

2018-2019 Illinois Kindergarten Individual
Development Survey (KIDS) Report

A LOOK AT KINDERGARTEN READINESS



KIDS

Kindergarten Individual Development Survey
Every Illinois Child Ready for Kindergarten



Illinois
State Board of
Education

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Statewide KIDS implementation receives support from a variety of public and private partners, including:



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Background and Goals

Until recently, Illinois did not have a consistent statewide way of determining whether children entering kindergarten possessed the skills and developmental strengths associated with long-term success in school. In the 2017-2018 school year, all kindergarten teachers in Illinois began observing their students on a common set of developmental measures using the Kindergarten Individual Development Survey (KIDS).

Aggregated statewide, KIDS data provide insight into children's unique learning and support needs and can help teachers and families understand trends in student development over the course of the year. This data provides information for teachers, administrators, families, and policymakers in Illinois to act earlier and more precisely to provide children with the supports and opportunities necessary to achieve success in school and beyond.

With this second annual statewide KIDS report, the hope is that a clearer and earlier picture of student developmental readiness will emerge to:

1. Assist classroom teachers in refining instruction and identifying professional learning needs
2. Allow early childhood providers to align programming around clear expectations for kindergarten readiness
3. Guide families on how to partner with teachers to advance learning at home and obtain additional needed supports
4. Inform state, local, and district policy decisions and specify needs for additional resources and investment



How Does KIDS Work?

KIDS is the result of years of planning and collaboration between the Illinois State Board of Education (ISBE), the early childhood community, advocates, educators, and policymakers.¹ KIDS was developed in alignment with Illinois Early Learning and Developmental Standards (IELDS), Illinois Early Learning Standards–Kindergarten (IELS-K), and other state standards including Common Core State Standards (CCSS) and Next Generation Science Standards (NGSS).

The full KIDS instrument includes 55 measures within 11 learning domains. Each domain contains multiple measures, and each measure consists of a progression of developmental levels typical for kindergarten-aged children. For each measure within the KIDS tool, teachers indicate the highest developmental level they observe each child mastering.

KIDS was piloted for five years before being implemented statewide in 2017. ISBE identified the mandatory 14 State Readiness Measures based on feedback from pilot district participants. KIDS is an observational tool designed to help teachers, administrators, families, and policymakers better understand the developmental readiness of children entering kindergarten.

ISBE requires kindergarten teachers to collect observations within the first 40 days of school on a minimum of 14 required measures. Those “14 State Readiness Measures” constitute a validated sample from four critical learning domains linked to children’s success in the early elementary grades: Approaches to Learning and Self-Regulation, Social and Emotional Development, Language and Literacy, and Math. This subset of **14 measures provides a proxy of readiness at the beginning of kindergarten.**

“KIDS data gathered from these observations inform not only our kindergarten but also our pre-K strategies so we can see gains from students as they enter the K-12 continuum.”

— Jeff Craig, Superintendent,
West Aurora School District 129



¹ For additional information about the timeline and process of developing KIDS, see <https://www.isbe.net/Documents/KIDS-IL-School-Readiness-Initiative.pdf>



“KIDS’ emphasis on children’s emotional intelligence and competence may be an important catalyst for a statewide move back to a play-based kindergarten curriculum that focuses on the whole child rather than isolated academic skills.”

— Megan Hillegass, Bilingual Preschool for All Teacher,
Valley View School District

The 14 State Readiness Measures are organized into four learning domains and collapse into three developmental areas:

