



# AMIRA FAMILY COMMUNICATION GUIDE

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**DATE**

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# Creating Strong Family Partnerships

Effective communication about reading development is built on partnership over time. Families are not passive recipients of reports. They are essential partners in helping children grow as readers.

## **Families consistently want to know three things:**

1. How is my child doing?
2. What is the school doing to help?
3. How can I support my child at home?

When communication happens only during benchmark windows or when concerns arise, it can feel reactive or stressful. Instead, schools should establish a steady, predictable rhythm of outreach that feels clear, supportive, and encouraging.

## **An effective system includes:**

- Clear reporting at key assessment moments
- Informal check-ins
- Celebration messages
- Shared evidence of growth

Communication should be predictable enough to feel reliable, informal enough to feel relational, and positive enough to build confidence.

When families consistently understand progress and hear evidence of their child's growth, students experience aligned support from both school and home. That alignment strengthens motivation, confidence, and reading development throughout the year.

# Explaining Amira Metrics to Families

When communicating with families, use clear, family-friendly language to explain assessment terms, growth expectations, and next steps. Avoid jargon and always provide context for any numbers you share.

When discussing ARM, Percentile Rank (PR), and MAST scores, focus on clarity and growth. The **sample scripts** below provide guidance for communicating Amira metrics in a way that builds understanding and partnership.

Metric	What does it mean?	Where does it come from?	Why is it helpful?
Amira Reading Mastery (ARM)	<p>“The ARM score reflects your child’s overall reading development. It combines different reading skills — like decoding, fluency, and comprehension — into one score that helps us understand where your child is right now.”</p> <p>“An ARM score shows how your student is performing compared to their peers nationally. For example, if a third grader has an ARM of 1.1, it means they are currently reading on par with the average first grader at the beginning of the year.”</p>	<p>“Your child’s ARM score comes from several parts of the Amira assessment. As your child reads and answers questions, Amira measures skills such as, word reading, fluency, vocabulary, and comprehension. All of those pieces are combined into one overall score.”</p>	<p>“The ARM score gives us a full picture of reading development, even for students who are still building early skills. It helps us monitor growth, plan instruction, and measure progress over time.”</p>
Percentile Rank (PR)	<p>“PR shows how your child’s reading compares to other students in the same grade across the country.”</p> <p>“If their PR is 40, that means they performed higher than 40% of students nationally and are still developing skills that many peers have already strengthened.”</p>	<p>“PR is calculated based on your child’s ARM score. Once Amira determines your child’s overall reading development score, that score is compared to a large, nationally representative group of students in the same grade and time of year. That comparison allows us to see how your child’s reading development relates to peers across the country.”</p>	<p>“PR helps us understand how your child’s reading development compares nationally and whether additional support may help accelerate growth.”</p>
Oral Reading Fluency (ORF)	<p>“ORF measures how smoothly and accurately your child reads aloud. It is often reported as the number of words read correctly per minute.”</p>	<p>“As your child reads, Amira listens and counts the number of words read correctly. The final number is divided by the time spent reading to determine how many words were read correctly in one minute.”</p>	<p>“ORF helps us understand your child’s reading fluency and identify what might be slowing them down. It allows us to target specific gaps that may be affecting their fluency and, in turn, their comprehension, confidence, and overall enjoyment of reading.”</p>

<p>Mastery of Academic Standards (MAST)</p>	<p>“MAST shows the percent of grade-level reading standards your child has likely mastered. It is reported as a percentage from 0 to 100. If your child has a MAST score of 70%, that means they have likely mastered about 70% of the grade-level standards Amira has observed so far.”</p>	<p>“Amira calculates MAST by gathering information about specific reading skills that align to grade-level standards. This data gives insight into how accurately and consistently your child demonstrates each skill and uses that evidence to estimate which grade-level standards your child has likely mastered.”</p>	<p>“MAST helps us understand exactly which grade-level standards your child has mastered and which ones still need strengthening.”</p>
<p>Dyslexia Risk Indicator</p>	<p>“DRI stands for Dyslexia Risk Indicator. It is a measure that helps identify whether your child may be at risk for characteristics commonly associated with reading difficulties.”</p> <p>“DRI does not diagnose dyslexia. It simply helps us understand whether your child may benefit from closer monitoring or additional support in specific reading areas.”</p>	<p>“As your child completes reading tasks, Amira looks closely at foundational literacy skills connected to dyslexia, such as how they hear and work with sounds in words, read unfamiliar words, and recognize patterns in print. Based on patterns in your child’s responses, Amira identifies whether there may be indicators of potential risk.”</p>	<p>“DRI helps us identify students early who may need additional support in reading. Early identification allows us to provide targeted instruction before reading difficulties become more significant.”</p>

## Keeping the Focus on Growth

In every conversation, it is important to reinforce that:

- This is a snapshot in time.
- Growth over time matters most.
- We have a clear plan.
- Your child is capable of strong progress.
- We are building skills step by step.

