

AGENDA

Early Readiness Assessment Subcommittee

**Monday, May 18, 2015
1:00 pm
Room 433, Blatt Building**

- | | | | |
|------|--|--|--|
| I. | Welcome & Introductions | Mrs. Barbara Hairfield | |
| II. | Action Item: Approval of Minutes | Mrs. Barbara Hairfield | |
| III. | Action Item: Readiness Assessment
Recommendations | Mrs. Melanie Barton

Mrs. Bunnie Ward | |
| IV. | 2015-16 4K and 5K Assessment Update | Mrs. Melanie Barton

Ms. Liz Jones
SC Department of Education | |
| IV. | Adjournment | | |

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EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR

Minutes

Early Readiness Assessment Subcommittee

March 23, 2015

2:00 p.m., Blatt Building 405

Subcommittee Members Present: Anne Bull, Senator Mike Fair, Representative Raye Felder, Barbara Hairfield (Chair), and Deb Marks

EOC Member Present: David Whittemore

EOC Staff Present: Dr. Kevin Andrews, Melanie Barton, Hope Johnson-Jones, Dr. Rainey Knight, Bunnie Ward, and Dana Yow

Guest Presenters: Dr. Floyd Creech, Penny Danielson, and Dr. Becky White

I. Welcome and Introductions

Mrs. Hairfield opened the meeting by providing an overview of the mission and timelines of the Early Readiness Assessment Subcommittee. She also introduced guests and presenters. Sen. Fair moved to approve the January 26, 2015 meeting minutes, and Deb Marks seconded approval of minutes. The minutes as distributed were approved.

II. Local Early Education Systems

Dr. Floyd Creech, Director of School Readiness, Florence School District One, discussed his district's approach to early childhood education and assessment.

- Families: Florence offers Parents as Teachers and Parent Child Home programs, serving 250 children. Start 2 Read, reaches 500 families who have jobs making minimum wage. Men Read to Children reaches dads through barbershops and monthly parenting workshops.
- Communities: School Readiness Board (StartSmart) includes all agencies that provide services to children services. The Board meets monthly and is led by The School Foundation. The Social Media Network and Business Partners also meet, giving money and time to provide employees with books for their children and education. Child care centers share in training and book distribution. The District provides training for childcare hours. The comprehensive system is based upon the research of Bronfenbrenner where children develop optimally in triad environments.
- Schools: A school board committee oversees school readiness programs. Local funding has been redirected to school readiness with an investment of \$2.5 million over five years. Comprehensive early childhood centers utilize proven curriculum models monitored for fidelity with comprehensive assessment models in place.

Assessment:

- The full-day 4K program uses OWL (Opening the World of Learning for Pre-K). OWL is the curriculum and locally developed assessments.
- Specialists conduct monthly fidelity assessments and provide feedback to teachers. Specialists use these instruments to better understand where teachers are having challenges.
- Florence One believes that if they use curriculum with fidelity, then children will be better educated.

Social Emotional Health:

- More children are coming to school with social-emotional issues (lack of parenting attachment and toxic stress).
- The BESS kindergarten readiness test for social-emotional development has been utilized. There is a high correlation between not being ready for school and elevated BESS scores.
- The District is adding a Nurse Parent program.
- In a study done in partnership with the University of South Carolina, the district found that 15 percent of children in the full-day 4K (out of 120) had elevated BESS Scores with 3 to 4% at the highest elevated levels.

Language and Literacy:

- District confirms that at eighteen months of age, the number of words that a child has heard is a predictor of the child's 4th grade reading ability.

Representative Felder asked Dr. Creech if full-day 4K has been successful. Dr. Creech looked at one school's recent PASS scores in 3rd grade. Approximately 60 to 70 children participated in Montessori for from three-year-old kindergarten through kindergarten. Only one child failed any part of the state test. The PASS scores were comparable to the PASS scores of children in a school in the same district that had lower poverty index. Based on the results in Florence One, children were 24% more likely to score Met or above on PASS reading in 3rd grade and 26% more likely to score Met or above on PASS reading in 3rd grade.

III. Physical Health & Motor Skills Development

Dr. Becky White, with Pediatrics of Newberry, discussed the role of physical health and motor skills development play in children's readiness for school.

- Her practice sees all children regardless of their income status.
- In a 2002 study of 4-6 year olds, there was a strong relationship between physical health, mental health and academic ability.
- Gross motor skills develop from before birth to approximately age 5. Prior to age 2, the cerebellum forms the connections that control posture and coordination.

- Developmental disabilities: About 15 percent of children aged 3 through 17 years have one or more developmental disabilities such as ADHD, autism spectrum disorder, cerebral palsy, hearing loss, intellectual disability, learning disability, or vision impairment.
- Autism Spectrum Disorder is a brain-based disorder that affects a child's behavior, communication and social skills. Affected children often experience language delays and lack of joint attention. Regression in developmental milestones at 18 months is commonly observed.
- ADHD is a developmental disorder that affects the behavior, attention and learning of children.
- Iron Deficiency and Anemia cause cognitive impairments, deficits in attention span, intelligence, emotions and behavior. Nutrition matters.
 - Lead poisoning: lead affects the neurological system, especially in developing children. Exposure to lead during their developmental years has been shown to lead to lower IQ in children. Lead poisoning can cause comas, seizures, death. Toys, jewelry, and other products from other counties still contain lead. Lead has also been found in candy imported from Mexico. In the past month five children in her practice tested in levels between 10 and 14. A level of 5 or higher leads to developmental disabilities.
- Hearing loss: SC Department of Health and Environmental Control maintains that hearing loss occurs in approximately 2 to 4 out of every 1,000 babies. Newborn hearing screens are required for all hospitals that have 100 or more births.
- Dental disease: 54.3% of third graders in SC have had one or more cavities, according to 2008 report by the Centers for Disease Control report. At the time they were questioned, 22.6% had untreated cavities. Dental disease attributes to student absence.
- Visual impairment: Not until two months of age will a blind child reach for an object based on sound cue alone. Language may start sooner, but combinations of words and understanding the meaning of words are delayed.
- Early Periodic Screening Diagnosis Treatment (EPSDT): Before birth through early years for Medicaid eligible children. A significant number of children are not being screened if parents only visit for shots. We are losing a lot of children, unless they are also being screened in effective child care and preschool programs.
- Patient Centered Medical Home. 2013 Comprehensive Housing Affordability Strategy (CHAS) Data (statewide) shows that
 - 1% went to ER or Urgent Care Center
 - 4.8% did not have health insurance at some point in past 12 months
 - 5.2% delayed or did not fill a prescription due to cost.
- American Academy of Pediatrics has a school readiness policy. Kindergarten readiness is too late and we need to start sooner. Everything is connected for the child; maternal depression also impacts children.
- Studies have shown that parents do not consider doctors as a resource for parenting advice.

- For children who do not have a physician, they miss out on the continuity of care and additional screenings.

Ms. Hairfield asked how can teachers be more informed about these health issues and how can children be identified early. Dr. White responded that early identification could really assist academic performance and reduce classroom issues.

IV. Status of Early Childhood Assessment in SC

Penny Danielson of the SC Department of Education provided an update regarding the implementation of the mClass:Circle assessment.

- Readiness and language/literacy assessments were required by Acts 284 and 287.
- The 45-day requirement in Act 287 (Read to Succeed) was very challenging. In August 2014, mClass:Circle by Amplify was secured. Approximately 24,000 4K and 52,000 5K students were assessed.
- The Department surveyed districts for feedback. The contract required data to be submitted to the Department by December, so data could be released in January 2015. There have been continuous problems with data submitted by Amplify. There were significant challenges with scoring and the scores matching up to schools. With the data problem, it may not be reliable to make comparisons from 4K to 5K next year. Timing is a concern because the spring is here and the 2015-16 school year is fast approaching.
- The contract with Amplify is for one year. The Department faces making a decision for 2015-16. During the 2016-17 school year, Act 287 requires SDE to assess all domains.
- One of the options being discussed is the NC consortium. However, the timeline is difficult because the KEA will not be ready until school year 2017-18.
- The current recommendation is to have two different assessments for 4K and 5K.
- The Department is discussing options that will be cost effective and provide a smoother implementation in 2015-16. The Department is trying to avoid a new assessment for 2015-16 and then another in 2017-18.

V. Discussion and Next Steps

Melanie Barton provided a draft of EOC recommendations for 5K beginning of year assessment.

Rep. Felder expressed concern that Amplify had not adhered to contract. She inquired about the opportunity for the State to recoup some of the costs since accurate data is not available.

Deb Marks also requested more details about the data problems.

EDUCATION OVERSIGHT COMMITTEE

Subcommittee: Early Readiness Assessment

Date: May 18, 2015

ACTION ITEM

Recommendations on School Readiness Assessment

PURPOSE/AUTHORITY

Pursuant to Act 287 of 2014, Section 59-152-33 of the South Carolina Code of Laws, the EOC is required to submit recommendations to the State Board of Education on what a comprehensive assessment to evaluate and measure the school readiness of students prior to their entrance into a prekindergarten or kindergarten program” should measure.

CRITICAL FACTS

The Early Readiness Assessment Subcommittee met several times this year to gather evidence and information from a broad-based group of stakeholders. The Subcommittee also convened a working group of early childhood practitioners representing public schools, private child care centers, and Head Start. The result is the attached report that recommends a framework defining the characteristics of a comprehensive readiness assessment to evaluate “each child’s early language and literacy development, numeracy skills, physical well-being, social and emotional and development, and approaches to learning.”

TIMELINE/REVIEW PROCESS

November 17, 2014 – Subcommittee met and received input from experts from Department of Social Services, Head Start, Lexington 4, and SC Council on Competitiveness
January 26, 2015 – Subcommittee met and received input from experts from State Office of First Steps, University of South Carolina, and Clemson University,
March 23, 2015 – Subcommittee met and received input from experts from South Carolina Department of Education, Florence 1 School District, and Pediatrics of Newberry
April 13, 2015 – Early Readiness Assessment Working Group reviews framework and makes recommendations on assessments
April 15, 2015 – EOC requests input from SC First Steps to School Readiness Board of Trustees

ECONOMIC IMPACT FOR EOC

Cost:

Fund/Source: Agency Appropriations

ACTION REQUEST

For approval

For information

Approved

ACTION TAKEN

Amended

Not Approved

Action deferred (explain)

DRAFT

**Readiness
Assessment
Recommendations
Per Act 287 of 2014**

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Acknowledgements

The EOC acknowledges the following individuals who provided technical assistance and input for this report:

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I. Overview

For young children to be ready for and successful in school, they must have foundational knowledge and skills in multiple areas, or domains. In 2014, the General Assembly fully supported the development of a comprehensive readiness assessment to gauge young children's acquisition of knowledge and skills. Legislative commitment to early assessment is evident in Proviso 1A.76 of the 2014-15 General Appropriation Act, as well as Act 284 (SC Read to Succeed Act) and Act 287 (First Steps to School Readiness Initiative) of 2014.

Act 287 (First Steps to School Readiness Initiative) defines school readiness as:

the level of child development necessary to ensure early school success as measured in the following domains: physical health and motor skills; emotional and social competence; language and literacy development; and mathematical thinking and cognitive skills. School readiness is supported by the knowledge and practices of families, caregivers, healthcare providers, educators, and communities.¹

With the implementation of early learning standards in multiple settings, statewide assessment of young children is used to:

- ⇒ inform instruction by providing essential information for caregivers and teachers to better understand individual children's developmental progress and how well they are learning,
- ⇒ screen for special education needs and identify additional services children may need,
- ⇒ guide program design and implementation,
- ⇒ apprise accountability systems by providing data about a program's impact on children., and
- ⇒ inform at the community or population level to determine the progress of a group of children over time.

South Carolina views readiness assessment with narrower focus as evident in Acts 284 and 287 of 2014. Act 284 (South Carolina Read to Succeed Initiative) defines a readiness assessment as an assessment "used to analyze students' literacy, mathematical, physical, social, and emotional-behavioral competencies in prekindergarten or kindergarten."² In this report, statewide readiness assessment is intended to provide formative and summative data to teachers, parents and policymakers to inform instruction and consider children's progress toward developmental competencies. This brief references five specific readiness domains: language and literacy, numeracy, physical well-being, social and emotional, and approaches to learning, which are listed in Acts 284 and 287.

Proviso 1A.76 (ratified by the General Assembly on June 5, 2014) requires the Education Oversight Committee (EOC) to recommend the characteristics of a readiness assessment for

¹ Act 287, "First Steps to School Readiness," Section 59-152-25(G).

² Act 284, "South Carolina Read to Succeed Act," Section 59-155-120(4).

children in prekindergarten and kindergarten, focused on early language and literacy development, to the State Board of Education no later than July 30, 2015. The EOC accomplished this initiative, which resulted in the adoption of the mClass:CIRCLE assessment. See Appendix D for additional detail.

During the summer of 2014, the South Carolina Department of Education (SCDE) awarded Amplify, Inc. a one-year contract to provide the mClass:CIRCLE assessment (Circle) to young children in publicly-funded four-year old prekindergarten (4K) and five-year old kindergarten (5K) classrooms in both public school and private child care center settings. Initial findings regarding 4K and 5K students' status in language and literacy and social and emotional development will be included in the second part of EOC's evaluation of publicly-funded full-day 4K in summer of 2015. Data quality issues have delayed reporting.

The EOC established the Early Readiness Assessment Subcommittee in response to Act 287 of 2014 (see Appendix A for language). Pursuant to Act 287 the EOC is making recommendations to the State Board of Education on what a comprehensive readiness assessment or assessments should be able to measure in each domain defined in law to determine the education needs of children. The EOC is also including potential assessments to be considered by the State Board of Education. Some of the assessments may have to be procured while others could merely be teacher observations or check lists developed by the South Carolina Department of Education. However, "selecting" an assessment cannot occur without having information on the amount of funds available to procure an assessment and without having to conform to the South Carolina Procurement Code.

The Subcommittee's mission was to gather information from early childhood experts and discuss recommendations for a statewide strategy for the assessment of young children's readiness for school. The Subcommittee met five times during 2014-15 and reviewed research or heard testimony from early childhood professionals and organizations including: University of South Carolina, Clemson University, Lexington 4 Early Childhood Center, Institute for Child Success, TransformSC, Head Start, Department of Social Services, First Steps State Office, and SC Department of Education. The EOC also convened a working group April 13, 2015 to discuss readiness assessment for 4K and 5K students and also solicited their feedback on the Kindergarten Readiness Assessment Framework included in this report. See Appendix G.

Conditions in which children live and learn greatly influence their development. Young children need supportive, nurturing, caring relationships with adults and stimulating, safe environments to thrive.³ Observational measures of home and learning environments are necessary to ensure they are conducive to children's development and learning. While there are several measures

³ Snow, C. E., and S. B. Van Hemel. *Early Childhood Assessment: Why, What, and How* (Washington D.C., The National Academies Press, 2008) http://www.nap.edu/openbook.php?record_id=12446&page=R1.

to assess home and community environments, this report will primarily consider assessment of learning environments.