14 STATE READINESS MEASURES	4 KEY LEARNING DOMAINS	3 KEY DEVELOPMENTAL AREAS
Curiosity and Initiative in Learning Self-Control of Feelings and Behavior Engagement and Persistence	Approaches to Learning & Self-Regulation (ALT-REG) Assesses a child's development of persistence, curiosity, and ability to self-regulate.	 SOCIAL AND EMOTIONAL DEVELOPMENT (SED & ALT-REG)
Relationships and Social Interactions with Familiar Adults Relationships and Social Interactions with Peers	Social and Emotional Development (SED) Assesses a child's development of feelings, behavior, and relationships with nurturing adults and peers.	
Communication and Use of Language (Expressive) Reciprocal Communication and Conversation Comprehension of Age-Appropriate Text Phonological Awareness Letter and Word Knowledge	Language and Literacy Development (LLD) Assesses a child's progress in developing foundational language and literacy skills by observing communication, conversation, awareness of text, and letter and word knowledge. These skills can be demonstrated in any language and in any mode of communication.	 LANGUAGE AND LITERACY DEVELOPMENT (LLD)
Classification Number Sense of Quantity Number Sense of Math Operations Shapes	Math (COG:MATH) Assesses a child's number sense, knowledge of shapes, and ability to classify objects through observation, exploration of people and objects, and objects and concepts.	 MATH (COG:MATH)

KIDS is an observational protocol. It is neither a pen and paper test, nor does it involve pulling children aside or disrupting instruction. Rather, teachers are trained to collect observational data on students as they go about their daily routines – such as playing, doing schoolwork, having conversations, and following directions. There is no interruption to regular classroom activity. Although there are only 14 required measures to collect, districts interested in a clearer picture of individual student development, skill level, and growth over time are encouraged to collect more than the required 14 measures and/or to administer KIDS multiple times a year.

KIDS is designed to accommodate diverse learning, communication, and language styles, allowing children to demonstrate skills and abilities in a variety of ways, such as use of a communication board, sign language, or their native language. Bilingual kindergarten classrooms in Illinois provide instruction on phonological awareness and letter and word knowledge in different ways from classrooms with predominantly English-only instruction. For this reason, the KIDS LLD measures² in the 14 required measures were modified for use in bilingual classrooms.

² For specific information on how and when teachers would utilize these alternate measures, see the "Guidance for Dual Language Users" document at https://www.isbe.net/Documents_KIDSWebsiteResources/LLD_Guidance.pdf

What “Demonstrating Readiness” Means

Because early childhood is a time of rapid development in multiple areas – physical, emotional, cognitive, and social growth – determining a child’s readiness for kindergarten involves more than observing a child recite shapes, numbers, and colors. In the case of KIDS, “demonstrating readiness” means that, by the 40th day of school, kindergarten teachers observed their students and collected multiple pieces of evidence of the child displaying skills, knowledge, and behaviors. This evidence indicates the child has reached a developmental level associated with typical expectations for children at kindergarten entry. Children who display these typical or anticipated behaviors and skills in *all three* developmental areas **demonstrate kindergarten readiness**. Children who display the skills and behaviors expected upon entering kindergarten in *none, one or two* of the developmental areas **may need additional support**. Districts or teachers that want to track student growth across the school year can administer KIDS in the winter and/or the spring. The tool and scoring progress along with children’s advancement to match the skills and learning that are typically displayed later in the year.

Many factors determine a child’s “readiness” for kindergarten. The KIDS 14 required measures provide a *proxy* of “kindergarten readiness,” as they include a narrow set of specific skills assessed by a small number of selected measures. This subset does not provide *comprehensive* coverage of the IELDS, IELS-K, or research-based developmental constructs that are represented in all the KIDS domains. For a more comprehensive view of individual student or group-level development, teachers would need to collect observations on all measures in each needed domain, 29 specific measures in the 5 readiness domains, all 55 measures in 11 domains, and/or at multiple points throughout the year.³ Even so, the 14-measure subset does provide a directional indicator of children’s strengths and developmental areas that need more support.

It is important to note that the development of individual children of the same chronological age varies, and that children enter kindergarten with a wide range of early

KIDS IS...



An informational tool for teachers to guide instruction, adapt curriculum, and encourage play-based learning experiences



Information for families to support their child’s unique learning and development needs



Data to inform policy decisions and leverage funding



A tool to foster greater alignment between early childhood programs, community services, and kindergarten

KIDS IS NOT...



