Kindergarten Readiness Rubric

Overview:

The path to leading the world in the success of each student starts in early childhood, long before a 5-year-old child begins kindergarten. A focus on early childhood and a commitment to strong community partnerships are essential to achieving our state's vision for education.

The Kansans Can Star Recognition program recognizes communities that offer quality, inclusive opportunities to young children and their families so that each student enters kindergarten at age 5 socially, emotionally and academically prepared for success.

Qualifiers:

A district/system must be in compliance with all state and federal Kindergarten Readiness requirements and the qualifiers below to be eligible for recognition.

Meets federal requirement that 100% of children transitioning from Early Intervention (IDEA Part C) to Early Childhood Special Education (IDEA Part B) have an initial Individualized Education Plan (IEP) completed by the child's third birthday. Is the school district compliant with the State Performance Plan (SPP) Indicator 12: Transition from C to B?

☐ YES   ☐ NO

Does each school district receiving Title I funds develop agreements and carry out coordination with Head Start and, if feasible, with other early childhood programs serving children who will attend the schools of the local educational agency?

☐ YES   ☐ NO

Under 20 U.S.C. § 1412(a)(5) of the IDEA, to the maximum extent appropriate, children with disabilities, including children in public or private institutions or other care facilities, must be educated with children who aren't disabled. The district meets the SPP targets for Indicator 6: Preschool Environments.

What is the district's indicator 6A, Early Childhood Least Restrictive Environment, data for Federal Fiscal Year 2022 (the 2022-2023 school year)?

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What is the district's indicator 6B, Early Childhood Least Restrictive Environment, data for Federal Fiscal Year 2022 (the 2022-2023 school year)?

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Indicator 6A:
Do at least 39.3% of children aged 3-5 with IEPs attend a regular early childhood program and receive the majority of special education and related services with typically developing peers (e.g., early childhood setting, home and part-time early childhood/part-time early childhood special education settings)?

☐ YES   ☐ NO

Indicator 6B:
Do no more than 36.84% of children aged 3-5 with IEPs attend a separate special education class, separate school or residential facility?

☐ YES   ☐ NO

Are all families of children who are age-eligible for kindergarten (5 years old on or before Aug. 31) encouraged to enroll their children in kindergarten? Are all children welcomed – as they are – into heterogeneous kindergarten settings and not segregated into extra-year programs prior to or following regular kindergarten? [1]

☐ YES   ☐ NO

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1   See the National Association of State Leaders in Early Education Position Paper: Still Unacceptable Trends in Kindergarten Entry and Placements and the National Association of State Leaders in Early Education Policy Statement The Power of Kindergarten: 10 Policies Leading to Positive Child Outcomes.

At least 50% of kindergarten students in each building that offers kindergarten participate in the Kindergarten Readiness Snapshot, the ASQ-3 and ASQ: SE-2 (unless the teacher collaborates with the family to determine that the ASQ should not be used).

How many kindergarteners participated in the Kindergarten Readiness Snapshot (both the ASQ-3 and the ASQ:SE-2) for the 2023-2024 school year?

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How many kindergarteners were enrolled on Sept. 20, 2023?

_____

What is the 2023 Kindergarten Readiness Snapshot participation rate?

_____

Is the 2023 Kindergarten Readiness Snapshot participation rate higher than 50% for each building that offers kindergarten?

☐ YES   ☐ NO

Description of Rubric

A total rubric score must fall into one of the point ranges in the Scoring Criteria to warrant submission and be eligible for Star Recognition consideration. The final performance rating and a Star Recognition System Designation will be determined by KSDE.

Kindergarten Readiness Recognition Scoring Criteria

STAR RECOGNITION LEVEL	GOLD	SILVER	BRONZE	COPPER
Available Point Range:	24	21-23	12-20	6-11

A district/system must comply with all state and federal early childhood requirements and the qualifiers listed above to be eligible for recognition. The Kindergarten Readiness rubric contains the following elements:

1. Community Partnerships
2. Quality, Evidence-Based Learning
3. Quality Workforce
4. Health and Safety
5. Inclusion
6. Transitions into Kindergarten

Subelements build on one another. For example, a district/system must meet the criteria to earn one point for element 1.1 to be eligible to earn two points for that element. A district/system must meet all the criteria to earn one point, two points and three points in an element to be eligible to earn four points in that element. In other words, a district/system should begin reviewing each row in the far left column and move from left to right until it no longer meets the listed criteria for that row (subelement). The average of each element's subelements will determine the element's score. The total rubric score will be the sum of the element scores.

