

Charting the Course: From Pre-K Play to ATLAS Success

Office of Early Childhood

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Local Leads**

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2026 ADE Summit



Meet Your Presenters

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Northeast Arkansas Education Cooperative

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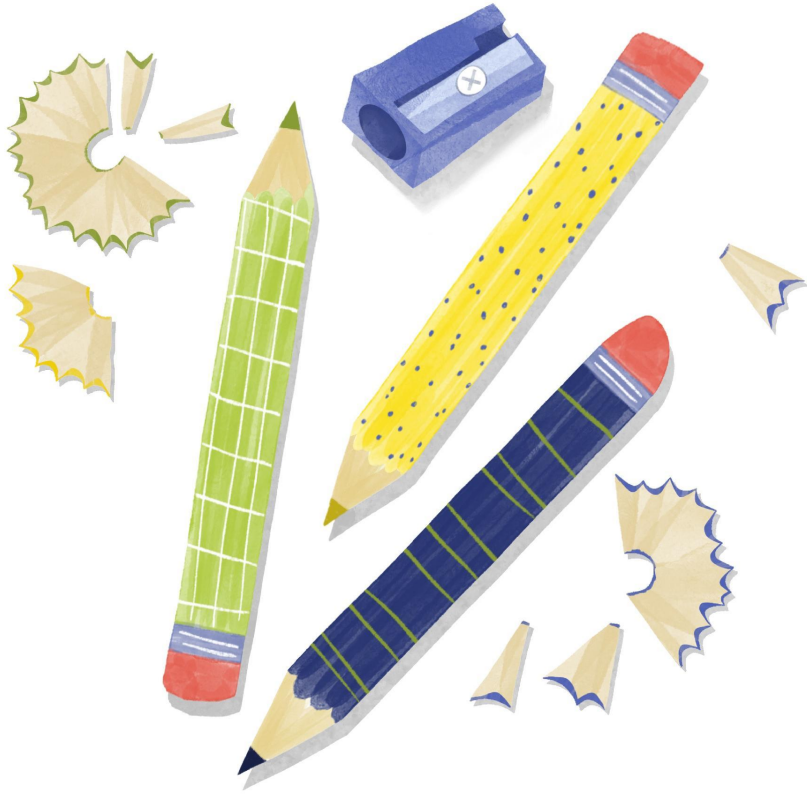
Katlin Niemeyer

Local Early Childhood Lead
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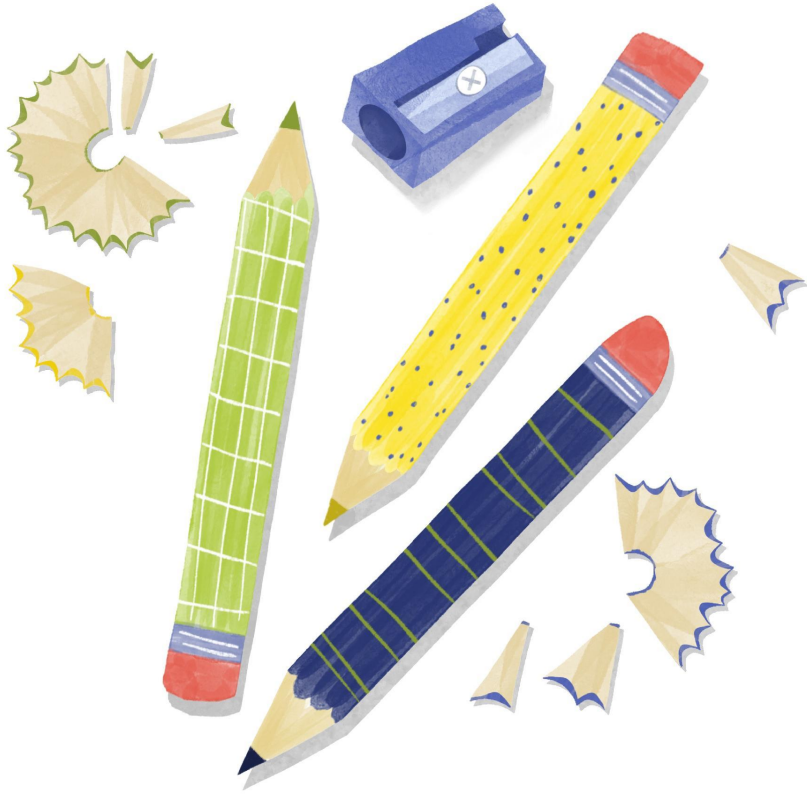
Objectives

1. Let's Discuss Atlas
2. Connection to PreK
3. Overall Alignment with CLASS, HQIM, and CDELS.
4. Resource Links from OEC



The Why?