An accountability metric for schools or classrooms



A tool for enrollment or classroom placement decisions



An indicator of the effectiveness of individual early childhood providers



Appropriate for use in teacher evaluation

See the KIDS instrument that teachers use to observe children [here](#).⁴

experiences. A child that is not demonstrating readiness in a particular measure or developmental area at the same time as his or her peers is not necessarily a reason for concern. Developmental skills build upon other developmental skills. Providing appropriate supports allow children the opportunity to get back on track – something easier to do in the earlier years.

³ For detailed information on the 14 State Required Measures, the 29 Measures in the 5 Domains of Readiness, and the Comprehensive View (full KIDS instrument), see https://www.isbe.net/Documents_KIDSWebsiteResources/Summary_of_KIDS_Measures_and_Reports.pdf

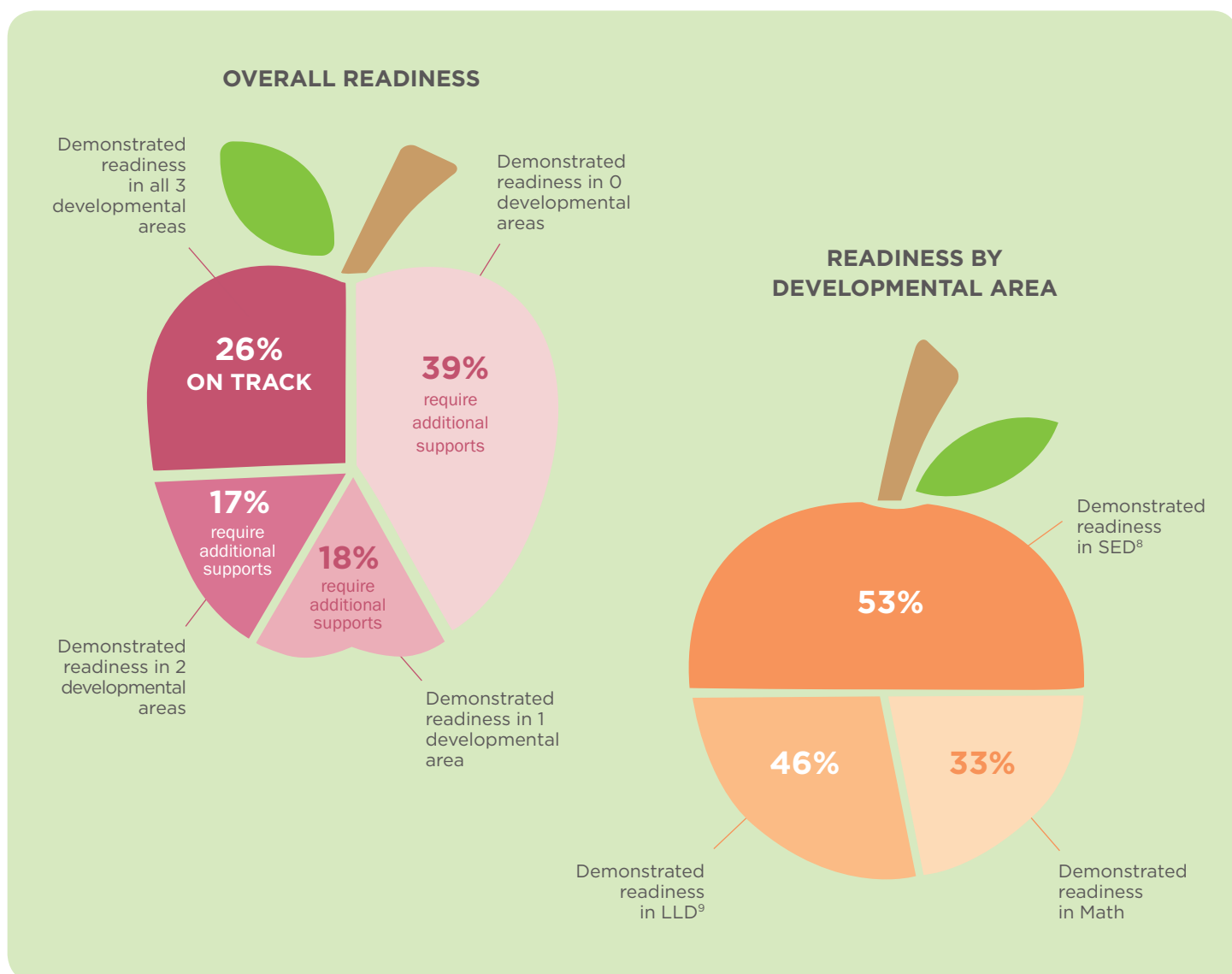
⁴ See the full KIDS instrument at <https://www.isbe.net/Documents/KIDS-User-Guide-Instrument.pdf>

