

Child Care & Early Education RESEARCH CONNECTIONS

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Statewide Kindergarten Entry Assessments: Research-to-Policy Resources

Kindergarten entry assessments (KEAs), also referred to as kindergarten readiness assessments or school readiness assessments, are meant to be, according to the *Research Connections* child care and early education glossary: “[assessments developed by states and aligned with states' early learning and development standards to assess what children know and are able to do as they enter kindergarten.](#)” This definition is consistent with the common features found in other organizations’ and government definitions ([Ackerman, 2018](#)). As such, KEAs are informed by the complex, multidimensional concept of kindergarten readiness. Definitions of kindergarten readiness vary across states, with some states defining the term explicitly and others doing so implicitly in their early learning standards ([Regenstein, Connors, Romero-Jurado, & Weiner, 2017](#)).

In aiming to measure kindergarten readiness, KEAs are intended to be reliable, valid, multidimensional, and suitable for use with diverse populations. For instance, in [their notice of final priorities](#) for the 2011 Race to the Top-Early Learning Challenge grant competition (RTT-ELC), the U.S. Departments of Education and Health and Human Services called for applicants to implement a “Kindergarten Entry Assessment that informs instruction and services in the early elementary grades and that— (a) Is aligned with the State’s Early Learning and Development Standards and covers all Essential Domains of School Readiness; (b) Is valid, reliable, and appropriate for the target population and for the purpose for which it will be used, including for English learners and children with disabilities.” KEA data may be used to improve practice at the school level and analyze system-wide needs at the policy level ([Regenstein, Connors, Romero-Jurado, & Weiner, 2017](#)).



KEAs are now required by 39 states, with 30 states mandating the use of a particular measure and nine allowing schools to choose which measure to use ([Center on Standards and Assessment Implementation, n.d.](#)). Much of the growth in KEA adoption was spurred by two federal initiatives, the previously mentioned RTT-ELC and the [2013 Enhanced Assessment Grants](#), which funded three consortia of states to develop KEAs. The measures that states use include “commercially available measures, newly developed assessments, and state-developed instruments” ([Ackerman, 2018](#)).

This Research-to-Policy Resource List provides resources in the *Research Connections* library on statewide KEAs. It does not address local KEA efforts or broader issues related to child assessment more generally. The first section presents publications that discuss issues surrounding the [development and use of KEAs](#). The second offers a list of resources that contain information on [multistate scans of KEA practices](#). The final section is divided by state and includes publications for each state, where available, on the [development and selection of its KEA, as well as KEA results](#).

Papers on the Development and Use of KEAS

Ackerman, D. J. (2018). [Real world compromises: Policy and practice impacts of kindergarten entry assessment-related validity and reliability challenges. \(Policy Information Report and ETS Research Report Series No. RR-18-13\)](#). Princeton, NJ: ETS Policy Information Center.

Bruner, C., Allard Agnamba, L., Calderon, M. E., & Anderson Simons, K. (2013). [Families know best](#). Boston: Build Initiative.

Bruner, C., & Copeman, A. (2003). [Measuring children's school readiness: Options for developing state baselines and benchmarks](#). Des Moines, IA: State Early Childhood Policy Technical Assistance Network.

Early Learning Challenge Technical Assistance Program. (2014). [Engaging and supporting educators in the development and implementation of KEA](#). Washington, DC: Early Learning Challenge Technical Assistance Program.

Espinosa, L. M., & Garcia, E. E. (2012). [Developmental assessment of young dual language learners with a focus on kindergarten entry assessment: Implications for state policies. \(Working Paper No. 1\)](#). Chapel Hill, NC: Center for Early Care and Education Research: Dual Language Learners.

Garber, R. F., Timko, G., Bunkley, L., Lumpkin, D., & Duckens, C. (2007). [School readiness assessment: A review of the literature](#). Columbus, OH: Community Research Partners.

Golan, S., Woodbridge, M. W., Davies-Mercier, B., & Pistorino, C. (2016). [Case studies of the early implementation of kindergarten entry assessments](#). Washington, DC: U.S. Department of Education, Policy and Program Studies Service.

Goldstein, J., & Flake, J. (2016). [Towards a framework for the validation of early childhood assessment systems](#). *Educational Assessment, Evaluation, and Accountability*, 28(3), 273-293.

Goodlett, G. B., & D'Amico, L. (2014). [School readiness: Moving toward a shared definition, standardized assessment, and unifying language](#). Greenville, SC: Institute for Child Success.