1. Atlas–hasn't changed things for Pre-K!
2. Let's align (connect) Pre-K to Kindergarten
3. Overall Alignment with CLASS, HQIM, and CDELS with common language.
4. Everyone using the same Resource Links from OEC





Kindergarten Beginning of the Year (BOY) Literacy Guidance 2025–2026

Purpose of This Guidance

This guidance is designed to support **kindergarten teachers** as they implement the Beginning of Year (BOY) literacy screening and follow-up process. It provides clear, step-by-step direction on:

- What to expect during the BOY assessment window,
- How to interpret screening data,
- How to identify and address early literacy risks,
- How to set specific, meaningful goals for students through an Individual Reading Plan (IRP), and
- How to monitor progress and adjust instruction as needed.

Early intervention is critical. The steps outlined in this guide help ensure that no student's reading challenges go unnoticed and that support begins immediately.

Overview of BOY Assessments for Kindergarten

Kindergarten students will be assessed on four foundational literacy skills through the BOY Universal Screener. These components are aligned with Arkansas law and support early identification of risk for reading difficulties, including characteristics of dyslexia.

Actually, K is
screened 4
times!



K-3

Beginning of Year Screener

(first 30 days)

K-2 Math

K-3 Literacy

Interim

K-2 Math

K-2 Literacy

Middle of Year Screener

(if indicated)

K-2 Math

K-3 Literacy

Summative

K-2 Math

K-2 Literacy

Testlets

K-2 Math

K-3 Literacy



Test	Testing Window	Grade(s)
ATLAS K-3 Beginning of Year (BOY) Literacy Screener	July 21, 2026 – December 18, 2026 Schools administer screener during the first 30 days.	K-3
ATLAS K-2 Beginning of Year (BOY) Math Screener	July 21, 2026 – April 9, 2027 Schools administer screener during the first 30 days.	K-2
ATLAS K-2 Interim 1	October 19, 2026 - November 6, 2026	K-2
ATLAS K-2 Interim 2	January 25, 2027 – February 12, 2027	K-2

2025-2026 ATLAS Kindergarten Assessment Blueprint



Kindergarten

Assessment		BOY Screener	MOY Screener	Interim 1	Summative
When Administered		First 30 Days Available from 8/4/25-12/31/25	Available from 1/5/26-3/27/26	Available from 12/1/25-2/27/26	Available from 4/13/26-5/15/26
Required for All		Yes	No	Yes	Yes
Total Number of Items		22	42	43	43
Reporting Category/Component	Standards				
Alphabet Knowledge	K.FR.4.CP**	1		2	2
Phonemic Awareness	K.FR.5.PA** K.FR.6.PA K.FR.7.PA***	10	10	10	10
Sound/Symbol	K.FR.21.F***		1	1	1
Decoding	K.FR.9.PD*** K.FR.10.PD K.FR.11.PD		10	10	10
Encoding	K.FR.14.PE*** K.FR.15.PE K.FR.17.PE		10	10	10
Oral Reading Fluency (ORF)					
Language Comprehension		10	10	10	10
• Vocabulary	K.V.1**** K.V.2 K.V.3**** K.V.4**** K.V.5	10	10	10	10
• Reading Fundamentals	K.RC.2.RF**** K.RC.6.RF				
• Reading Literature	K.RC.8.RL**** K.RC.9.RL****				
• Reading Information	K.RC.13.RI****				
Rapid Naming (RAN)		1	1		

Let's focus on BOY
Screener!

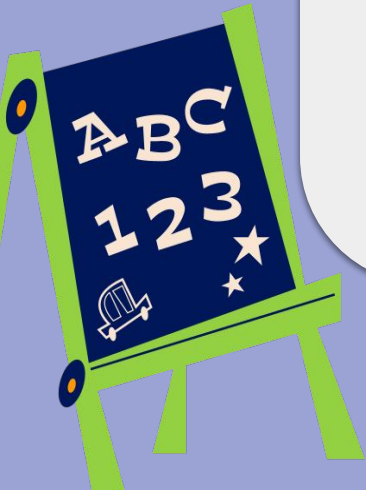
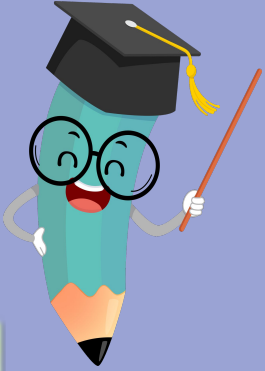
What do you
notice? Wonder?

Kindergarten students will be assessed on four foundational literacy skills through the BOY Universal Screener. These components are aligned with Arkansas law and support early identification of risk for reading difficulties, including characteristics of dyslexia.

Component	What It Measures	How It Works
Phonemic Awareness	Ability to isolate the first sound in spoken words	A word is spoken aloud and students say the first sound
Alphabet Knowledge	Recognition and naming a subset of uppercase letters	Students name letters shown one at a time, in random order
Language Comprehension	Understanding of literary and informational texts	Students listen to passages and answer comprehension questions
Rapid Automatized Naming (RAN)	Automatic retrieval and oral production of familiar objects.	Students will see a series of objects and are asked to say the name of the objects, going from left to right, one row at a time, as quickly as possible.