The 2023-2024 Kindergarten Readiness Star Recognition rubric includes fewer subelements (rows) than in the past. In the authenticated application, select the rating that is the average of the subelements in that section. Round up.

Districts/systems will upload artifacts (documentation and/or outcomes analysis) to support the self-assessment in the application for recognition. These artifacts should demonstrate that an applicant should earn the points associated with each item on the rubric. Reviewers will review the artifacts to determine whether an applicant will receive the points associated with each subelement. See the Kindergarten Readiness Suggested Artifacts document for additional guidance.

Kindergarten Readiness: Star Recognition Rubric

ELEMENT 1:

Community Partnerships

ELEMENT 1	0	1	2	3	4
1.1 Community collaboration	☐ ☐	☐ Structure exists to collaborate with early childhood partners. District/system participates in its local interagency coordinating council (ICC), early childhood coalition or local early childhood task force.	☐ The district/system meets the criteria for the column(s) to the left. The early childhood community collaboration includes a range of partners representing different sectors. This should include partners who are school district/system staff and others who serve children and families in the community and families served by early childhood programs. While the makeup of a community collaboration will vary by community, it may also include business leaders, health providers, mental health providers, kindergarten teachers and administrators, Family and Consumer Science (FCS) teachers, child care providers and other early childhood providers.	☐ The district/system meets the criteria for the column(s) to the left. Early childhood community collaboration uses data to inform decisions, drive plans for collaboration and create a communitywide early childhood strategy.	☐ The district/system meets the criteria for the column(s) to the left. Early childhood partners advance shared community initiatives. These may include providing shared professional development opportunities; sharing resources (space, staff, funding) between programs; coordinating intake and referral processes; implementing a communitywide screening strategy; partnering to expand the number of children served by early childhood programs in the community; supporting community-based child care; offering health fairs; or coordinating seamless transitions between programs and services.

ELEMENT 1	0	1	2	3	4
1.2 Kansas Family Engagement and Partnership Standards for Early Childhood[2]	☐ ☐	The district/system utilizes the Kansas Family Engagement and Partnership Standards for Early Childhood as a framework in developing programs, policies and practices.	☐ The district/system meets the criteria for the column(s) to the left. The community completes self-assessments using the Kansas Family Engagement and Partnership Standards for Early Childhood and identifies opportunities for improvement. Programs collect data on family engagement and use it to inform strategies.	☐ The district/system meets the criteria for the column(s) to the left. The community engages in strategies to implement the Kansas Family Engagement and Partnership Standards for Early Childhood.	☐ The district/system meets the criteria for the column(s) to the left. The district/system has documented interaction with a parent advisory committee and demonstrated the initiation of recommendations from that advisory group within the past five years.

ELEMENT 2:

Quality, Evidence-Based Learning

ELEMENT 2	0	1	2	3	4
2.1 Data	☐ ☐	In all district/system preschool and kindergarten classrooms, an evidence-based assessment is used to measure children's developmental growth upon entry and exit of the program.[3]	☐ The district/system meets the criteria for the column(s) to the left. In all district/system preschool and kindergarten classrooms, all instructors collect data on an ongoing basis to monitor progress, using evidence-based assessments as needed.	☐ The district/system meets the criteria for the column(s) to the left. In all district/system preschool and kindergarten classrooms, data informs a tiered system of supports.	☐ The district/system meets the criteria for the column(s) to the left. District/system partners with community-based preschool programming, child care and early learning in the community to utilize evidence-based assessments, data and a tiered system of supports. For example, providing joint professional development, partnering to host collaborative screening events, etc.

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[2] View the *Kansas Family Engagement and Partnership Standards for Early Childhood* on the KSDE TASN Kansas Parent Information Resource Center (KPIRC) website.

