



## STATE PRE-KINDERGARTEN PROGRAM

### (Four-Year-Old At-Risk) Program Standards and Requirements 2016-2017

#### **OUTCOME: Children will enter school ready to succeed.**

The Kansas State Board of Education has identified Kindergarten readiness as an essential building block for future achievement and academic success. This measure is an important element in the Board's new vision that "Kansas leads the world in the success of each student".

<http://www.ksde.org/Home/QuickLinks/NewsRoom/tabid/586/aid/165/Default.aspx>

The **State Pre-Kindergarten Program (Four-Year-Old At-Risk)** is based upon research and evidence based practice recognizing the correlation between participation in high quality early learning environments and improved child outcomes essential for later school success [Center on the Developing Child at Harvard University (2007). *A Science-Based Framework for Early Childhood Policy: Using Evidence to Improve Outcomes in Learning, Behavior, and Health for Vulnerable Children*. <http://www.developingchild.harvard.edu>] Evidence-based practice is defined as a decision-making process that integrates the best available research evidence with family and professional wisdom and values (Buysse & Wesley, 2006). The characteristics of a high quality program includes; a) well trained and knowledgeable staff, b) the implementation of curriculum and instructional practices that are supported by scientific research and/or an established evidence base (e.g. well defined scope and sequence, intentionally designed learning opportunities, a balance of teacher/child initiated activities, the use of explicit/incidental/and embedded teaching strategies), and c) a system for collecting, analyzing, and using formative and summative assessment data for instructional planning and program evaluation. All of the described characteristics are implemented with tools and procedures that are consistent with developmentally appropriate practices. In addition, high quality programs establish positive collaborative relationships with community programs and partners in order to maximize potential benefits to the families and young children they serve.

Funds will be awarded through an application process. Program descriptions must include the evidence-based practices used to promote quality. As is noted in the "Assurances" page, school districts are required to offer services that will build on and not duplicate services already provided in the community for the four-year-old at-risk population.

**At-risk criteria:** Any child is eligible to participate in a State Pre-Kindergarten (Four-Year-Old At-Risk) program, if they meet (1) at least one of the risk criteria; and, (2) the age requirement (4 by August 31<sup>st</sup> of the attending school year). Programs are encouraged to place students with disabilities (a child with an IEP) in a State Pre-Kindergarten classroom when appropriate. Special Education evaluation teams are urged to consider this environment with typically developing peers whenever possible due to the preponderance of research documenting the positive outcomes for both children with disabilities as well as for children without disabilities.

<http://www2.ed.gov/policy/speced/guid/earlylearning/joint-statement-full-text.pdf>

NOTE: Children who do not meet the age requirement can still be placed in the classroom based upon local decisions. They will be included in the "no more than 25 children in the classroom" as well as "no more than 1:10 teacher/student ratio in a classroom" but will not receive any at-risk funding.

## **State Pre-Kindergarten (Four-Year-Old At-Risk) Program Standards**

Program standards and components required for participation in the State Pre-Kindergarten (Four-Year-Old At-Risk) Program are described below.

### 1. Teacher Requirements

#### Lead Teacher Qualifications:

##### a. State Pre-Kindergarten Program Requirement

Teaching staff for the State Pre-Kindergarten program must have a current teacher license and must have, at the minimum, a current Elementary Education license. A Kansas license in Early Childhood Education is recommended. KSDE encourages school districts to hire teachers who have one of the following:

- Early Childhood Unified, Birth to Grade 3 license
- Early Childhood Unified, Birth to Kindergarten license
- Early Childhood Education license
- Early Childhood Special Education (ECH) license
- Early Childhood endorsement with a license in Elementary Education.

#### Lead Teacher Accepted Qualifications:

- Elementary Education, K-6 or K-9

#### Assistant Teacher/Teacher Aide Qualifications:

- b. It is strongly recommended that school districts employ paraprofessionals or aides who have at least a Child Development Associate (CDA certificate) or an A.A. in early childhood education or a related field. This teacher is considered to be a second teacher in the classroom and teaching under the supervision of the Lead Teacher.