Pre-K Expectations and Information



Arkansas PRE-K Standards



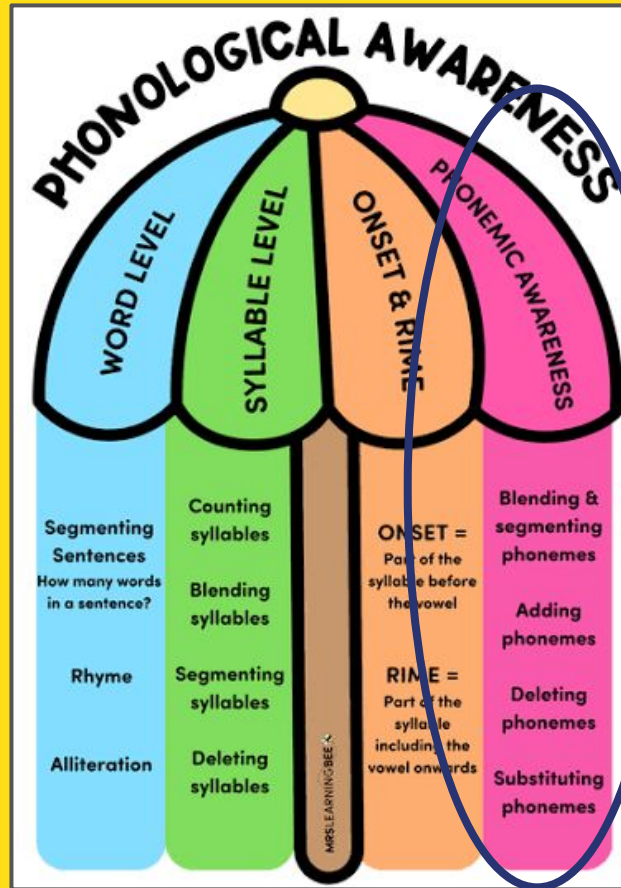
Arkansas Child Development and Early Learning Standards: Birth through 60 Months

Shared expectations for what children typically know, understand, and are able to do at different ages of early childhood

April 2016



Phonological Awareness Umbrella



Phonemic Awareness

Kindergarten Expectation (AR Academic Standards)

- K.FR.5.PA:** Isolate and pronounce the initial, medial vowel, and final sounds in three sound words.
- K.FR.6.PA:** Blend two to four individual sounds to create one-syllable words (e.g., /a/ /t/ to at; /s/ /i/ /p/ to sip; /c/ /a/ /t/ /s/ to cats).
- K.FR.7.PA:** Segment one-syllable words into individual sounds.
- K.FR.8.PA:** Distinguish between sounds based on place of articulation (where in the mouth it is produced) and manner of articulation (voicing and air flow) (e.g., /p/ vs. /b/; /ch/ vs. /j/).

Preschool Connections (CDELS)

- EL 2.1** - Decides whether two words rhyme.
- EL 2.1** - Shows awareness that some words begin with the same sound
- EL 2.1** - Verbally identifies, blends, segments, and deletes parts of words with decreasing need for modeling or visual supports Pre-K



Name sound play

Sound Isolation

Onset/rime during small
and whole group

HQIM

Picture cards for
segmenting

Rhyming Chants

Picture cards for
blending



CLASS

Instructional Learning Formats:
Playing sound games
Using hand motions

Concept Development:
Producing rhyming words from previously learned sounds

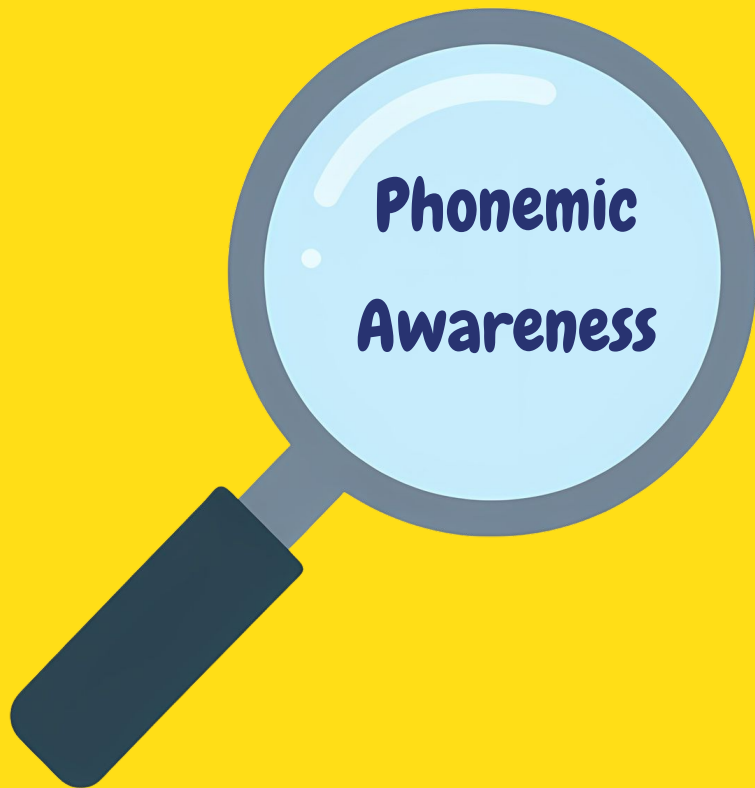
Quality of Feedback:
Teacher models sounds with scaffolding and gesture cues.