3   See the Kansas PreKindergarten Guide

ELEMENT 2	0	1	2	3	4
2.2 Developmentally appropriate practice	☐ ☐	Developmentally appropriate practice, including opportunities for child-initiated play, is intentionally incorporated into all preschool and kindergarten classrooms in the district/system.[4]	☐ The district/system meets the criteria for the column(s) to the left. As the year progresses, the kindergarten schedule evolves along a continuum of looking like a preschool classroom to a first-grade classroom. Kindergarten classrooms rich in child-initiated play transition into playful classrooms with focused learning through the year.[5]	☐ The district/system meets the criteria for the column(s) to the left. Across all preschool and kindergarten classrooms in the district/system, teaching staff implement intentionally designed learning experiences for each child that are: • Individually and age appropriate, including child-initiated play. • Aligned with previous and future age levels/grades to enhance the learning continuum. • Based on reliable and valid data. • Improve development, learning and behavioral outcomes.	☐ The district/system meets the criteria for the column(s) to the left. Across all preschool and kindergarten classrooms in the district/system, administrators, teaching staff and families work together to implement intentionally designed learning experiences.
2.3 Parent education	☐ ☐	The community provides a parent education or other home visitation program.	☐ The district/system meets the criteria for the column(s) to the left. All parent education programs deliver an evidence-based model with research-informed tools and curriculum.	☐ The district/system meets the criteria for the column(s) to the left. The parent education program has obtained Parents as Teachers Model Affiliate status (or equivalent).	☐ The district/system meets the criteria for the column(s) to the left. The parent education program has obtained Parents as Teachers Blue Ribbon Affiliate status (or equivalent).
2.3 Standards Alignment *This subelement will not be included in scoring Star Recognition for the 2023-2024 school year.*	☐ ☐	Early childhood programming aligns curriculum and instructional materials to the Kansas Early Learning Standards. All preschool classrooms in the district/system use a curriculum that addresses the areas of literacy, math and social-emotional development.	☐ The district/system meets the criteria for the column(s) to the left. A research base or evidence base indicates the preschool curriculum is effective.	☐ The district/system meets the criteria for the column(s) to the left. Early childhood and kindergarten staff work together to align instruction and expectations to the Kansas Early Learning Standards and to kindergarten standards.	☐ The district/system meets the criteria for the column(s) to the left. The district/system works with other early childhood community partners to align expectations for learning and development. This may include offering joint professional development opportunities or sharing instructional materials and resources with partners.

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4   See the National Association for the Education of Young Children, "Developmentally Appropriate Practice", for more information and resources

5   See the Kansas Full-Day Kindergarten Guide

ELEMENT 3:

Quality Workforce[6]

ELEMENT 3	0	1	2	3	4
3.1 Credentialing and professional development	☐	☐ Except as otherwise provided in K.A.R. 91-31-34, the district/system fills each preschool teaching position with a teacher with one of the following endorsements on their teaching license: General Education Pre-K Assignment: • Early Childhood Unified, Birth to Grade 3 (ECU) • Early Childhood Unified, Birth to Kindergarten (ECU) • Early Childhood education (EC-EC) • Elementary Education, PRK-6, K-6, or K-9 • Elementary Education Unified, K-6 Special Education Pre-K Assignment: • Early Childhood Unified, Birth to Grade 3 (ECU) • Early Childhood Unified, Birth to Kindergarten (ECU) • Early Childhood Handicapped (ECH) • High incidence PrK-12 • Low Incidence PrK-12 All preschool teacher aides, assistant teachers and paraprofessionals have one of the following credentials: • A Child Development Associate (CDA) certificate or an Associate of Arts (A.A.) in early childhood education or a related field. • A high school diploma or a GED and completed 48 credit hours at an institution of higher education. • Associate degree (or higher). • Pass a state-approved assessment that determines an ability to assist in reading, writing and mathematics, or reading, writing and mathematics readiness.	☐ The district/system meets the criteria for the column(s) to the left. All direct preschool service staff members, including teachers and assistant teachers, teacher aides and paraprofessionals, receive more than 15 hours of annual in-service training in the area of early learning or related topics. Teachers and assistant teachers, teacher aides and paraprofessionals have annual written individualized professional development plans.	☐ The district/system meets the criteria for the column(s) to the left. All preschool teachers have an endorsement for one of the following: Early Childhood Unified, Early Childhood Education or Early Childhood Handicapped.	☐ The district/system meets the criteria for the column(s) to the left. All assistant teachers, teacher aides and paraprofessionals have at least a child development associate certificate or an associate of arts in early childhood education or related field.

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6   The Quality Workforce criteria for align to quality benchmarks found in the National Institute for Early Education Research State of Preschool Yearbook. *CTE-supported programs may have unique considerations regarding teacher aide credentialing.*

ELEMENT 3	0	1	2	3	4
3.2 Ongoing support	☐ ☐	Each preschool teacher has access to and an ability to participate in a mentorship opportunity, community of practice and/or professional learning community.	☐ The district/system meets the criteria for the column(s) to the left. Preschool administrators routinely (for example, monthly, quarterly or each semester) visit each preschool classroom. Preschool administrator(s) provide reflective feedback and/or coaching.	☐ The district/system meets the criteria for the column(s) to the left. District/system leaders (superintendent, administrators, principals, other key personnel) have a "knowledge of and stay current with research on child development (including social-emotional development, executive function and effects of toxic stress)" [7] and so hold developmentally appropriate expectations of prekindergarten, kindergarten and early elementary children, teachers and classrooms.	☐ The district/system meets the criteria for the column(s) to the left. Professional learning opportunities are shared with other early childhood partners in the community. The district/system intentionally schedules professional learning opportunities so that early learning providers who provide child care and preschool during the school day can access professional development.