II. Purpose of Assessment - Overview

Assessment is an essential part of a larger early childhood system. It is necessary to efficiently deliver effective services, while consistently improving quality by implementing programs and interventions with fidelity. Provision of ongoing, supportive professional development for caregivers and teachers must also be considered. A comprehensive assessment system is a:

Coordinated and comprehensive system of multiple assessments—each of which is valid and reliable for its specified purpose and for the population with which it will be used—that organizes information about the process and context of young children’s learning and development in order to help early childhood educators make informed instructional and programmatic decisions. A comprehensive assessment system includes, at a minimum, screening measures, formative assessments, measures of environmental quality, and measures of the quality of adult-child interactions.⁴

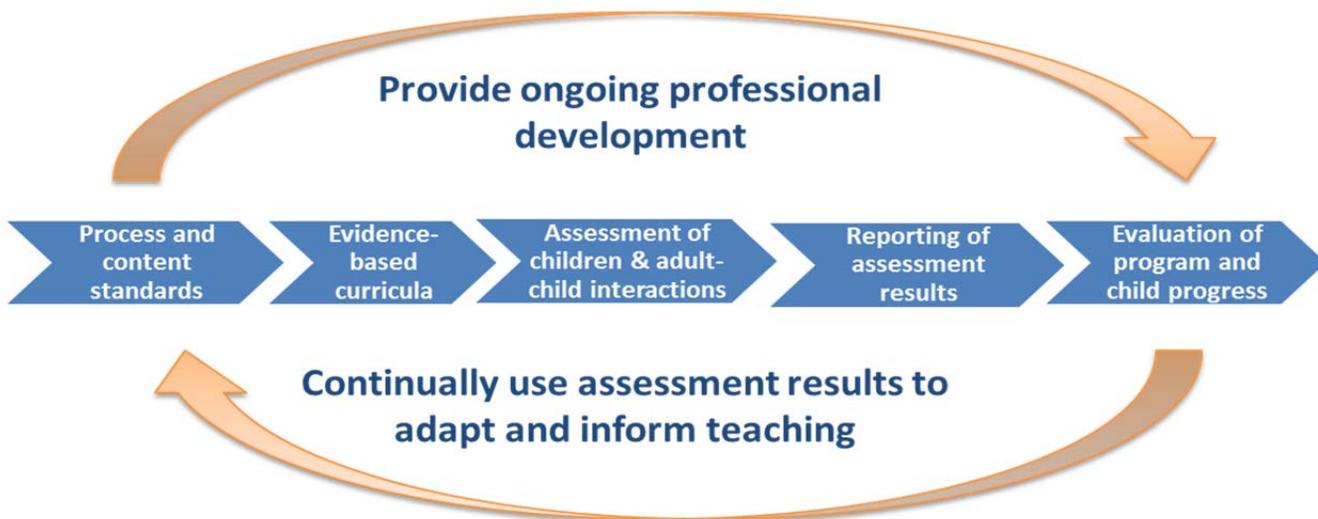
This broader consideration of assessment is important, and it is most effective if it is utilized to provide professional development to teachers in order to improve young children’s learning, and ultimately, school readiness and educational success. Figure 1 shows the cyclical nature of early childhood assessment, when it is effectively implemented. An evidence-based curriculum ensures State-adopted process and content standards are well-integrated into an early learning environment. Consideration of the adult-child interaction, as well as assessment of the child, provide a comprehensive picture of effectiveness for our youngest students. These assessments can be communicated to a diverse group of stakeholders including teachers, schools, parents, community leaders, policy makers, and the general public. Results can be used to inform instruction and provide ongoing professional development. Recent research notes a system should include:

- ⇒ “Standards: a comprehensive, well-articulated set of standards for both program quality and children’s learning,
- ⇒ Assessments: Multiple approaches to documenting program quality, as well as children’s learning and development. Assessments should be aligned to standards,
- ⇒ Reporting: An integrated database of assessment instruments and results that also provides information on how scores related to standards and produces reports for various stakeholder groups,
- ⇒ Professional development: Ongoing opportunities for policy makers, program directors, administrators, and practitioners to further their understanding of standards and learn to use assessment results for their own purposes,

⁴ U.S. Department of Education. <http://www.ed.gov/early-learning/elc-draft-summary/definitions>

- ⇒ Opportunity to learn: Procedures to assess children’s environments and whether they offer safety, enjoyment, and high-quality support for development and learning, and
- ⇒ Inclusion: Procedures for ensuring that all children served by the program will be assessed fairly, regardless of their language, culture, or disabilities.”⁵

Figure 1
Assessment Cycle for Young Children



Source: B. Ward, EOC, 2015

National Perspective

Assessment of young children can be challenging. Traditionally, students’ academic achievement is assessed by using norm- or criterion-reference tests. Students read and answer items independently and teachers record their responses on an answer sheet or using a computer. Due to younger children’s developmental status, they may be unable to use a pencil or a computer independently. Young children also develop at different rates. There also may be significant variation in the skills and knowledge due to factors associated with families’ socioeconomic status or home language, children’s disabilities, or parent participation in the military. For these reasons, it is important that the assessment of young children be developmentally appropriate. Both the National Association for the Education of Young Children (NAEYC) and the National Association of Early Childhood Specialists in State Departments of Education have issued a joint statement that supports young children’s assessment when it is used to:

⁵ Hanover Research, *Kindergarten Entry Assessments: Practices and Policies* (December 2013). <http://www.hanoverresearch.com/media/Kindergarten-Entry-Assessments-Practices-and-Policies.pdf>

Assess young children’s strengths, progress, and needs, use assessment methods that are developmentally appropriate, culturally and linguistically responsive, tied to children’s daily activities, supported by professional development, inclusive of families, and connected to specific beneficial purposes: (1) making sound decisions about teaching and learning, (2) identifying significant concerns that may require focused intervention for individual children, and (3) helping programs improve their educational and developmental interventions.⁶

Both organizations also urge multiple sources of evidence be considered and recommend:

- ⇒ Assessment instruments are used for their intended purposes,
- ⇒ Assessments are appropriate for ages and other characteristics of children being assessed,
- ⇒ Assessment instruments are in compliance with professional criteria for quality [validity and reliability],
- ⇒ What is assessed is developmentally and educationally significant,
- ⇒ Assessment evidence is used to understand and improve learning,
- ⇒ Assessment evidence is gathered from realistic settings and situations that reflect children’s actual performance,
- ⇒ Assessments use multiple sources of evidence gathered over time,
- ⇒ Screening is always linked to follow-up,
- ⇒ Use of individually administered, norm-referenced tests is limited, and
- ⇒ Staff and families are knowledgeable about assessment.⁷

These recommendations are useful when considering the three types of readiness assessment widely used today.

- ⇒ Direct assessments provide both individual student scores and aggregated data for large groups of children compared to a larger sample of children of the same chronological age. Direct assessment data are useful for considering trends within classrooms, schools or districts over a period of time. Since direct assessment is usually based upon particular set of skills or knowledge, adults who conduct the assessment can be external to the classroom or school as long as they are trained. However, a child’s knowledge or skill at a particular point in time may not give a full understanding of the child’s ability and may not provide enough information about program quality or teacher professional development needs.

⁶ National Association for the Education of Young Children (NAEYC) and the National Association of Early Childhood Specialists in State Departments of Education (NAECS/SDE), *Early Childhood Curriculum, Assessment, and Program Evaluation: Building an Effective Accountable System in Programs for Children Birth through Age 8* (November 2003). <http://www.buildinitiative.org/TheIssues/EarlyLearning/StandardsAssessment/KEA.aspx>

⁷ Ibid.

- ⇒ Observation checklists and rating scales are another assessment strategy that is often viewed as “authentic” or “informal” because it depends on observation of children by familiar adults on a daily basis while they are participating in classroom activities and other educational settings. Observational assessments are also believed to provide a more comprehensive picture of children’s true ability. This assessment style is more labor intensive than direct assessment because it must be conducted by the classroom teacher and observations must be made over time. It may also provide a better sense of how learning occurs in the classroom and be especially useful for identifying training needs and developing professional development opportunities.
- ⇒ The collection of children’s work is another example of “authentic” assessment. Often referred to as “work sampling,” a teacher may collect samples of items created by children. Sometimes, teachers will document children’s learning with short videos or photos that can provide a picture of a child’s ability. Organizing work samples can be extremely time and labor intensive for teachers, and they have to be committed to continuously collecting and updating children’s work. Schools must also consider storage of work samples and how to communicate children’s skill sets to teachers in the next grade.

Recent research shows that states prefer “comprehensive observation-based protocols over direct assessments...At the same time, direct assessments appear to have their place in state Pre-K policies. Such measures can not only document discrete skills...but are especially useful for screening children for potential learning disabilities and/or diagnosing their need for specialized intervention.”⁸

South Carolina Perspective

Based upon recent legislation, the General Assembly envisions early assessment as a way to inform instruction and monitor children’s progress. In Act 284, the General Assembly views the purpose of readiness assessment to be “to provide teachers, administrators, and parents or guardians with information to address the readiness needs of each student...and providing appropriate instruction and support for each child.”⁹ In Act 287, the General Assembly also notes the assessment may include multiple assessments, and the purpose of assessment is to “provide teachers and parents or guardians with information to address the readiness needs of each student...The results of the assessment and the child’s identified needs must be provided, in writing, to the parent of guardian.”¹⁰

Given the substantive state investment in early education, the effectiveness of early education programs and interventions should also be considered. Progress at the programmatic, school

⁸ Debra J. Ackerman and Richard J. Coley, Educational Testing Service, *State Pre-K Assessment Policies: Issues and Status* (February 2012). <http://www.ets.org/Media/Research/pdf/PIC-PRE-K.pdf>.

⁹ Act 287, First Steps to School Readiness, Section 59-152-33(A).

¹⁰ Act 284, Read to Succeed, Section 59-155-150(A).

and community level can also be determined and result in program improvements. Assessment may also be used to screen children who may have additional needs (such as special education).

A comprehensive assessment system addresses several purposes, each with implications for data use. The purposes include (1) assessments used to support learning and instruction, (2) assessments used to identify children who may need additional services, (3) assessments used for program evaluation and to monitor trends such as the impact of modifications to the program. These assessments can further be classified into three tiers, summative, interim, and formative.

- ⇒ Summative assessments are often used one-time,
- ⇒ Interim assessments are those that are given a few times a year but are administered at the program, school, or district level, and
- ⇒ Formative assessment is embedded in instruction and administered across the school year.¹¹

¹¹ Shannon Riley-Ayers, Ph.D., Center on Enhancing Early Learning Outcomes, *Formative Assessment: Guidance for Early Childhood Policymakers* (April 2014). http://ceelo.org/wp-content/uploads/2014/04/ceelo_policy_report_formative_assessment.pdf.

III. Purpose of Assessment – Understand Individual Child

While the discussion below is organized by each domain, all of the child development domains are interrelated and interdependent. Multiple systems also address the developmental domains. Prior to assessment, evidence-based expectations should be established. The importance of standards cannot be overemphasized. Children who participate in programs and interventions that adhere to high-quality standards “exhibit improved developmental and learning outcomes compared with children with no program or those experiencing a low-quality program.”¹²

The South Carolina Early Learning Standards detail these expectations for three-, four-, and five-year olds. The stated purpose of the standards is to “support the readiness of young children through nurturing early care and education environments and developmentally appropriate practices through the development of voluntary guidelines.”¹³ The standards’ Guiding Principles establish a strengths-based approach when considering young children’s progress and achievement. Originally established in the 1960s, Head Start also has its own child outcomes framework, with content that is similar to the South Carolina Early Learning Standards. Head Start staff also actively participated in the development of the state’s standards.

In addition to these early care and education systems, South Carolina’s grade level standards address the developmental domains of English language arts and mathematics. While the Early Learning Standards address content (what children should know) and process (how they should learn) at the beginning of kindergarten, the grade level standards address process and content expectations for children at the end of kindergarten. Both the Early Learning Standards and the grade level standards were revised during the 2014-15 timeframe. The process for their development and approval varies. The South Carolina Department of Social Services manages the development of the voluntary early learning standards with significant input from community and government stakeholders. The promulgation of grade level standards is more formal. The South Carolina Department of Education established a writing team of educators, business leaders and community members. The EOC established review panels of educators, business leaders and community members who reviewed the draft standards and recommended revisions. Both the State Board of Education and the EOC approved the standards for their adoption for the 2015-16 school year. At the time of this report, the revision of the Early Learning Standards was not complete.

¹² Snow, C. E., and S. B. Van Hemel. *Early Childhood Assessment: Why, What, and How* (Washington D.C., The National Academies Press, 2008), 45. http://www.nap.edu/openbook.php?record_id=12446&page=R1.

¹³ <https://ed.sc.gov/agency/programs-services/64/documents/EarlyLearningGoodStart.pdf>

Domain 1: Social and Emotional Development

Social and emotional development for young children is a critical, but often overlooked factor that impacts their ability to learn and be successful in school. They must be able to understand the feelings of others, control their own feelings and actions, and get along with teachers and their peers. Other related characteristics address how young children approach learning and may include initiative and curiosity, engagement, persistence, reasoning and problem solving skills.

Social-emotional issues among young children are common. Between 9.5 and 14.2 percent of children five years of age and younger experience social-emotional problems that negatively affect their functioning, development and school readiness.¹⁴ It is also important to note the social context of children's social-emotional development since family and environmental factors can make a child more vulnerable. Potential risk factors are associated with maternal well-being (mental health condition, domestic violence exposure) and neighborhood characteristics (low-income).¹⁵

Both Head Start and the SC Early Learning Standards address Social and Emotional Development. Head Start's commitment to children's mental health is evident by specific Head Start Program Performance Standards that address children's mental health, including self-concept, self-regulation, prosocial behavior, positive experiences and play. As part of the implementation of Circle during the 2014-15 school year, the South Carolina Department of Education requested teachers in school districts and private programs to rate 31 items included in the Social and Emotional Dimension of the assessment.

¹⁴ Cooper, Janice L, *Social-emotional Development in Early Childhood: What Every Policymaker Should Know*, (National Center for Children in Poverty at Mailman School of Public Health, Columbia University, 2003), 3.

http://www.nccp.org/publications/pdf/text_882.pdf

¹⁵ Ibid, 4-5.

Table 1
Social and Emotional Development Comparison

Head Start Child Development and Early Learning Framework	Current SC Early Learning Standards	mClass:Circle
Social relationships	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • form healthy social relationships • express feelings and show concern for others. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Positive Social Behaviors (9 teacher ratings) • Classroom Community & Safety (6 teacher ratings)
Self-Concept and Self-Efficacy	demonstrate a positive sense of self.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Emotion & Behavior Regulation (8 teacher ratings)
Self-Regulation	demonstrate self-control, respect and responsibility.	
Emotional and Behavioral Health		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Self-Care (2 teacher ratings)

Sources: SC Head Start Collaboration Office and SC Department of Social Services.

Domain 2: Approaches to Learning

As evidenced by the “Profile of the South Carolina Graduate,” social and emotional skills and the manner in which children approach learning are critical to children’s long-term success and their ability to become independent, productive adults. In fact, the Profile notes the importance of integrity, interpersonal skills, integrity, self-direction, perseverance, problem solving, work ethic, collaboration, and teamwork.¹⁶ While these soft skills may be overlooked in K-12 education, early childhood systems consider them Approaches to Learning.

Approaches to Learning are defined as “distinct, observable behaviors that indicate ways children become engaged in classroom interactions and learning activities.”¹⁷ Often Social and Emotional and Approaches to Learning domains are consolidated because they are interrelated. However, these domains are distinct from one another. Numerous studies have indicated that learning behaviors such as attention and persistence are related to early mathematics and literacy skills. A 2000 longitudinal study of children from kindergarten through second grade showed that teachers’ ratings of kindergartners’ work-related skills like those mentioned above were “significantly associated with children’s academic performance in kindergarten.”¹⁸ The most widely used measures of Approaches to Learning are teacher questionnaires. Table 2

¹⁶ The “Profile of the South Carolina Graduate” is approved by SCASA Superintendent’s Roundtable, SC Chamber of Commerce and the SC Council on Competitiveness. In February 2015, it was formally endorsed by the EOC and the State Board of Education. See Appendix D.

¹⁷ Snow, C. E., and S. B. Van Hemel. *Early Childhood Assessment: Why, What, and How*, The National Academies Press, 2008, 97. http://www.nap.edu/openbook.php?record_id=12446&page=R1

¹⁸ Ibid, 99.

provides a comparison of Head Start’s Framework and the current South Carolina Early Learning Standards.

Table 2
Approaches to Learning Comparison

Head Start Child Development and Early Learning Framework	Current SC Early Learning Standards	mClass:Circle
Initiative and Curiosity	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • show curiosity, eagerness and satisfaction as a learner • engage in play as a means to develop their individual approaches to learning. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Approaches to Learning (6 teacher ratings)
Persistence and Attentiveness	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • demonstrate initiative, engagement, and persistence in learning • demonstrate an increasing ability to envision a goal and to accomplish it • extend learning through the use of memory, reasoning, and problem solving skills. 	
Cooperation	Not specifically mentioned in standards	

Sources: SC Head Start Collaboration Office and SC Department of Social Services.

Domain 3: Language and Literacy Development

With the enactment of Act 284, the Read to Succeed Act, the General Assembly expressed its commitment to emergent language and literacy skills for young children from preschool through the early elementary grades. Language and literacy are closely linked but have different meanings: “Language is all about ideas passing from one person to another. Literacy is the ability to use and understand written words, or other symbols, in order to communicate.”¹⁹

Many experts and researchers have emphasized the impact of early language and literacy skills on a child’s development and success in school. According to the National Institute for Early Education Research (NIEER), “literacy development starts early in life and is highly correlated with school achievement...oral language is the foundation for literacy development.”²⁰ NIEER continues by stating:

Learning to read and write starts long before first grade and has long-lasting effects. Learning to read and write is an ongoing process from infancy.

¹⁹ Office of Head Start National Resource Center, *News You Can Use* (July 2013). <https://eclkc.ohs.acf.hhs.gov/hslc/tta-system/ehsnrc/school-readiness/nycusranglit.htm>

²⁰ National Institute for Early Education Research, *Early Literacy: Policy and Practice in the Preschool Years* (April 2006), 1.

Contrary to popular belief, it does not suddenly begin in kindergarten or first grade. From the earliest years, everything that adults do to support children's language and literacy is critical.²¹

Vocabulary is the most widely assessed component.²² Other emergent skills include a general understanding of print (such as book handling, letter recognition), comprehension, phonological awareness, and writing. Table 3 below compares Head Start and the SC Early Learning Standards to the skills assessed by mClass:Circle.

²¹ Ibid, 3.

²² Snow, C. E., and S. B. Van Hemel. *Early Childhood Assessment: Why, What, and How*, The National Academies Press, 2008, 101. http://www.nap.edu/openbook.php?record_id=12446&page=R1

Table 3
Language and Literacy Development Comparison

Head Start Child Development and Early Learning Framework	Current SC Early Learning Standards	mClass:Circle
Book Appreciation; Print Concepts and Conventions		Book and Print Concepts
Early Writing	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Developing written communication • Producing written communication in a variety of forms 	Early Writing
Alphabet Knowledge		Letter Naming
Alphabet Knowledge		Letter-Sound Correspondence
Phonological Awareness		Phonological Awareness with listening, rhyming, alliteration, words in a sentence, syllabication, onset-rime
Receptive Language; Expressive Language	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Understanding and using literary texts • Understanding and using informational texts • Learning to read by applying appropriate skills and strategies • Applying inquiry skills and oral communication 	Story Retell and Comprehension with: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • retell story with an introduction, • accurately or logically sequencing events, • retell with a logical summary or conclusion, comprehension with main idea, story sequence and • recalling story details
		Vocabulary Naming

Sources: SC Head Start Collaboration Office, SC Department of Social Services, and Amplify, Inc.