Behavior Management & Positive Climate:



Frequent opportunities for children to respond, playful sound games

PreK Look-Fors



- ✓ Know most common sounds by EOY
- ✓ Phoneme manipulation embedded across day (centers, transitions, morning message)
- ✓ Students beginning to attach sounds to letters (phoneme-grapheme correspondence)

Alphabet Knowledge

Kindergarten Expectation (AR Academic Standards)

K.FR.20.F: Name all upper and lowercase letters in non-sequential order with accuracy and automaticity.

K.FR.21.F: Produce the most common sound for each letter of the alphabet with accuracy and automaticity.

Preschool Connections (CDELS)

EL 3.2 - Shows knowledge of the shapes, names, and sounds of letters.

EL 3.2 - Recognizes and names an increasing number of letters correctly, especially those in own name.

EL 3.2 - Produces the correct sounds for an increasing number of letters.



Alphabet

Focus Letters

Letter Songs

Name Wall

"ABC" Center

Tactile Letter Cards

HQIM



CLASS

Feedback loops:

“Yes! That’s M. What sound does M make?”

Language

Modeling:

Advanced Language

Narration

Communication

Extensions

Scaffolding:

letter-sound connections
in centers & small groups

PreK Look-Fors



- ✓ Letter Identification by EOY
- ✓ Letters embedded across day (centers, transitions, morning message)
- ✓ Students naming letters, not just matching

The Pre-K RISE Initiative

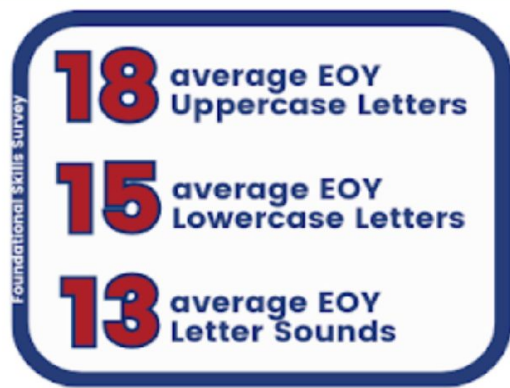


Fact Sheet 2020–2024

Focus Area 1
Provide
High-Quality Instructional
Material

Focus Area 2
Provide
Regional Technical
Assistance

Focus Area 3
Provide Professional
Development Grounded
in the Science of Reading

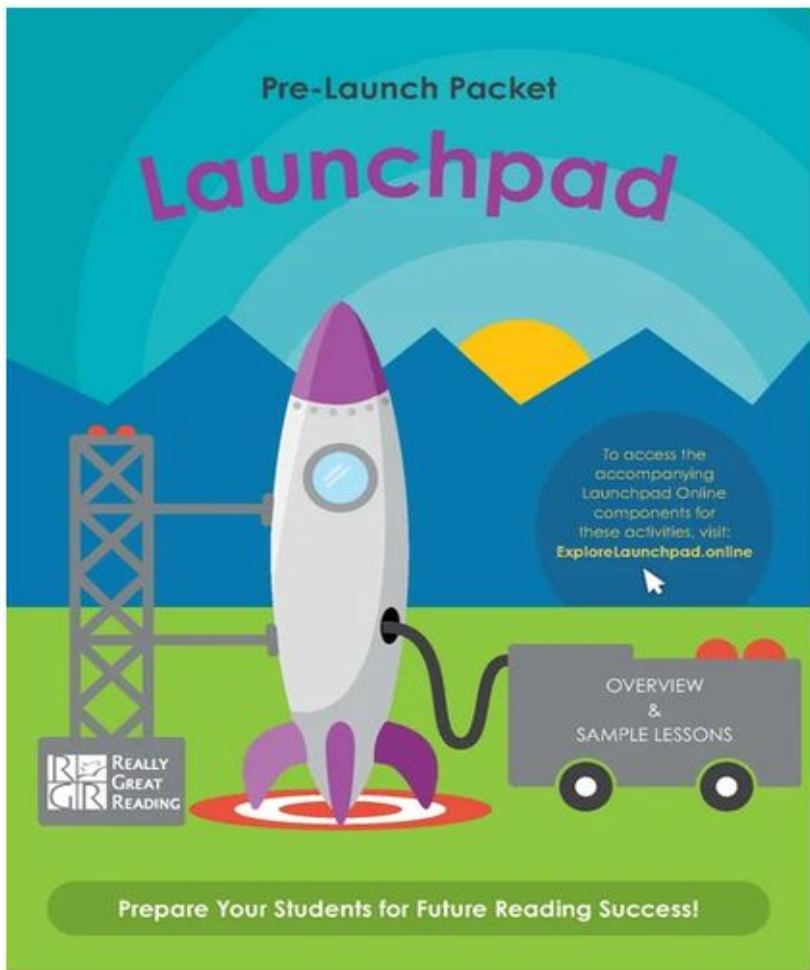


What is Launchpad?

