

Annual Report on the
**Kindergarten Readiness
Assessment (KRA)**

Fall 2019 Administration



**What do the results of the KRA tell us?
How can we improve school readiness and
address students' needs?**

How is a student assessed on the KRA?

Because all children have unique backgrounds and experiences prior to entering kindergarten, teachers in South Carolina use the Kindergarten Readiness Assessment during the first weeks of school to get to know children as learners. The assessment tool is not designed to rank children by ability, nor is it used for identifying gifted or challenged students. This tool is primarily to help teachers get to know children in a way that does not interrupt their learning. Children may not even be aware that the teacher is using this tool because most of the tool requires the teacher to observe children during the natural course of the school day's activities.



- The KRA includes selected-response items (multiple-choice), performance tasks, and observation items. The test consists of 50 items; each item is scored using a rubric.
- Teachers interact directly with the child for the selected-response and the performance task items. Observations can take place in a variety of naturally occurring settings. For the observation items, teachers can observe students individually, in small groups, or as a whole class. Observation items are scored using a rubric that includes specific criteria at three levels of proficiency: Proficient, In Progress, or Not Yet Evident.
- Only professional educators who have received training and certification in the use of the KRA materials may administer the assessment.

There are three ways for children to show what they know and are able to do on the KRA:

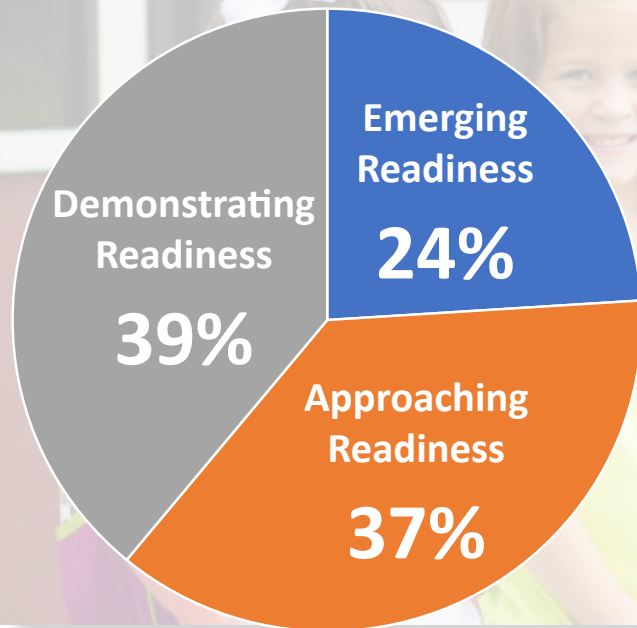
1. Select an answer to a question the teacher asks
2. Perform a requested task
3. Be observed by the teacher during school and at recess

Are SC students prepared for kindergarten?

The Kindergarten Readiness Assessment (KRA) is designed to provide information on children's preparedness for kindergarten. In 2019, South Carolina schools began a third statewide administration of the assessment, which provides the only "snapshot" of kindergarten readiness in the state currently. Other states, like Maryland and Ohio, also administer the KRA, to kindergarten students.

The KRA is administered by a teacher during the first 45 days of schools, a requirement of the law. It includes questions that students answer, as well as questions where children are observed in their classrooms while doing activities or interacting with other children. It is designed to give reports for an individual child, as well as cohorts of children.

Fall 2019 Overall Results 55,694 Kindergartners



After the assessment is complete, each student receives a score of overall readiness in one of the following categories:

Demonstrating Readiness:

Student *demonstrates* foundational skills and behaviors that prepare him or her for instruction based on kindergarten standards.