Avoid words like “behind,” “low,” or “struggling.” Instead, describe students as currently demonstrating certain skills, building strength in specific areas, or working toward grade-level expectations.

# Using Asset-Based Language

Asset-based language builds trust and motivation. It focuses on growth rather than labels. This type of communication:

- Highlights strengths and effort
- Frames challenges as areas for growth
- Follows data with next steps
- Communicates belief in progress

## Reframing Reading Progress

When discussing reading data, it is important to focus on clarity, growth, and next steps rather than labels.

Avoid Saying	Say This Instead
"Your child is below grade level."	"Your child is currently reading on par with the average <b>[grade-level indicated by ARM]</b> student nationally. We see a need for additional support in <b>[area such as fluency, decoding, or comprehension]</b> , and we are addressing this through <b>[example: small group instruction, targeted phonics lessons, additional Amira practice]</b> ."
"They are struggling."	"Your child is still developing strength in <b>[specific skill]</b> . During reading sessions with Amira, this shows up as <b>[example: pausing to decode longer words, reading more slowly, needing to reread for understanding]</b> . We are supporting this growth by <b>[instructional strategy or intervention]</b> ."
"They didn't grow enough."	"This period, your child's ARM moved from <b>[previous score]</b> to <b>[current score]</b> . While growth was smaller than our typical 0.1 monthly goal, the data helps us identify that we need to focus more intentionally on <b>[skill area]</b> . We are adjusting instruction by <b>[specific support]</b> ."
"Their score dropped."	"Your child's ARM shifted from <b>[previous score]</b> to <b>[current score]</b> . Scores can fluctuate for a variety of reasons, including text difficulty or focus. We are monitoring closely and providing additional support in <b>[skill area]</b> through Amira practice and small group time."

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"They are behind."

"Your child is currently reading on par with the average **[grade-level indicated by ARM]** student nationally. Our focus is strengthening foundational skills in **[skill area]**, which are essential for accelerating growth. We have a clear support plan in place."

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"This is concerning."

"This data point tells us we need to provide more focused support in **[skill area]**. Our plan includes **[specific intervention]**. We will review progress again in **[timeframe]**."

## Helpful Sentence Frames

These can be used in conferences, phone calls, or emails:

- "We are focusing on strengthening \_\_\_\_\_ so your child can \_\_\_\_\_."
- "In Amira, I notice your child is \_\_\_\_\_, which tells me they are developing \_\_\_\_\_."
- "Our next instructional step is \_\_\_\_\_."
- "At home, continuing \_\_\_\_\_ will support this growth."
- "You may notice your child \_\_\_\_\_ when reading aloud. That is something we are actively working on."

## The Yearlong Communication Framework

Effective communication about Amira includes two essential forms of outreach:

1. **Assessment updates** occur around benchmark assessments and conferences. These moments focus on reviewing data, explaining growth, clarifying goals, and outlining instructional plans. They provide families with a clear understanding of how their child is performing and what comes next.
2. **Reading check-ins** occur between those formal review points. These updates may include celebrations, skill focus updates, early concerns, or brief progress notes. They help families stay connected to day-to-day learning and ensure communication feels supportive rather than reactive.

Together, assessment-based communication and regular reading check-ins create consistency, transparency, and partnership over time. The timeline below outlines recommended communication points across the school year.