- A foundational pre-reading skills program designed explicitly for the year before children transition to kindergarten.
- It is a highly targeted, 15-to-20-minute daily supplement routine.

It focuses on:

- Oral Language Development
- Concepts of Print
- Instructional Vocabulary
- Alphabet Knowledge
- Phonological Awareness
- Phonemic Awareness



Why is Launchpad essential?



A Critical 15–Minute Window: Launchpad focuses exclusively on oral language, sound discrimination, and print concepts.

By keeping Launchpad as a distinct, dedicated pillar of our daily schedule, we ensure every child leaves pre-K with the foundational code-cracking skills they need for life.

How does it differ from a HQIM?

Launchpad Builds the "Brain Framework": While an HQIM touches on multiple learning areas, Launchpad provides the explicit, systematic, and sequential daily practice that aligns with Science of Reading research.



Language Comprehension

Kindergarten Expectation (AR Academic Standards)

K.RC.2.RF: Answer questions about key details in a text.

K.RC.3.RF: Orally retell a text after listening to it read aloud; include the main topic and key details.

Preschool Connections (CDELS)

LD 2.1 - Uses increasingly complex vocabulary, grammar, and sentence structure

EL 1.2 - Engages in read-alouds and conversations about books and stories

LD 1.1 - Understands and responds to language



Story mapping

Realistic idea

Retelling stories cards

HQIM

Academic vocabulary

Vocabulary with visuals

STEAM- Science, Technology,
Engineering, Arts, & Math



CLASS

Language Modeling:

Teachers extend
language- tell me
more..."

Concept Development:

Ask:
"Why/How?"

Quality of Feedback:

Co-construct
narrative
sequences



PreK Look-Fors



✓ Children retell stories

with sequence

(first/next/last)

✓ Open-ended questioning.

(encourage curiosity, critical

thinking, and language

development)

"Tell me about...", "What do you

think...?", and "How did you...?"

✓ Visual supports for

understanding

Rapid Automatic Naming (RAN)

Kindergarten Expectation



Quickly name objects/colors/shapes
(Arkansas Required Dyslexia Screener)

Preschool Connections (CDELS)

MT 2.1 Sorts and names items by color, size, or shape



Naming rapid cards→
colors, shapes, characters,
objects



HQIM



Transition games→
Name 3 animals before
lining up

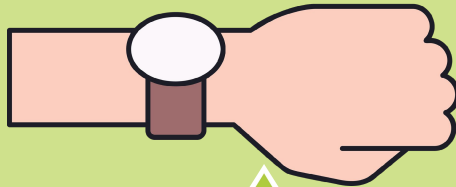


CLASS

Classroom

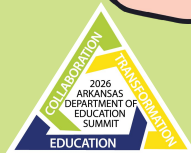
Organization:

Keep the Pace
Smooth routines



Concept Development:

Rapid response routines
increase opportunities to
respond– boosts
vocabulary and fluency



PreK Look-Fors



✓ Naming practiced daily through routines

✓ Increasing speed & confidence over time

✓ Reinforcing vocabulary across content areas



How does this all align with
CLASS, HQIM, and CDELS?



How Does This Aligns Across Literacy Systems?



 CDELS (What Children Need to Learn)	 CLASS (How Learning Happens)	 HQIM (How We Teach It)
EL2.1 – Phonological awareness (sounds, blending, segmenting)	Language Modeling - specifically using repetition, imitation, and language stimulation techniques)	HQIM provides the structure and materials
EL3.2 – Alphabet knowledge & letter–sound connections	Concept Development -Ask “why” and “how” questions (Concept Development)	Small groups ensure intentional practice with fidelity
LD1.1 / LD2.1 / EL1.2 – Oral language & comprehension	Quality of Feedback -Give feedback that expands thinking (Quality of Feedback)	Instruction is purposeful, not worksheet-driven
CD3.1 – Uses reasoning and planning ahead to solve problems and reach	Concept Development by forcing them to analyze, predict, and plan their next steps.	HQIM provides open-ended prompts and scenarios that encourage children to

Practical Pre-K Implementation Checklist



Daily Practice	Skills Supported	Program Alignment
Greeting Circle - name/sound Launchpad	PA + Launchpad	HQIM + Launchpad + CLASS - Emotional Support & Classroom Org.
Read Aloud + WH - questions + retell	Language Comprehension	CDELS + HQIM + CLASS (Concept Development & Quality of Feedback)
ABC Center + tactile letter work	Alphabet Knowledge	CDELS & HQIM
Vocabulary/naming transitions	RAN	HQIM + CLASS - Language Modeling- (Adv. Lang)
Math (counting, comparing, measuring)	Number Sense + Problem Solving	CDELS + HQIM + CLASS (Concept Development & Quality of Feedback)

CLASS and Kindergarten Readiness

CLASS Domain: Instructional Support



Concept Development	Quality of Feedback	Language Modeling
Analysis and reasoning	Scaffolding	Frequent Conversation
Creativity	Feedback Loops	Open Ended prompts
Integration	Prompting through the process	Communication Extension
Connection to everyday lives	Providing information	Narration
	Encouragement and Affirmation	Advanced Language
<u>HQIM</u>	<u>LENA</u>	<u>Launchpad</u>

Why does the alignment matter?

