁸

At Tara Elementary in Clayton County, Georgia, students using Amira at the recommended level gained 18.7 weeks of reading growth in 15.7 weeks of instruction. This figure comes from a single school and is best read alongside the broader Louisiana study. Before using it in board or budget materials, ask Amira for the full methodology and dosage details.⁹

Apply the same questions above to Amira that you apply to any other tool.

Citations -- Part 3 ⁶ Amira Learning product documentation. Confirm with your Amira Missouri rep at time of contracting that dyslexia screening is included in the package being quoted. ⁸ Shah, Scanlan, Wall, Instructure EdTech Collective, June 2025. Full study available from Amira Learning. ⁹ Amira Learning internal data, Tara Elementary, Clayton County, Georgia.

Published by Amira Learning · amiralearning.com · Amira ISIP Assess is one of four DESE-approved reading assessments.

PART 4: QUESTIONS TO BRING TO DESE

Here are specific questions to bring to DESE. Most can be answered in a single call.

On what the law requires:

- Which of the four approved assessments does DESE consider to fully satisfy the dyslexia screening requirement of Section 167.645 in the base product?
- What documentation will DESE expect districts to produce in fall 2026 to show RSP compliance?
- If a district's chosen tool requires a separate purchase for dyslexia screening, does that satisfy the requirement as long as the add-on is purchased?
- Does DESE expect assessment data to map to the skill areas in the RSP template, or is a composite score sufficient?

LEAs can reach out to Area Supervisors or the local Regional Professional Development Center (RPDC) for literacy support. Find contact information for your local RPDC [here](#).

On funding:

- What state literacy funding is available to our district for 2026–27 assessment costs?
- Can those funds cover the full cost of an approved assessment, including dyslexia screening and bilingual components?
- Are there funding application deadlines before June 19?

On what reviewers will look for:

- What will DESE reviewers look for when checking RSP compliance in 2026–27?
- Are there standard RSP templates or documentation formats our assessment data should match?
- Who is the right contact at DESE for RSP implementation questions?

PART 5: FUNDING OPTIONS

Missouri districts have several ways to fund RSP-compliant assessment tools. The key is identifying which options apply before your procurement timeline runs out.

Important note: The options below are generally allowed under federal and state law, but what is allowable is specific to each district and subject to audit. Confirm all funding decisions with your district's legal counsel and finance team. Do not rely on this guide or vendor representations alone.

State literacy funding. Missouri may have state literacy funding available to support RSP-related assessment costs. Contact DESE directly to find out what applies to your district and whether it can be applied to assessment procurement. Ask about application deadlines, as some funding cycles close before June 19.¹⁰

Verify allowable use with DESE and your district finance team before committing funds.

Title I, Part A. Federal funds covering supplemental literacy assessment and progress monitoring for students at risk. Confirm allowable use with your Title I coordinator and district legal counsel.¹¹

Title III. Federal funds covering literacy assessment for English learners. Tools with authentic bilingual screening are well-suited for Title III justification. Confirm with your Title III coordinator and district legal counsel.¹²

IDEA. Federal funds applicable to dyslexia screening and early identification of reading risk, particularly for students with or at risk of identified disabilities. Confirm with your special education director and district legal counsel.¹³

Cooperative purchasing. Some Missouri districts use cooperative purchasing agreements to simplify procurement and avoid a full competitive bidding process. Ask your purchasing office whether this applies to your district and whether your vendor of choice is currently listed on any applicable agreement.

Citations -- Part 5 ¹⁰ Contact DESE directly at dese.mo.gov to confirm available state literacy funding and allowable uses. Confirm with your district finance team before committing funds. ¹¹ ESSA, Title I, Part A, 20 U.S.C. § 6321. Confirm with your Title I coordinator and district legal counsel. ¹² ESSA Title III, 20 U.S.C. § 6825. Confirm with your Title III coordinator and district legal counsel. ¹³ Individuals with Disabilities Education Act, 20 U.S.C. § 1400 et seq. Confirm with your special education director and district legal counsel.

PART 6: ACTION CHECKLIST

Work through this with your assessment or curriculum team. Most districts can cover all of these in a single meeting.

Check your assessment's status. Is it on DESE's approved list at dese.mo.gov?⁵ If not, identify your path to compliance before June 19.

Check your dyslexia screening coverage. Does your current or planned assessment include dyslexia screening in the base product, without a separate purchase? Ask your vendor what the screening covers and confirm it addresses the components required under Section 167.645.¹

Check that your assessment data maps to the RSP template. Can your tool report skill-level results across phonological awareness, phonics, fluency, vocabulary, comprehension, morphology, syntax, and orthography? Ask to see a sample report alongside DESE's RSP template before deciding.

Check your progress monitoring. Does your tool support the regular data-driven decision points DESE's RSP template requires? If not, identify how you will address that before August.

Contact DESE directly. Use the question list in Part 4. Confirm documentation expectations, available state funding, and funding deadlines. Ask for the direct link to the Foundational Reading Assessment form if you do not already have it.

Identify your funding sources. Contact your state and federal programs director to confirm what funds are available and whether they can be applied to assessment costs.¹⁰

Map your purchasing timeline. Determine your formal bid threshold, whether cooperative purchasing applies, and how long your contracting process takes. Work back from June 19.

Ask every vendor for independent research. Look for third-party studies at ESSA Level II or higher, on a student population similar to yours, with results by grade level.⁸

Get all-in pricing from every tool you are seriously considering. Ask for a single per-student number covering everything needed for full RSP compliance. For Amira, contact your Missouri rep for a conversation about your compliance needs, student population, and existing tools.

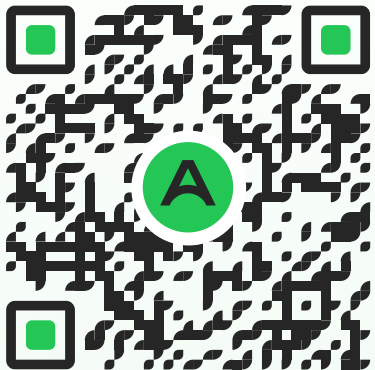
STILL HAVE QUESTIONS?

Contact an Amira Missouri specialist for a conversation about your tools, your funding, and your timeline.

Visit **www.AmiraLearning.com** to request more information, or scan the QR code below.

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Amira ISIP Assess is one of four DESE-approved reading assessments published by Amira Learning. Assessment approval status is based on DESE's published Foundational Reading Assessment Vendors list, April 2026. ESSA Level II study: Shah, Scanlan, Wall, Instructure EdTech Collective, June 2025, 79,084 students across 12 Louisiana districts. All citations should be verified against current source documents before use in board, budget, or purchasing materials. Contact DESE directly for current requirements. Funding decisions should be made with your district's legal counsel and finance staff.



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