Read to Succeed also addresses early language and literacy development. The Act is a systemic and comprehensive approach to reading and addresses early identification of struggling readers in 4K through second grade. It further reinforces early identification by requiring a comprehensive readiness assessment that addresses all developmental domains by the 2016-17 school year. Read to Succeed also focuses on:

- ⇒ improving classroom instruction,
- ⇒ intervening to assist struggling readers upon identification,
- ⇒ communicating with parents or guardians when children have been identified as struggling readers,
- ⇒ improving pre- and in-service training of teachers,

- ⇒ requiring state and district reading plans, and
- ⇒ connecting reading instruction to statewide goals of college and career readiness.

Domain 4: Cognitive and Mathematics Development

Acts 284 (Read to Succeed Act) and 287 (First Steps to School Readiness Initiative) include mathematical skills as a critical developmental domain for young children. Act 287, however, includes math within a broader developmental area known as cognitive reasoning. Cognitive functioning denotes “general intellectual functioning; knowledge of specific topics, such as mathematics, science, and social studies; and more specific cognitive skills, such as executive function, attention and memory.”²³

Common components of math development are number sense, spatial sense and reasoning (geometry), measurement, classification and patterning (algebra) and number reasoning. Recently, the important role of math in determining school success may have been downplayed due to the increasing focus on language and literacy. However, American students’ performance in math ranks in the bottom third when compared to other students internationally. Longitudinal studies have also shown that mastery of some math concepts at school entry is the strongest predictor of later academic achievement.²⁴

Head Start takes a broader view of cognitive development and addresses math, science, social studies, and logic and reasoning. The state’s Early Learning Standards focus on math. See Table 4 for more detail.

²³ Ibid, 108-109.

²⁴ Ibid, 114-116.

Table 4
Math and Cognitive Development Comparison

Head Start Child Development and Early Learning Framework	Current SC Early Learning Standards
Mathematics <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Number Concepts & Quantities • Number Relationships & Operations • Geometry & Spatial Sense • Patterns • Measurement & Comparison 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Mathematics Processes • Number & Operations • Algebra • Geometry • Measurement • Data Analysis & Probability
Science Knowledge & Skills <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Scientific Skills & Method • Conceptual Knowledge of the Natural & Physical World 	Do not address
Social Studies Knowledge & Skills <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Family & Community • History & Events • People & the Environment 	Do not address
Logic & Reasoning <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Reasoning & Problem Solving • Symbolic Representation 	Addressed in Approaches to Learning

Sources: SC Head Start Collaboration Office, SC Department of Social Services

Cognitive assessment should focus on the child’s process of learning, as well as the child’s knowledge. During her January 26, 2015 presentation to the Early Readiness Assessment Subcommittee, Dr. Sandra Linder of Clemson University noted it is important for assessment to measure *how* students should learn, as well as *what* students know:²⁵

- ⇒ Content is *what* students should know- Process is *how* students should learn the content.
- ⇒ Process standards are often overlooked, forgotten, or thought of as a separate set of items to teach.
- ⇒ “Cognitive development is far more than recognizing shapes, colors, and letters of the alphabet -- it is how children think and understand the world around them.” (National Education Goals Panel)

The SC Early Learning Standards capture both process and content components. Standard M-4K-1.2, a process standard, states a four-year-old should “generate conjectures based on

²⁵ Linder, Sandra M., *Examining Cognitive Skills for School Readiness*, Presentation to the EOC Early Readiness Assessment Subcommittee (January 26, 2015).

personal experiences and simple reasoning.”²⁶ Standard M-4K-2.1, a content standard, states a four-year-old should “count orally forward to twenty and backward from three.”²⁷

South Carolina students’ math performance is an area of growing concern. The EOC analyzed student performance using SC Palmetto Assessment of State Standards (SCPASS) longitudinal data. The analysis showed the achievement gap between all students in South Carolina and students who participated in PUBLICLY-FUNDED FULL-DAY 4K has not narrowed. In math, the achievement gap may be increasing. The gap grew by 2.3 percent from 2012 to 2014.²⁸

Domain 5: Physical Health and Motor Skills

Similar to social and emotional development, children’s physical health is a foundational component that impacts children’s learning in every content area. Characteristics of child health and its impact on children’s school readiness is well-researched. A study related to the Early Development Instrument, another readiness assessment, found a child’s health and gender were the strongest indicators of school readiness.²⁹

Head Start is well-known for its focus on ensuring children are healthy so they can learn:

Health and school readiness begin long before a child enters a classroom. “Striking disparities in what children know and can do are evident well before they enter kindergarten. These differences are strongly associated with social and economic circumstances and they are predictive of subsequent academic performance (Shonkoff and Phillips, 2000).” Young children who are healthy and safe are more prepared for school.³⁰

Head Start Program Performance Standards address physical health, oral health, motor development, physical activity, nutrition, and sleep. South Carolina’s Early Learning Standards are aligned with Head Start’s Framework, except for systematically accounting for a children’s physical health status in an early learning environment.

²⁶ SC Early Learning Standards, 96. <https://ed.sc.gov/agency/programs-services/64/documents/EarlyLearningGoodStart.pdf>.

²⁷ Ibid, 91.

²⁸ SC Education Oversight Committee, *SC Child Early Reading Development & Education Program Report for FY 2014 & 2015* (January 2015), 31.

²⁹ Linder, Sandra M., M. Deanna Ramey, Serbay Zambak, *Predictors of School Readiness in Literacy and Mathematics: A Selective Review of the Literature* (2013).

³⁰ U.S. Department of Health and Human Services, Administration for Children and Families, Office of Head Start, by the National Center on Health, *Healthy Children Are Ready to Learn* (2013), 1. <http://eclkc.ohs.acf.hhs.gov/hslc/tta-system/health/physical-health/individual-wellness-plans/healthy-children-ready-learn.pdf>.

Table 5
Physical Well-Being Comparison

Head Start Child Development and Early Learning Framework	Current SC Early Learning Standards
Physical Health Status	Do not address
Health Knowledge & Practice	Personal Health Knowledge
Gross Motor Skills	Gross Motor Development
Fine Motor Skills	Fine Motor Control

Sources: SC Head Start Collaboration Office, SC Department of Social Services

In general, school readiness assessments for four- and five-year-olds address children’s health knowledge and skills and motor development. They do not include children’s physical health status within an assessment framework. Kentucky has included physical health status within its school readiness framework. Indicators for “health and physical well-being” include a child who:

- ⇒ Eats a balanced diet,
- ⇒ Gets plenty of rest,
- ⇒ Receives regular medical and dental care,
- ⇒ Has had all necessary immunizations,
- ⇒ Can run, jump, climb, and does other activities that develop large muscles, and
- ⇒ Uses pencils, scissors, etc. and does other activities that develop small muscles.³¹

At the national level, the Early and Periodic Screening, Diagnostic and Treatment (EPSDT) benefit provides comprehensive and preventive health care services for children under age 21 who are enrolled in Medicaid. EPSDT is crucial to ensuring young children have access appropriate preventive, dental, mental health, developmental, and specialty services. The South Carolina Department of Health and Human Services is responsible for EPSDT administration.

Assessment Gauges Students’ Ongoing Progress

In order for students to be successful throughout their school experience, a strong foundation of early learning must be established. A comprehensive readiness assessment would evaluate the foundation so education in the early elementary grades (primarily first, second and the beginning of third grade) can build upon the competencies and learning that occurred during pre-kindergarten and kindergarten. Again, ongoing, formative assessment of children’s

³¹ Hanover Research, *Kindergarten Entry Assessments: Practices and Policies* (December 2013), 29.
<http://www.hanoverresearch.com/media/Kindergarten-Entry-Assessments-Practices-and-Policies.pdf>

learning in the early elementary grades is critically important so teachers can make timely adjustments to their instruction to meet the educational needs of students.³² A requirement of Act 284 (SC Read to Succeed Act) is the ongoing evaluation of student progress. Section 59-155-110(2) states “classroom teachers periodically reassess their curriculum and instruction to determine if they are helping each student progress as a proficient reader and make modifications as appropriate.”

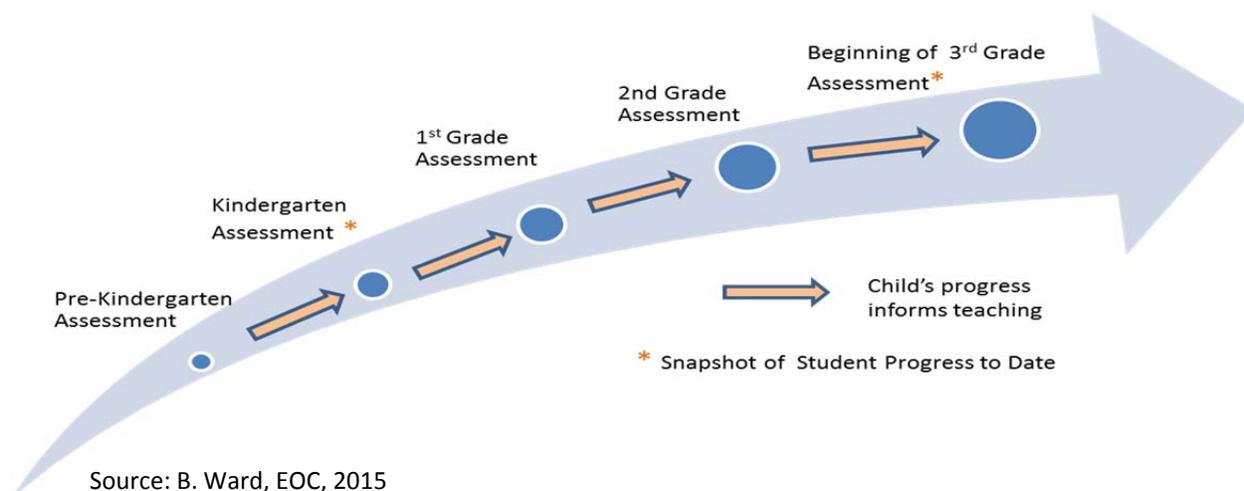
Kindergarten entry is a distinct point in child’s educational life where data can be used to gauge progress to date and support continued progress going forward. In the past few years, there has been more interest in formally and systematically measuring children’s developmental status upon their entry into kindergarten and into the primary grades. The 2011 Race to the Top – Early Learning Challenge initiative spurred the interest in Kindergarten Entry Assessments (KEAs) since applicant states were given the option to propose how they would develop or improve KEAs.

A KEA measures across five developmental domains using observations, tasks and intentional situations. It is an assessment continuum that assesses children beginning in kindergarten through third grade. In response, 35 of the 37 applicant states have made plans to begin or improve wide-scale initiatives to develop a continuum of assessment from kindergarten through the early elementary years. North Carolina, Maryland and Washington are among the states. Maryland is a member of a four-state consortium that is utilizing Work Sampling System as its basis for assessment. Washington is a member of a three-state consortium that is developing its KEA on Teaching Strategies GOLD. North Carolina is also a lead state for a nine-state consortium that is developing a KEA.

As noted in Figure 2 below, throughout children’s educational experience, teachers consider their progress in order to inform and adapt instruction to better meet the individual needs of students. At critical transition times, such as the beginning of kindergarten or third grade assessment can provide a “snapshot” of a student’s growth at that time. This snapshot provides the school and teacher to more comprehensively assess a child’s needs and consider additional academic supports or interventions (such as Response to Intervention). At the same time the impact of interventions and programs that have been utilized (such as 4K) can also be evaluated so programmatic adjustments can be made.

³² Act 284 refers to formative assessment as assessment used within the school year to analyze strengths and weaknesses of students individually to adapt instruction to meet student needs, make decisions about appropriate intervention services, and inform placement and instructional planning for the next grade level.

Figure 2
Assessment Continuum for Young Children



North Carolina is a leader of a nine-state consortium, and the consortium members are developing their own state-developed KEA. The North Carolina consortium is committed to providing resources and an electronic platform that will help teachers gain a better understanding of the whole child, as well as students' progress toward learning standards.³³ KEAs provide a snapshot of a child's development at the beginning of kindergarten entry and subsequently inform instruction throughout a child's early elementary years. The teacher uses KEA data as a starting point to develop individualized instruction for each child. While South Carolina is not a named participant in the nine-state consortium, early childhood staff from the South Carolina Department of Social Services, State Office of First Steps, and the South Carolina Department of Education have participated in consortium discussions.

Assessment Provides a Snapshot of Child's Skills and Abilities

In the fall of 2014, the EOC established an Early Readiness Assessment Subcommittee to discuss early readiness assessment and to make recommendations to the General Assembly about the characteristics of the assessment. The Subcommittee has convened three times, and the final meeting occurred May 18, with specific recommendations about the readiness assessment. Multiple experts, educators and practitioners have presented to the Subcommittee, including Dr. Bill Brown of USC, Dr. Sandra Linder of Clemson, Lillian Atkins

³³ Participating states are California, Connecticut, Hawaii, Kansas, Missouri, North Carolina, Pennsylvania, Puerto Rico, and Vermont.

of Lexington 4, Dr. Floyd Creech of Florence 1, and Dr. Becky White, a Newberry pediatrician who also participates in the Reach Out and Read program. The Subcommittee also heard from Dewayne Frederick of Beaufort Jasper Head Start, Dr. Dan Wuori of SC First Steps, Penny Danielson of the SCDE (SDE), and Leigh Bolick of DSS. Appendix F includes agendas from Subcommittee meetings.

With input from SDE, the EOC staff developed the attached “Kindergarten Readiness Assessment Framework” as a starting point for discussions. Staff considered Teaching Strategies GOLD and the Work Sampling System, as well as kindergarten entry assessments from Washington, Georgia, Maryland and Kentucky. Staff also consulted the SC Early Learning Standards and the SC Kindergarten Content Standards. EOC requested feedback about the Framework from multiple early childhood professionals, including representatives from Head Start, SCDE, SCDSS, State Office of First Steps, private child care, public school districts, TransformSC and higher education research. On April 13, 2015, EOC convened a Working Group to discuss readiness assessment and requested feedback on the Framework.

During the April 13, 2015 Working Group session, participants also discussed the following language and literacy assessments for 4K: My IGDIS, ELSA, Teaching Strategies GOLD, PALS Preschool, and mCLASS:CIRCLE. Teaching Strategies GOLD is used by Head Start in South Carolina. Charleston County School District uses My IGDIS. Other assessments discussed for 5K readiness included the BESS for social-emotional development and TEAM for math competency. See Appendix G for a complete list of Working Group invitees and participants.

Skills and abilities included in the matrix below are meant to be illustrative, serving as examples of skills children entering kindergarten should possess. Since children’s learning and education is constantly developing and progressing, the Framework is not intended to be a comprehensive, exhaustive list of beginning-of-year kindergarten skills. Education from early childhood through high school graduation is a continuum of learning that evolves and changes over time. To reflect the continuous nature of children’s learning, the Framework also organizes domains and children’s skills around the “Profile of the SC Graduate” that is included in this report as Appendix D. It is important to note that children’s learning is also integrated across content areas in various informal settings. The Framework is organized by discrete domains and skills to facilitate the reader’s understanding; it does not suggest young children learn by teaching of discrete content areas and processes.

Table 6
EOC Kindergarten Readiness Assessment Framework

DRAFT

EOC KINDERGARTEN READINESS ASSESSMENT FRAMEWORK			
Grad Profile	Domain	Area	Skill/Ability “At the beginning of Kindergarten, a student can...”
World Class Skills	Approaches to Learning	Curiosity & Initiative	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Show curiosity in an increasing variety of ideas and interests. • Make predictions and test ideas. • Seek out new challenges and experiences. • Ask for help when needed.
		Confidence & Risk Taking	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Show increasing ability to identify and take appropriate risk when learning new knowledge and skills. • Express confidence in meeting new challenges and experiences.
		Persistence	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Maintain interest in self-selected activities, even if there are interruptions or challenges. • Identify a problem and be flexible in solving it. Able to change plans if necessary to solve problem.
		Creativity & Problem Solving	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Show creativity and imagination in a variety of settings. • Engage creatively with others in play. • Demonstrate an increased ability to accomplish a task requiring multiple steps.
Life and Career Characteristics	Social -Emotional Development	Emotional Development	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Show initiative by making choices and accepting responsibility. • Adjust well to changes in routines and environments. • Express emotions and needs through appropriate words and actions.
		Social Development	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Treat others with respect in words and actions. • Show caring for others. • Follow directions and school rules. • Respect the property of others. • Work and play cooperatively with others. • Interact easily with familiar adults.
	Physical Well Being and Motor Skills	Physical Health	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Access regular medical, dental, vision care. • Identify different food groups. • Understand and follow basic health and safety rules (hand washing). • Perform self-care independently (buttoning clothes, toileting).
		Fine Motor Skills	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Use hand eye coordination to perform various tasks (put together a puzzle, use scissors, tape). • Use drawing and writing tools with some control and purpose.
		Gross Motor Skills	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Use basic loco motor skills alone, with a partner and in a group. • Coordinate body movement to perform various tasks (kick a moving ball, throw a ball overhand). • Coordinate body movement across midline to perform various tasks (use right hand on left side of body).

