

Kindergarten Entry Assessments in RTT-ELC Grantee States

Under their Race to the Top – Early Learning Challenge (RTT-ELC) grants, States are revising existing kindergarten entry assessment (KEA) systems or implementing new ones. This document provides an overview of the following information related to KEA systems:

- Where RTT-ELC States are in the development and implementation processes;
- When RTT-ELC States will implement their KEAs;
- How States are collaborating on assessment development;
- What types of assessment tools RTT-ELC States are using; and
- When RTT-ELC States assess children for school readiness.



The information in this document is based on a review of State websites, 2014 and 2015 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.

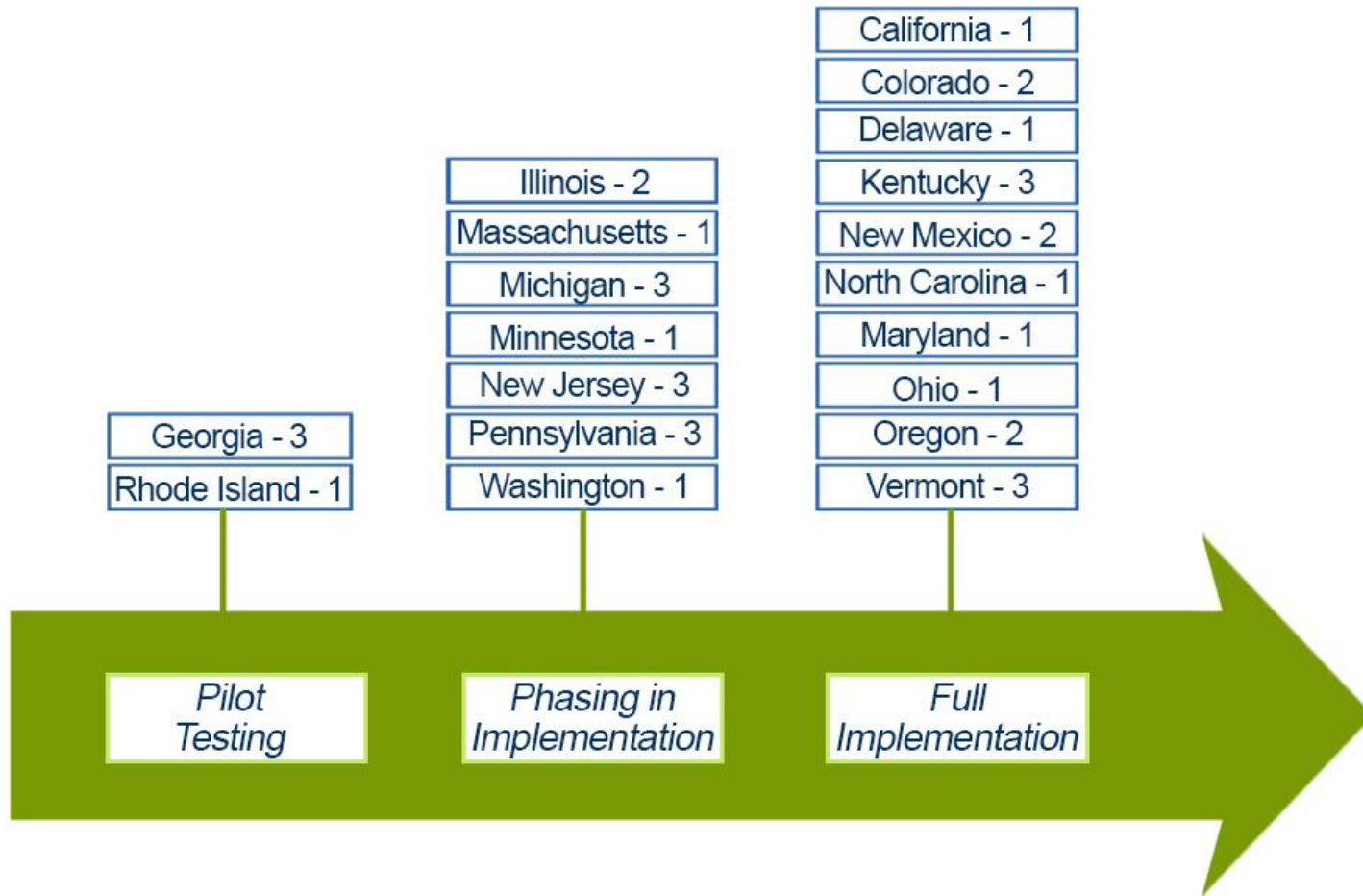
Results of the assessment should be used to provide information to help close the school readiness gap at kindergarten entry, to inform instruction in the early elementary school grades, and to notify parents about their children's status and involve them in decisions about their children's education.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

