



EARLY LEARNING AND SCHOOL READINESS POLICY

BOARD POLICY 6:137 EARLY LEARNING AND SCHOOL READINESS FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS

INSTRUCTION

Early Learning and School Readiness

~~Crete-Monee School District 201-U affirms its commitment to high-quality early learning by aligning Pre-K to Kindergarten practices with all ISBE mandates, including Illinois Early Learning Development Standards and the KIDS Readiness Assessment, and by establishing a sustainable framework for school readiness, long-term planning, and continuous improvement without prescribing funding levels or operational decisions.~~

PROPOSED REVISION

Crete-Monee School District 201-U affirms its commitment to high-quality early learning by aligning Pre-K to Kindergarten practices with all applicable Illinois State Board of Education (ISBE) mandates, including the Illinois Early Learning and Development Standards and state-required school readiness assessments, and by establishing a sustainable framework for school readiness, long-term planning, and continuous improvement without prescribing funding levels or operational decisions.

BOARD OF EDUCATION SUMMARY

Purpose of the Proposed Policy

There is a recommendation to create and adopt an Early Learning and School Readiness Policy. This policy aims to formally affirm the Board's commitment to high-quality early childhood education and establish a clear, sustainable framework for planning, reporting, and alignment across Pre-K and Kindergarten. This policy does not mandate funding levels or direct operational decisions; instead, it sets expectations that support long-term stability and coherence.

Why This Policy Is Needed Now

Crete-Monee's Early Learning Program has become a recognized strength of our district. Families, staff, and community partners consistently affirm the program's quality, and we continue to see positive readiness outcomes for students entering kindergarten.

With the implementation of the KIDS (Kindergarten Individual Development Survey) initiative—alongside our existing Pre-K-K alignment work and early learning best practices—this is the right time for the Board to codify its support. A policy will:

- Clarify the district's expectations for early learning
- Strengthen alignment with ISBE mandates and readiness standards
- Protect the program from erosion during leadership transitions
- Provide continuity despite grant dependency and annual renewal cycles
- Reinforce the Board's role in setting priorities and monitoring outcomes

What the Policy Does

The proposed policy:

- Confirms the district's commitment to high-quality early learning aligned to state mandates, including the Illinois Early Learning and Development Standards (IELDS) and the KIDS Readiness Assessment
- Establishes expectations for aligned Pre-K to Kindergarten practices
- Encourages long-term planning and sustainability
- Ensures transparency through regular reporting to the Board
- Supports the pursuit of external funding without obligating district resources
- Affirms school readiness as a core district priority

What the Policy Does Not Do

- It does not require additional spending.



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- It does not mandate program expansion.
- It does not interfere with operational decisions or curriculum implementation.
- It does not bind future Boards to financial commitments.

Intended Impact

Adopting this policy will:

- Strengthen alignment from early childhood through Kindergarten
- Preserve a successful program through periods of change
- Provide clarity for staff, families, and community partners
- Ensure consistency in expectations regardless of funding cycles
- Embed early learning in district strategic planning and accountability structures