## Sharing Assessment Updates

### Beginning of Year (BOY)

<b>When</b>	<b>Before the BOY Benchmark</b> At the start of the school year and/or 1 to 2 weeks before the assessment window	<b>After the BOY Benchmark</b> Within 1 to 2 weeks after completion
<b>Purpose</b>	Build trust and explain the purpose of the assessment as a starting point to guide instruction	Explain results clearly and establish a growth goal for the year
<b>Key Message</b>	“This assessment helps us understand your child’s starting point so we can tailor instruction.”	“Here is where your child is starting, what it means, and how we will support growth.”
<b>Communicate</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• What Amira is &amp; how students use it</li> <li>• When the benchmark will occur</li> <li>• What the assessment measures</li> <li>• How data will be used</li> <li>• Data privacy and security</li> <li>• How to reach out if needed</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• ARM score explained in plain language</li> <li>• Percentile Rank in context</li> <li>• Predicted end-of-year trajectory</li> <li>• Monthly growth goal of ~0.1 ARM</li> <li>• Instructional focus areas</li> <li>• What this looks like in Amira</li> <li>• How families can support at home</li> </ul>
<b>Options to Send Home</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <a href="#">Introducing Amira Letter</a></li> <li>• <a href="#">Getting to Know Your Child as a Reader</a> (p.3)</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <a href="#">Parent Report</a></li> <li>• <a href="#">Parent Report One-Pager</a></li> <li>• <a href="#">Amira Progress Update</a> (p.4)</li> <li>• <a href="#">Amira at Home Handout</a></li> </ul>

### Middle of Year (MOY)

<b>When</b>	<b>Before the MOY Benchmark</b> (1 to 2 weeks before)	<b>After the MOY Benchmark</b> (Within 1 to 2 weeks after completion and/or during conferences)
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<b>Purpose</b>	Prepare families for a midyear progress check and reinforce growth expectations	Review growth since BOY, adjust goals or supports as needed, and provide guidance for spring break (if applicable)
<b>Key Message</b>	"This assessment helps us review progress and adjust instruction if needed."	"Here is how your child has grown since the beginning of the year and what we are focusing on next."
<b>Communicate</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>When the benchmark will occur</li> <li>Why the results are important</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>ARM growth from BOY to MOY</li> <li>Whether student is meeting growth expectations</li> <li>Strengths and areas for development</li> <li>Instructional adjustments</li> <li>Updated growth goal</li> <li>How families can support</li> </ul>
<b>Options to Send Home</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li><a href="#">MOY Letter</a> (p.8)</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li><a href="#">Parent Report</a></li> <li><a href="#">Parent Report One-Pager</a></li> <li><a href="#">Amira Progress Update 2</a> (p.9)</li> <li><a href="#">Amira at Home Handout</a></li> <li><a href="#">Spring Break Family Letter</a></li> <li><a href="#">Student recording(s)</a></li> </ul>

## End of Year (EOY)

<b>When</b>	<b>Before the EOY Benchmark</b> (1 to 2 weeks before)	<b>After the EOY Benchmark</b> (Within 1 to 2 weeks after completion and/or during conferences)
<b>Purpose</b>	Prepare families for final progress reflection	Celebrate annual growth and provide summer guidance
<b>Key Message</b>	"This final assessment helps us celebrate growth and plan for continued success."	"Here is how much your child has grown this year and how to keep that growth going."
<b>Communicate</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>When the benchmark will occur</li> <li>Why the results are important</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>ARM growth from MOY to EOY</li> <li>Whether student is meeting growth expectations</li> <li>Strengths and areas for development</li> <li>Instructional adjustments</li> <li>Updated growth goal</li> <li>How families can support</li> </ul>

<b>Options to Send Home</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <a href="#">EOY Letter</a> (p.13)</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <a href="#">Parent Report</a></li> <li>• <a href="#">Parent Report One-Pager</a></li> <li>• <a href="#">Amira Progress Update 3</a> (p.14)</li> <li>• <a href="#">Amira at Home Handout</a></li> <li>• <a href="#">Summer Break Family Letter</a></li> <li>• <a href="#">Student recording(s)</a></li> </ul>
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## Checking in Between Benchmark Windows

### Reading Celebrations

Subject	Individual Students	Whole Class
When	At least once per quarter	
Purpose	Maintain connection, celebrate ongoing growth and keep families engaged in the learning process.	
Key Message	“Here is something positive we are noticing in your child’s reading.”	“Here’s something we’re proud to share about our class’s reading progress.”
Communicate	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Progress toward their goal</li> <li>• Improvement in fluency, decoding, or comprehension</li> <li>• Increased reading confidence or independence</li> <li>• Current skill focus in class</li> <li>• Any early instructional adjustments</li> <li>• What families can reinforce at home</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Reading competition updates</li> <li>• Class average ARM growth</li> <li>• Percentage meeting monthly goals</li> <li>• Schoolwide literacy milestones</li> <li>• Skill focus areas</li> </ul>
What to Send Home	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Brief email update</li> <li>• <a href="#">Student recording(s)</a></li> <li>• Celebration note</li> <li>• <a href="#">Certificates</a></li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Brief email update</li> <li>• Celebration note</li> </ul>