In addition to the language in RTT-ELC that supports comprehensive assessments, States were also given the opportunity through the Enhanced Assessment Grants (EAGs) 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 were supporting three State education agencies—North Carolina, Maryland, and Texas—in developing or enhancing their kindergarten entry assessments.

* Federal guidance for RTT-ELC defines Essential Domains of School Readiness as 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?

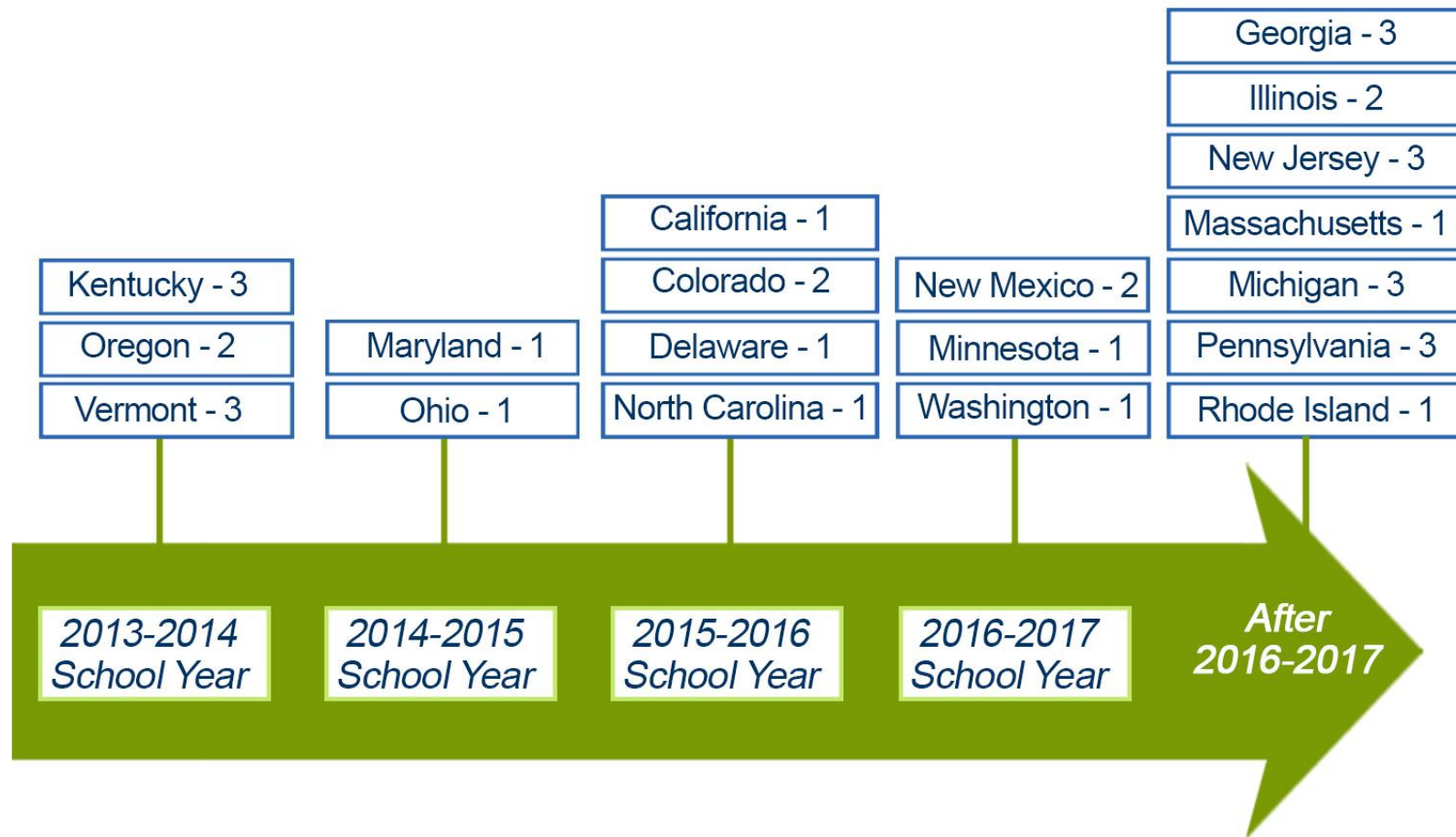
RTT-ELC grantee States are at different stages in the process of implementing a new or revised KEA. States have completed the planning and development stage and, as illustrated in the graphic below, are expected to be pilot testing, phasing in implementation, or at statewide implementation by the end of 2016.[†] The number after each State name indicates whether the State is a Phase 1 grantee (awarded in 2011), Phase 2 grantee (awarded in 2012), or Phase 3 grantee (awarded in 2013).



