Kindergarten Entry Assessments in RTT-ELC Grantee States

Under their Race to the Top – Early Learning Challenge (RTT-ELC) grants, States are revising existing or implementing new kindergarten entry assessment (KEA) tools. This document provides an overview of the assessment instruments currently in use or being developed by the 20 States that have been awarded RTT-ELC grants. It details which States are collaborating on KEA development, and it provides information on the time frames for developing and conducting the assessments.

The information in this document is based on a review of State websites, RTT-ELC Annual Performance Reports, and a brief prepared by the Center on Enhancing Early Learning Outcomes (CEELO).

KEA Defined

Federal guidance for RTT-ELC defines a KEA as an assessment that has the following characteristics:

- It is administered to children during the first few months of their admission into kindergarten.
- It covers all the Essential Domains of School Readiness.*
- It is used in conformance with the recommendations of the National Research Council reports on early childhood.
- It is valid and reliable for its intended purposes and for the target populations and is aligned to the State’s early learning and development standards.

Results of the assessment should be used to provide information to help close the school readiness gap at kindergarten entry, to inform instruction in the early elementary school grades, and to notify parents about their children’s status and involve them in decisions about their children’s education. KEAs should not be used to prevent children’s entry into kindergarten or as a single measure for high-stakes decisions.

The primary measure of a school’s success under the Elementary and Secondary Education Act is proficiency on State assessments. The Federal Enhanced Assessment Grants (EAGs) can be used to improve the quality, validity, and reliability of State academic assessments; measure student academic achievement using multiple measures; chart student progress over time; and evaluate student academic achievement through the development of comprehensive academic assessment instruments. The fiscal year 2013 EAGs are supporting three State education agencies—North Carolina, Maryland, and Texas—in developing or enhancing their kindergarten entry assessments.

* Essential Domains of School Readiness means the domains of language and literacy development, cognition, and general knowledge (including early mathematics and early scientific development); approaches toward learning; physical well-being and motor development (including adaptive skills); and social and emotional development.
Where Are RTT-ELC States in the Development and Implementation Process?

RTT-ELC grantee States are at different stages in the process of implementing a new or revised KEA. All States have completed the planning and development stage and, as illustrated in the graphic below, are expected to be pilot testing, phasing in implementation, or at statewide implementation by the end of the 2015 calendar year. The number after each State’s name indicates whether the State is a Phase 1 (awarded in 2011), Phase 2 (awarded in 2012), or Phase 3 (awarded in 2013) grantee.

### Pilot Testing
- Georgia* – 3
- Minnesota – 1
- New Mexico – 2
- Rhode Island – 1

### Phasing in Implementation
- Colorado – 2
- Delaware – 1
- Illinois – 2
- Massachusetts – 1
- Michigan – 3
- New Jersey – 3
- Pennsylvania – 3
- Washington – 1

### Statewide Implementation
- California – 1
- Kentucky – 3
- Maryland – 1
- North Carolina* – 1
- Ohio – 1
- Oregon – 2
- Vermont – 3
- Wisconsin† – 2

* Each of these States has an existing assessment tool in statewide implementation that is used as a KEA, but is developing a new or revised KEA as part of its RTT-ELC grant.

† Wisconsin’s assessment is not a comprehensive KEA. It is used for literacy assessment only.
When Will Each RTT-ELC State’s KEA Be Implemented?

This graphic shows the anticipated date of implementation for each State’s KEA, as reported in its 2014 Annual Performance Report. Information was updated based on a review of State webpages in September 2015. The number after each State’s name indicates whether the State is a Phase 1 (awarded in 2011), Phase 2 (awarded in 2012), or Phase 3 (awarded in 2013) grantee.*

2013–2014 School Year
- Kentucky – 3
- Oregon – 2
- Vermont – 3

2014–2015 School Year
- Maryland – 1
- Ohio – 1

2015–2016 School Year
- California – 1
- Colorado – 2
- Delaware – 1
- Massachusetts – 1
- Michigan – 3
- North Carolina* – 1

After 2015–2016
- Georgia* – 3
- Illinois – 2
- Minnesota – 1
- New Jersey – 3
- New Mexico – 2
- New Jersey – 3
- Pennsylvania – 3
- Rhode Island – 1
- Washington – 1

* Each of these States has an existing assessment tool in statewide implementation that is used as a KEA, but is developing a new or revised KEA as part of its RTT-ELC grant.
† Wisconsin, a Phase 2 grantee, is not shown because its assessment, which is not a comprehensive KEA and is used for literacy assessment only, is already fully implemented.
How Are States Collaborating on Assessment Development?

States are collaborating on assessment development and leveraging other States’ experiences in various ways. Some RTT-ELC States are collaborating with one another to develop assessment tools. Some States are adapting tools developed in other States or including those tools in their KEA pilot studies. Many States are collaborating through two Enhanced Assessment Grant (EAG) consortia, one led by Maryland* and the other by North Carolina.† A third EAG was awarded to Texas.‡ Many States are also collaborating through the Partnership for Assessment of Readiness for College and Careers (PARCC) on K-2 English Language Arts/Literacy and Math assessments.

* Maryland’s consortium includes Connecticut, Indiana, Massachusetts, Michigan, Nevada, and Ohio.
† North Carolina’s consortium includes Arizona, Delaware, Iowa, Maine, North Dakota, Oregon, Rhode Island, and Washington, D.C., with South Carolina as a collaborating State.
‡ Texas received an EAG to implement the Texas Kindergarten Entry Assessment System (TX-KEA).
Are RTT-ELC States Using Commercial or State-Developed Tools?