If Pre-K does this well, children will:

1. Have strong sound awareness
2. Know most uppercase/lowercase letters & sounds
3. Can fluently name objects/colors/shapes
4. Have high oral language engagement.

Kindergarten will then see:

1. Fewer PA “at risk” IRP flags (Individual Reading Plans)
2. Quicker decoding readiness (reading words)
3. Better automaticity in early reading
4. Strong listening comprehension





RESOURCE LINKS From OEC

Kindergarten Readiness Indicator Checklist



Emergent Literacy

Engagement in Literacy Experiences and Understanding of Stories and Books

- ☐ Listens, tells, and engages in stories being read
- ☐ Participates in singing songs and saying rhymes
- ☐ Retells stories from favorite books and personal experiences

Phonological Awareness

- ☐ Decides if two words rhyme, for example, cat and bat

Knowledge and Use of Books, Print, and Letters

- ☐ Holds a book right-side up, turns pages front-to-back, follows print left-to-right, and top-to-bottom
- ☐ Recognizes and names letters, especially those in their name or on road signs, storefronts, and restaurant signs
- ☐ Produces the correct sounds for some of the letters of the alphabet
- ☐ Writes some letters correctly, especially those in their name

EL1. Engagement in Literacy Experiences and Understanding of Stories and Books

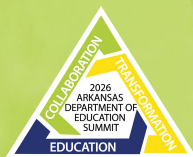
- EL1.1 Shows interest in literacy experiences
- EL1.2 Engages in read-alouds and conversations about books and stories

EL2. Phonological Awareness

- EL2.1 Notices and manipulates the sounds of language

EL3. Knowledge and Use of Books, Print, and Letters

- EL3.1 Responds to features of books and print
- EL3.2 Shows knowledge of the shapes, names, and sounds of letters
- EL3.3 Demonstrates emergent writing skills



Kindergarten Readiness for FAMILIES



Language Development

- Understands an increasing number and variety of words for objects, actions, and ways to describe things
- Comprehends who, what, why, and where questions
- Performs up to three-step directions
- Uses four- to six-word sentences
- Tells increasingly detailed stories or ideas
- Communicates clearly enough to be understood by most people
- Takes turns in conversations with others
- Responds to the English language
- Speaks and expresses themselves in English

Emergent Development

- Listens, tells, and engages in stories being read
- Participates in singing songs and saying rhymes
- Retells stories from favorite books and personal experiences
- Decides if two words rhyme, for example, cat and bat
- Holds a book right-side-up, turns pages front-to-back, follows print left-to-right, and top-to-bottom
- Recognizes and names letters, especially those in their name or on road signs, storefronts, and restaurant signs
- Produces the correct sounds for some of the letters of the alphabet
- Writes some letters correctly, especially those in their name



MONTHLY



for Families and Children

August

Read with your child each day.

WEEK 1

Create a reading area for your child.

- ✱ Store your child's books in a special place, such as a basket or drawer or on a low shelf.
- ✱ Place a small rug or pillow in the area to create a cozy and comfortable place for reading.
- ✱ Join your child and enjoy reading together.
- ✱ Talk with your child about how to care for books, including returning them to their storage place.

WEEK 2

Build healthy book habits.

- ✱ Visit your local library with your child and get a library card for your child to check out books.
- ✱ Build a daily routine for reading, such as reading with your child before bedtime.
- ✱ Look for other places to find books:
 - garage or yard sales
 - friends or relatives
 - thrift shops
 - public library sales
 - little free libraries
 - book stores



Additional Ideas

Bring a book bag containing your child's favorite books when you leave home. Your child can read in the car, on the bus, at the laundromat, or at the doctor's office. You can read with your child as you wait together.

Focus on Kindergarten Readiness Indicators

Comprehends who, what, why, and where questions

Retell stories from favorite books and personal experiences

Listens, tells, and engages in stories being read

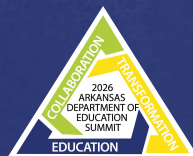
Holds a book right-side-up, turns pages front-to-back, follows print left-to-right, and top-to-bottom

Focuses and pays attention during an activity, such as during story time

Communicates clearly enough to be understood by most people

Takes turns in conversations with others

Responds to the English language



Kindergarten Readiness Flyer



KINDERGARTEN READINESS TIPS



Language

Early Literacy

Read together daily (10–15 minutes)
Talk about stories: “What happened?” “Why?”
Play sound games: “I spy something that starts with /b/”
Practice writing first and last name



Alphabet & Letter Sounds

Find letters on signs and packages
Say letter names and sounds
Use magnetic letters to build simple words