Table 6
EOC Kindergarten Readiness Assessment Framework

DRAFT

EOC KINDERGARTEN READINESS ASSESSMENT FRAMEWORK			
Grad Profile	Domain	Area	Skill/Ability “At the beginning of Kindergarten, a student can...”
World Class Knowledge	Mathematics	Mathematical Processes	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Begin to use and explain strategies to solve mathematical problems. • Use words and representations to describe mathematical ideas.
		Numbers & Operations	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Show understanding of relationship between number and quantity. • Begin to understand relationships between quantities.
		Patterns, Relationships, & Functions	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Sort objects into subgroups by classifying and comparing. • Recognize duplicates and extend patterns.
		Geometry & Spatial Relations	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Recognize and describe some attributes of shapes. • Show understanding of and use direction, location, and position words (over, under).
		Measurement	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Order, compare and describe objects by size, length, and weight. • Explore common instruments for measuring during work and play. • Estimate and measure using non-standard and standard units. • Show awareness of time concepts.
		Statistics	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Begin to collect data and make records by using pictures to develop lists or graphs.
	Language & Literacy	Listening	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Gain meaning by listening. • Follow directions that involve a series of actions. • Demonstrate phonological and phonemic awareness (rhyme, alliteration, smaller and smaller units of sound).
		Speaking	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Speak clearly and convey ideas effectively. • Use expanded vocabulary and language.
		Reading	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Show interest in and knowledge about books and reading. • Show some understanding of concepts about print. • Know letters, sounds, and how they form words. • Comprehend and respond to various literary texts (fiction, nonfiction, poetry). • Retell familiar stories. • Begin to understand how personal experiences connect to texts.
		Writing	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Represent stories through pictures, dictation, and play. • Use letter-like shapes, symbols, letters, and words to convey meaning. • Understand purposes of writing.

Source: B. Ward, EOC, 2015

IV. Purpose of Assessment: Determine Quality of Early Education Programs

In its annual report on publicly-funded full-day 4K (SC Child Early Reading Development and Education Program), the EOC discussed the importance of high-quality preschool education. Lasting improvements in school success include higher achievement test scores, lower rates of grade repetition and special education designation, and higher educational attainment.³⁴ Further, both the U.S. Department of Education and the National Institute for Early Education Research (NIEER) include program monitoring and evaluation as crucial components for the provision of high-quality preschool.³⁵

Teacher-child interactions powerfully impact children’s learning. The ongoing measurement of this interaction, with subsequent professional development opportunities, is one way to enhance the quality of learning and instruction for young children. Currently there are several assessments that consider the quality of this interaction in a learning environment, including Classroom Assessment Scoring System, Early Childhood Environmental Rating Scales, Early Language and Literacy Classroom Observation Tool, and Teaching Pyramid Observation Tool.

Classroom Assessment Scoring System (CLASS)

During a recent visit to South Carolina, Dr. Robert Pianta of the University of Virginia noted:

- ⇒ Early history of relationships with adults forms the “infrastructure” for school success, including: social competence with peers; self-regulation, emotional self-control; and task orientation, persistence, and following directions.
- ⇒ School readiness is a social process: relationships with teachers are a “medium” for learning.
- ⇒ Relationships and interactions with teachers and caregivers define quality and value of early education and are the path to improving school readiness.
- ⇒ Interactions are really important for children from low-income families and those who have difficulty adjusting to classroom environments may particularly benefit from exposure to high-quality early learning environments.³⁶

³⁴ Barnett, W.S., *Preschool education and its lasting effects: Research and policy implications* (2004) Boulder and Tempe: Education and the Public Interest Center and Education Policy Research Unit.
<http://epicpolicy.org/publication/preschooleducation>.

³⁵ U.S. Department of Education and U.S. Department of Health and Human Services, *2014 Preschool Development Grants Executive Summary*, (2014).
<http://www2.ed.gov/programs/preschooldevelopmentgrants/executivesummary-419b.pdg>.

Barnett, W.S., Carolan, M.E., Squires, J.H., Brown, K.C. “The State of Preschool 2013.” Rutgers: National Institute for Early Education Research (2013) <http://nieer.org/sites/nieer/files/yearbook2013.pdf>.

³⁶ Dr. Robert Pianta, *Elevating the Capacity of Classroom Experiences for Promoting Students’ Learning and Development: Observation and Improvement of Teacher-Child Interactions* (February 12, 2015) Presentation hosted by Francis Marion University’s Center of Excellence to Prepare Teachers of Children of Poverty.

One example of an assessment that measures this crucial interaction is the Classroom Assessment Scoring System (CLASS), which evaluates the overall preschool classroom in terms of the teacher's sensitivity, quality of instruction across all academic areas, and classroom management. A trained observer utilizes a seven-point Likert Scale to determine the emotional, organizational, and instructional supports provided by teachers that contribute to children's social, developmental, and academic achievement.³⁷ Research has shown that children in pre-kindergarten classrooms offering higher levels of instructional support displayed better language skills at the end of the kindergarten year. Further, when high-quality instructional support is provided during the kindergarten year, it contributed to gains in children's language and math abilities.³⁸

Classroom assessment is a tool for developing high-quality, ongoing professional development for teachers so they can continue to grow as educators and improve instruction. Professional development is integrated within CLASS and can be provided through a video library or one-to-one professional coaching. A teacher can access the video library and view various video clips that show a teacher interacting with young students. Utilizing an online portal a participating teacher can record his/her own interactions with students and upload the videos so they can be reviewed by a professional coach. In turn, the coach provides verbal feedback to the participating teacher via a phone call or email.

Research shows teachers with coaches grew more sensitive in their interactions with students and increased students' engagement in instruction. In addition, children living in poverty benefited a great deal. Children with participating teachers made greater gains in tests of early literacy and demonstrated higher levels of expressive language.³⁹

A recommendation in EOC's 2015 evaluation of publicly-funded full-day 4K emphasized the importance of high-quality instruction, as evident by meaningful interactions between teachers and children. In addition, a 2010 EOC evaluation of publicly-funded full-day 4K reported on the use of CLASS in 100 South Carolina classrooms in 2009 and 2010. The EOC noted:

Our classroom observations with the CLASS Pre-K have indicated that on the domains of Emotional Support and Classroom Organization that CDEPP [full-day four-year-old-kindergarten] classrooms were similar to other preschool classrooms in previous investigations. Nevertheless, for the domain of Instructional Support with accompanying dimensions of concept development, quality of feedback, and language modeling, the ratings were lower than previous investigators have reported. A continuous improvement approach to pre-kindergarten educational services indicates that targeted professional development and technical assistance might be helpful to local preschool personnel in the area of instructional support and high-quality teaching

³⁷ Ibid.

³⁸ Ibid.

³⁹ Ibid.

interactions. State level early childhood administrators should carefully consider how to enhance professional development activities and technical assistance to support the efforts of local pre-kindergarten personnel.⁴⁰

Early Childhood Environment Rating Scale 3rd Edition (ECERS-3)

In general ECERS is an assessment of overall quality of early childhood programs. The Department of Social Services currently uses ECERS-2 for all environmental ratings of childcare quality. DSS also uses its own state-developed tool to assess childcare centers that are rated at Level B or better. The State Office of First Steps also uses ECERS to assess the quality of the private childcare learning environments for students enrolled in publicly-funded full-day 4K.

The newest version, ECERS-3, was revised in 2015 and features less emphasis on materials and more on interactions based on the individual child's abilities. There are expanded items for math, language and literacy. It does not monitor the interaction as deeply as CLASS; instead it assesses a wider range of learning environment components. ECERS-3 has 35 items organized in 6 subscales and addresses: space and furnishings, personal care routines, language and literacy, learning activities, interactions and program structure. This revision requires more attention to how teachers use materials to stimulate children's learning. For example, instead of simply counting the number of books in a classroom, ECERS-3 measures how teachers expand children's vocabulary or encourage children's use of books. In the language and literacy subscale, it has more specific indicators provided in order to assess teacher strategies for guiding language and literacy awareness. ECERS-3 also addresses math, including three new items that focus on helping children become familiar with math.

Early Language & Literacy Classroom Observation Pre-K Tool (ELLCO-Pre-K)

Part of a larger early childhood assessment portfolio, ELLCO Pre-K is an observation instrument that has been specifically designed for use in center-based classrooms with three- to five-year-old children. It incorporates the most recent research on language and literacy development. ELLCO Pre-K includes four items on classroom structure and three items on curriculum, but focuses heavily on language and literacy, including:

⁴⁰ SC Education Oversight Committee, *Child Development Education Pilot Program (CDEPP): 2009-10 Student and Classroom Assessment Report*, (October 11, 2010), 3.
[http://www.eoc.sc.gov/Information%20for%20Educators/CDEPP/CDEPP%20Report%20General%20Assembly%201-12-10%20\(2\).pdf](http://www.eoc.sc.gov/Information%20for%20Educators/CDEPP/CDEPP%20Report%20General%20Assembly%201-12-10%20(2).pdf).

- ⇒ Language Environment (4 items): Discourse Climate, Opportunities for Extended Conversation, Efforts to Build Vocabulary, and Phonological Awareness
- ⇒ Books and Book Reading (5 items): Organization of Book Area, Characteristics of Books, Books for Learning, Approaches to Book Reading, and Quality of Book Reading, and
- ⇒ Print and Early Writing (3 items): Early Writing Environment, Support for Children’s Writing, and Environmental Print.

Similar to ECERS-3, ELLCO Pre-K was revised to reduce some of the reliance on counting materials and activities and instead, to focus more on how materials are used and activities are instructed to support students’ learning. The SCDE currently uses ELLCO Pre-K to assess the quality of language and literacy instruction in publicly-funded full-day 4K and for implementation of Read to Succeed.

Teaching Pyramid Observation Tool for Preschool Classrooms (TPOT)

TPOT provides a tool for assessing the fidelity of implementation of the Teaching Pyramid Model. The Teaching Pyramid Model is a model focused on social and emotional development; it supports social competence and prevents challenging behavior in young children. The pyramid has four levels that guide teacher-child interactions to help social and emotional development:

- ⇒ First Level (at the bottom of the pyramid): builds positive relationships with children, families and colleagues
- ⇒ Second Level: implements classroom practices to prevent challenging behavior
- ⇒ Third Level: uses social and emotional teaching strategies,
- ⇒ Fourth Level (at the top of the pyramid): plans intensive, individualized interventions for children when necessary.

TPOT includes three subscales including Key Practices, Red Flags, and Responses to Challenging Behavior. Key Practices include schedules, routines, and activities. Red Flag items are teaching practices that are not aligned with the Teaching Pyramid Model, such as a teacher reprimanding or admonishing children for expressing their emotions. Responses to Challenging Behavior include teaching practices that are developmentally appropriate responses to challenging behavior, such as redirection. Table 7 below summarizes characteristics of the three quality measures discussed.⁴¹

⁴¹ Child Trends, *Quality in Early Childhood Education Settings: A Compendium of Measures Second Edition* (2010). Prepared under Contract with the Administration of Children and Families, U.S. Department of Health and Human Services. http://www.acf.hhs.gov/sites/default/files/opre/complete_compendium_full.pdf.

Table 7⁴²
Comparison of Assessments that Measure Quality of Early Childhood Programs

Assessment/ Measure	Ages Served and Learning Environment	Primary Purpose and Administration	Reliability and Validity ⁴³
Classroom Assessment Scoring System (CLASS)	Two versions are available: pre-school classroom and a K-3 classroom	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Program Improvement/Evaluation • Observer must attend a training session and pass a reliability test. • Cost is \$600 per person for training and \$20 for manual • 2 hours to administer 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Not normed. Reliability: High (.80 or higher). Concurrent validity: Low (below .50). Significant correlations were found with other measures of classroom quality, but they were generally low, possible because this tool measures different aspects of the classroom than other quality measures. • Average inter-rater reliability reported in the Technical Appendix is 87%. Stability across time is uniformly high with almost all correlations above .90. • Results from NCEDL multi-state study show classroom quality as assessed by CLASS is associated with children’s performance at the end of pre-school as well as gains in in their performance across the preschool year.
Early Childhood Environmental Rating Scale 3 rd Edition (ECERS-3)	Early childhood classrooms serving 2.5-5 year olds. New version published in late 2014.	Program Improvement, Monitoring/Accreditation, Research/Evaluation	Basic field test for reliability. Ongoing testing of reliability and validity, using Item Response Theory.

⁴² Washington State Office of Superintendent of Public Instruction, *A Guide to Assessment in Early Childhood Infancy to Age Eight*, (2008). http://www.k12.wa.us/earlylearning/pubdocs/assessment_print.pdf.

⁴³ Reliability refers to the consistency to which a test (or subtest) measures a given construct. In general terms, validity refers to the extent to which one can trust that a test measures what it is intended to measure.

Assessment/ Measure	Ages Served and Learning Environment	Primary Purpose and Administration	Reliability and Validity ⁴³
Early Language & Literacy Classroom Observation Tool (ELLCO Pre-K)	Center-based classrooms for 3- to 5-year-old children	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Program Improvement, Research/Evaluation • Can be administered by teachers, principals, administrators, supervisors, program directors, or researchers • Cost is \$50 • 60-90 minutes to administer 	The ELLCO Research Edition was used for research purposes in more than 150 preschool classrooms; the reliability was 90% or better. ⁴⁴
Teaching Pyramid Observation Tool (TPOT)	Pre-school classrooms	Research/Evaluation	<p>Three separate studies with 174 classrooms. Inter-rater score reliability coefficients were generally acceptable for key practice items. Means percentage scores demonstrated adequate stability. Noteworthy relationships between scores for 10 of 14 TPOT key practice items and overall global classroom quality scores on ECERS-R. TPOT Red Flags subscale had substantial negative relationships with scores for all CLASS domain and dimension scores.</p> <p>Source: B. Ward, EOC, 2015</p>

⁴⁴ Brookes Publishing Website (2015), <http://www.brookespublishing.com/resource-center/screening-and-assessment/ellco/ellco-pre-k/>.

V. Findings and Recommendations

- ⇒ Pursuant to Act 287 the EOC is making recommendation to the State Board of Education on what a comprehensive readiness assessment or assessments should be able to measure in each domain defined in law to determine the education needs of children. The EOC is also including potential assessments to be considered by the State Board of Education. Some of the assessment may have to be procured while others could merely be teacher observations or check lists developed by the South Carolina Department of Education. However, “selecting” an assessment cannot occur without having information on the amount of funds available to procure an assessment and without having to conform to the South Carolina Procurement Code.
- ⇒ Last year, the EOC provided recommendations and feedback about the characteristics of readiness assessment (see Appendix D). The EOC developed a 5K Readiness Assessment Framework (Table 6) that provides illustrative examples of 5K skills and capabilities that should be measured by any State-adopted assessment. It is essential to consider young children’s developmental and academic progression as a continuum that begins before 4K and expands beyond 5K. Act 284 (Read to Succeed) also requires progress monitoring for students’ language and literacy development from pre-kindergarten through the early elementary years. Instead of looking at these various systems of assessment as separate and isolated, these systems should be integrated into a single, comprehensive assessment strategy. A strategic approach will improve instruction and subsequently children’s academic progress.
- ⇒ In addition to assessment of individual children, a larger system should be considered, with integration of measurement of teacher-child interactions, ongoing and well-planned and responsive professional development with teachers, and online data capture and reporting to administrators and policy makers.
- ⇒ Since the General Assembly also considers children’s progress in a more holistic manner by looking at the development of the “whole child,” the additional integration or connections to other early childhood systems is also important.

Individual Child

- ⇒ **Finding 1:** Both at the national and state levels, significant progress has been made to better understand early learning and developmental skills that are essential to a child’s readiness for school. However, the current challenge in South Carolina is the majority of school districts do not assess language and literacy with a tool that gets to the level of data that is needed.

During the April 13, 2015 Working Group session, participants also discussed the following language and literacy assessments for 4K: My IGDIS, ELSA, Teaching Strategies GOLD, PALS Pre-K, and mCLASS:CIRCLE. Teaching Strategies GOLD is used by Head Start in South Carolina. Charleston County School District uses My IGDIS. Refer to Table 8 below for additional detail. Other assessments discussed for 5K readiness included the Behavioral and

Emotional Screening System for social-emotional development and Tools for Early Assessment in Math for math competency. See Appendix G for a complete list of Working Group invitees and participants.

