

To: District Reading and IT Contacts  
Fm: Karl Hook, Director of Technical Projects, Florida Center for Reading Research  
Date: August 1, 2009  
Re: Florida Assessment for Instruction in Reading

On August 31, the Florida Assessments for Instruction in Reading will have a statewide launch. There are three websites that support the Florida Assessments.

- 1) Progress Monitoring and Reporting Network (PMRN) – Located at <https://pmrn.fcrr.org>, the PMRN is the data management system that rosters the other applications, stores the score data, and generates the reports. The PMRN allows the import of data files provided by the FLDOE’s Education Information and Accountability Services (EIAS). The data files are generated by the districts and compiled through the submission of surveys 6, 5, 2, and 3. There is also a User Interface by which School Level Users may roster classes. The PMRN generates reports that reflect student gains in reading at the student, class, teacher, school, district, region, and state levels. A district data file may be downloaded into the district’s database. The download file is updated weekly. To gain access to the PMRN, contact your district’s superintendent or one of the two district reading contacts. If you do not know the district reading contact, call or E-mail the PMRN Help Desk at (850) 644-0931 or [helpdesk@fcrr.org](mailto:helpdesk@fcrr.org).
- 2) K-2 Electronic Scoring Tool (K-2 EST) – Located at <https://k2.pmrn.fcrr.org>, the EST automates the paper and pencil administration of the Kindergarten through Second grade assessments. To access the K-2 EST, teachers must be listed in the PMRN and their classes must be rostered. The K-2 EST is available to any Florida school at no cost. The K-2 EST is used by a teacher to score students in a one teacher to one student setting. The User’s credentials for the PMRN are used to access the K-2 EST. The developers of the assessment recommend that the scoring be completed on a “mini” laptop, although any computer with an internet connection can be used. The district reading contact has information on how you can see a demonstration of the K-2 EST. There are two versions of the EST – a “Live” version and an Adobe AIR version.
  - a. The Live version requires a constant internet connection and interacts with the PMRN in real-time. Roster information found in the PMRN is reflected in the Live EST and scores collected by the K-2 EST are transferred to the PMRN as soon as a task is complete. No software installation is necessary.
  - b. The AIR version utilizes Adobe’s Integrated Runtime technology. This version is designed for a classroom that does not have a consistent internet connection. It requires a one-time installation of the Adobe AIR application from the Adobe website, the initial install and periodic update of the K-2 EST application, daily import of rosters and the export of scores. Rosters and scores in the PMRN and K-2 AIR EST can be different. Similarity of information is dependent on how frequently the computer is connected to the internet.
- 3) 3-12 Web-based Assessment Module (3-12 WAM) – Located at <https://312.pmrn.fcrr.org>, the WAM is the assessment instrument for students in grades 3-12. Students interact with the computer and are delivered the adaptive tests through one-on-one interaction with the internet-based application. In the PMRN, the students must be rostered in a class. Rosters in the PMRN are reflected on the 3-12 WAM with a five-minute delay. Scores from the WAM are reported in the PMRN as soon as the task is complete.

Of the three electronic components of the Florida Assessments for Instruction in Reading, concern has only been raised about the 3-12 WAM and the network resources that will be taxed when entire classes are in computer labs completing the tasks at the same time. The concern is the amount of strain on the lab, school, and district bandwidth.

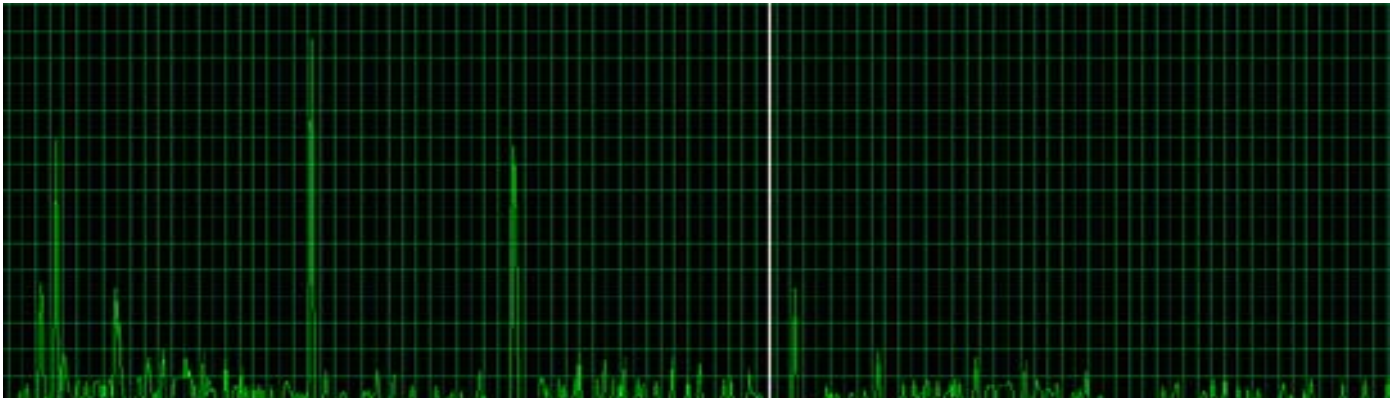
The bulk of the load is when the three instruction files are loaded. These files play just before each of the three tasks – Reading Comprehension, Maze, and Word Analysis. The files sizes are 308 KB, 563 KB, and 618 KB respectively. The entire file will be downloaded before it begins to play.

To reduce the load on the networks, it is our recommendation that the district utilize caching/proxy servers at the district or school level. If a server is not available, the recommendation is to allow caching on the individual machines. We are looking for other alternatives, but at this time, if a server is not available and the security policies do not allow caching on the local machine or across profiles, each time a different student is assessed, the files will need to be downloaded in their entirety. If a single profile can be set up across the district that allows access only to the browser and that allows caching, utilization of network resources will be reduced.

Below are two screen captures of the local network resources utilized by a PC running the WAM. The graph on the left is a machine that does not have the instruction files cached. The three large peaks are the downloading of the instruction files. The graph on the right is on the same machine. The one peak on the right graph is the exchange of the student credentials that is behind a Secure Socket Layer and because it is secure and dynamic cannot (and should not) be cached.

3-12 WAM with instruction files not cached

3-12 WAM with instruction files cached



Throughout the month of July and through August 20, we are providing opportunities for districts to conduct a Local Network Check. The “stress test” allows up to 936 machines in the district to access the 3-12 WAM at a single time to get an idea of what level of resources will be needed to run the assessment. Details how to register for and conduct a Local Network Check will follow in a separate E-mail.

To view the list of schools in your district that have registered, please click on the link located at [www.fcrr.org/pmrn/](http://www.fcrr.org/pmrn/).