Physical Development

Play with playdough and beads
Draw and color
Run, jump, and play outside



SELF-HELP

GOING TO THE BATHROOM
PRACTICE OPENING SNACKS
ENCOURAGE TRYING AGAIN
PRACTICE TYING SHOES



Social-Emotional Skills

Talk about feelings
Play turn-taking games
Encourage trying again
Let your child choose activities



Early Math

Count snacks, steps, and toys
Sort laundry or toys by color or size
Play board games with dice or numbers



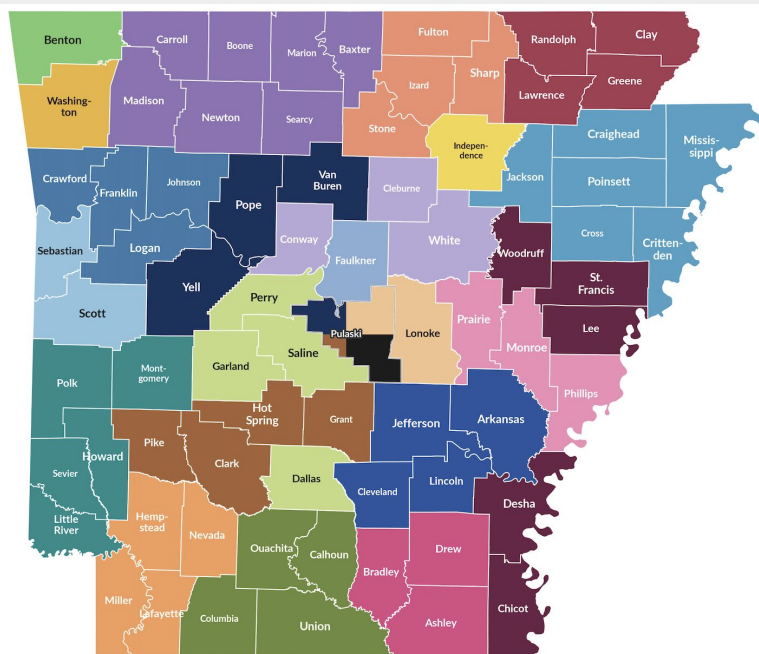
Help your child know their personal information. When you find out your child's teacher, make sure they know his or her name.



FOR MORE INFORMATION:
CONTACT LOCAL LEADS CAPTAIN WENDY GREEN
wgreen@crmail.k12.ar.us

Arkansas standards focus on helping children grow in language, early literacy, early math, social-emotional skills, approaches to learning, and physical development. You can support all of these at home through simple, playful activities!

Local Lead Connections



Local Lead Organizations

23 organizations • 75 counties

	Arch Ford ESC Pope, Van Buren, Yell, Pulaski (NLR)		IMPACT Independence Independence
	Arkansas River ESC Arkansas, Cleveland, Jefferson, Lincoln		National Park College Dallas, Garland, Perry, Saline
	Arkansas State Univ. Childhood Services Chicot, Desha, Woodruff, St. Francis, Lee		Northcentral Arkansas ESC Fulton, Sharp, Izard, Stone
	Child Care Aware of NW Arkansas Benton		Northeast Arkansas ESC Lawrence, Randolph, Clay, Greene
	City of Little Rock Pulaski (Little Rock)		Ozarks Unlimited Resources ESC Baxter, Boone, Carroll, Madison, Marion, Newton, Searcy
	Clarendon School District Monroe, Prairie, Phillips		South Central Arkansas Ed. Coop Calhoun, Columbia, Ouachita, Union
	Conway School District Faulkner		Southeast Educational Service Coop Ashley, Bradley, Drew
	Crowley's Ridge ESC Craighead, Poinsett, Crittenden, Cross, Jackson, Mississippi		Southwest Arkansas Education Coop Hempstead, Nevada, Miller, Lafayette
	Dawson ESC Clark, Pike, Hot Spring, Grant, Pulaski (W & S)		University of Arkansas at Fort Smith Sebastian, Scott
	DeQueen Mena ESC Montgomery, Polk, Howard, Sevier, Little River		Washington County Collaborative Washington
	Guy Fenter ESC Crawford, Franklin, Johnson, Logan		White River Planning & Dev. District Conway, Cleburne, White
			Wilbur D Mills ESC Lonoke, Pulaski (JSM)



Closing Thoughts From US!