Table 8⁴⁵

4K Early Language and Literacy Assessments Discussed in April 13, 2015 Working Group

Assessment	Description	Administration	Validity and Reliability ⁴⁶
Individual Growth Development Indicators (IGDIs)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Early literacy: picture naming (oral language and vocabulary); rhyming and alliteration (phonological awareness); sound identification (alphabet knowledge); comprehension • Early numeracy: oral counting, number naming, quantity comparison, one-to-one correspondence counting • Designed to support “Response to Intervention” model with whole group, small group and intensive intervention. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • No cost • 10 minutes per child • Currently used in Charleston County School District • Administered in fall, winter and spring • Can be administered by psychologists, teachers, paraprofessionals, volunteers • Age Range: 3-5 years 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Not normed. Reliability: Adequate (.65 to .79). Concurrent validity: Adequate (.50 to .69) • In most instances, preschool administrations of the Early Literacy IGDIs were moderately correlated with kindergarten measures of alphabetic principle and phonological awareness. • Preschool Early Literacy IGDIs was found to be significantly predictive of later outcomes in oral reading fluency both at the end of kindergarten and at the end of first grade. The diagnostic utility of these measures was found to be strong.⁴⁷ • Psychometric information available at http://www.myigdis.com/wp-content/uploads/2012/01/Missall-Reschly-et-al-2007.pdf.
Teaching Strategies GOLD	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The first 23 objectives focus on key predictors of school success in the areas of social–emotional, physical, cognitive, oral language, literacy, and math development and learning. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Ongoing and observation based • Currently used by Head Start and Early Head Start in 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The 2012/2013 technical report was based on a nationally representative norm sample of 18,000 children. It contained children from all 50 states, the District of Columbia, and Puerto Rico. The Center for Educational Measurement and Evaluation

⁴⁵ Age range, cost, administration time obtained from April 13 Working Group meeting and Washington State Office of Superintendent of Public Instruction, *A Guide to Assessment in Early Childhood Infancy to Age Eight*, (2008). http://www.k12.wa.us/earlylearning/pubdocs/assessment_print.pdf.

⁴⁶ Reliability refers to the consistency to which a test (or subtest) measures a given construct. In general terms, validity refers to the extent to which one can trust that a test measures what it is intended to measure.

⁴⁷ Missall, K., Reschly, A., Betts, J., McConnell, S., Heistad, D., Pickart, M., Sheran, C., Martson, D., “Examination of the Predictive Validity of Preschool Early Literacy Skills,” *School Psychology Review* 36, no. 3 (2007): 433-452.

Assessment	Description	Administration	Validity and Reliability ⁴⁶
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The remaining objectives help teachers plan instruction in science and technology, social studies, and the arts, and enable teachers to assess children’s English language acquisition. 	SC	<p>determined the norm sample from a total of 933,000 children who had scores available using <i>Teaching Strategies GOLD</i>® over the 2012/2013 school year. The norm sample contained 3,000 children in each of the six age or class/grade cohorts: birth to 1, 1 to 2, 2 to 3, 3 or preschool, 4 or prekindergarten, and kindergarten.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> The <i>Teaching Strategies GOLD</i>® assessment system continues to yield highly valid and reliable results.⁴⁸ Psychometric information available at http://teachingstrategies.com/content/pageDocs/TS-GOLD-Technical-Summary-2013.pdf.
PALS:Pre-K	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> PALS-PreK is a phonological awareness and literacy screening that measures preschoolers’ developing knowledge of important literacy fundamentals and offers guidance to teachers for tailoring instruction to children’s specific needs. The assessment reflects skills that are predictive of future reading success and measures name writing ability, upper-case and lower-case alphabet recognition, letter sound and beginning sound production, print and word awareness, rhyme awareness and nursery rhyme awareness. PALS consists of three instruments, PALS-PreK (for preschool students), PALS-K (for kindergartners), and PALS 1-3 (for students in Grades 1-3). 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> \$75 Approximately 20-30 minutes per child Currently used in Georgetown School District. Can be administered in the fall, winter and spring. Administered by teachers who have read the manual and scoring guide. Age range is 4 years. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Not normed. Reliability: High (.80 or higher). Concurrent validity: High (.70 or higher) From 2000-2004, four separate pilots have been conducted. Pilot data and data from regular screenings in Virginia’s preschools provide evidence of the reliability (including internal consistency and inter-rater reliability) and validity (including content, construct, and criterion-related validity) of PALS-PreK for the purposes for which it was intended. Spring developmental ranges suggest a range of performance that may be associated with later reading achievement provide a general guide for educators as they use PALS-PreK to guide the planning and implementation of early literacy instruction. Psychometric information available at https://pals.virginia.edu/pdfs/rd/tech/PreK_technical_chapter.pdf

⁴⁸Teaching Strategies GOLD *Technical Summary* (2013) <http://teachingstrategies.com/content/pageDocs/TS-GOLD-Technical-Summary-2013.pdf>.

Assessment	Description	Administration	Validity and Reliability ⁴⁶
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • PALS is the state-provided screening tool for Virginia’s Early Intervention Reading Initiative (EIRI) and is used by 99% of school divisions in the state on a voluntary basis. 		
<p>Early Literacy Skills Assessment (ELSA)</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The Early Literacy Skills Assessment measures progress in all early childhood programs — including, but not limited to, those using the HighScope educational approach. The assessment meets the psychometric standards of demonstrated reliability and validity. • Measures phonological awareness, comprehension, print awareness and alphabetic principles. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Approximately 20 minutes to administer per child. • An authentic assessment in the form of a children’s storybook. To conduct the assessment, a teacher reads the story with an individual child, stopping where indicated in the book to ask questions or elicit ideas. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Reliability: The ELSA reliability estimates were consistently above .6 and were often .8 or higher across instruments, indicating that both the English and Spanish versions of the ELSA reliably measure children’s comprehension, phonological awareness, alphabetic principle, and concepts about print. • Concurrent validity: Although we did not have concurrent measures for all of the ELSA instruments, the alphabetic principle instrument correlated highly with similar items from the Woodcock Johnson and Pre-CTOPP. In addition, the phonological awareness and concepts about print also correlated over .6 with items reflecting phonological awareness and concepts about print in the Pre-CTOPP, indicating that the 3 of the 4 ELSA instruments for which concurrent measures were available overlapped substantially with previously validated measures. • More information available at http://www.highscope.org/file/Assessment/ELSAJacobs.pdf
<p>mClass:CIRCLE</p>	<p>mCLASS Circle is designed to enable evaluation and ongoing monitoring of socio-emotional development, book and print awareness, early writing, and early math skills by facilitating one-to-one interaction between student and teacher.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Administered to all publicly-funded full-day 4K and 5K students in SC during the 2014-15 school year. • Can be 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Reliability: The mClass:CIRCLE Chronbach’s Alpha reliability estimates for phonological awareness subscale of the language and literacy were .91/.93. Chronbach’s Alpha for the social emotional scale .96. Test-retest reliability correlations ranged from .42 to .58. • Concurrent validity: Concurrent validity correlations

Assessment	Description	Administration	Validity and Reliability ⁴⁶
		<p>administered in the fall, winter and spring.</p>	<p>with the Expressive One Word Picture Vocabulary test (EOWPVT) ranged from .28 to .80. Concurrent validity correlations with the Developing Skills Checklist (DSC) ranged from .10 to .35).</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Concurrent validity correlations with the Social and Emotional Skills-Checklist and Social Competence and Behavioral Evaluation-Preschool Edition were .25 to .61. Concurrent validity correlations with the Children’s Behavioral Checklist were .29 to .65. <p style="text-align: right;">Source: B. Ward, EOC, 2015</p>

- **Recommendation 1a:** The State should consider a list of formative assessments specifically designed to identify children’s language and literacy ability levels. The assessments should be easy to administer after sufficient professional development has been provided. The assessments should provide teachers with targeted recommended activities for small groups and individual students based on the assessment data.
 - **Recommendation 1b:** The State should consider a group of assessments that measure the skills indicated in both the South Carolina Early Learning Standards for social-emotional, physical well-being, and cognitive domains. For English language arts and mathematics, assessments should be aligned with state-adopted standards.
- ⇒ **Finding 2:** Language and literacy has been the focus for assessing young children, due to the passage of Act 284 (SC Read to Succeed Act). In response to Act 284, Circle has been uniformly used to assess all publicly-funded four-year-old and five-year-old kindergartners within the first 45 days of the 2014-15 school year. However, both Acts 284 and 287 require the implementation of a more comprehensive readiness assessment that will measure children’s progress in their social-emotional development, cognitive skills, math competencies, and their physical health and motor skill development.
- **Recommendation 2:** For publicly-funded full-day 4K, an analysis of assessments approved by SCDE and State Office of First Steps should be conducted to determine the extent to which currently used assessments address all of the developmental domains. When possible, assessments currently used by districts should be integrated into the new portfolio of State-approved assessments to lessen the impact of change on instruction and children. For a list of assessments that are approved by the SCDE and the State Office of First Steps, please see Finding 6.
- ⇒ **Finding 3:** South Carolina’s current Early Learning Standards and several state kindergarten entry assessments do not address children’s physical health status as part of individual child assessments in early learning environments.
- **Recommendation 3:** When developing a comprehensive readiness assessment, the State should consider how to incorporate children’s physical health status as part of any assessment. One potential addition could be to collect information about whether a child receives ongoing, regular health care (physical, vision, dental) from a free health clinic, family doctor, pediatrician or emergency room.
- ⇒ **Finding 4:** Through consultation with other early care and education experts and organizations multiple recommendations were gathered.
- **Recommendation 4a:** Often, the voice of frontline professionals who have the greatest impact on our students is not considered. When discussing early education assessment systems and selecting assessments, local school districts, teachers, and school leaders should be included in the process.
 - **Recommendation 4b:** A single assessment does not offer the fullest picture of a child’s ability and progress. Consider an assessment that is triangulated with ongoing observations and artifact collection or work samples. Assessment should also include

performance-based tasks where teachers can gather evidence related to process standards.

- **Recommendation 4c:** Traditionally, school readiness assessment has focused on a young child’s knowledge, or content. A child’s process of learning, or how a child performs activities and tasks, is also important. Performance-based tasks should be considered as part of the assessment process so teachers can gather evidence related to process standards. In later grades, the process of learning is more evident. For example, in math it is important a student “shows the work” or provides the intermediate steps used to arrive at the answer. These intermediate steps need to be examined so a teacher can identify where the student may be struggling or not fully grasping a concept. The process for young children is just as important so additional supports can be provided as needed.

Programmatic Impact

- ⇒ **Finding 5:** Currently, the SCDSS promulgates the SC Early Learning Standards that address social-emotional, language and literacy, math, approaches to learning and physical well-being for three-, four- and five-year-olds. The SCDE is responsible for developing grade-level standards in content areas for kindergarten through high school. While there is collaboration among state agencies, there is no formal standards alignment process to ensure alignment of the SC Early Learning Standards with the kindergarten content standards.
 - **Recommendation 5:** A formal, continuous standards alignment and assessment process for early education should be established. Similar to the development and adoption of statewide standards for K-12 education, the State Board of Education should formally adopt the SC Early Learning Standards thereby ensuring they are aligned with content standards for 5K. The EOC developed a 5K Readiness Assessment Framework (Table 6) that provides illustrative examples of 5K skills and capabilities that should be measured by any State-adopted assessment.
- ⇒ **Finding 6:** Districts throughout the state significantly vary in the type of assessments currently used to measure children’s growth and development in publicly-funded full-day 4K. The SCDE approved the following four-year-old assessments to measure children’s growth and skill development for the 2014-15 school year:
 - Work Sampling System
 - Creative Curriculum Developmental Continuum, Ages 3-5
 - GOLD by Teaching Strategies
 - HighScope Preschool Child Observation Record
 - Galileo Pre-K Online Assessment System
 - Learning Accomplishment File

- Montessori assessment.⁴⁹

For publicly-funded full-day 4K, private child care providers have used the Work Sampling System for assessment purposes, but this has been a site-based decision made by participating child care providers. During 2014-15, South Carolina First Steps encouraged the use of authentic assessment and portfolios based on state standards. Providers also completed Ages and Stages Questionnaire, third-edition developmental screening, in addition to mCLASS:Circle. All of this assessment information was provided to parents four times a year.

During the April 13, 2015 Working Group session, participants also discussed the following language and literacy assessments for 4K: My IGDIS, ELSA, Teaching Strategies GOLD, PALS Pre-K, and mCLASS:CIRCLE. Teaching Strategies GOLD is used by Head Start in South Carolina. Charleston County School District uses My IGDIS. Other assessments discussed for 5K readiness included the BESS for social-emotional development and TEAM for math competency.

- **Recommendation 6:** Based upon a review of the assessment analysis conducted under Recommendation 1, the State Board of Education should approve a shortened list of evidence-based assessment options for all publicly-funded four-year-olds. Upon approval, assessment options should be provided to public schools and private providers. Below is a recommended timeline that has been developed in collaboration with the SCDE.

Table 9
Timeline for 4K and 5K Assessment Implementation

Year	4K	5K
2015-16	Choice of Three Formative Assessments Selected by SDE	Language and Literacy Assessment Selected by SDE
2016-17	Choice of Three Formative Assessments Selected by SDE	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Language and Literacy Assessment Selected by SDE • Readiness Assessment(s) or Checklist(s) for Other 4 Domains

⇒ **Finding 7:** There are multiple, significant components of an assessment system beyond individual student assessment. Other important factors include: standards, reporting, professional development, adult-child interactions and inclusion of children with disabilities. By addressing these other factors, the quality of instruction, and subsequently student achievement should improve.

⁴⁹ As listed in the SC Department of Education’s *South Carolina Child Development Education Program 2014-2015 Public School Guidelines*, effective July 2014.

- **Recommendation 7:** To improve the quality of instruction for young students from pre-kindergarten through early elementary grades, the General Assembly should support creative, evidence-based approaches to improving the quality of publicly-funded full-day 4K. The General Assembly should fund a pilot program that would encourage creative and innovative approaches to measuring and improving quality, such as the enhancement of teacher-child interactions in classroom settings.

Appendices

Appendix A: Act 287 of 2014 (First Steps Reauthorization)

SECTION 3. Chapter 152, Title 59 of the 1976 Code is amended by adding:

“Section 59-152-33. (A) Before July 1, 2015, the South Carolina Education Oversight Committee shall recommend an assessment to evaluate and measure the school readiness of students prior to their entrance into a prekindergarten or kindergarten program per the goals pursuant to Section 59-152-30 to the State Board of Education. Prior to submitting the recommendation to the State Board, the Education Oversight Committee shall seek input from the South Carolina First Steps to School Readiness Board of Trustees and other early childhood advocates. In making the recommendation, the South Carolina Education Oversight Committee shall consider assessments that are research-based, reliable, and appropriate for measuring readiness. The assessment chosen must evaluate each child’s early language and literacy development, numeracy skills, physical well-being, social and emotional development, and approaches to learning. The assessment of academic readiness must be aligned with first and second grade standards for English language arts and mathematics. The purpose of the assessment is to provide teachers, administrators, and parents or guardians with information to address the readiness needs of each student, especially by identifying language, cognitive, social, emotional, and health needs, and providing appropriate instruction and support for each child. The results of the screenings and the developmental intervention strategies recommended to address the child’s identified needs must be provided, in writing, to the parent or guardian. Reading instructional strategies and developmental activities for children whose oral language and emergent literacy skills are assessed to be below the national standards must be aligned with the district’s reading proficiency plan for addressing the readiness needs of each student. The school readiness assessment adopted by the State Board of Education may not be used to deny a student admission or progress to kindergarten or first grade. Every student entering the public schools for the first time in prekindergarten and kindergarten must be administered a readiness screening by the forty-fifth day of the school year.

(B) The results of individual students in a school readiness assessment may not be publicly reported.

(C) Following adoption of a school readiness assessment, the State Board of Education shall adopt a system for reporting population-level results that provides baseline data for measuring overall change and improvement in the skills and knowledge of students over time. The Department of Education shall house and monitor the system.

(D) The South Carolina First Steps to School Readiness Board of Trustees shall support the implementation of the school readiness assessment and must provide professional development to support the readiness assessment for teachers and parents of programs supported with First Steps funds. The board shall utilize the annual aggregate literacy and other readiness assessment information in establishing standards and practices to support all early childhood providers served by First Steps.”

Appendix B: Act 284 of 2014 (Read to Succeed)

Section 59-155-150. (A) With the enactment of this chapter, the State Superintendent of Education shall ensure that every student entering publically funded prekindergarten and kindergarten beginning in Fiscal Year 2014-2015 will be administered a readiness assessment by the forty-fifth day of the school year. Initially the assessment shall focus on early language and literacy development. Beginning in Fiscal Year 2016-2017, the assessment must assess each child's early language and literacy development, mathematical thinking, physical well-being, and social-emotional development. The assessment may include multiple assessments, all of which must be approved by the board. The approved assessments of academic readiness must be aligned with first and second grade standards for English/language arts and mathematics. The purpose of the assessment is to provide teachers and parents or guardians with information to address the readiness needs of each student, especially by identifying language, cognitive, social, emotional, health problems, and concerning appropriate instruction for each child. The results of the assessment and the developmental intervention strategies recommended to address the child's identified needs must be provided, in writing, to the parent or guardian. Reading instructional strategies and developmental activities for children whose oral language skills are assessed to be below the norm of their peers in the State must be aligned with the district's reading proficiency plan for addressing the readiness needs of each student. The results of each assessment also must be reported to the Read to Succeed Office.