Grafwallner, R., Taylor, K., deFosset, S., & Branscome, K. (2015). [Insights on readiness: What states are learning from kindergarten entry assessments](#). Washington, DC: Early Learning Challenge Technical Assistance Program.

Hanover Research Council. (2013). [Kindergarten entry assessments: Practices and policies](#). Washington, DC: Hanover Research Council.

Krasnoff, B. (2015). [Overview of approaches to kindergarten entry/readiness assessments](#). Portland, OR: Northwest Comprehensive Center.

Regenstein, E. M., Connors, M. C., Romero-Jurado, R., & Weiner, J. (2017). *Uses and misuses of kindergarten readiness assessment results. (Policy Conversations Conversation No. 6, Version 1.0)*. Chicago, IL: Ounce of Prevention Fund.

Schilder, D., & Dahlin, M. (2014). *Considerations for 'rebranding' kindergarten readiness assessment*. New Brunswick, NJ: Center on Enhancing Early Learning Outcomes.

Scott-Little, C., Kagan, S., & Clifford, R. M. (2003). *Assessing the state of state assessments: Perspectives on assessing young children*. Greensboro, NC: SERVE.

Scott-Little, C., Kagan, S., Reid, J., Sumrall, T., & Fox, E. A. (n.d.). *Common early learning and development standards analysis for the North Carolina EAG Consortium: Summary report*. Boston: Build Initiative.

Scott-Little, C., & Maxwell, K. (2015). *Improving systems of learning through the use of child standards and assessments*. In *Rising to the Challenge: Building effective systems for young children and families: A BUILD e-book*. Boston: Build Initiative.

Snow, K. L. (2011). *Developing kindergarten readiness and other large-scale assessment systems: Necessary considerations in the assessment of young children*. Washington, DC: National Association for the Education of Young Children.

Weisenfeld, G. (2017). *Implementing a kindergarten entry assessment (KEA) system*. New Brunswick, NJ: Center on Enhancing Early Learning Outcomes.

Multistate Scans of KEA Practices

Center on Standards and Assessment Implementation. (2016). [Pre-kindergarten and kindergarten entry assessments](#). San Francisco, CA: Center on Standards and Assessment Implementation.

Center on Standards and Assessment Implementation. (n.d.). [State of the states \[Interactive tool\]](#). San Francisco, CA: Center on Standards and Assessment Implementation.

Connors-Tadros, L. (n.d.). [Fast fact: Information and resources on developing state policy on kindergarten entry assessment \(KEA\)](#). New Brunswick, NJ: Center on Enhancing Early Learning Outcomes.

Daily, S., Burkhauser, M., & Halle, T. (2010). [A review of school readiness practices in the states: Early learning guidelines and assessments. \(Early Childhood Highlights Vol. 1, Issue 3, Publication No. 2010-14\)](#). Washington, DC: Child Trends.

Early Childhood Data Collaborative. (2014). [2013 state of states' early childhood data systems. \(Publication No. 2014-06\)](#). Bethesda, MD: Early Childhood Data Collaborative.

National Conference of State Legislatures. (2014). [State approaches to school readiness: 2014 update](#). Denver, CO: National Conference of State Legislatures.

Preschool Development and Expansion Grant Technical Assistance Program. (n.d.). [Comprehensive assessment systems in Preschool Development and Expansion Grant states](#). Washington, DC: Preschool Development and Expansion Grant Technical Assistance Program.

Saluja, G., Scott-Little, C., & Clifford, R. M. (2000). [Readiness for school: A survey of state policies and definitions](#). *Early Childhood Research & Practice*, 2(2).

Schilder, D., & Carolan, M. E. (2014). [State of the states policy snapshot: State early childhood assessment policies](#). New Brunswick, NJ: Center on Enhancing Early Learning Outcomes.

Shields, K. A., Cook, K., & Greller, S. (2016). [How kindergarten entry assessments are used in public schools and how they correlate with spring assessments. \(REL 2017-182\)](#). Washington, DC: Regional Educational Laboratory Northeast & Islands.

Stedron, J. (n.d.). [NCSL technical report: State approaches to school readiness assessment](#). Denver, CO: National Conference of State Legislatures.

Stedron, J., & Berger, A. (2010). [NCSL technical report: State approaches to school readiness assessment](#). Denver, CO: National Conference of State Legislatures.

United States. Department of Health and Human Services., & United States. Department of Education. (n.d.). [Kindergarten entry assessments in RTT-ELC grantee states](#). Washington, DC:

U.S. Department of Health and Human Services.

United States. Department of Health and Human Services., & United States. Department of Education. (2015). [Kindergarten entry assessments in RTT-ELC grantee states](#). Washington, DC: U.S. Department of Health and Human Services.