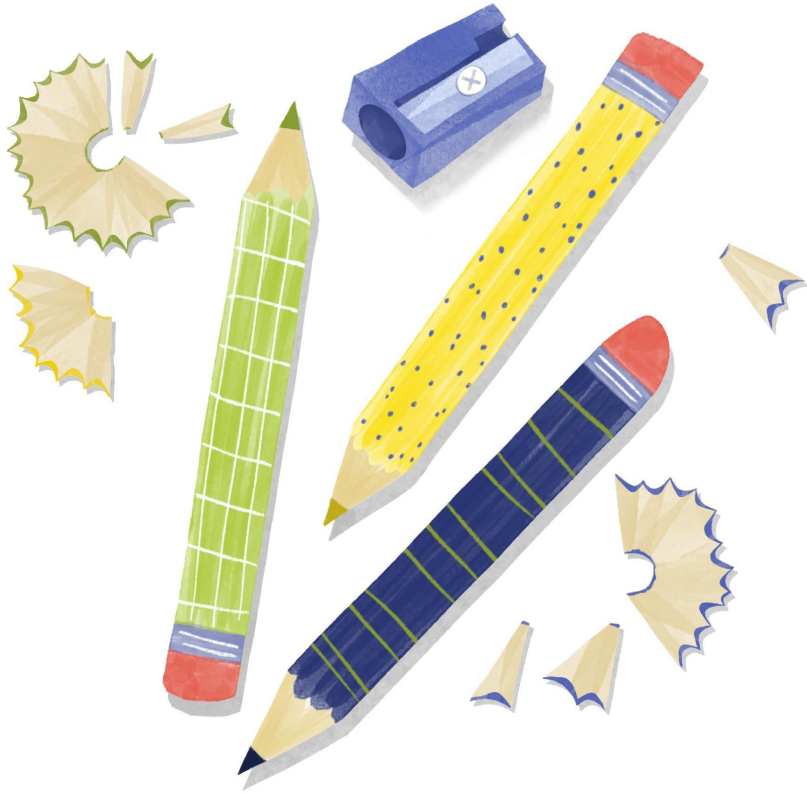
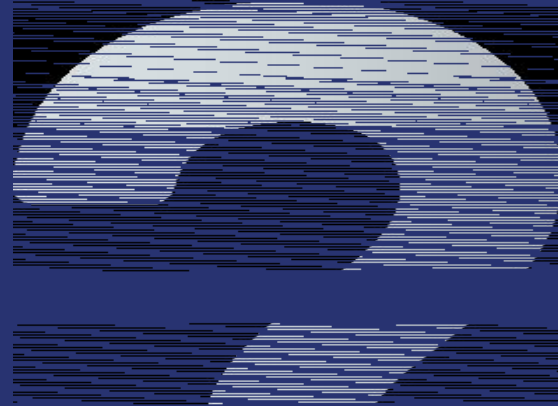
While kindergarten readiness **begins at birth**, our focus today was on strengthening the direct connection between Pre-K and Kindergarten.

Please remember that **ATLAS has not added anything extra to your plate**. It is simply a reminder to be **intentional** in Early Childcare by focusing on three things:

- **CDELS Awareness:** Keeping our Early Learning Standards at the forefront at all levels.
- **Shared Vocabulary:** Using the same language across both Pre-K and Kindergarten to ease transitions.
- **Common Resources:** Utilizing shared tools so we are all moving in the same direction.

By aligning our language and resources, we can build a seamless pathway for our children's success!

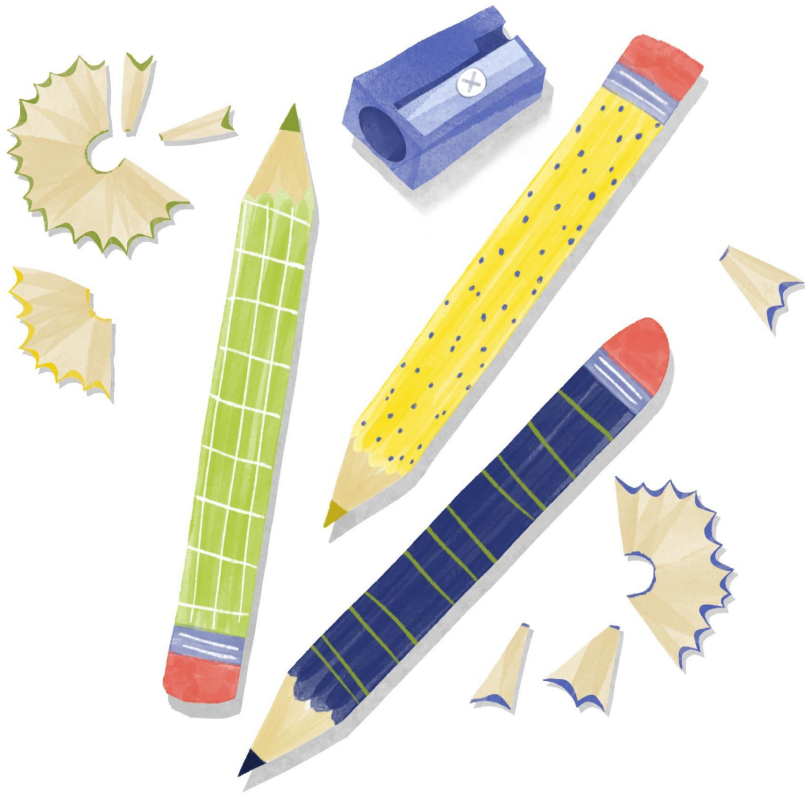
Questions



Contact Information

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DIVISION OF ELEMENTARY
& SECONDARY EDUCATION

Thank you!