2018-2019 Statewide Readiness Findings

Readiness Overall and by Developmental Area

In the fall of 2018, teachers observed 123,881⁵ of 129,563 eligible⁶ children enrolled in Kindergarten. Of that number, **115,920** students were considered fully assessed, meaning teachers entered data for them in all of the 14 required measures. The rest of the students were either considered unable to rate (362 students)⁷ or were only rated partially (7,976 students). For these reasons, those students are not included in the following information.

Among 115,920 kindergarten students rated on all 14 required measures in Fall 2018:



⁵ Number of students that were rostered for the Fall 2018 KIDS data collection.

⁶ Eligibility varies due to situations where teachers are unable to rate their students. The general rule is that a minimum of 30 days of observation is necessary to effectively and accurately rate student development.

⁷ To ensure an accurate reflection of children's developmental abilities upon kindergarten entry, ISBE established "Student Exemption Reason Codes" that may be applied in situations in which teachers are unable to complete the KIDS assessment for a specific student.

⁸ SED and ATL measures are combined into one developmental area/score: SED.

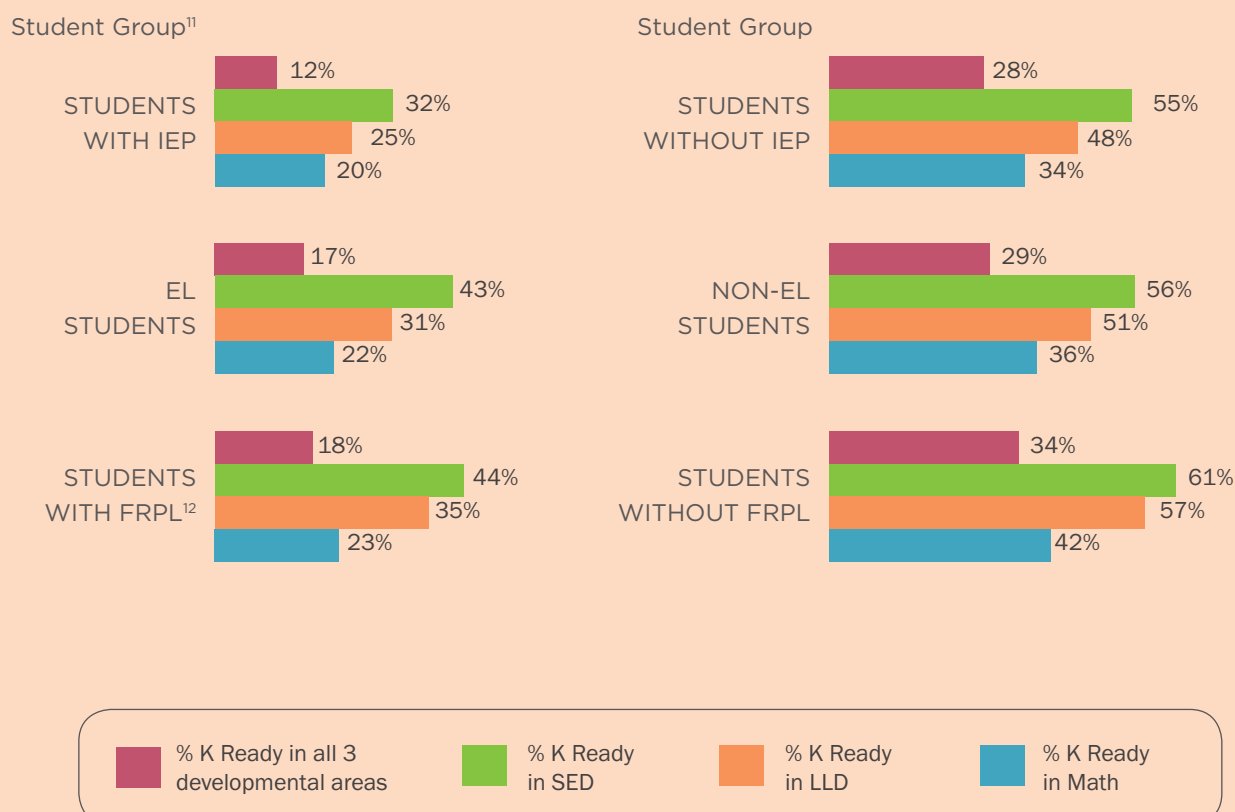
⁹ KIDS allows children to demonstrate mastery through a variety of communication modes, language, and behaviors.