### Discussing Areas of Need

When	As soon as a pattern is noticed, not only at the next benchmark
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<b>Purpose</b>	Prevent surprises and strengthen collaboration. Early communication builds trust and allows families to reinforce support at home.
<b>Key Message</b>	"We noticed this pattern and have a clear plan to support growth."
<b>Communicate</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• What the data shows</li> <li>• Whether the pattern is short-term or ongoing</li> <li>• Specific skill focus</li> <li>• Instructional adjustments</li> <li>• Timeline for monitoring progress</li> <li>• How families can support</li> </ul>
<b>Recommended Outreach</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Phone call, e-mail, conference invitation if needed</li> <li>• Targeted reading suggestions</li> </ul>

## Leveraging Student Recordings

Amira provides access to student reading recordings, which can be a powerful tool in family communication. Student recordings make growth concrete and understandable. They can be downloaded and shared with families as part of conferences, progress updates, or celebration moments.

[Learn how to listen and download student recordings here.](#)

The sample scripts below provide guidance for communicating about student recordings in a clear, supportive, and growth-focused way.

Use Case	Sample Script
Demonstrating Needs	"I'd like to play a short clip of your child reading so you can hear what we're noticing at school. You'll hear a few pauses when the words get longer. That's connected to the decoding work we're focusing on in small group. This gives you a clearer picture of the skill we're building."
Showing Growth Over Time	"Let's listen to a quick clip from earlier this year and then a recent one. Notice how much smoother and more confident the reading sounds now. There are fewer pauses, and the pace is more consistent. That's the growth we're seeing reflected in the data."
Celebrating Progress	"I wanted to share this recent recording because it really highlights your child's progress. Listen to the expression and confidence in their voice. They've been working hard, and you can truly hear the difference."

## Using Amira at Home

Using Amira at home can strengthen reading growth by extending guided practice beyond the classroom. For many students, additional structured reading time supports fluency, confidence, and skill development.

In some schools or districts, home use is optional; in others, it may be part of assigned coursework. Expectations should always align with school or district policy and be clearly communicated to families.

Amira at home can serve several purposes:

- An alternative homework option
- A structured reading routine
- Enrichment or extra credit
- Targeted skill reinforcement

## Understanding Family Context

Access to technology varies across families, so expectations for home use should be realistic and equitable. Schools and educators should consider device availability, internet reliability, and overall access before setting requirements. Gather information from families first, use it to guide communication and planning, and avoid making assumptions. When barriers exist, provide alternative support to ensure all students can participate.

A brief survey can help you understand:

- Device access
- WiFi reliability
- Homework routines
- Who supports reading at home
- What feels manageable for the family

## Introducing Families to Amira

A clear introduction builds confidence and increases participation. Before launching home use, ensure families understand three core ideas:

- **Why it matters:** Amira reinforces classroom instruction through guided reading practice.
- **What their child will experience:** A typical session includes logging in, reading aloud, and receiving immediate feedback.
- **What their role is:** Amira provides the instruction. Families provide encouragement, routine, and celebration.

Possible strategies:

- Host an Amira Family Night
- Share a short video and preview the student experience (see below)
- Demonstrate login steps at Back-to-School Night
- Show photos/videos of students using Amira correctly
- Share testimonials from families with Amira experience
- Model what supportive encouragement sounds like
- Send home a [letter](#) introducing Amira

Content to share with families:

Introducing Amira Videos	Student Experience Walkthroughs
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● <a href="#">General</a></li> <li>● <a href="#">Instruct</a></li> <li>● <a href="#">ISIP Assess   Student Prep</a></li> <li>● <a href="#">Tutor   Student Prep</a></li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● <a href="#">ISIP Assess</a></li> <li>● <a href="#">Tutor</a></li> <li>● <a href="#">Tutor + Instruct</a></li> <li>● <a href="#">Instruct PK-2</a></li> <li>● <a href="#">Instruct 3-8</a></li> </ul>

## Making Access Simple

Reduce barriers by providing:

- Clear login instructions
- Device setup guidance
- Basic troubleshooting tips
- A designated school contact for support

Helpful resources:

- [Login cards](#)

- [Amira at Home Handout](#)

## Encouraging At-Home Usage

When expectations are clear and recognition is positive, students are more likely to build consistent habits. Focus on effort, participation, and progress rather than comparison.