RTT-ELC States are selecting and developing a variety of tools for use in their KEA initiatives. Several States are adopting or adapting commercially developed tools. Other States are developing their own tools or adapting tools developed by another State. A few States are pilot testing multiple tools.

Click on a State in the map below to visit its KEA website.

**Using Both Commercial and State Tools**
- **CO**: Teaching Strategies GOLD, Riverside Early Assessments of Learning (REAL), Desired Results Developmental Profile (DRDP-K 2015), and Teaching Strategies GOLD Survey
- **MN**: Desired Results Developmental Profile - School Readiness (2012), Teaching Strategies GOLD 2nd edition (2013), and Work Sampling System - MN Adapted version (2006). Other tools may be piloted at a later date

**Adopting or Adapting Commercial Tools**
- **DE**: Adapted version of Teaching Strategies GOLD
- **KY**: Brigance Kindergarten Screen III
- **MA**: Teaching Strategies GOLD and Work Sampling System are being piloted
- **MI**: Teaching Strategies GOLD is being piloted
- **NJ**: Teaching Strategies GOLD is being piloted
- **OR**: Adapted version of Child Behavior Rating Scale and easyCBM
- **WA**: Teaching Strategies GOLD
- **WI**: Phonological Awareness Literacy Screening (PALS)*

**Developing or Adapting State Tools**
- **CA**: Desired Results Developmental Profile – Kindergarten
- **GA**: Kindergarten Entry Profile for the Georgia Kindergarten Inventory of Developing Skills (GKIDS)
- **IL**: DRDP-K
- **OH**: New Kindergarten Readiness Assessment
- **MD**: Kindergarten Readiness Assessment (KRA)
- **NM**: The Kindergarten Observation Tool (KOT) is based on a modified version of New Mexico’s PreK Observational Assessment
- **NC**: A K-3 formative assessment will generate a child profile at kindergarten entry
- **PA**: Kindergarten Entry Inventory (KEI)
- **RI**: Kindergarten Entry Profile (KEP) developed in collaboration with a consortium led by North Carolina
- **VT**: Kindergarten Readiness Survey (KRS)

*The PALS is not a comprehensive KEA. It is used for literacy assessment only.*

Updated October 2015.
When Are RTT-ELC States Assessing Children for School Readiness?

Nearly all the RTT-ELC States have implemented, or plan to implement, a KEA that is administered in the fall. However, there is variation in when children are assessed for school readiness and whether the KEA is also administered in winter and/or spring of the kindergarten year. This graphic takes into account the differing school year start dates for each State.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>State</th>
<th>Fall Assessment</th>
<th>Winter Assessment</th>
<th>Spring Assessment</th>
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</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>California</td>
<td>Within 60 calendar days</td>
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<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>Colorado</td>
<td>During the first six weeks</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>Delaware</td>
<td>Within 30 school days</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>Georgia</td>
<td>Within six weeks</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>Illinois</td>
<td>Within 40 school days</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>Kentucky</td>
<td>Within 15 calendar days prior to the start of school and 30 school days</td>
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<tr>
<td>Maryland</td>
<td>Between the start of school and November 1</td>
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<tr>
<td>Massachusetts</td>
<td>Fall checkpoint by November 7; spring checkpoint by June 5</td>
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<tr>
<td>Michigan</td>
<td>Within 45 school days</td>
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<tr>
<td>Minnesota</td>
<td>Within eight weeks*</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>New Jersey</td>
<td>Within seven weeks</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>New Mexico</td>
<td>No later than October 1†</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>North Carolina</td>
<td>Within 60 days of enrollment</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>Ohio</td>
<td>By November 1</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Oregon</td>
<td>Within six weeks</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Pennsylvania</td>
<td>Within 45 calendar days</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>Rhode Island</td>
<td>No time frame has been established for the forthcoming KEA</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>Vermont</td>
<td>First six to eight weeks</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>Washington</td>
<td>By October 31</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>Wisconsin</td>
<td>October 14 through November 8‡</td>
<td></td>
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</tbody>
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* Teachers administer their school’s chosen KEA tool based on the publisher’s recommended timeline, which is typically within the first eight weeks of the school year.
† This requirement will begin with the 2016-2017 school year.
‡ This is for the 2013 administration of the PALS. The PALS is not a comprehensive KEA and covers literacy only.

Updated October 2015.
Resources

Developing Kindergarten Readiness and Other Large-Scale Assessment Systems: Necessary Considerations in the Assessment of Young Children (a National Association for the Education of Young Children document)

ELC TA Community of Practice on Comprehensive Assessment

Fast Fact: Information and Resources on Developing State Policy on Kindergarten Entry Assessment (a CEELO document)

Kindergarten Entrance Assessments (an Education Commission of the States document)
http://ecs.force.com/mbdata/mbquestRT?rep=Kq1407

Kindergarten Entry Assessment Discussion Guide 2013 (a BUILD Initiative document)

Moving Forward with Kindergarten Readiness Assessment Efforts: A Position Paper of the Early Childhood Education State Collaborative on Assessment and Student Standards (a Council of Chief State School Officers document)

http://www.nap.edu/catalog.php?record_id=12446

Race to the Top – Early Learning Challenge Grant Program

U.S. Department of Education Enhanced Assessment Grant Program
http://www2.ed.gov/programs/eag/index.html