[†] Wisconsin's assessment, the PALS, is not a KEA as defined by Federal guidelines. It is used for literary assessment only.

When Will Each RTT-ELC State's KEA Be Implemented?

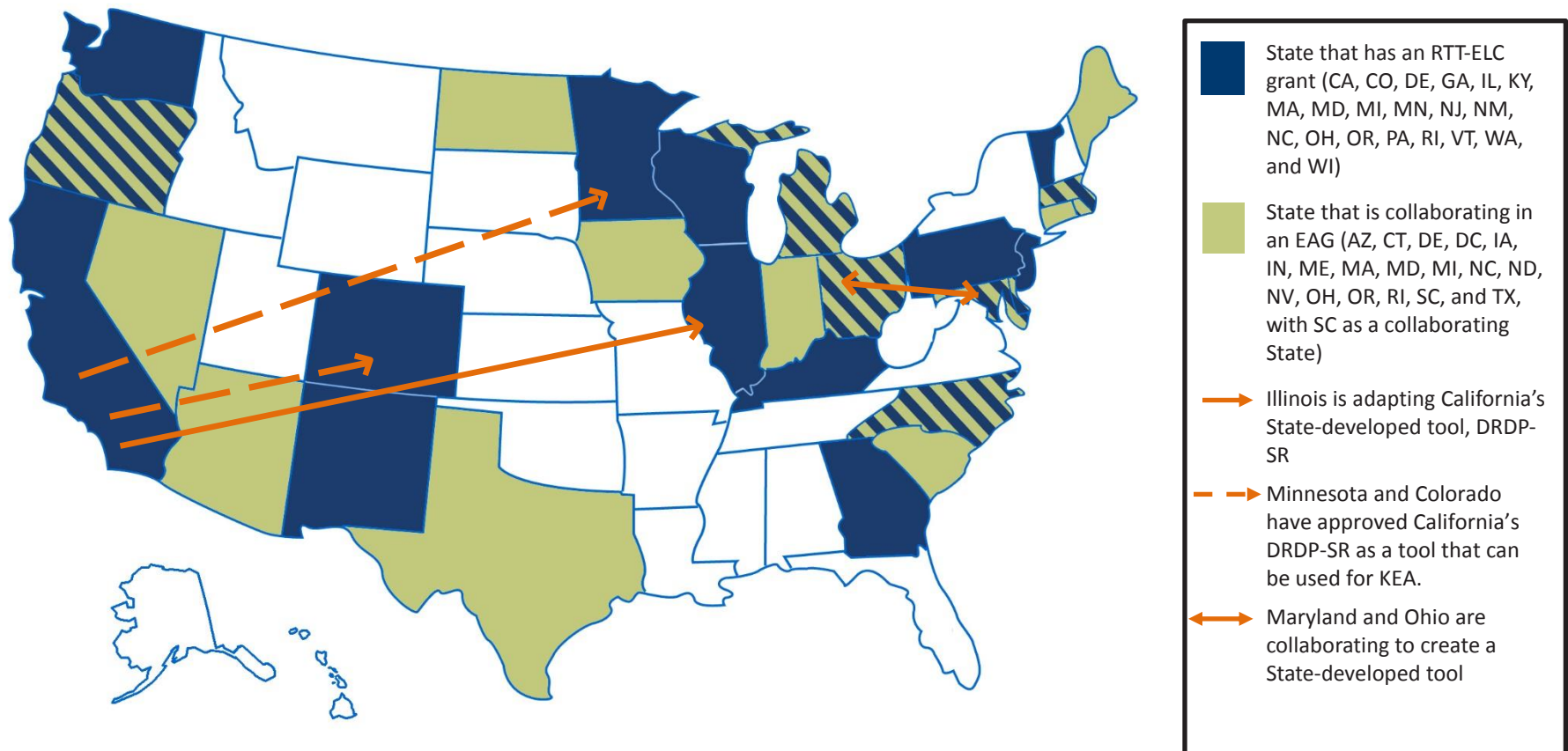
This graphic shows the anticipated date of implementation for each State's KEA[†], as reported in its 2015 RTT-ELC Annual Performance Report. Information has been updated based on a review of State webpages in June 2016. The number after each State name indicates whether the State is a Phase 1 grantee (awarded in 2011), Phase 2 grantee (awarded in 2012), or Phase 3 grantee (awarded in 2013).