Readiness by Student Group

The following disaggregated information is included for schools and communities to raise awareness, generate conversation, and direct greater state and local investment in supports for students demonstrating greater needs. Identifying and understanding the needs of children as early as possible allows them the greatest chance to succeed in school. Providing additional supports to kindergartners already experiencing barriers to learning may afford them to the opportunity to make greater developmental gains.

In the 2018-2019 school year, students who required additional supports because they were English learners (EL), have individualized education programs (IEP), or received free or reduced-price lunch (FRPL)¹⁰ entered kindergarten at the following levels of readiness:

READINESS BY STUDENT GROUP AND DEVELOPMENTAL AREA



¹⁰ During the 2018-2019 academic year, at least 49% of kindergartners lived in households with limited resources (as defined by eligibility for free and reduced-price lunch). Children living in households that are economically disadvantaged are more likely to face housing and food insecurity, which places them at greater risk of academic failure.

¹¹ Shortage of additional supports and services, such as early intervention, qualified special education or bilingual educators, and access to quality early childhood experiences may impact readiness of student groups.

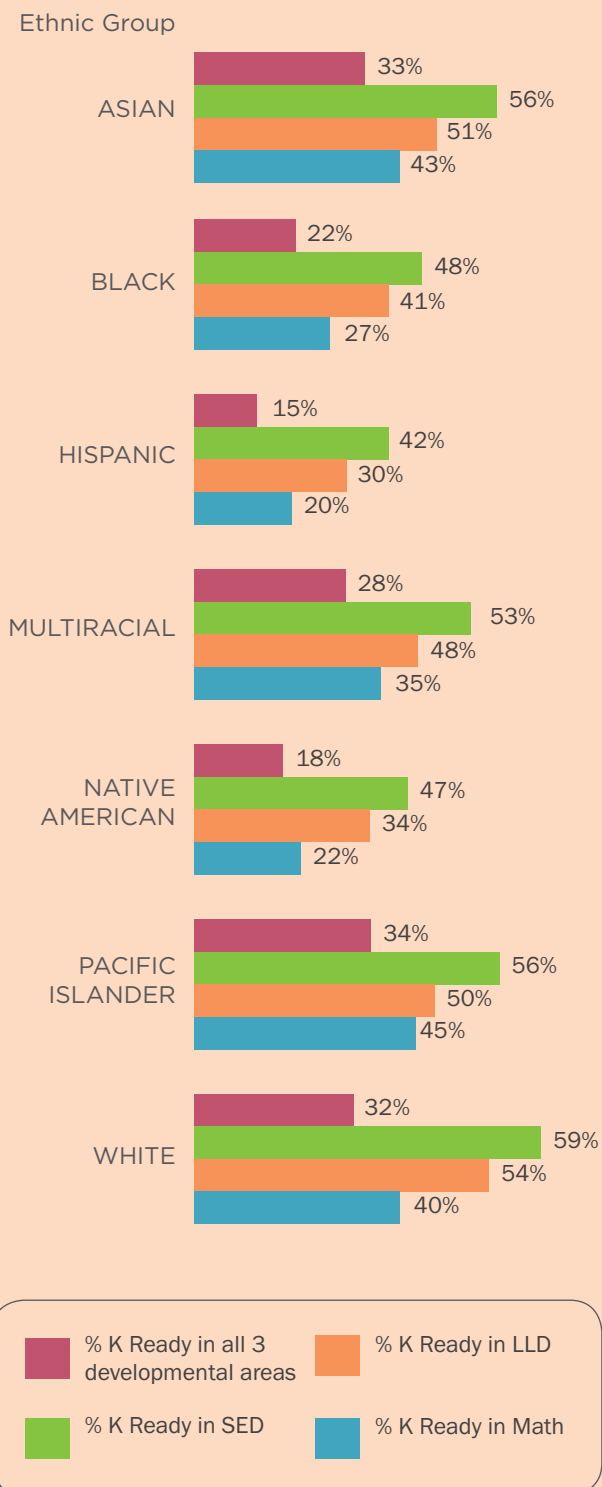
¹² *The Impact of Poverty, Food Insecurity, and Poor Nutrition on Health and Well-Being* (2017). Food and Action Resource Center. Retrieved on May 15, 2019 from <http://frac.org/wp-content/uploads/hunger-health-impact-poverty-food-insecurity-health-well-being.pdf>