Appendix C: Provisos 1A.2 and 1A.76 (Prekindergarten and Kindergarten Assessments)

1A.2. (SDE-EIA:XII.B - Half Day Program for Four-Year-Olds) Of the funds appropriated in Part IA, Section 1,XII.B. for half-day programs for four-year-olds, up to \$2,500,000 must be allocated for the administration in the current fiscal year of a formative readiness assessment or assessments that will analyze the early literacy competencies of children in publicly funded prekindergarten and public kindergarten so that students may receive the appropriate support and intervention to succeed in school. The assessments must be approved by the State Board of Education. Professional development and teacher training must be provided by the department. The remainder of the funds shall be distributed based on the prior year number of students in kindergarten eligible for free and reduce price lunch to school districts that are not participating or not eligible to participate in the Child Development Education Pilot Program.

H. 3701 as adopted by the House:

1A.67. (SDE-EIA: Prekindergarten and Kindergarten Assessments) For the current fiscal year, all *publicly funded* students entering a publicly funded prekindergarten or public kindergarten must be administered a readiness assessment approved by the State Board of Education that shall focus on early language and literacy development no later than the forty fifth day of the school year. ~~The readiness assessment must be approved by the State Board of Education. The approved readiness assessment must be aligned with kindergarten and first grade standards for English/language arts and mathematics.~~ The results of the assessment and the developmental intervention strategies recommended or services needed to address the child's identified needs must be provided, in writing, to the parent or guardian. The readiness assessment may not be used to deny a student admission or to progress to kindergarten or first grade.

~~The Education Oversight Committee shall recommend the characteristics of the readiness assessment for children in prekindergarten and kindergarten, focused on early language and literacy development, to the State Board of Education no later than July thirtieth. Prior to submitting the recommendation to the State Board, the Education Oversight Committee shall seek input from the South Carolina First Steps to School Readiness Board of Trustees and other early childhood advocates. The State Board must move expeditiously to approve or modify the criteria submitted by the committee. Once approved, with the assistance of the Education Oversight Committee, the board shall develop a solicitation to be used in procuring the assessment. The solicitation must be forwarded to the Executive Director of the State Fiscal Accountability Authority who must immediately move to procure the readiness assessment in order to meet the forty five day requirement. The Executive Director is authorized to make changes to the solicitation with the consent of the Chairman of the State Board of Education and the Chairman of the Education Oversight Committee. The Department of Education must bear the costs of the procurement.~~

**Appendix D: June 30, 2014 EOC Memo to State Board of Education
(Early Readiness Assessment Characteristics)**

MEMORANDUM

TO: Barry Bolen, Chair of State Board of Education
Traci Young Cooper, Chair Elect of State Board of Education
FROM: Melanie Barton *Melanie Barton*
DATE: June 30, 2014
IN RE: Early Readiness Assessment Characteristics

On behalf of the Education Oversight Committee (EOC), I am forwarding to you the recommendations of the Committee regarding proviso 1A.76. of the 2014-15 General Appropriation Act as ratified by the General Assembly on June 5, 2014.

1A.76. (SDE-EIA: Prekindergarten and Kindergarten Assessments)
For the current fiscal year, all students entering a publicly funded prekindergarten or public kindergarten must be administered a readiness assessment that shall focus on early language and literacy development no later than the forty fifth day of the school year. The readiness assessment must be approved by the State Board of Education. The approved readiness assessment must be aligned with kindergarten and first grade standards for English/language arts and mathematics. The results of the assessment and the developmental intervention strategies recommended or services needed to address the child's identified needs must be provided, in writing, to the parent or guardian. The readiness assessment may not be used to deny a student admission or to progress to kindergarten or first grade.

The Education Oversight Committee shall recommend the characteristics of the readiness assessment for children in prekindergarten and kindergarten, focused on early language and literacy development, to the State Board of Education no later than July 30. Prior to submitting the recommendation to the State Board, the Education Oversight Committee shall seek input from the South Carolina First Steps to School Readiness Board of Trustees and other early childhood advocates. The State Board must move expeditiously to approve or modify the criteria submitted by the committee. Once approved, with the assistance of the

- David Whittemore
CHAIR
- Daniel B. Merck
VICE CHAIR
- J. Phillip Bowers
- Anne H. Bull
- Mike Fair
- Margaret Anne Gaffney
- Barbara B. Hairfield
- Nikki Haley
- R. Wesley Hayes, Jr.
- Alex Martin
- John W. Matthews, Jr.
- Joseph H. Neal
- Andrew S. Patrick
- Neil C. Robinson, Jr.
- J. Roland Smith
- Patti J. Tate
- John Warner
- Mick Zais

Melanie D. Barton
EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR

Education Oversight Committee, the board shall develop a solicitation to be used in procuring the assessment. The solicitation must be forwarded to the Executive Director of the Budget and Control Board who must immediately move to procure the readiness assessment in order to meet the forty- five day requirement. The Executive Director is authorized to make changes to the solicitation with the consent of the Chairman of the State Board of Education and the Chairman of the Education Oversight Committee. The Department of Education must bear the costs of the procurement.

The proviso specifically requires that the EOC recommend “no later than July 30” to the State Board of Education the characteristics of a readiness assessment for children entering publicly funded prekindergarten (four-year-old kindergarten) and kindergarten (five-year-old kindergarten) by the 45th day of the school year, which equates to the first nine weeks of school. Prior to submitting its recommendations, the EOC is required to seek input from the Office of First Steps to School Readiness Board of Trustees and other early childhood advocates.

Background

The General Assembly focused several of its key public education initiatives on improving reading achievement. The General Assembly this session enacted the Read to Succeed legislation that addresses the importance of early identification and intervention of struggling readers, of teacher preparation and training, and of parental involvement and community support to systemically improve reading achievement. Furthermore, the General Assembly expanded the Child Development Education Pilot Program (CDEPP). Any four-year-old who qualifies for the free or reduced price Federal lunch program and/or Medicaid and who resides in a school district where at a poverty index of least 70 percent or more is eligible to participate in a full-day education program in a public or private center at no cost. The legislature also addressed the importance of a readiness assessment focused on early literacy based on evidence that:

The assessment of emergent literacy skills can serve to identify those children who may be at risk for later reading difficulties. Furthermore, assessment can guide the content and delivery of early literacy instruction. Failure to identify children early and provide appropriate intervention to promote emergent literacy skills is likely to have serious repercussions for later development of conventional reading skills.⁵⁰

In the fall of 2013 the EOC contacted Dr. William H. Brown, leader of the previous CDEPP evaluations to assist the agency in planning and implementing an evaluation of the CDEPP Expansion. Dr. Brown and colleagues from the University of South Carolina convened a well-informed task force of individuals familiar with CDEPP and early childhood services including:⁵¹

- Dr. Lorin Anderson, Distinguished Professor Emeritus, University of South Carolina
- Dr. Kevin Andrews, EOC
- Lillian Atkins, Lexington School District 4, Early Childhood Center
- ~~Melanie Barton, EOC~~
- Leigh Bolick, DSS Early Care and Education

⁵⁰ Spencer, E., Spencer, T., Goldstein, H., & Scheider, N. (2013). Identifying early literacy learning needs: Implications for child outcome standards and assessment systems. In T. Shanahan & C. Lonigan (Eds.), *Literacy in preschool and kindergarten children: The National Early Literacy Panel and beyond* (pp. 45-70). Baltimore, MD: Paul H. Brookes.

⁵¹ *2013-14 Expansion of the SC Child Development Education Pilot Program (CDEPP) Report*. Appendix I. SC Education Oversight Committee. January 21, 2014. 2013-14

- Dr. Bill Brown, University of South Carolina
- Floyd Creech, Florence School District 1
- Dr. Leigh D'Amico, Office of Program Evaluation, University of South Carolina
- Penny Danielson, SC Department of Education
- Mary Lynn Diggs, Head Start Collaboration
- Pam Dinkins, Central Carolina Technical College
- Dr. Christine DiStefano, University of South Carolina
- Dewayne Frederick, Beaufort Jasper EOC Head Start
- Rachael Fulmer, State Budget Division
- Dr. Susan Gehlmann, Berkeley County Schools, Director of Elementary Education
- Betty Harrington, Clarendon School District 2, Manning Early Childhood Center
- Ashley Hutchinson, Beaufort County Schools
- Debbie Hyler, The School Foundation, Florence School District 1
- Mellanie Jinnette, SC Department of Education
- Kassie Mae Miller, Office of Program Evaluation, University of South Carolina
- Jenny May, Children's Law Center, University of South Carolina
- Katy Sides, Institute for Child Success
- Dr. Reginald Williams, South Carolina State University
- Dr. Dan Wuori, Office of First Steps to School Readiness
- Dana Yow, EOC

The stakeholders met on November 1, 2013 in Columbia and began working on a framework and glossary. The framework and glossary were recommended and published in the EOC's annual evaluation of CDEPP.³ The framework identifies key academic and social accomplishments that must be addressed if children are to succeed in kindergarten. Included in these accomplishments are language and literacy skills defined as:

Critical language and literacy skills included but are not necessarily limited to communication of needs and preferences, listening, receptive and expressive vocabulary, phonological awareness, alphabetic principal and knowledge, print and book knowledge, prewriting and writing skills, and reading comprehension.

In addition the EOC has been working since last summer with officials from the Florida Center for Reading Research at Florida State University and from the Florida Just Read! Office and with early childhood experts in South Carolina at the school, district, higher education and state levels on the P-20 reading initiative.

In April of 2014, the EOC staff participated in a Think Tank on School Readiness in Greenville, sponsored by the Institute for Child Success (ICS) in Greenville. ICS had published an issue brief and extended white paper, *School Readiness: Moving Toward a Shared Definition, Standardized Assessment, and Unifying Language*. On June 16, 2014 the EOC contacted the staff of ICS and asked ICS to review the nine characteristics of a readiness assessment focused on early language and literacy development that were tentatively approved by the EOC on June 8. Based upon the input of the Think Tank and the research paper, ICS concurred that the nine

³ 2013-14 Expansion of the SC Child Development Education Pilot Program (CDEPP) Report. Section V. SC Education Oversight Committee. January 21, 2014.

characteristics capture many of the elements ICS considers “essential to an effective early language and literacy assessment. ICS sees print awareness and orientation, verbal communication, picture and letter recognition, ability to tell a story, beginning of proper oral word use and sentence structure, alphabetic principle and knowledge, prewriting and writing/pretend, listening/story recall and vocabulary as important elements of this assessment, which are in line with the elements included in the EOC recommended assessment characteristics.”⁵²

On June 10, 2014 the EOC staff mailed and emailed letters to the Executive Director and Deputy Director of the Office of First Steps to School Readiness, to the Governor and to the Vice-Chair of the Board of Trustees to the Office of First Steps requesting input on the proposed nine characteristics. The First Steps Board of Trustees met on June 26, 2014 and voted to recommend three additional characteristics of the assessment to the EOC. These recommendations are included in the following:

Recommendation:

Consequently, per the requirements of Proviso 1A.76. the Education Oversight Committee recommends to the State Board of Education, the following characteristics of an early language and literacy assessment for students entering four-year-old and five-year-old kindergarten programs during the 2014-15 school year.

A readiness assessment administered to children in four-year-old and five-year-old kindergarten in school year 2014-15 and focused on early language and literacy development should have the following characteristics:

1. The assessment should measure critical language and literacy skills including, but not limited to communication of needs and preferences, listening, receptive and expressive vocabulary, phonological awareness, alphabetic principles and knowledge, print and book knowledge, prewriting and writing skills, and reading comprehension.
2. The assessment must be supported by empirical data or evidence documenting that it measures these critical language and literacy skills and that these competencies are predictive of later reading and writing success.
3. The assessment should provide student-level results that can then inform individual literacy instruction by teachers.
4. The assessment should provide student-level results that can assist parents or guardians in providing appropriate support to assist their child's language development.
5. The assessment should be able to measure student growth from one year to the next, from 4K to 5K, at a minimum.
6. The assessment should provide accommodations for children with disabilities and children who are English language learners.
7. The assessment should give timely, student-level feedback and reports to parents, teachers, schools and the state.

⁵² Email from Katy Sides, Director of Research and Grants, Institute for Child Success, to Melanie Barton, Executive Director of the EOC, dated June 21, 2014.

- 8.
9. The assessment should demonstrate alignment with South Carolina English language arts standards.
10. The assessment should have a well-documented and detailed description of its development and history, including what states use the assessment to guarantee the assessment's reliability and validity.
11. The assessment should be curriculum neutral and therefore not require the use of any specific early childhood curriculum in the publicly funded prekindergarten or public kindergarten programs.

In addition, based upon the input received, the EOC also recommends to the State Board of Education that vendors responding to the request for proposal be asked to:

- Document the specific components of the assessment, including but not limited to, print awareness and orientation, verbal communication, picture and letter recognition, ability to tell a story, beginning of proper oral word use and sentence structure, alphabetic principle and knowledge, prewriting and writing/pretend, listening/story recall and vocabulary;
- Document the amount of ongoing professional development that can be provided to schools and districts; and
- Document the amount of time that will be required to administer the assessment so that the assessment is respectful of classroom teachers' time and need for professional development.

cc: Nancy Busbee, SC Department of Education
Liz Jones, SC Department of Education

Appendix E: Profile of the South Carolina Graduate

Profile of the South Carolina Graduate



World Class Knowledge

- Rigorous standards in language arts and math for career and college readiness
- Multiple languages, science, technology, engineering, mathematics (STEM), arts and social sciences

World Class Skills

- Creativity and innovation
- Critical thinking and problem solving
- Collaboration and teamwork
- Communication, information, media and technology
- Knowing how to learn

Life and Career Characteristics

- Integrity
- Self-direction
- Global perspective
- Perseverance
- Work ethic
- Interpersonal skills



Approved by SCASA Superintendent's Roundtable
and SC Chamber of Commerce



Note: Endorsed in February and March 2015 by State Board of Education and EOC

Appendix F: Meeting Agendas for EOC Early Readiness Assessment Subcommittee



AGENDA

Early Readiness Assessment Subcommittee

November 17, 2014
Lexington 4 Early Childhood Center
135 Lewis Rast Road, Swansea

- | | | |
|------|---|--|
| I. | Introductions | Ms. Barbara Hairfield, Chair |
| II. | Overview of Subcommittee Mission and Timeline | Ms. Barbara Hairfield |
| III. | Overview of Readiness Domains | |
| | <p>Dr. Leigh Kale D'Amico
<i>Research Assistant Professor, USC College of Education</i></p> <p>Leigh Bolick
<i>Director, DSS Division of Early Care and Education</i></p> <p>Mary Lynne Diggs
<i>Director, SC Head Start Collaboration Office</i></p> <p>Dwayne Johnson
<i>Director, Head Start of Beaufort and Jasper Counties</i></p> | |
| IV. | Discussion of Approaches to Learning and Social/Emotional Domains | <p>David Whittmore
CHAIR</p> <p>Daniel B. Merck
VICE CHAIR</p> <p>Anne H. Bull</p> <p>Mike Fair</p> <p>Margaret Anne Gaffney</p> <p>Barbara B. Hairfield</p> <p>Nikki Haley</p> <p>R. Wesley Hayes, Jr.</p> <p>Deb. Marks</p> <p>Alex Martin</p> <p>John W. Matthews, Jr.</p> <p>Joseph H. Neal</p> <p>Andrew S. Patrick</p> <p>Neil C. Robinson, Jr.</p> <p>J. Roland Smith</p> <p>Patti J. Tate</p> <p>Mick Zeis</p> |
| V. | Adjournment | |
| VI. | Lunch | |
| | <p><u>Subcommittee Members:</u>
Barbara Hairfield, Chair
Margaret Anne Gaffney, Co-Chair
Anne Bull
Sen. Mike Fair
Deb Marks
Rep. Andy Patrick
Patti Tate</p> | <p>Melanie D. Barton
EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR</p> |



**(REVISED)
AGENDA**

Early Readiness Assessment Subcommittee

January 26, 2015
2:00 pm
Brown Building, Room 415

- I. Welcome & Introductions Mrs. Barbara Hairfield
- II. Action: Approval of Minutes - November 17, 2014
- III. Progress Update and Discussion Dr. Dan Wuori
Deputy Director
SC First Steps to School Readiness
- IV. Cognitive Skills Dr. Sandra M. Linder
Assistant Professor
Early Childhood Mathematics Education
Clemson University
- V. Language and Literacy Dr. Bill Brown
Professor
Department of Educational Studies
University of SC
- VI. Wrap Up and Discussion
- VII. Adjournment

Subcommittee Members
 Barbara Hairfield, Chair
 Margaret Anne Gaffney, Co-Chair
 Anne Bull
 Sen. Mike Fair
 Deb Marks
 Patti Tate

David Whittlemore
 CHAIR
 Daniel B. Merck
 VICE CHAIR
 Anne H. Bull
 Mike Fair
 Margaret Anne Gaffney
 Barbara B. Hairfield
 Nikki Haley
 R. Wesley Hayes, Jr.
 Deb. Marks
 John W. Matthews, Jr.
 Joseph H. Neal
 Neil C. Robinson, Jr.
 Molly Spearman
 Patti J. Tate
 Melanie D. Barton
 EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR



AGENDA

Early Readiness Assessment Subcommittee

**Monday, March 23, 2015
10:00 am
Blatt Building, Room 433**

- I. Welcome & Introductions Mrs. Barbara Hairfield
- II. Action: Approval of Minutes – January 26, 2015
- III. Local Early Education Systems Dr. Floyd Creech
*Director of School Readiness
Florence School District One*
- IV. Physical Health & Motor Skills Development..... Dr. Becky White
Pediatrics of Newberry
- V. Status of Early Childhood Assessment in SC..... Ms. Penny Danielson
*Program Manager, Early Learning & Literacy
& Education Associate, CDEP, SCDE*
- VI. Discussion and Next Steps
- VII. Adjournment

David Whittemore
CHAIR

Daniel B. Merck
VICE CHAIR

Anne H. Bull

Bob Couch

Mike Fair

Raye Felder

Margaret Anne Gaffney

Barbara B. Hairfield

Nikki Haley

R. Wesley Hayes, Jr.

Dwight A. Loftis

Deb. Marks

John W. Matthews, Jr.