Weisenfeld, G. (2017). [Assessment tools used in kindergarten entry assessments \(KEAs\): State scan](#). New Brunswick, NJ: Center on Enhancing Early Learning Outcomes.

Reports on State KEA Development, Selection, and Results

Alaska

Ohle, K. A., & Harvey, H. A. (2017). [Educators' perceptions of school readiness within the context of a kindergarten entry assessment in Alaska](#). *Early Child Development and Care*, , 1-15.

Arizona

Fry, S., & Scott-Little, C. (2013). [On track: Ensuring school readiness for Arizona's children](#). Phoenix, AZ: First Things First.

California

California. Child Development Division. (2013). [California Desired Results Developmental Profile\(C\) \(2010\) technical report](#). Sacramento, CA: California, Child Development Division.

First 5 California. (n.d.). [First 5 school readiness program evaluation: Kindergarten entry profiles: Overview and statewide results: Fall 2006](#). Menlo Park, CA: SRI International.

First 5 California. (2004). [First 5 School Readiness \(SR\) Initiative evaluation: Kindergarten Entry Profiles \(KEP\): Overview and initial statewide results, Fall 2003](#). Menlo Park, CA: SRI International.

First 5 California. (2005). [The reliability of the Modified Desired Results Developmental Profile \(MDRDP\): Results from the 2004 kindergarten entry profiles \(KEP\)](#). Menlo Park, CA: SRI International.

Connecticut

Goldstein, J., & McCoach, D. (2011). [The starting line: Developing a structure for teacher ratings of students' skills at kindergarten entry](#). *Early Childhood Research & Practice*, 13(2).

Goldstein, J., McCoach, D., & Yu, H. (2017). [The predictive validity of kindergarten readiness judgments: Lessons from one state](#). *The Journal of Educational Research*, 110(1), 50-60.

Strambler, M. J., Irwin, C. W., Meyer, J. L., & Coleman, G. (2018). [Assessing kindergarten entry skills in Connecticut: The Kindergarten Entrance Inventory, 2010-2013](#). New Haven, CT: Partnership for Early Education Research.

Delaware

Ackerman, D. J. (2018). [Real world compromises: Policy and practice impacts of kindergarten entry assessment-related validity and reliability challenges. \(Policy Information Report and ETS Research Report Series No. RR-18-13\)](#). Princeton, NJ: ETS Policy Information Center.

Delaware. Department of Education. (n.d.). [Delaware Early Learner Survey 2016 key findings](#). Dover, DE: Delaware, Department of Education.

Delaware. Department of Education. (n.d.). [Delaware Early Learner Survey: 2017 key findings](#). Dover, DE: Delaware, Department of Education.

Hanover Research Council. (2017). [Delaware Early Learner Survey: Key findings](#). Dover, DE: Delaware, Department of Education.

Hustedt, J. T., Pinder, W., Hallam, R. A., Buell, M. J., & Kaminski, L. (2013). [Delaware Kindergarten Readiness Pilot Study: An analysis of kindergarten report cards used by districts and charter schools](#). Dover: Delaware, Department of Education.

Hawaii

Good Beginnings Alliance. (n.d.). [Catching up to school readiness](#). Honolulu, HI: Good Beginnings Alliance.

Good Beginnings Alliance. (2012). [Hawaii State School Readiness Assessment: State results: School year 2012-2013](#). Honolulu: Hawaii, Department of Education, System Evaluation and Reporting Section.

Good Beginnings Alliance. (2014). [Hawaii State School Readiness Assessment: State results: School year 2013-2014](#). Honolulu: Hawaii, Department of Education, System Evaluation and Reporting Section.

Hawaii. Department of Education. System Evaluation and Reporting Section., & Good Beginnings Alliance. (2010). [Hawaii State School Readiness Assessment state results: School year 2010-2011](#). Honolulu: Hawaii, Department of Education, System Evaluation and Reporting Section.

Hawaii. Department of Education. System Evaluation and Reporting Section., & Good Beginnings Alliance. (2011). [Hawaii State School Readiness Assessment state results: School year 2011-2012](#). Honolulu: Hawaii, Department of Education, System Evaluation and Reporting Section.

Illinois

Ackerman, D. J. (2018). [Real world compromises: Policy and practice impacts of kindergarten entry assessment-related validity and reliability challenges. \(Policy Information Report and ETS Research Report Series No. RR-18-13\)](#). Princeton, NJ: ETS Policy Information Center.