Readiness by Race/Ethnicity

The data¹³ show early gaps between the readiness of students of different races, reinforcing the need for equitable supports in school, and in access to quality experiences before kindergarten. It also confirms what is well established in the literature and codified in ISBE's Equity Values and Belief Statement¹⁴ that structural racism impacts children at this early stage of development. The data provide one indicator of barriers faced in prior years and affirm the importance of supporting early learners with comprehensive, high-quality supports to combat years of systemic inequity in both funding and opportunity.

READINESS BY RACE/ETHNICITY AND DEVELOPMENTAL AREA



¹³ The denominator for the readiness percentages shown is based on the number of kindergarten students rated on a minimum of 14 required measures *and* who identified as a specific race or ethnicity at enrollment. These percentages are not based on the total population of students who were assessed on the 14 measures.

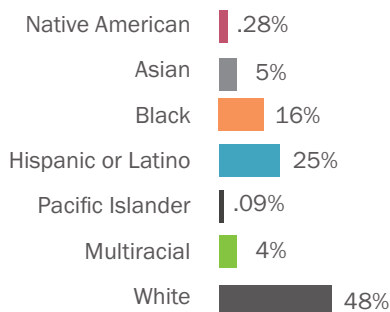
¹⁴ ISBE Supports the Whole Child, the Whole School, and the Whole Community (2018). Retrieved on May 5, 2019 from <https://www.isbe.net/Documents/ISBE-Values-Beliefs.pdf#search=ISBE%20Values%20%26%20beliefs>

By the Numbers

A 2018-2019 Illinois Kindergarten Readiness Snapshot

OVERALL KINDERGARTEN DATA

KINDERGARTEN ENROLLMENTⁱ



30%
of kindergartners
were previously
enrolled in state-
funded pre-Kⁱⁱ

752
districts in Illinois
have kindergarten
classrooms

129,563
eligibleⁱⁱⁱ students
enrolled in
kindergarten

12%
of kindergartners
have individualized
education
programs (IEP)

49%
of kindergartners
qualify for free or
reduced-price
lunch^{iv} (FRPL)

26%
of kindergartners
are English
learners (EL)

KIDS DATA

6,290
kindergarten
teachers
implemented
KIDS

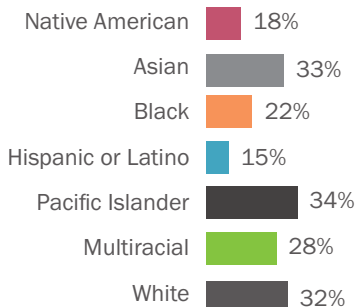
89%
of kindergartners
observed
with KIDS

OVERALL READINESS

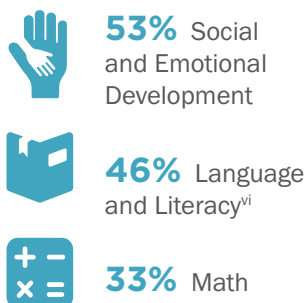
26% All 3 Developmental Areas
17% 2 Developmental Areas
18% 1 Developmental Area
39% 0 Developmental Areas