#### Assistant Teacher Accepted Qualifications:

- Be a high school graduate, and complete an orientation session addressing confidentiality and the services to be provided in this program. OR
- Have a high school diploma or a GED and complete 48 hours at an institution of higher education OR
- Obtain an associate's (or higher) degree OR
- Pass a State approved assessment that assesses the ability to assist in instructing reading, writing, and mathematics (or reading, writing, mathematics readiness).

2. Curriculum & Assessment requirements:

All State Pre-Kindergarten (Four-Year-Old At-Risk) programs are required to collect data on child outcomes, classroom/transition practices, and family practices (this is voluntary on the part of the family). Programs should develop local child outcomes that align with their curricula as well as collect ongoing data for KSDE on the assessments listed below and enter data into the Early Childhood—Success in School database.

**All programs will collect data for KSDE via the Early Childhood Success in School web-based application. The instruments used are the KELI-4 (twice annually), the Family Survey, Protective Factors Survey, the Classroom Practices Survey, and Transition Survey. Any current or new information on the instruments and the process as well as any training to be made available will be posted online and sent via various list serves to keep all involved staff up-to-date. Children in the classroom who have IEPs and are age-eligible MUST be included in the random selection process. Children who are three or five (not age-eligible) are NOT included in the random selection process but can be participants in the classroom.**

**This information will be collected via the web-based application instruments.**

All curricula must be aligned with the Kansas Early Learning Standards, must be evidence and research-based, and specifically designed for preschool students. Evidence-based practice is defined as a decision-making process that integrates the best available research evidence with family and professional wisdom and values (Buisse & Wesley, 2006). An evidence-based curriculum should be based upon the best research available.

NOTE: The Kansas Early Learning Standards have been revised and are aligned with the Kansas Career and College – Ready Standards. The KELI-4 has been revised to align with these newly revised standards.

To collect child data for local outcomes and to determine growth over the year, programs must use developmentally appropriate, valid, and reliable assessments, aligned with Kansas Early Learning Standards and the core curriculum of the program. The KELI-4 is used at the state level and is not appropriate for use at the program level for program outcomes because not all children are assessed in the KELI-4 process and other behaviors and skills may need to be assessed at the local level, based upon local decisions.

**NOTE: Remember that a data collection process for local assessments may be used to complete items on the KELI-4R that are the same skills/behavior.**

3. The teacher to child ratio will be no higher than 1:10, and there can be no more than 25 students in a classroom. This applies to ALL children in a classroom—not just age-eligible children who meet at least one of the 1-8 risk criteria.
4. Teachers and assistant teachers/paraprofessionals/teacher aides must participate in at least 15 hours of in-service training annually. Professional development should address the curriculum model in use as well as other developmentally appropriate topics of early childhood learning. Examples include training through Kansas Technical Assistance System Network (TASN), Kansas Child Care Training Opportunity (KCCTO), etc.

5. The State Pre-Kindergarten (Four Year-Old At-Risk) program must be implemented at least 465 hours during the school year. This is typically around 3 hours a day for 5 days a week. Districts that choose a four day a week program may need to add minutes to their classroom day to meet the 465 hours a year requirement.
6. Collaboration with community early childhood partners is required to meet application assurances and must be described in the application.
7. All children must meet one or more of the at-risk criteria listed in the following table. This information will be used for the September 20<sup>th</sup> count and will determine the reimbursable number of at-risk children. Documentation for the criteria met for each child will need to be available for auditors.