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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.‡



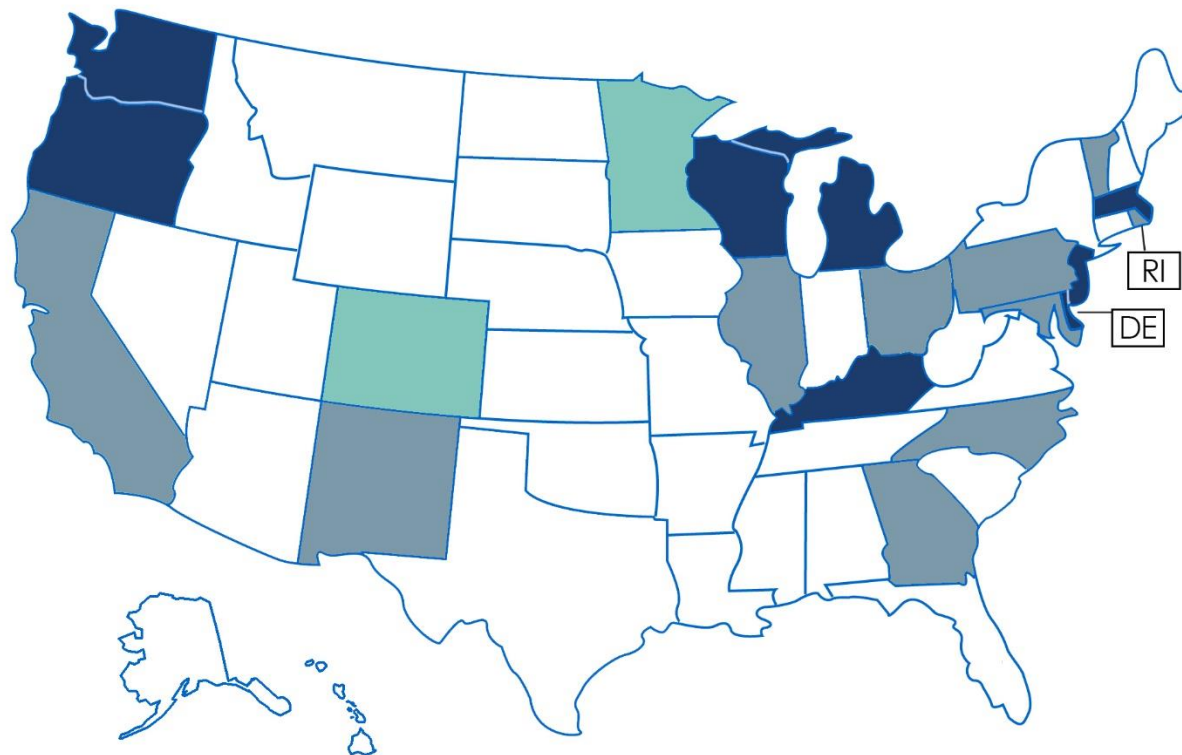
*Maryland's consortium includes Connecticut, Indiana, Massachusetts, Michigan, Nevada, and Ohio.

† 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.