26%
of kindergartners
demonstrated
readiness in all three
developmental
areas^v

READINESS BY RACE/ETHNICITY



READINESS BY DEVELOPMENTAL AREA



READINESS BY SUBGROUP AS MEASURED BY KIDS

12% IEP **18%** FRPL **17%** EL

These data reaffirm the commitment ISBE has to supporting Illinois' early learners with comprehensive, high-quality supports to combat years of systemic inequity in both funding and opportunity. This strategy is outlined in ISBE's Equity Values and Beliefs Statement^{vii}, which was approved by the Board in October of 2018.

ⁱ Total enrolled students at the time of the fall KIDS assessment, including those "Exempted" or "Unable to Rate"

ⁱⁱ 40,085 Kindergartners attended either a PFA, PFAE, or PDG funded classroom.

ⁱⁱⁱ Eligibility varies due to situations where teachers are unable to rate their students. The general rule is that a minimum of 30 days of observation is necessary to effectively and accurately rate student development.

^{iv} As defined by school's Title 1 status

^v Based on the total number of students assessed on a minimum of the 14 required measures collected during the first 40 days of attendance

^{vi} KIDS allows children to demonstrate mastery through a variety of communication modes, language and behaviors.

^{vii} ISBE Supports the Whole Child, the Whole School, and the Whole Community (2018). Retrieved from: <https://www.isbe.net/Documents/ISBE-Values-Beliefs.pdf#search=ISBE%20Values%20%26%20beliefs>

KIDS in Action Across Illinois

KIDS is a relatively new tool, and teachers are working hard to implement it with fidelity. KIDS requires educators to collect data by observation – a practice familiar to preschool and other early childhood teachers but often new in kindergarten classrooms, depending on the teacher’s background. Teachers across the state are showing creativity and diligence in familiarizing themselves with the measures and developing observation collection systems that allow them to create developmental portfolios for each child. The second year of statewide implementation shows improved district participation rates.

The information gathered through KIDS is encouraging districts to focus on strengthening and developing early learning supports for classrooms, teachers, and families. Assisting in that is a team of Regional KIDS Coaches, all of whom are former kindergarten teachers, who are available to provide teacher, school, district, and regional level supports **at no cost** to each school district. Many districts have been working with their KIDS Coaches on more individualized goals based on their local KIDS data results.

- Some districts have created their own professional learning networks around KIDS.
- Others have used KIDS data to align more intentionally with feeder preschool classrooms or have used KIDS data to make the case in their communities to shift from half-day to full-day kindergarten.
- Some districts that made the decision to collect data for the full domains on each student and administer KIDS multiple times per year are using KIDS data as their student report cards.

For vignettes showcasing how educators and districts use KIDS to improve instruction, connect with preschools, engage families, and impact policy, go [here](#).¹⁵

KIDS Resources

As with any new tool, especially an observational tool, there is a learning curve in the administration of KIDS statewide. The Division of Early Childhood at ISBE is actively working with administrators and teachers across the state to ensure districts have sufficient supports in order to implement KIDS with fidelity.

Every district in the state can access a KIDS Coach who is available to provide training and help with data collection and data interpretation. For a listing of available supports, go [here](#).¹⁶

Additional resources are available for families, teachers, schools, and district leaders and can be found at [isbe.net/kids](https://www.isbe.net/kids).

“In a district that focuses heavily on attainment-based assessments, KIDS reminds me to look for and celebrate the strengths of my students. We have a long way to go with implementation and alignment, but this is a great first step.”

— Katie Cannaday,
Kindergarten Teacher,
Chicago Public Schools

¹⁵ See Pilot Case Studies & Videos under Administrators & Teachers Toolkit at <https://www.isbe.net/Pages/KIDSAdminandTeachers.aspx>

¹⁶ See Learning Opportunities with KIDS Coaches at <https://www.isbe.net/Documents/Learning-Op-KIDS-Coaches.pdf>



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isbe.net/KIDS