[7] Kauerz, K., Ballard, R., Soli, M., & Hagerman, S. (2021). *Leading learning communities: A principal's guide to early learning and the early grades (Pre-K–3rd Grade)*. Alexandria, VA: National Association of Elementary School Principals.

ELEMENT 4:

Health and Safety

ELEMENT 4	0	1	2	3	4
4.1 Nutrition	☐	☐ All preschools in the district/system participate in either the Child and Adult Care Food Program (CACFP) or the National School Lunch Program (NSLP) to provide all preschool students access to meals and snacks. All preschools meet CACFP/NSLP requirements.	☐ The district/system meets the criteria for the column(s) to the left. All preschools in the district/system apply for and have received the Healthier CACFP Award at the honors level in either the Menus category or the Nutrition and Wellness Environment category. *Note:* A *district/system can still apply for this award if they opt to participate in the NSLP instead of the CACFP.*	☐ The district/system meets the criteria for the column(s) to the left. All preschools in the district/system apply for and have received the Healthier CACFP Award at the high honors level in either the Menus category or the Nutrition and Wellness Environment category. *Note:* A *district/system can still apply for this award if they opt to participate in the NSLP instead of the CACFP.*	☐ The district/system meets the criteria for the column(s) to the left. All preschools in the district/system apply for and have received the Healthier CACFP Award at the highest honors level in either the Menus category or the Nutrition and Wellness Environment category. *Note:* A *district/system can still apply for this award if they opt to participate in the NSLP instead of the CACFP.*
4.2 School wellness policy	☐	☐ Early childhood is recognized in school wellness policy in the areas of nutrition, nutrition promotion and education, physical activity and integrated school-based wellness.	☐ The district/system meets the criteria for the column(s) to the left. Early childhood is engaged in the process to shape the school wellness policy.	☐ The district/system meets the criteria for the column(s) to the left. The district/system demonstrates that it follows best practices for early childhood programming.	☐ The district/system meets the criteria for the column(s) to the left. The district/system supports community efforts to create safe, developmentally appropriate, maintained spaces for all children to play throughout the community.

ELEMENT 5:

Inclusion and Accessibility

ELEMENT 5	0	1	2	3	4
5.1 Inclusion	☐	☐ All preschool services provide inclusive early childhood programs that are available to all children in the community on an equitable basis, including children receiving Early Childhood Special Education Services (ECSE); Dual Language Learners (DLL) and English Learners (EL); in foster care; in migrant worker families; in families who are currently homeless; and in families who are refugees.	☐ The district/system meets the criteria for the column(s) to the left. The district/system is moving toward combining its early childhood education opportunities (for example, early childhood special education, Head Start, preschool-aged at-risk) into integrated classrooms. The district/system analyzes data to identify and address barriers to ensure that all early childhood services and classrooms reflect the natural proportions of students in the district/system.[8] At least 50% of preschool children with IEPs in the district received special education and related services in settings with typically developing peers for Indicator 6: Preschool Environments for Children 3-5 (LRE).	☐ The district/system meets the criteria for the column(s) to the left. The district/system has combined its early childhood education opportunities (for example, early childhood special education, Head Start, preschool-aged at-risk) into integrated classrooms. All early childhood services and classrooms reflect the natural proportions of students in the district/system. Children aren't excluded in policy or in practice from preschool classrooms, including children who are receiving Early Childhood Special Education Services (ECSE); Dual Language Learners (DLL) and English Learners (EL); in foster care; in migrant worker families; in families who are currently homeless; in families who are refugees; and who are experiencing other risk factors. Funds are allocated and formalized partnerships exist to provide children with inclusive early learning opportunities in school- and community-based settings.[9]	☐ The district/system meets the criteria for the column(s) to the left. Early childhood programs have established policies that eliminate or severely limit expulsion, suspension or other exclusionary discipline. These extraordinary measures are used only as a last resort in extraordinary circumstances where there is a determination of a serious safety threat that can't otherwise be reduced or eliminated by the provision of reasonable modifications. Should a situation arise where there is documented evidence that all possible interventions and supports have been exhausted, and it is unanimously determined that another setting is more appropriate for the well-being of the child in question, all parties, including the receiving program, work together to develop and implement a seamless transition plan.[10] The district's data shows zero expulsions or suspensions for children ages birth through 5.

