

## **Background**

In March 2010, State Superintendent Christopher Koch convened a committee of over 50 members that were charged to examine the feasibility of adopting a uniform, statewide kindergarten readiness assessment process. The goals of the process were to identify gaps in school readiness, provide information to drive more effective classroom instruction, and support state and local data-driven decision making with regard to professional development and resource allocation.

The Kindergarten Individual Development Survey (KIDS) Advisory Committee was convened in October of 2011 and met in March and June 2012. The committee was comprised of school administrators, teachers, university faculty, researchers and education advocates. The role of the committee was to advise and support the selection, development, and implementation of the instrument. After careful consideration, the California Department of Education's (CDE) Desired Results Developmental Profile-School Readiness instrument was selected. It was developed by the CDE, WestEd and the University of California, Berkeley BEAR Center. Over the next few years, research studies will be conducted to adapt the assessment to be Illinois specific. In 2015, a final KIDS implementation will be available.

Developmentally appropriate and aligned, the Kindergarten Individual Development Survey (KIDS) is an assessment that can provide useful information to teachers and administrators in order to better address children's learning and developmental needs over time. It is an essential strategy to close the readiness gap and ensure all children thrive in their earliest years. KIDS is a comprehensive process designed to provide information about children's competencies across developmental domains over time and to inform whether Illinois' kindergarteners have the skills and knowledge needed to succeed in school.

## **Overview**

KIDS is an observational formative assessment. Children are observed and evidence is collected throughout each of the rating periods. This evidence is then used to complete the assessment for that period. The assessment is completed three times per school year. For example the first rating is due within the first 40 days of student attendance. For the 2012-2013 school year, the 40<sup>th</sup> day of school is October 22, 2012. The second rating is due within 105 days of student attendance (February 2, 2013). The evidence used for the second rating period is from days 41-105. The third rating is due within 170 days of attendance (May 17, 2013). The evidence collected is from days 106-170.

The KIDS assessment has five domains and 30 measures. The domains are English Language Development, Self and Social Development, Self Regulation, Language and Literacy Development, and mathematical Development. Each domain has 4-7 school readiness measures. The English Language Development domain has five developmental levels used for rating the

measures; discovering, exploring, developing, building and integrating. The remaining domains also have five rating levels: exploring competencies, developing competencies, building competencies, integrating competencies, and applying competencies.

During each rating period, kindergarten teachers are expected to assess every student on all measures in each of the domains. Students do not all develop at the same rate and some students may be between developmental levels as evidenced by observations and work samples. Ratings should indicate the developmental level that the student has mastered at the time of the assessment, based on the student's mastery as exhibited through easy and confident performance over time in a variety of settings.

Each time the teacher enters student observational data into the KIDS data base, she/he will be looking at it with "fresh eyes", and therefore previous ratings will not be available. Research shows that teachers are most objective when they look at the evidence and documentation, then rate the measure. When referring to previous ratings, teachers may rate the child higher or lower than their true developmental level because of their expectations of growth since the last rating.

The kindergarten classroom teacher who has been trained on KIDS will make the final decision for rating and will enter the data. However, teaching assistants, volunteers, parents and others (e.g. reading specialist, special education teacher, speech/language, ELL teacher, Occupational Therapist, Physical Therapist) can provide evidence to the teacher to be used in the rating.

Whether kindergarten students are enrolled in a half day program or a full day program, the KIDS assessment must be completed for all children, during the specified assessment period, regardless of the circumstances. This KIDS assessment instrument is for all kindergarten students, regular education and special education alike. It is based on observations of the student in typical everyday activities with familiar people. Any adaptations noted on the child's IEP can be used. Adaptations are changes in the environment or differences in the observed behavior. Adaptations should be present throughout the child's day and available for all routines and activities, not introduced solely for the purpose of the assessment. For example, a child who wears glasses, or uses an alternative communication system, should have those available at all times. This KIDS assessment instrument is focused on the development of kindergarten students, regardless of the curriculum that is being used or how the classroom is set up and structured (play based or academic).

### **Assessment**

Although the Common Core standards have been adopted in Illinois, the decision regarding report cards is a local decision and must be made at the district level. The Common Core Standards for Language Arts and Math have been adopted in Illinois. However, the Illinois Kindergarten standards for English Language Development and Social Emotional Development will continue to be used until there is alignment with the Common Core Standards.

