



School District 59 (Peace River South)

11600-7th Street,
Dawson Creek, B.C. V1G 4R8

Phone: (250) 782-8571 Fax: (250) 782-3204

SD # 59 Developmental Screen Information

In School District 59, all kindergarten children participate in a developmental screen in the fall and again in the spring. The screen provides information about a student's development in key areas required for successful learning. The screen will be administered by members of the district speech-language pathology and educational psychology departments.

The purpose of the **fall** screen is to provide teachers with a profile of their classroom's developmental needs. This allows kindergarten teachers to incorporate the most effective developmental strategies based on their specific class profile. Intervention services may also be provided at the school for identified areas of need.

The purpose of the **spring** screen is to identify students who will need further investigation and support in their grade one year. This may involve Occupational and Physiotherapists, Speech-Language Pathologists and/or Educational Psychologists. Necessary referrals will be sent to parents at the start of the child's grade 1 year.

The aim of the screen is to remove barriers to academic success by:

- Providing teachers with information on the overall profile of their kindergarten class.
- Providing classroom teachers with specific interventions at the classroom level (Tier 1)
- Identifying students who may require specific small group/individual interventions (Tier 2)
- Identifying students who may require referrals to specific professionals (Tier 3).

The developmental kindergarten screen includes:

1. Hearing and Vision	2. Verbal Working Memory (Spring)
3. Rapid Automatic Naming – Objects (Fall) & Letters (Spring)	4. Articulation (Fall and Spring)
5. Phonological Awareness (Spring)	6. Expressive Language (Spring)

1. WHY vision and hearing screens?

- Because learning is mostly accomplished through the senses of vision and hearing, screenings help to identify any barriers that would impair a child's ability to learn.
- Early identification and treatment can prevent or at least alleviate many of the problems that result from impaired hearing or vision.
- Screening is the most practical approach to identifying children in need of professional services before interventions are put in place.

2. WHY Working Memory?

- Working memory has significant relationships with
 - Reading decoding, reading comprehension, language comprehension, spelling, following directions, vocabulary development, note taking, written expression, reasoning, mathematics, complex learning.

- Working memory is required whenever anything must be learned because learning requires manipulation of information, interaction with long-term memory, and simultaneous storage/processing of information.
- Working memory plays a critical role in learning; it is where knowledge is constructed and modified and where information is processed for semantic encoding
- The capacity and effective functioning of working memory determines the rate and extent of learning
- Three specific domains that are most clearly associated with poor math performance: working memory, attention ('emotion is the gatekeeper to attention) and mental flexibility (learn this through mental modelling).

3. *WHY Rapid Automatized Naming (RAN):*

- RAN tasks and reading are seen to require many of the same processes, from eye saccades to working memory to the connecting of orthographic and phonological representations.
- Children can have a deficit in RAN OR phonological processing (PA) or both.
- RAN and PA tasks are valuable tools because both are robust predictors of reading ability that can be assessed before children learn to read and thus early indicators of risk for reading difficulties.
- RAN is one of the universal processes that predict young children's later ability to connect and automatize whole sequences of letters and words with their linguistic information, regardless of writing system.

4. *WHY Phonological Awareness?*

- Phonological awareness is the understanding that language is made up of words, syllables and sounds and that these can be manipulated.
- The ability to use the rhythm of language, follow the stressed and unstressed words and syllables, and attend to all the parts of words is necessary to develop strong language skills (semantics and syntax).
- Oral language develops before written language.
- Phonological awareness is the most powerful predictor of success in learning to read and spell and is a better predictor than IQ. PA can be improved through instruction and intervention AND that improvement in PA leads to improvement in word decoding.
- At least 3 ways that PA contributes to the growth of early reading skills:
 - Helps children understand the alphabetic principle, notice the regular ways that letters represent sounds in words, and makes it possible to generate possibilities for words in context that are only partially 'sounded out'
- Phonological Awareness & English Language Learners
 - Phonological processing skills are less dependent on language proficiency (PA & RAN)
 - ELLs are similar to monolingual learners on these tasks
 - Phonological processing skills correlate across unrelated languages
 - Word level reading and spelling skills are less dependent on language proficiency and are predicted by PA and RAN

5. *WHY Expressive Language?*

- Reading relies heavily on a child's knowledge of the phonological, semantic, syntactic, and pragmatic aspects of language.
- Research indicates that children with language impairments (i.e. Expressive Language Delays/Disorders) are significantly more likely to have difficulty learning to read.
- Vocabulary skills are an important component of expressive language development and predict reading comprehension skills.