Joseph H. Neal

Neil C. Robinson, Jr.

Molly Spearman

Patti J. Tate

Melanie D. Barton
EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR

Early Readiness Assessment Subcommittee Members:

Mrs. Barbara Hairfield, Chairwoman
Mrs. Margaret Anne Gaffney, Co-Chair
Mrs. Anne Bull
Sen. Mike Fair
Ms. Deb Marks
Ms. Patti Tate

Appendix G:
Readiness Assessment Working Group
April 13, 2015 1:00 p.m. 415 Brown Building

Lillian Atkins
Principal, Early Childhood Center
Lexington School District Four

Melanie Barton
Executive Director
SC Education Oversight Committee

*Michael Brenan
President
BB&T

Jean Brewington
Director, Elementary Education
Spartanburg School District Three

Bill Brown
Professor, Educational Studies
University of South Carolina

*Gina Carter
Coordinator, Early Childhood Education
Richland School District One

*Kim Chariker
Director
ABC Academy

Floyd Creech
Director, School Readiness
Florence School District One

Penny Danielson
CDEP Coordinator
SC Department of Education

Mary Lynne Diggs
Director
SC Head Start Collaboration Office

Christine DiStefino
Associate Professor of Educational Research
University of South Carolina

*Dewayne Federick
Director
Beaufort/Jasper Head Start

Kimberly Foxworth
Director, Child Development
Charleston School District

Fred Greer
Research Assistant Professor
Department of Educational Studies
University of South Carolina

Quantina Haggwood
Director, Early Childhood Education
Richland School District One

Barbara Hairfield
Chair, Early Readiness Assessment Subcommittee
SC Education Oversight Committee

Patti Hammel
Executive Director, Student Performance & Federal
Programs
Georgetown School District

Betty Harrington
Principal, Manning Early Childhood Center
Clarendon School District Two

Elizabeth Jones
Director of Assessment
SC Department of Education

Jennifer McConnell
Director, Child Development Center
Brookland Baptist Church

*Noelle McInerney
Program Manager, ABC Program Monitoring
Activities
SC Department of Social Services

Linnie Miller
Director
Carolina C.A.A. Head Start & Early Head Start

James L. Pasley, Jr.
Executive Director/CEO
Waccamaw Economic Opportunity Council, Inc.

*Lindsay Singleton
Operator
Upstate Children's Center of Walhalla

Karen Sparkman
Director Early Intervention and Support Services
Greenville School District

Martha Strickland
State Director
SC First Steps

Bunnie Ward
Director, Policy Development & Evaluation
SC Education Oversight Committee

*David Whittemore
Chairman
SC Education Oversight Committee

*Dana Yow
Director, Public Engagement & Communications
SC Education Oversight Committee

55

* Indicates invited but did not attend.



Appendix H:
EOC Letter to SC First Steps Board Chair
Requesting Input for the EOC Kindergarten
Readiness Assessment Framework

April 15, 2015

Mr. Ken Wingate
 Chairman
 SC First Steps Board of Trustees
 1300 Sumter Street, Suite 100
 Columbia, SC 29201

Dear Chairman Wingate:

Pursuant to Section 59-152-33(A) of the South Carolina Code of Laws the Education Oversight Committee (EOC) is required by July 1, 2015 to:

"to evaluate and measure the school readiness of students prior to their entrance into a prekindergarten or kindergarten program per the goals pursuant to Section 59-152-30 to the State Board of Education. Prior to submitting the recommendation to the State Board, the Education Oversight Committee shall seek input from the South Carolina First Steps to School Readiness Board of Trustees and other early childhood advocates. In making the recommendation, the South Carolina Education Oversight Committee shall consider assessments that are research-based, reliable, and appropriate for measuring readiness. The assessment chosen must evaluate each child's early language and literacy development, numeracy skills, physical well-being, social and emotional development, and approaches to learning. The assessment of academic readiness must be aligned with first and second grade standards for English language arts and mathematics. The purpose of the assessment is to provide teachers, administrators, and parents or guardians with information to address the readiness needs of each student, especially by identifying language, cognitive, social, emotional, and health needs, and providing appropriate instruction and support for each child. The results of the screenings and the developmental intervention strategies recommended to address the child's identified needs must be provided, in writing, to the parent or guardian. Reading instructional strategies and developmental activities for children whose oral language and emergent literacy skills are assessed to be below the national standards must be aligned with the district's reading proficiency plan for addressing the readiness needs of each student. The school readiness assessment adopted by the State Board of Education may not be used to deny a student admission or progress to kindergarten or first grade. Every student entering the public schools for the first time in prekindergarten and kindergarten must be administered a readiness screening by the forty-fifth day of the school year."

- David Whittamore
CHAIR
- Daniel B. Merck
VICE CHAIR
- Anne H. Bull
- Bob Couch
- Mike Fair
- Raye Felder
- Margaret Anne Gaffney
- Barbara B. Hairfield
- Nikki Haley
- R. Wesley Hayes, Jr.
- Dwight A. Loftis
- Deb Marks
- John W. Matthews, Jr.
- Joseph H. Neal
- Neil C. Robinson, Jr.
- Molly Spearman
- Patti J. Tate

- Melanie D. Barton
EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR

Mr. Ken Wingate
April 15, 2015
Page 2

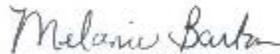
In the fall of 2014 the EOC established an Early Readiness Assessment Subcommittee to make recommendations to the full EOC per the law. The subcommittee has convened three times with the final meeting to occur May 18 followed by the full EOC on June 8.

On Monday, April 13, 2015 a working group composed of early childhood coordinators in school districts, private child care center directors, Head Start officials, and representatives from the South Carolina Department of Education and the State Office of First Steps to School Readiness met to discuss readiness assessment. In order for them to consider specific assessments, the EOC drafted the attached document to ensure all working group participants were in general agreement about skills children should have upon entry into kindergarten. The working group discussed the attached document entitled State Readiness Assessment and provided feedback to the staff and committee. That information is being collected now.

The EOC respectfully asks the First Steps to School Readiness Board of Trustees consider the attached framework that the EOC will consider to determine the domains and areas that a comprehensive readiness assessment or assessments should measure to determine readiness for kindergarten. The information is based upon the Profile of the South Carolina Graduate which has been endorsed by the State Board of Education and the EOC and the newly adopted South Carolina College- and Career-Ready Standards in English language arts and mathematics for kindergarten students. The state's Early Learning Standards for children from birth to age 5 were also considered to ensure there were no conflicts. However, since they are still being amended, any potential changes to the Early Learning Standards were not part of the analysis. Therefore, the framework considered the end product – the world class skills, life and career characteristics and world class knowledge that South Carolina graduates from our public high schools should have – and the standards that five-year-olds should master upon completing kindergarten.

The EOC looks forward to getting input on how to improve and amend the framework to guarantee that students are ready to succeed by May 6, 2015, if at all possible, so that the Early Readiness Assessment Subcommittee can incorporate the Board's recommendations.

Sincerely,



Melanie Barton
Executive Director

C: Susan DeVenny, Executive Director, State Office of First Steps
Dr. Dan Wuori, Deputy Director, State Office of First Steps
Barbara Hairfield, Chair, Early Readiness Assessment Subcommittee

Attachment



Melanie Barton
Director
SC Education Oversight Committee
P.O. Box 11867
Columbia, SC 29211

May 6, 2015

Dear Mrs. Barton,

As you are aware, Section 59-152-33 (A) of the South Carolina Code of Laws requires that:

“Before July 1, 2015, the South Carolina Education Oversight Committee shall recommend an assessment to evaluate and measure the school readiness of students prior to their entrance into a prekindergarten or kindergarten program per the goals pursuant to Section 59-152-30 to the State Board of Education. Prior to submitting the recommendation to the State Board, the Education Oversight Committee shall seek input from the South Carolina First Steps to School Readiness Board of Trustees and other early childhood advocates. In making the recommendation, the South Carolina Education Oversight Committee shall consider assessments that are research-based, reliable, and appropriate for measuring readiness.”

Pursuant to this section and your written request dated April 15, 2015, I am writing to share the feedback of the SC First Steps Board of Trustees.

As relates to the Board’s feedback regarding the attributes of a high-quality readiness assessment, I am enclosing Attachment 1 – generated during the Board’s open dialogue during its March 19, 2015 meeting. This document detail’s the Board’s desires related to five key questions:

- What do we want a school readiness assessment to provide for *students*?
- What do we want a school readiness assessment to provide for *parents*?
- What do we want a school readiness assessment to provide for *teachers*?
- What do we want a school readiness assessment to provide for *policymakers*?
- What do we want a school readiness assessment to provide for *other key stakeholders*?

In regard to the draft document shared by the EOC on April 15, we have been most appreciative of the EOC’s participation (along with that of the SC Department of Education, the Institute for Child Success, Transform SC and others) in a pair of recent meetings of the SC First Steps Board’s Program and Grants Committee – which is leading our own work under Section 59-152-32 (A) to create a description of school readiness to include:

*“(a) characteristics and development levels of a ready child that must include, but are not limited to, emerging literacy, numeracy, and physical, social, and emotional competencies;
(b) characteristics of school, educators, and caregivers that the board considers necessary to create an optimal learning environment for the early years of students’ lives; and
(c) characteristics of the optimal environment which would lead to the readiness of students and their continued success.”*

As part of this work the committee has recently created a crosswalk document comparing the EOC’s draft framework with the national milestones of the Parents as Teachers curriculum, South Carolina’s Good Start, Grow Smart Early Learning Standards and feedback recently offered by the Institute for Child Success, which I have attached in draft form as Attachment 2.

Based on the committee's work, we are pleased to note significant alignment across these four documents. As articulated to EOC staff during the committee's May 3rd teleconference, First Steps intends to use this document as a key source in the development of a parent- and community-friendly description of readiness as we have been charged in Section 59-152-32 (A). We hope that when completed, the EOC will consider endorsing this document alongside the State Board of Education as single description around which we can collectively plan on behalf of SC children.

We appreciate the opportunity to inform your important process and hope you won't ever hesitate to reach out as the First Steps Board of Trustees can be of assistance to you in our shared work.

Respectfully,

Ken Wingate
Chair
SC First Steps Board of Trustees

cc: David Whittemore, Chair, SC Education Oversight Committee
Superintendent Molly Spearman
Dr. Traci Young-Cooper, Chair, State Board of Education
Dr. Danny Varat, State Board of Education
Julia-Ellen Davis, Chair, SCFS Board of Trustees Program and Grants Committee
Susan DeVenny, Director, SC First Steps to School Readiness

ATTACHMENT 1: Attributes of a High-Quality School Readiness Assessment
First Steps Board of Trustees, March 19, 2015

What do we want a school readiness assessment to provide for STUDENTS?

- Support the child's success: provide feedback, affirmation, direction
- Time for one-on-one time with teacher, relationship building. A comfortable time for students.
- Want to convey information with sensitivity, positivity
- Provide motivation and a hunger for learning
- Provide snapshot of strengths and weaknesses (to guide teacher for instructional planning)
- A measure of student growth
- A culturally sensitive measure that includes multiple areas of development

What do we want a school readiness assessment to provide for PARENTS?

- What should they expect of their child? Information to inform against an objective range.
- Results provided to compare against milestones
- Help develop a relationship of trust
- Bridge of communication...two way conversation between parents and teachers
- Parent friendly in its delivery, help parents to understand. Uses accessible language.
- Letting parents know what their children need - insight as to what they can do to support their child's areas of weakness
- Sensitivity to range of normal (don't let parenting be competitive)
- Establishing communication and relationships

What do we want a school readiness assessment to provide for TEACHERS?

- Snapshot of where the child is at that moment. In context that it is just for that moment.
- Flexibility.
- Opportunity to document progression in all areas.
- Encourage risk-taking in children, help work on their weaknesses.
- Assessment process needs to be sensitive to teacher overload.
- Should not be punitive to teachers.
- Tool that isn't influenced by student behavior. Some unable to focus, sit down and "be assessed."
- Help inform/drive instruction.
- The only thing we assess is content knowledge...Needs to measure characteristics and skills like integrity and perseverance. Approaches to learning.
- Give teachers flexibility to reinforce important attributes like caring, integrity.

What do we want a school readiness assessment to provide for POLICYMAKERS?

- Data that allows them to make important decisions as they are setting policy.
- Help them understand the goals by age group and how do children measure up?
- Confidence that assessments are accurate.

What do we want a school readiness assessment to provide for OTHER KEY STAKEHOLDERS?

- Is there a way to use assessment broadly to inform other key stakeholders?
- Is there a way to gather information from stakeholders such as pediatricians?

**ATTACHMENT 2: DRAFT Readiness Description Crosswalk and Proposed Teacher Survey Items
SC First Steps to School Readiness, May 3, 2015**

Parents as Teachers Milestones	EOC	ICS Priorities	SC 4K Preschool Standards	SC First Steps: Proposed Consensus Language
Language and Literacy				
Listening, Speaking, Understanding				
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • I can learn a song and the actions that go with the words. • I carry out four simple, related directions in order (e.g., steps to get ready to go outdoors). • I use six to eight words in a sentence. • I use future and past tenses. • I carry on a conversation for multiple turns on the same topic. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Gain meaning by listening. • Follow directions that involve a series of actions. • Demonstrate phonological and phonemic awareness (rhyme, alliteration, smaller and smaller units of sound). • Speak clearly and convey ideas effectively. • Use expanded vocabulary and language. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Verbal communication* • Recognition of speech sounds • Answering questions • Ability to tell a story* • Rhyming • Using language to solve a problem • Self-expression • Cultural competencies • English skills for non-native speakers • Dual language learners (may have these skills but not in English) • Family/community experience • Learning objects • Beginning of proper word use and sentence structure (orally)* • Listening/story recall* • Expressive and receptive language skills • Vocabulary* 	<p>ELA -4K-1.2 Make relevant comments or appropriate responses to story events or characters.</p> <p>ELA-4K-1.3 Distinguish between descriptions of story events and spoken words of characters.</p> <p>ELA-4K-1.4 Respond to elements of colorful language in stories and poetry.</p> <p>ELA-4K-1.5 Retell one or two events from a story read aloud.</p> <p>ELA-4K-1.7 Recall some details in stories read aloud.</p> <p>ELA-4K-1.10 Begin to ask questions about the causes of events they observe or hear about in books.</p> <p>ELA-4K-3.7 Begin using appropriate voice volume, sentence, structure (syntax), and vocabulary.</p> <p>ELA-4K-3.9 Recognize rhyming words with adult modeling.</p>	<p>I can listen to stories and understand their meaning.</p> <p>I can carry on a conversation, taking turns speaking, listening.</p> <p>I can answer questions that others ask of me.</p> <p>I can follow directions that have several steps.</p> <p>I can remember details and retell stories.</p> <p>I can speak clearly and express my ideas and questions.</p> <p>I have a growing vocabulary and speak in sentences of at least six to eight words.</p> <p>I can use words to seek help and solve problems.</p> <p>I can recognize and name rhyming words.</p>

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Early Reading				
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • I identify my own name when I see it printed. • I can predict a suitable ending to a simple story. • I can fill in a word that is missing from a rhyme, chant or song (e.g., Jack and Jill went up the ____.) • I can “read” environmental print and symbols print (e.g., McDonald’s, STOP, Exit). 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Show interest in and knowledge about books and reading. • Show some understanding of concepts about print. • Know letters, sounds, and how they form words. • Comprehend and respond to various literary texts (fiction, nonfiction, poetry). • Retell familiar stories. • Begin to understand how personal experiences connect to texts. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Print awareness and orientation* • Picture and letter recognition* • Alphabetic principle and knowledge* 	<p>ELA-4K-1.6 Begin to identify significant words from text read aloud.</p> <p>ELA-4K-3.1 Begin to use both pictures and text read aloud as cues to meaning of unfamiliar words.</p> <p>ELA-4K-3.3 Display curiosity and interest in learning new words.</p> <p>ELA-4K-3.13 Identify several letters and their general order in the alphabet.</p> <p>ELA-4K-3.14 Beginning to understand that letters can represent speech sounds.</p> <p>ELA-4K-3.20 Identify familiar environmental print such as business logos and traffic signs.</p> <p>ELA-4K-3.22 Understand relationship between print and pictures on page.</p>	<p>I know that printed text has a meaning.</p> <p>I can recognize my written name and maybe some other familiar words.</p> <p>I recognize many letters of the alphabet.</p> <p>I know that letters represent spoken sounds and know some of them – especially the ones in my name.</p> <p>I recognize and understand the meaning of familiar signs and logos in the world around me. (STOP, McDonalds, etc.).</p> <p>I have an interest in books and reading.</p> <p>I can make predictions about the things that will happen next in a story being read to me.</p> <p>I can use the pictures in a book to help me.</p> <p>I know how books work and can show you the front and back and turn the pages in correct order.</p> <p>I can fill in a word that is missing from a rhyme, chant or song. (e.g. “Jack and Jill went up the ____.”)</p>