Adopting or Adapting Commercial Tools

DE: Adapted version of Teaching Strategies GOLD®

KY: Brigance® Kindergarten Screen III

MA: Teaching Strategies GOLD®, Work Sampling System or other tools that meet State requirements

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: Readiness Check

IL: DRDP-K

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

OH: Kindergarten Readiness Assessment

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)

Using Both Commercial and State Tools

CO: Teaching Strategies GOLD®, Riverside Early Assessments of Learning (REAL), Desired Results Developmental Profile (DRDP-K), and Teaching Strategies GOLD® Survey

MN: Desired Results Developmental Profile - Kindergarten (DRDP-K), Teaching Strategies GOLD®, Minnesota Work Sampling System, and Formative Assessment System for Teachers

† Wisconsin's assessment, the PALS, is not a KEA as defined by Federal guidelines. It is used for literacy assessment only.

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.

California		Within 60 calendar days	
Colorado		Within 60 calendar days	
Delaware		Within 30 school days	
Georgia		Within six weeks	
Illinois		Within 40 school days	
Kentucky		Within 15 calendar days prior to the start of school and 30 school days	
Maryland		Between the start of school and November 1	
Massachusetts		Fall checkpoint by November 7 - spring checkpoint by June 5	
Michigan		Within 45 school days	
Minnesota		Within eight weeks*	
New Jersey		Within seven weeks	
New Mexico [‡]		With 30 school days	
North Carolina		Within 60 days of enrollment	
Ohio		By November 1	
Oregon		Within six weeks	
Pennsylvania		Within 45 calendar days	
Rhode Island		No time frame has been established for the forthcoming KEA	
Vermont		First six to eight weeks	
Washington		By October 31	
Wisconsin [†]		October 12 through November 6	

Aug. Sept. Oct. Nov.

Fall Assessment Winter Assessment Spring Assessment

* 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 begins with the 2016-2017 school year.

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Resources

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

http://www.naeyc.org/files/naeyc/file/research/Assessment_Systems.pdf

ELC TA Community of Practice on Comprehensive Assessment

<https://elc.grads360.org/#communities/comprehensive-assessment>

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

Fast Fact: Information and Resources on Developing State Policy on Kindergarten Entry Assessment. Center on

Enhancing Early Learning Outcomes (CEELO). [http://ceelo.org/wp-](http://ceelo.org/wp-content/uploads/2014/02/KEA_Fast_Fact_Feb_11_2014_2.pdf)

[content/uploads/2014/02/KEA_Fast_Fact_Feb_11_2014_2.pdf](http://ceelo.org/wp-content/uploads/2014/02/KEA_Fast_Fact_Feb_11_2014_2.pdf)

Kindergarten Entrance Assessments. Education Commission of the States. <http://ecs.force.com/mbdata/mbquestRT?rep=Kq1407>

Improving Systems of Learning Through the Use of Child Standards and Assessments: 2015 BUILD E-Book. BUILD Initiative.

<http://www.buildinitiative.org/Portals/0/Uploads/Documents/E->

[BookChapter6ImprovingSystemsofLearningThroughtheUseofChildStandardsandAssessments.pdf](http://www.buildinitiative.org/Portals/0/Uploads/Documents/E-BookChapter6ImprovingSystemsofLearningThroughtheUseofChildStandardsandAssessments.pdf)

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

http://www.ccsso.org/Documents/CCSSO_K-Assessment_Final_7-12-11.pdf

National Research Council. (2008). *Early Childhood Assessment: Why, What, and How.* Committee on Developmental Outcomes and Assessments for Young Children, C.E. Snow and S.B. Van Hemel, Editors. Board on Children, Youth, and Families, Board on Testing and Assessment, Division of Behavioral and Social Sciences and Education. Washington, DC: The National Academies Press.

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

Race to the Top – Early Learning Challenge Grant Program. U.S. Department of

Education. <http://www2.ed.gov/programs/racetothetop-earlylearningchallenge/index.html>

Race to the Top – Early Learning Challenge Annual Progress Reports for 2014 and 2015 are

available at <https://elc.grads360.org/#program/annual-performance-reports>

RTT-ELC Notices Inviting Applications are available at <http://www.federalregister.gov/a/2011-21756/p-110>