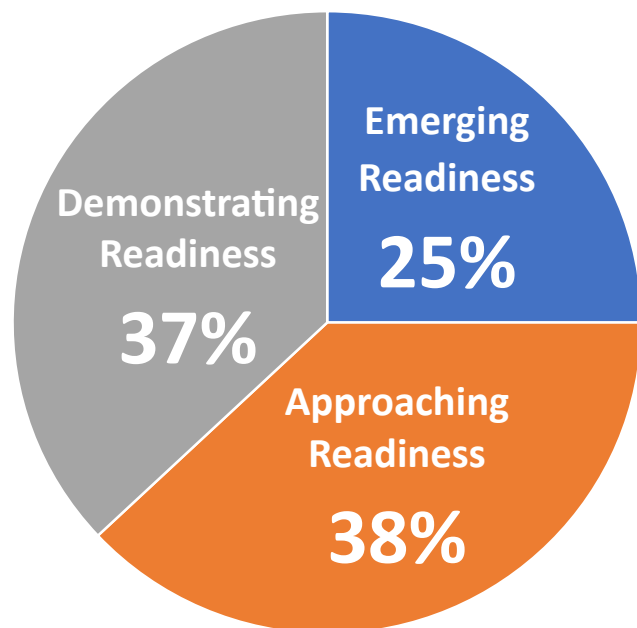
Approaching Readiness:

Student *demonstrates some* foundational skills and behaviors that prepare him or her for instruction based on kindergarten standards.

Emerging Readiness:

Student *demonstrates limited* foundational skills and behaviors that prepare him or her for instruction based on kindergarten standards.

Fall 2018 Overall Results 54,904 Kindergartners



Why does SC assess the readiness of students for kindergarten?

Like most states in this country, South Carolina assesses the readiness children upon entering kindergarten. The results of the assessment are not used to deny a student access to kindergarten. Instead, the results are used to improve the services provided to young children and their families upon entering the public-school system.

South Carolina understands that having all children ready for the transition to kindergarten, the first step in formal education, is critical to a child's long-term academic success. We also want to assess the readiness of the whole child, which includes a child's physical, social, early literacy and early mathematics skills. And, ensuring a child's readiness is our responsibility – the responsibility of parents, families and communities!

So, what do the results of the assessments provide? The assessment results are used for various audiences and purposes.

For parents and families:

- Identify possible developmental concerns and strengths of children.
- Provide information to know where their child may need additional supports.

For teachers and schools:

- Provide important information about kindergarteners to inform instruction and engage parents in ways they may support children's development and learning at home.
- Provide important information to pre-kindergarten (4K) teachers about areas of strength and challenge for children so pre-kindergarten interactions and instruction may be adjusted to boost pre-kindergarten students' readiness for kindergarten.

For policymakers:

- Provide information on state and county school readiness efforts, and trends over time.
- Provide information so that local communities can take action to support growth and development of all young children in South Carolina.
- Assess state's efforts in language, literacy, math instruction and social, emotional and physical development.
- Provide policymakers information about the impact of full-day four-year-old programs funded with state investments of approximately \$64 million each year.

Policymakers at the state and local levels are charged with providing children from birth through age 5 and their families with access to services that ensure that children enter kindergarten ready to learn. These services include the following:

- Early Care and Education
- Parenting and Family Support
- Health and Social Services



Questions?

If families have questions about the KRA and what the results mean for their child, they should ask their child's teacher or principal who can provide you with suggestions for supporting your child's learning and development outside of school.

Key Results

- Scores from the 2019 KRA administration showed that 31 districts met or surpassed the overall state average for Demonstrating Readiness.
- Among White children, about 48 percent performed at the Demonstrating Readiness level on the Overall scale, while 29 percent of African American children and 24 percent of Hispanic children were at that level.
- The Child Early Reading and Development Education Program (CERDEP) is a full day, four year old kindergarten program for at risk children which must be made available to qualified children in all public school districts within the State. KRA test results for students who attended a 4K program, either full or half-day, in a non-CERDEP eligible district were compared with results for students who attended a 4K program in a CERDEP-eligible district. Both groups showed slight increases in the percentage of kindergartners performing in the Demonstrating Readiness category in 2019 as compared to 2018. In CERDEP districts, 39 percent of kindergartners scored Demonstrating Readiness. In non-CERDEP districts, 42 percent of kindergartners who participated in 4K programs performed in the Demonstrating Readiness category.