The KIDS assessment is comparable to the Illinois preschool work sampling system which is required in Illinois Preschool for All (PFA) programs. The KIDS assessment, like the Teaching Strategies Gold assessment instruments used in PFA, is an observation based assessment based upon typical classroom activities.

Teachers in the implementation pilot are required to complete the assessment for all children in their classrooms. Assessments that are currently being used may also be used as part of the evidence for rating measures for the KIDS assessment; however, more than one piece of evidence is required to complete each measure. The rating is for mastery, which means behaviors that are done easily and confidently, consistently over time, and in different settings.

KIDS data will be able to be disaggregated in a variety of ways. School districts can choose how to disaggregate the data to produce a variety of reports. The results of this assessment will enable the state to identify, monitor, and strategically respond to district, school, teacher, and student needs over time. If a student is promoted or moves out of the district, the student's information is housed in the Student Information System (SIS). Therefore, this data is available to the child's future teachers.

## **Implementation**

District 97 has chosen to participate in the KIDS pilot. There are 56 districts in the state piloting the KIDS program. The state is building capacity for professional development and technical assistance at each step. School districts are not receiving financial compensation. The pilot implementation will last through the 2014-2015 school year. Full statewide implementation will begin in the 2015-2016 school year.

There are 36 kindergarten teachers in District 97. To date, 24 of those teachers have participated in the KIDS pilot training. Since the beginning of the school year, the teachers have been collecting evidence on student progress.

In September and October voluntary meetings were held with KIDS kindergarten teachers. The meeting focused on understanding the expectations, data collection, data collection instruments, and information sharing.

A portion of the November Institute Day was devoted to KIDS. Kindergarten teachers came together to brain storm and share ideas regarding the KIDS program. Kindergarten teachers trained during the summer were also provided with half day release time to complete the measures for their students. Teachers trained in the fall are not required to complete the measures until the second reporting period.

Completing all 30 measures for each student can be time consuming. However, as teachers become more familiar with the assessment and observe more individual students, their proficiency will become increasingly efficient. In the development field study, teachers reported the tool was user friendly and expressed that the instrument became easier to complete with the second and third ratings.

Documentation collected as evidence should be kept electronically or in paper format for each student. ISBE has not issued guidelines for the length of time the KIDS records are to be kept. In District 97, we have requested that teachers keep the student documentation for five years. This decision was based on a recommendation at the KIDS coaches training.

The iPad 3's have been provided by ISBE to kindergarten teachers that attended the KIDS implementation trainings and are implementing KIDS in the pilot school year 2012-2013. The iPads are district property and are for use in KIDS implementation classrooms only. There is an iPad application in development designed to attach documentation (video/audio/photo) for storage.

### **Support**

Regina MacAskill and Felicia Starks Turner serve as KIDS Coaches for District 97. The coach's responsibility is to aid in the implementation of the Kindergarten Individual Development Survey (KIDS) by providing support and feedback to teachers. Coaches work to assist teachers in elevating the quality of their instruction by helping them to align their intentions with their actions. Teachers have a variety of assessments they give to students (DIBELS, teacher created measures, etc.)

Teachers participating in the KIDS pilot all attended two day trainings. Ongoing support includes online tutorials, webinars, and modules will be available on the Illinois KIDS website: [www.illinoiskids.org](http://www.illinoiskids.org). Teachers must have attended the training provided by WestED prior to completing the assessment.

KIDS Tech is a free server-based computer support system for the KIDS assessment instrument. KIDS Tech is designed to allow teachers, program administrators, and other designated staff to enter the results of assessments using the KIDS instruments and to produce a variety of reports about the results for individual children and groups of children.

District level administrators and principals will have access to the KIDS data. District administrators will be able to see all student data; principals will be able to see the data of students at their school. The KIDS data will provide valuable information for teachers, principals, administrators, and ISBE for planning and program improvement.

## **Next Steps**

The District KIDS coaches will continue to provide support to kindergarten teachers trained to use KIDS. As additional KIDS training sessions are available, kindergarten teachers not yet trained will be encouraged to attend. The Illinois State Board of Education is in the process of developing avenues to make the data in Kids Tech available to parents.