## Using Progress Trackers & Reading Logs

[Reading logs and progress trackers](#) help create structure and transparency around at-home practice. They allow students to take ownership of their reading while giving families a clear way to monitor consistency and celebrate effort.

Teachers can use trackers and logs to:

- Count Amira stories or minutes toward individual usage goals
- Contribute to class-wide goals (e.g., “1,000 minutes of reading”)
- Support school-wide literacy competitions or challenges
- Serve as a homework option or structured weekly assignment
- Reinforce consistent reading routines
- Track progress toward a personal growth goal
- Encourage friendly, effort-based participation challenges

Communicate clearly with families about how trackers will be used, how goals are set, and how participation will be acknowledged. When families understand the purpose, they are more likely to support follow-through at home.

## Celebrating At-Home Usage

Celebrating at-home Amira usage reinforces positive habits and strengthens collaboration between school and home. Recognition should emphasize consistency, effort, and growth.

At school, consider recognizing participation through:

- Stickers for completed weekly goals
- Classroom recognition boards highlighting milestones
- [Certificates](#) for consistent practice or goal achievement
- Milestone celebrations (e.g., 100 minutes, 10 stories completed)

- Positive notes sent home acknowledging effort and growth

Encourage families to celebrate at home as well. Simple actions such as offering verbal praise, listening to a recording together, inviting their child to share what they are proud of, or creating a small reward for reaching a goal can significantly boost motivation and confidence.

## Communicating about Data Privacy & AI

Families may have questions or concerns about how student data is protected, especially when artificial intelligence is involved. Addressing these questions proactively builds trust and strengthens the home–school partnership.

When families understand that Amira is designed with strong privacy protections and strict security controls, they are more likely to feel confident and supportive of its use. Clear communication helps shift the focus from uncertainty to partnership.

### Essential Talking Points:

When discussing privacy, emphasize protection, compliance, and oversight. Focus on these core points:

- Amira complies with federal student privacy laws, including FERPA and COPPA. Student data is encrypted when it is stored and when it is transmitted.
- Data is stored securely in U.S.-based data centers.
- Access is role-based, meaning only authorized school personnel can view student data.
- Amira does not sell or share student data for advertising or commercial purposes. AI models do not process personally identifiable information (PII).
- Students are not exposed to public AI tools.
- Educators maintain visibility and can override AI-generated scores when needed.

### Key Terms

Term	What does it mean?
<b>Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act (FERPA)</b>	A federal law that protects the privacy of student education records and limits who can access them.

<b>Children’s Online Privacy Protection Act (COPPA)</b>	A federal law that protects the personal information of children under 13 when using online services.
<b>SOC 2</b>	An independent audit certification that verifies a company follows strict security and data protection controls.
<b>Encryption</b>	A security process that protects data by converting it into a format that cannot be read by unauthorized users.
<b>Role-Based Access Control</b>	A system that ensures users can only access the information necessary for their job responsibilities.
<b>Personally Identifiable Information (PII)</b>	Information that can identify a specific student, such as name, ID number, or date of birth.

## Common Questions & Sample Responses

### Is my child’s data safe?

“Yes. Amira follows federal privacy laws, encrypts all data, and stores it securely in U.S.-based data centers. Only authorized school personnel can access student information.”

### Does Amira sell student data?

“No. Amira does not sell or share student information and does not use student data for advertising or marketing.”

### Is my child’s voice being recorded?

“Amira analyzes speech to support reading instruction, but the AI does not process personally identifiable information. Speech is converted into abstract features for instructional purposes.”

### Does Amira use tools like ChatGPT?

“No. Amira’s AI models are developed and operated internally. Students are not interacting with public AI systems.”

### Who can see my child’s information?

“Access is controlled by role. Teachers, administrators, and district leaders can only see the information necessary for their responsibilities.”