### **Criteria for State Pre-Kindergarten (Four-Year Old At-Risk) Program**

Criteria	Clarification
1. Poverty (4 year old at-risk)	1. Qualifies for free or reduced lunch program on September 20
2. Single parent families	2. At the time of enrollment, the custodial parent is unmarried.
3. Department for Children and Families (DCF) referral	3. The reason for referral must describe the need for the child to attend the <i>State Pre-Kindergarten Program (4 year AR)</i> program and be documented and signed by the DCF agent.
4. Teen parents	4. At least one parent was a teen when the child was born.
5. Either parent is lacking a high school diploma or GED.	5. At the time of enrollment, either parent lacks a high diploma or a GED.
6. Child qualifies for migrant status	6. There must be a copy of the Certificate of Eligibility on file.
7. English Learners	7. LEP status must be documented  NOTE: ESOL services must be provided by qualified teachers.
8.* Lower than expected Developmental Progress in at least one of the following areas: Cognitive Developmental; physical development; communication/literacy; social-emotional/behavior; adaptive behavior/self-help skills	8.* Based on results of an appropriate and valid assessment (screening, authentic assessment, or standardized instrument), which has been administered and interpreted by a trained professional, the developmental progress of the child has been determined to be lower than typically expected for his/her chronological age, yet above eligibility requirements for special education services (based the special education eligibility requirement in the Kansas Special Education Process Handbook).

**Note: Participants must be four years of age on or before August 31, 2016.** (*Children turning 5 years old on or before August 31, 2016 cannot generate funds for this program.*) NOTE: children who are not age eligible may still be placed in the classroom and will be included in the required 1:10 teacher/student ratio as well as the count of no more than 25 children in the classroom. However, these students cannot be funded through the at-risk funding.

**Other Policies:**

Meal or Snack: At least one a classroom period	Programs must provide at least one snack per classroom session to all the children attending their program. By participating in the Child and Adult Care Food Program schools can earn reimbursement for providing nutritious snacks. For further information, contact Child Nutrition & Wellness at the Kansas State Department of Education (785) 296-2276. As with kindergarten programs, teachers can request parents to provide nutritious snacks.
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**Eligibility/Funding: State Pre-Kindergarten (Four-Year-Old At-Risk) Program**

As part of the school finance formula for 1998-1999, the legislature and governor approved funding a half-day educational program for at-risk four-year-olds. Any public school district in Kansas may apply for funds through the application process. Funds for this program are available through weighted state aid, so only school districts may apply. Funds are to be used to provide a half-day early learning educational experience for four-year old children who are at-risk: i.e., those who meet one or more of the criteria described above.

Districts with current programs must develop and submit a **program application**. Programs funded in 2015-2016 will be continued, pending approval by the Kansas State Board of Education. As determined by the legislature, funding is available for a total of **(unknown at this time)** four-year-old at-risk children across the state.

The four-year old at-risk children in State Pre-Kindergarten Programs are to be counted in the same manner as kindergarten students with funding based on children in attendance on September 20, 2016.

**Budget Year: State Pre-Kindergarten (Four-Year-Old At-Risk)**

All activities are to be completed and all funds received under this program must be spent or encumbered by June 30, 2017. Salaries may not be encumbered.

**Application Deadline**

Applications are due March 11, 2016. Applications will be reviewed by KSDE staff. Recommendations will be forwarded to the Kansas State Board of Education for action at the April 2016 meeting. Immediately following Board action, grant award notices detailing results from the Board meeting will be sent to all districts applying for funding.

The grant application is being collected in the Survey Monkey program. **One person at each program will be forwarded a computer link to their particular grant application which should be completed and submitted to KSDE by 5:00pm, March 11, 2016.** The assurances page must be signed and faxed, or scanned and emailed to Beccy Strohm, using the contact information below **by 5:00 p.m. on March 11, 2016.**

**For more information, contact:**



Early Childhood, Special Education and Title Services Kansas State  
Department of Education  
Landon State Office Building  
900 S.W. Jackson Street, STE 620  
Topeka, KS 66612-1212

(785) 291-3791 (FAX)

**For Questions on Programming**

Colleen Riley  
ECSETS Director  
(785) 296-3097  
[criley@ksde.org](mailto:criley@ksde.org)