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Early Writing				
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • I use scribbles, shapes and letter-like symbols to write. • I try to write for a variety of purposes (e.g., lists, messages, pretend play). • I print some letters. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Represent stories through pictures, dictation, and play. • Use letter-like shapes, symbols, letters, and words to convey meaning. • Understand purposes of writing. 	Prewriting and writing/pretend* writing/drawing	ELA-4K-2.6 Begin to understand graphic information which he/she has participated in creating. ELA-4K-3.4 Begin understanding how print is used to bring meaning. ELA-4K-4.3 Creates a picture and labels it orally. ELA-4K-4.6 Understands that each person in the class has a first and last name. ELA-4K-4.9 Makes some upper case letters without regard to proportion or placement. ELA-4K-5.1 Combine some letters with pretend writing. ELA-4K-5.2 Use drawings, letters, or words to create narratives about people and things in their environment.	I can print – or am learning to print - my name. I can write by combining some letters with other kinds of pretend writing (scribbles, letter-like shapes, symbols). I can print some letters. I can draw a picture and tell about it. I know that print carries a meaning and can “read” you what I have written. I sometimes write as a part of my play. (I might make a sign or a “grocery list” for example.)
Cognitive and General Knowledge				
Attention and Memory				
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • I stay with a task of my choice, without supervision, for more than 5 minutes • I can recall several details of a sequence of events with more detail. • I can reengage in a task after an interruption. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Maintain interest in self-selected activities, even if there are interruptions or challenges. • Identify a problem and be flexible in solving it. Able to change plans if necessary to solve problem. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Meaningful engagement • Persistence • Ability to sit for a certain amount of time • The ability to complete tasks • Memory • Attention Object permanence (early memory)	AL-4K- 3.3 Show ability to focus attention for increasing variety of chosen tasks and activities for short periods of time (10-20 minutes). AL-4K-4.2 Demonstrate an increasing ability to organize actions and materials in the learning environment. AL-4K-5.1 Represent prior events and personal experiences in one or more ways. AL-4K-5.2 Demonstrate increasing ability to use prior knowledge to understand new experiences.	I am able to pay attention to a single task for a period of several minutes. When I am interrupted from a task I can go right back to it and pick up where I left off. As I play and go about my day, I am able to identify problems and change my plans to solve them. I use things I have learned previously and apply them in new situations. I can maintain my attention

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				<p>to a story being read or through a short conversation with a friend or grown up.</p> <p>When I start something simple, I can maintain my attention long enough to finish it.</p>
Mathematics: Numbers, Counting				
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> I can spontaneously recognize a group of five presented in a non-linear, organized way (e.g., on dice). I count 10 objects out loud. I can evenly divide a set of four objects between myself and a friend. I can place five objects in order and explain my decision. I can recognize some numerals. I use a variety of vocabulary to make comparisons of quantity, size and weight (e.g., more, less, biggest). I can use non-standard units to measure objects (e.g., determine how many blocks in the length of a table). I can make reasonable estimates of small quantities of objects (up to seven or eight). 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Show understanding of relationship between number and quantity. Begin to understand relationships between quantities. 	<p>Counting and using numbers to describe and compare</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Recognizing, and sorting shapes Predicting A sense of quantity (more vs. less) 	<p>M-4K-2.1 Count orally forward to twenty and backward from three.</p> <p>M-4K-2.2 Show one-to-one correspondence through ten when counting real objects.</p> <p>M-4K-2.3 Compare sets of no more than ten objects using the terms “more than” or “same as”.</p>	<p>I can count out loud to 20.</p> <p>I can count backward from three.</p> <p>I can count a group of up to 10 objects accurately.</p> <p>I recognize some printed numbers.</p> <p>I understand that there is a connection between a printed number and a quantity of objects.</p> <p>I use words to compare quantity (more and less), size (big and small) and weight (light and heavy).</p> <p>I can compare small sets of objects and accurately describe them using words like “more than” and “same as.”</p> <p>I recognize basic shapes like a circle, square and triangle.</p>

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Matching sorting classifying				
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • I identify items based on category when looking at a picture book (e.g., animals, foods or toys). • I can sort objects into groups according to their characteristics. • I can create a predictable pattern. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Sort objects into subgroups by classifying and comparing. • Recognize duplicates and extends patterns. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Making comparisons • Positioning/direction • Basic patterns/emergent algebra • Classification and use of symbols • Observational skills – what does not belong and what is missing 	<p>ELA-4K-6.3 Classify objects and information by observable attributes into predetermined categories.</p> <p>M-4K-1.4 Locate patterns in the environment.</p> <p>M-4K-3.2 Identify and copy a simple pattern.</p> <p>M-4K-3.4 Sort and classify objects by one attribute (size, shape, or color).</p>	<p>I can sort objects into groups that are “the same.”</p> <p>I can create simple patterns using real objects.</p> <p>I can point out simple patterns in the world around me.</p> <p>I can tell why an item or items does not belong in a group.</p>
Reasoning				
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • I explore the effects of forces in nature such as wind, gravity and magnetism (e.g., observe that a toy car rolls slower when a ramp is lowered). • I can use materials to design a solution to a simple problem (build a wall of rocks to stop water flowing through sand or mud). • I can predict (not necessarily with accuracy) the results of an action and test out my idea. • I explore changes in matter and describe what happens (e.g., cooking). 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Show creativity and imagination in a variety of settings. • Engage creatively with others in play. • Demonstrate an increased ability to accomplish a task requiring multiple steps. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Using objects in play, experimenting with materials • Problem solving • Understanding a sequence of events/cycles 	<p>AL-4K-2.2 Demonstrate eagerness and interest as a learner by questioning and adding ideas.</p> <p>ELA-4K-6.1 Ask “how” and “why” questions about things in books and their environment.</p> <p>M-4K-1.2 Generate conjectures based on personal experiences and simple reasoning.</p>	<p>I can predict the results of an action and test my idea.</p> <p>I show creativity and imagination in a variety of settings.</p> <p>I can complete tasks that take several steps to accomplish.</p> <p>I ask “how” and “why” questions.</p> <p>I can overcome challenges and use materials to solve problems.</p>

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Scientific Knowledge				
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> I make comparisons and categorize living things. (e.g. All fish have fins.) I combine two-dimensional shapes to create complex designs (e.g. place triangles around a circle to make a flower.) I use time-related words (without accuracy) to describe the sequence and duration of events. I can use simple tools to explore the physical properties of objects (e.g. magnifiers, scales, thermometers) I can represent new knowledge, plans or steps of an experiment (e.g., draw observed changes, characteristics or results). 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Show curiosity in an increasing variety of ideas and interests. Make predictions and test ideas. Seek out new challenges and experiences. Ask for help when needed. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Observation skills Creativity, curiosity, motivation, persistence ** Curiosity* Problem solving Representation – using items/tools creatively (outside the box) 	<p>AL-4K-2.1 Show curiosity in an increasing variety of activities, tasks, and learning centers.</p> <p>AL-4K-2.2 Demonstrate eagerness and interest as a learner by questioning and adding ideas.</p> <p>AL-4K-3.1 Demonstrate growing initiative in selecting and carrying out activities.</p> <p>AL-4K-4.4 Try to solve problems encountered in play.</p>	<p>I am curious about the world around me and ask questions to gain greater understanding.</p> <p>I seek out new challenges and experiences. I want to try new things.</p> <p>I ask for help when needed.</p> <p>I use my senses to learn about the world around me and make observations about the things I experience.</p>
Social Emotional				
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> I incorporate emotion during pretend play. I show when I experience complex emotions (e.g., embarrassment, pride, shame, guilt). I can label and show understanding of others' feelings. My displayed emotion is appropriate for the situation, but what I'm feeling may be different. I can regain my calm in a changing or disappointing situation. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Express emotions and needs through appropriate words and actions. Adjust well to changes in routines and environments. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Resilience and perseverance through frustration* Express and identify emotions appropriately 	<p>AL-4K-1.2 Demonstrate increasing ability to identify and take appropriate risks in order to learn and demonstrate new skills.</p> <p>AL-4K- 2.3 Demonstrate delight or satisfaction when completing a task, solving a problem, or making a discovery.</p> <p>SE-4K-1.1 Describe characteristics of self and others.</p> <p>SE-4K-1.2 Demonstrate self-direction by making choices among peers, activities and materials.</p> <p>SE-4K-1.3 Demonstrate</p>	<p>I express my emotions through appropriate actions and words.</p> <p>I show when I experience different emotions.</p> <p>I can label and show understanding of others' feelings.</p> <p>I can adjust well to changes in my routine and environments.</p> <p>I can role play different emotions during pretend play.</p>

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<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • I can follow external directions to inhibit my behavior. • I can give up an immediate reward to earn a more valued reward. • I share toys or equipment with other children without being asked. • I seek out play partners who have something in common with me. • I play cooperatively with a group of two or more children with the same goal in mind. • I verbalize what I want to another person prior to physical expression (e.g., saying “I want a turn” before grabbing a toy). • I comply with adults’ requests most of the time (e.g., talk quietly, come to the table). 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Work and play cooperatively with others. • Show caring for others. • Treat others with respect in words and actions. • Respect the property of others. • Interact easily with familiar adults. • Follow Directions and school rules. • Demonstrate increasing ability to identify and take appropriate risk when learning new knowledge and skills. • Express confidence in meeting new challenges and experiences. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Self-regulation/delaying gratification* • Self-control • Relationship with peers Have opportunities to form friendships/ability to build relationships* • Exploring cooperation • Learning how to act, interact and react with people and their environment (early learning standards language)* • Classroom management (follow age-appropriate requests from adults) • Recognition of authority • Following directions 	<p>confidence by participating in most classroom activities. SE-4K-1.4 Stand up for rights much of the time. SE-4K-1.5 Respond respectfully to positive and negative feedback from adults most of the time. SE-4K-2.1 Follow classroom rules and procedures with reminders. SE-4K-2.2 Use classroom materials responsibly, most of the time. SE-4K-2.3 Manage transitions positively when told what to expect. SE-4K-2.4 Recognize effect on others of own behavior most of the time. SE-4K-2.5 Demonstrate with adult guidance simple techniques to solve social problems. SE-4K-3.1 Recognize own feelings and describe them some of the time. SE-4K-3.2 Develop strategies to express strong emotion with adult help. SE-4K-4.2 Develop friendships with one or two preferred children.</p>	<p>I can regain my calm in a changing or disappointing situation.</p> <p>I can follow directions and change my behavior.</p> <p>I can give up an immediate reward to earn something more valued later.</p> <p>I can show self-control.</p> <p>I can work and play cooperatively with others.</p> <p>I can share toys and equipment with other children without being asked.</p> <p>I can take turns.</p> <p>I can play cooperatively with other children.</p> <p>I show my caring for others.</p> <p>I show respect for the property of others.</p> <p>I can interact easily with familiar adults.</p> <p>I follow simple rules and directions.</p> <p>I stand up for my rights.</p> <p>I recognize authority and will change my behavior as directed by my teacher or parent.</p> <p>I solve my problems without resorting to violence – by</p>
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				<p>using words and seeking the help of trusted adults.</p> <p>I can make friends.</p>
Physical well-being and motor development				
Gross				
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> I can bounce and then catch a large ball. I can balance on one foot for 10 seconds. I can run and pivot to change directions without stopping. I can gallop. I adjust my body rhythm when music tempo changes. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Use basic locomotor skills alone, with a partner and in a group. Coordinate body movement to perform various tasks (kick a moving ball, throw a ball overhand). Coordinate body movement across midline to perform various tasks (use right hand on left side of body). 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Appropriate gross and fine motor skill development* Ability to set and respect physical boundaries 	<p>PD-4K-1.1 Move with balance and control while walking, running, jumping, marching, hopping, and galloping.</p> <p>PD-4K-1.2 Coordinate movements to perform more complex tasks.</p>	<p>I can move with control and with balance while walking, running, jumping, marching, hopping and galloping.</p> <p>I can bounce, throw, kick and catch a large ball.</p> <p>I can run and change directions without stopping.</p> <p>I can balance on one foot for ten seconds.</p>
Fine				
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> I can string half-inch beads with ease. I can draw a square, a triangle and zigzag lines, imitating an adult. I can draw a person with four parts. I can cut out simple pictures following a general outline. I can build block structures that extend out and up. I can pour liquid or sand into a small container without spilling. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Use hand eye coordination to perform various tasks (put together a puzzle, use scissors, tape). Use drawing and writing tools with some control and purpose. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Appropriate gross and fine motor skill development* 	<p>PD-4K-2.1 Use strength and control to perform more complex tasks.</p> <p>PD-4K-2.2 Use hand-eye coordination to perform more complex tasks.</p> <p>PD-4K-2.3 Show beginning control of drawing and writing tools.</p>	<p>I can draw a person with four parts.</p> <p>I can grasp a pencil or crayon and use it with some control and purpose.</p> <p>I use hand-eye coordination to perform simple tasks, like putting together a puzzle.</p> <p>I can use scissors to cut a piece of paper.</p> <p>I can use my fingers to pick up and manipulate small objects.</p>

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Health				
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Access regular medical, dental, vision care. • Identify different food groups. • Understand and follow basic health and safety rules (hand washing). • Perform self-care independently (buttoning clothes, toileting). 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Self-help skills* • Self-care* • Up to date immunizations • Nutritional needs are met • Body awareness • Address needs/condition of exceptional children (not considered a limitation) <ul style="list-style-type: none"> o Health and development screenings with appropriate services/interventions • Healthy nutrition, exercise and sleep routines <ul style="list-style-type: none"> o Access and Utilization <ul style="list-style-type: none"> o Prenatal and perinatal care o Medical home with case management that connects and promotes utilization of various services o Service coordination, wrap around services, partnerships with families • Established routines to promote health (appropriate amounts of sleep) • Screen time • Prenatal and perinatal care 	PD-4K-3.1 Perform some self-care tasks independently. PD-4K-3.2 Follow basic health rules most of the time. PD-4K-3.3 Follow basic safety rules most of the time. PD-4K-3.4 Demonstrate adequate stamina and strength for program activities.	<p>I use self-care skills to do things like use the bathroom, wash my hands, button my clothes, brush my teeth.</p> <p>I have access to regular health and dental care. I follow basic health rules most of the time.</p> <p>I get 8-10 hours of sleep each night.</p> <p>I have enough strength and stamina to make it through daily activities.</p>

H.3701, the 2015-16 General Appropriation Act

as Reported by Senate Finance Committee on April 29, 2015

1A.77. (SDE-EIA: 4K Early Literacy Competencies Assessments) Of the funds carried forward from the full-day 4K program from the previous fiscal year, the Department of Education is authorized to expend up to \$800,000 on assessments and professional development to analyze the early literacy competencies of children in publicly funded prekindergarten. The department, in consultation with the Office of First Steps, will select up to three formative assessments that analyze the early literacy and language development of children in publicly funded prekindergarten. Each school district and private provider participating in a publicly funded prekindergarten program will administer one of the formative assessments selected by the department to each child eligible for and enrolled in a publicly funded prekindergarten program during the first forty-five days of the school year and during the last forty-five days of the school year. School districts and private providers will be allocated \$15 per child assessed to cover the cost of the formative assessment. School districts and private providers are required to report electronically the results of each individual assessment to the department using a form that must include the unique student identifier and any other information prescribed by the department. In turn, the department will provide the assessment data to the Education Oversight Committee. The results of the assessment and the developmental intervention strategies recommended or services needed to address the child's identified needs must also be provided, in writing, to the parent or guardian. The assessment may not be used to deny a student to admission to prekindergarten.

Furthermore, \$2,000,000 of the funds appropriated for half-day programs for four-year-olds and funds carried forward from assessment must be expended by the Department of Education to administer the Developmental Reading Assessment(r) 2nd Edition PLUS to implement the progress monitoring system required by the Read to Succeed Act of 2014 and to evaluate the early literacy and language competencies of each child entering kindergarten in the public schools. The assessment of kindergarten students must be administered at a minimum of once during the first forty-five days of the school year and once during the last forty-five days of the school year with the results collected by the department. The results of the assessments and the developmental intervention strategies recommended or services needed to address each child's identified needs must also be provided, in writing, to the parent or guardian. The assessment may not be used to deny a student admission to kindergarten. Districts are given the option of designating up to two days of the 180-day school calendar to administer the assessment to kindergarten students. The department will also provide the results of the assessment of kindergarten students to the Education Oversight Committee. With available funds, the department will also provide or secure training for appropriate educators in how to administer the assessment. In addition the department may pilot in kindergarten classes one or more comprehensive readiness assessments that address the other domains in numeracy, approaches to learning, social and emotional development, and physical well-being in the current school year.