Kindergarten Individual Development Survey. (2018). [Readiness matters: 2018 Illinois Kindergarten Individual Development Survey \(KIDS\) report](#). Chicago, IL: Ounce of Prevention

Fund.

Kindergarten Readiness Assessment Stakeholder Committee. (2011). [*A new beginning: The Illinois Kindergarten Individual Development Survey*](#). Chicago: Robert R. McCormick Tribune Foundation.

Iowa

Iowa. Department of Education. (2008). [*Kindergarten literacy assessment report. \(House File 761\)*](#). Des Moines: Iowa, Department of Education.

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Iowa. Department of Education. (2016). [*Legislative report: Kindergarten literacy assessment: Preliminary report*](#). Des Moines, IA: Iowa, Department of Education.

Iowa. Department of Education. (2017). [*Legislative report: Early childhood assessment*](#). Des Moines, IA: Iowa, Department of Education.

Maryland

Ackerman, D. J. (2018). [*Real world compromises: Policy and practice impacts of kindergarten*](#)

[entry assessment-related validity and reliability challenges. \(Policy Information Report and ETS Research Report Series No. RR-18-13\)](#). Princeton, NJ: ETS Policy Information Center.

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Maryland. State Department of Education. (2007). [Children entering school ready to learn: Maryland school readiness information: 2006-2007](#). Baltimore: Maryland, State Department of Education.

Maryland. State Department of Education. (2008). [2008-2009 Maryland school readiness report: Children entering school ready to learn](#). Baltimore: Maryland, State Department of Education.

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Maryland. State Department of Education. (2009). [2009-2010 Maryland school readiness report: Children entering school ready to learn](#). Baltimore: Maryland, State Department of Education.

Maryland. State Department of Education. (2009). [Children entering school ready to learn:](#)

[2009-2010 Maryland model for school readiness](#). Baltimore: Maryland, State Department of Education.

Maryland. State Department of Education. (2011). [Children entering school ready to learn: 2010-2011 Maryland Model for School Readiness](#). Baltimore: Maryland, State Department of Education.

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Massachusetts

Kagan, S., Reid, J., & Scott-Little, C. (2013). [Massachusetts Department of Early Education and Care alignment study: Deliverable V: Summary of findings and recommendations](#). Boston: Massachusetts, Department of Early Education and Care.

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Minnesota

Cox, M., Rodriguez, M. C., & Edwards, K. (n.d.). [Empirical alignment of assessments to standards: A new direction for kindergarten entry](#). Roseville, MN: Minnesota, Department of Education.

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Minnesota School Readiness Study Team. (2004). [Minnesota School Readiness year two study: Developmental assessment at kindergarten entrance: Fall 2003](#). Roseville: Minnesota Department of Education.

Mississippi

Mississippi. Department of Education. (2014). [Kindergarten readiness assessment results:](#)

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Nevada

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Nevada. Early Childhood Advisory Council. (n.d.). [Needs assessment for Nevada's early childhood data system project 2012](#). Las Vegas: Nevada, Early Childhood Advisory Council.

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New Mexico

Center on Standards and Assessment Implementation. (2017). [New Mexico kindergarten teachers' use of kindergarten entry assessment data](#). San Francisco, CA: Center on Standards and Assessment Implementation.

Dahlke, K., Yang, R., Martinez, C., Chavez, S., Martin, A., Hawkinson, L. E., Shields, J., & et al. (2017). [Scientific evidence for the validity of the New Mexico Kindergarten Observation Tool. \(REL 2018-281\)](#). Washington, DC: Regional Educational Laboratory Southwest.

New York

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North Carolina

Ackerman, D. J. (2018). [Real world compromises: Policy and practice impacts of kindergarten entry assessment-related validity and reliability challenges.](#) (Policy Information Report and ETS Research Report Series No. RR-18-13). Princeton, NJ: ETS Policy Information Center.

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Maxwell, K., & Scott-Little, C. (2000). [School readiness in North Carolina: Strategies for defining, measuring, and promoting success for all children: Report of the Ready for School Goal Team: Full report.](#) Greensboro, NC: SERVE.

Ohio

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Columbus, OH: Ohio State University, Crane Center for Early Childhood Research and Policy.

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Oregon

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Pennsylvania

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South Carolina

Goodlett, G. B., & D'Amico, L. (2014). [School readiness: Moving toward a shared definition, standardized assessment, and unifying language](#). Greenville, SC: Institute for Child Success.

Utah

Utah State Board of Education. (n.d.). [Utah's KEEEP report](#). Salt Lake City, UT: Utah State Board of Education.

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