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8   Adapted from the Florida Inclusion Network, Best Practices for Inclusive Education (BPIE) – District

9   U.S. Department of Health and Human Services and U.S. Department of Education, Policy Statement on Inclusion of Children with Disabilities in Early Childhood Programs

10 U.S. Department of Health and Human Services and U.S. Department of Education Policy Statement on Expulsion and Suspension Policies in Early Childhood Settings

ELEMENT 6:

Transitions into Kindergarten

ELEMENT 6	0	1	2	3	4
6.1 Kindergarten transition planning	☐ ☐	The district/system works to support students' transitions into kindergarten.	The district/system meets the criteria for the column(s) to the left. The district/system partners with early childhood educators in the district/system and other early childhood providers in the community to support successful kindergarten transitions.	The district/system meets the criteria for the column(s) to the left. The district/system has strategies in place to ensure that kindergarten transition planning occurs for each child and family.	The district/system meets the criteria for the column(s) to the left. Kindergarten transition planning is personalized and occurs for each child, family and staff member.
6.2 Kindergarten Readiness Snapshot participation	☐ ☐	Most (more than 75%) of all kindergarten students participate in the Kindergarten Readiness Snapshot, the ASQ-3 and ASQ: SE-2 (unless the teacher collaborates with the family to determine that the ASQ should not be used); in-person, phone or written follow-up for all students; and in-person or phone follow-up conversation for all students whose results indicate the need for monitoring or are below the cutoff in ASQ-3/above the cutoff in ASQ:SE-2.	Most (more than 85%) of all kindergarten students participate in the Kindergarten Readiness Snapshot, the ASQ-3 and ASQ: SE-2 (unless the teacher collaborates with the family to determine that the ASQ should not be used); in-person, phone or written follow-up for all students; and in-person or phone follow-up conversation for all students whose results indicate the need for monitoring or are below the cutoff in ASQ-3/above the cutoff in ASQ:SE-2.	Nearly all (at least 95%) kindergarten students participate in the Kindergarten Readiness Snapshot, the ASQ-3 and ASQ: SE-2 (unless the teacher collaborates with the family to determine that the ASQ should not be used); in-person, phone or written follow-up for all students; and in-person or phone follow-up conversation for all students whose results indicate the need for monitoring or are below the cutoff in ASQ-3/above the cutoff in ASQ:SE-2.	Nearly all (at least 95%) kindergarten students participate in the Kindergarten Readiness Snapshot, the ASQ-3 and ASQ:SE-2 (unless the teacher collaborates with the family to determine that the ASQ should not be used); in-person, phone or written follow-up for all students; and in-person or phone follow-up conversations for all students whose results indicate the need for monitoring or are below the cutoff in ASQ-3/above the cutoff in ASQ:SE-2. A district's/system's Kindergarten Readiness Snapshot data is used to: • Design environments and instruction to meet the needs of incoming kindergarteners. • Support aligned teaching practice and program planning. • Support personalized instruction. • Promote positive teacher family relationships.

Complete the online application

Districts apply for Kansans Can Star Recognition using an authenticated application located through **KSDE's authenticated application**[11] website.

An authorized district representative will register for access to the Kansans Can Star Recognition application and then enter the results of the district's completed self-assessment. The district representative will receive a confirmation email once the application has been successfully submitted.

Applicants should upload **artifacts** (documentation and/or outcomes analysis) to support each subelement rating. Artifacts provide evidence that districts/systems should earn the points associated with each item on the rubric. As local teams conduct their local self-assessment and complete the rubric, they should consider what artifacts (documentation and/or outcomes analysis) can support the self-assessment in the district's/system's application for recognition. These artifacts should NOT include hyperlinks/URLs to external websites. See the Kindergarten Readiness Suggested Artifacts document for additional guidance. Applicants will use the **narrative** box in the authenticated application to describe why the artifacts submitted support the self-assessment rating for that subelement.

The online application will automatically calculate the Star Recognition level that corresponds with the results of the district's submitted self-assessment. This result will be considered unofficial until the Kansas State Department of Education's official review of the application and any accompanying artifacts.

Districts/systems that have previously earned Star Recognition may choose to reapply to earn a higher level of recognition. These applicants should add artifacts and narratives for each element when reapplying.

For more information, contact:

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Website: https://www.ksde.org

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[11] KSDE Authenticated Applications website: https://apps.ksde.org/Authentication/login.aspx