



Choosing The Best Applicant Screening Tool

Questions to Ask Potential Vendors

Choosing the Best Applicant Screening Tool for Your District

If you're considering using an applicant prescreening tool in your district, you're not alone. In fact, you're probably evaluating several different tools to determine the best fit for your district's needs. While several tools exist, not all of them "are created equal."

We believe in maintaining transparency with the districts we serve, so we've provided below some important questions you should ask any company (us included) that you're considering for employee screening — and how our prescreening assessments within Frontline Recruiting & Hiring address those questions.

1. Does your screening tool impact student achievement?

Our teacher prescreening tests identify applicants who possess the characteristics of teachers deemed "high performing" by both subject matter and research experts. In some cases, "high performing" means that the teacher's students have high test scores. In other cases, "high performing" means that a teacher engages and supplements students on multiple levels of academic and personal achievement, from test scores to emotional development to extra-curricular involvement.

We do believe that our prescreening assessments help you hire effective teachers and staff who will drive student achievement in curricular and extracurricular activities. We also have hundreds of clients who would be happy to share their experience with the product.

The screening tool within Frontline Recruiting & Hiring truly separates the best candidates from the rest of your applicant pool, so you can hire great teachers for your students. And we believe, as you probably do too, that a great teacher is one of the greatest influencers on student achievement. However, you need to make sure you have the same expectation for student performance as your vendors.

2. Does your screening tool predict which teachers will accelerate student growth?

No metric exists that can definitively prove that a high score on a teacher assessment tool directly correlates to a high score on a standardized test. Vendors who claim this have looked at the characteristics of teachers of students with higher test scores and built a tool that is supposed to mirror these characteristics. However, no district case studies yet exist to determine whether these tools have actually resulted in higher student scores.

In addition, these vendors are working off the assumption that student test scores are the key measurement of a teacher's success. But do you believe that student test scores are the only indicator of student growth when so many other factors influence student performance: parents, the community, the curriculum, professional development opportunities for teachers, and more? Industry experts agree that all these variables make proving a direct correlation between applicant assessments and student scores virtually impossible.

If a company has claimed that their applicant assessment tool directly improves student performance, dig a little deeper and ask these follow-up questions:

- How do you define "student performance"? Solely by test scores? If so, which of the dozens of standardized tests are you using?
- How do you account for all of the varied influences surrounding different students?
- Have districts using your screening tool seen a measurable impact on student test scores, and have they shared that information?

3. Has any university backed your research?

John Arnold, Ph.D. of Wayne State University, and Neal Schmitt, Ph.D. of Michigan State University, conducted the research that enables our screening tool to assess the qualifications of a strong teacher. Dr. Arnold brings more than 30 years of experience to the table as a well-recognized Industrial/ Organizational Psychologist. Similarly, Dr. Schmitt has served for more than 35 years as Professor of Psychology at Michigan State University and has received numerous recognitions for his work in personnel selection.

4. Can I view your research?

We would be happy to share the research that went into developing the prescreening assessment if you would like to see it for yourself. If you ask to see a company's research and they won't provide it, you should seriously question why.

5. How many districts are using your screening tools?

Hundreds of school districts use our prescreening tool — more than any other K-12 screening tool — and thousands more use Frontline Recruiting & Hiring for applicant tracking. We'd love to give you a list of K-12 clients who are happily and successfully using our products.

6. Are you sure your test is treating all populations fairly?

Our assessment tool has been in use since 2008. In that time, hundreds of thousands of candidates across the nation have completed the assessment. As part of Frontline Education's regular monitoring and continuous improvement activities, adverse impact reviews are conducted periodically to ensure our tool passes the EEOC 4/5ths rule. Ask to see our Prescreening Assessment Adverse Impact Review for a detailed summary of adverse impact.

7. How does your screening tool gauge teacher success after the hire?

Frontline Recruiting & Hiring provides post-hire evaluation forms for you to assess your employees after they've been working at the district for 6 and 12 months. These forms enable you or your administrators to gauge how well your employees are meeting the criteria scored in their initial prescreening assessment.

We also can share conceptual correlation studies on how our assessment for teachers aligns to popular evaluation frameworks that most districts are using.

8. Is multi-year validation available for the district to review?

Yes, Frontline Recruiting & Hiring stores applicant score history so that you can accurately track your employee's pre-and post-hire data/performance.

9. Does your tool "get smarter" over time?

Yes, our assessment utilizes "machine learning," which means that the longer you use it, the better it will understand which applicants are likely to succeed in your district. Our tool analyzes the data brought in by your applicants and "re-norms" itself based on those scores, so the more high-scoring applications you receive, the higher the bar will be raised for excellent scores on your assessment.

10. Are applicants asked to purchase anything after completing the test?

Of course not! We just want to help you find great applicants. Unfortunately, some competitors require applicants to pay in order to see the results of their assessment.

11. Has your assessment ever lost a challenge in a court of law?

No. Any challenges posed have been dropped because the validity of our prescreening assessment was deemed indisputable. This is important because you know that the assessment has already been tested, should an EEOC complaint ever arise in your district.

12. Will you provide technical support to applicants who may have trouble taking the tests?

Yes, our applicant-supporting customer service team makes sure that applicant problems and any technical difficulties don't become the responsibility of your district HR department.

13. How much does it cost?

Doctorate-level research and continuous software development are not cheap. However, our end goal is the same as yours — getting the best educators in the classrooms. We know districts have to make a case for each tool they bring in, so we try to be sensitive to district budgets. While some companies charge hundreds of thousands of dollars for the same type of product, Frontline Education offers a significant ROI and an affordable, scalable pricing system based on the size of your district.

Frontline's tool isn't the only employee prescreening assessment tool available. However, we believe that with the proper research, you'll find it's more trustworthy and a better value than competing products.