**For Questions on the Application**

Beccy Strohm  
Sr. Administrative Assistant  
(785) 296-6602  
[bstrohm@ksde.org](mailto:bstrohm@ksde.org)



Kansas Board of Education  
 Kansas State Department of Education  
 Landon State Office Building  
 900 S.W. Jackson St., Suite 600  
 Topeka, Kan. 66612-1212

(785) 296-3203

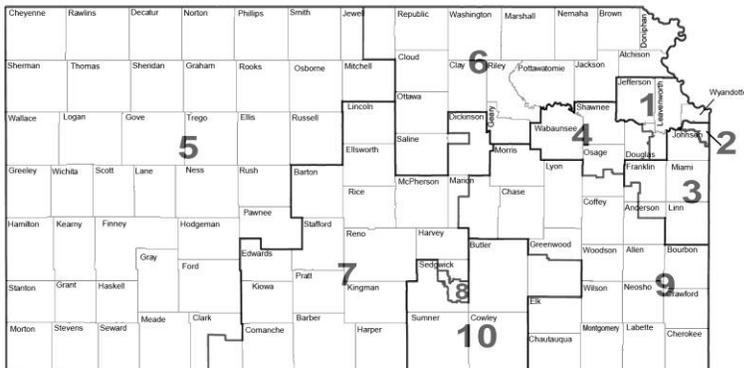
[www.ksde.org/Board.aspx](http://www.ksde.org/Board.aspx)

Great students. Great teachers. Great leaders. Great citizens.

The mission of the Kansas State Board of Education is to prepare Kansas students for lifelong success through rigorous, quality academic instruction, career training and character development according to each student's gifts and talents. To accomplish this mission, the State Board has identified five goals. They are as follows:

- Provide a flexible delivery system to meet our students' changing needs.
- Provide an effective educator in every classroom.
- Ensure effective, visionary leaders in every school.
- Promote and encourage best practices for early childhood programs.
- Develop active communication and partnerships with families, communities, business stakeholders, constituents and policy makers.

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Kansas State Department of Education  
 Landon State Office Building  
 900 SW Jackson St., Suite 600  
 Topeka, KS 66612-1212  
 (785) 296-3201  
[www.ksde.org](http://www.ksde.org)



**Dr. Randy Watson**  
 Commissioner of Education  
 (785) 296-3202



**Dale M. Dennis**  
 Deputy Commissioner  
 Division of Fiscal and Administrative Services  
 (785) 296-3871



**Brad Neuenswander**  
 Deputy Commissioner  
 Division of Learning Services  
 (785) 296-2304

DISTRICT 1



**Janet Waugh**  
[JWaugh1052@aol.com](mailto:JWaugh1052@aol.com)

DISTRICT 2



**Steve Roberts**  
[mrxmlmath@gmail.com](mailto:mrxmlmath@gmail.com)

DISTRICT 3



**John W. Bacon**  
[jwmsbacon@aol.com](mailto:jwmsbacon@aol.com)

DISTRICT 4



**Carolyn L. Wims-Campbell, Vice-Chair**  
[campbell4ksboe@gmail.com](mailto:campbell4ksboe@gmail.com)

DISTRICT 5



**Sally Cauble**  
[scauble@swko.net](mailto:scauble@swko.net)

DISTRICT 6



**Deena Horst**  
[deena@worldlinc.net](mailto:deena@worldlinc.net)

DISTRICT 7



**Kenneth Willard**  
[kwillard48@gmail.com](mailto:kwillard48@gmail.com)

DISTRICT 8



**Kathy Busch**  
[kathy.busch@ymail.com](mailto:kathy.busch@ymail.com)

DISTRICT 9



**Jim Porter**  
[jimporterksbe@gmail.com](mailto:jimporterksbe@gmail.com)

DISTRICT 10



**Jim McNiece, Chairman**  
[nemprin@yahoo.com](mailto:nemprin@yahoo.com)

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