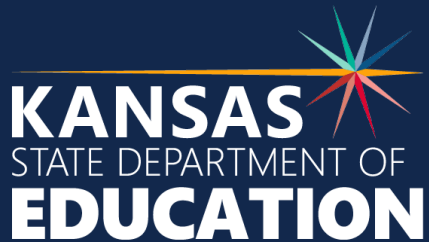


Balanced, Developmentally Appropriate Assessment in Preschool

What it Looks Like in Practice



Kansas State Department of Education | www.ksde.gov

Kansas leads the world in the success of each student.

A vertical light blue bar is on the left. On the right, there are several abstract geometric shapes: a large teal triangle pointing left, a smaller teal triangle pointing left, a long orange triangle pointing right, and a red triangle pointing left.

Today
we will
discuss...

What is Balanced Assessment

Program Requirements for Assessment

Developmentally Appropriate Assessment
Methods

Selecting Assessments

Using the Data

Kansas School Improvement Model

Fundamentals

(The foundation for school improvement in Kansas Schools)

Structured Literacy

We provide literacy instruction in pre-K-12 aligned to the science of reading and assure teachers and admin are well-trained and knowledgeable in the elements and implementation of structured literacy.

Standards Alignment

We align lessons, instruction, and materials to Kansas standards and clearly identify what students must know and be able to do. This includes interpersonal, intrapersonal, and cognitive skills in pre-K-12.

Balanced Assessment System

We assess students for risk and standards in pre-K-12 and use data to adjust instruction. We have a deep understanding of the purpose of each assessment and how to use the data to raise achievement.

Quality Instruction

We have a culture of high expectations in our classrooms and provide each student access to grade level standards and content through high-quality instruction and materials in pre-K-12.

Structures

(Reinforce lead indicators and sustain fundamentals within the system)

Resource Allocation

Emphasis on allocating time, personnel, and/or financial resources to support implementation of the 4 Fundamentals.

Classroom Observation

Processes for classroom observation, data collection, and feedback are used to optimize conditions for learning. This could include informal observation and/or formal evaluation models.

Professional Learning

District professional development and mentoring plans account for the alignment of classroom practice with the 4 Fundamentals to optimize conditions for learning in classrooms.

Professional Collaboration

Collaboration system includes grade level and content area teachers aligning instruction with the 4 Fundamentals to optimize conditions for learning in classrooms.

Tiered System of Supports

Data analysis and utilization includes screening for risk and performance against standards. Appropriate time is provided for core activities and interventions to meet student needs.

Family, Community and Business Partnerships

Educators, families, and community partners collaborate to ensure students are progressing on state standards, competencies, and postsecondary readiness indicators.

Once a school system selects the Fundamental/Structure combination, it will select a Measure of Progress to track implementation progress with 6-month and 1-year targets.

Updated June 2026

What is Balanced Assessment?



Balanced Assessment

A **Balanced Assessment** system refers to a collection of varying types of assessments that provide feedback regarding instruction and student learning. It utilizes assessment as a measure for learning and of learning.

We assess students for risk and standards and use data to adjust instruction. We have a deep understanding of the purpose of each assessment and how to use the data to raise achievement.

Screening vs. Assessment

Screening

Developmental screening is one or more brief checks on a child's developmental status. Screening is used to help determine whether children might need additional evaluation.

Assessment

Ongoing child assessment involves gathering information repeatedly and over time and using that information to plan for learning experiences and to individualize interactions with children.

Purpose of Assessments



ELIGIBILITY
DETERMINATION



INSTRUCTIONAL
PLANNING



EVALUATION

Program Requirements for Assessment



Requirements for Kansas Funded Preschool

Preschool-Aged At-Risk and Kansas Preschool Pilot Assurances

#3. Ensure that each child receives a developmental screening using an approved screening tool. The program must share results with the child's family.

#4. Implement an approved assessment to measure children's developmental growth upon entry and exit of the program.

Requirements for Literacy Blueprint (HB-2485)

1. For the **2026-2027 academic year**, reporting of universal screener data will be collected in the **fall (due October 10th) including PreK** submitted to KSDE.
2. The bill requires Kansas to move to a *single statewide universal screening tool*. In the next few months, there will be one statewide universal screener selected for use across the state of Kansas which will be **implemented starting in the 2027-2028** academic year.

Requirements for Early Childhood Special Education

Indicator 7 Early Childhood Outcomes

Organizations must use one of the approved Curriculum-Based Assessments (CBA)

Note: The requirement for the CBA is waived for children with articulation-only speech concerns if the team can confidently rate the child a 6 or 7 in all three outcome areas on the basis of record review, interview, observation and screening.

- Assessment and Evaluation Programming System (AEPS)
- Carolina Curriculum for Infants and Toddlers/Preschoolers with Special Needs
- Child Observation Record (High Scope)
- Desired Results Developmental Profile (DRDP)
- Hawaii Early Learning Profile (HELP)
- Teaching Strategies Gold (TS GOLD)
- Transdisciplinary Play-Based Assessment (TPBA2)
- Work Sampling System

Requirements for Early Childhood Block Grant

- Common Measures

- ASQ-3 & ASQ:SE-2
- Devereux Early Childhood Assessment (DECA)- Social Emotional Measure
- Individual Growth and Development Indicators (IGDIS)
- Classroom Assessment Scoring Scale (CLASS)

Requirements for Head Start

- Screenings

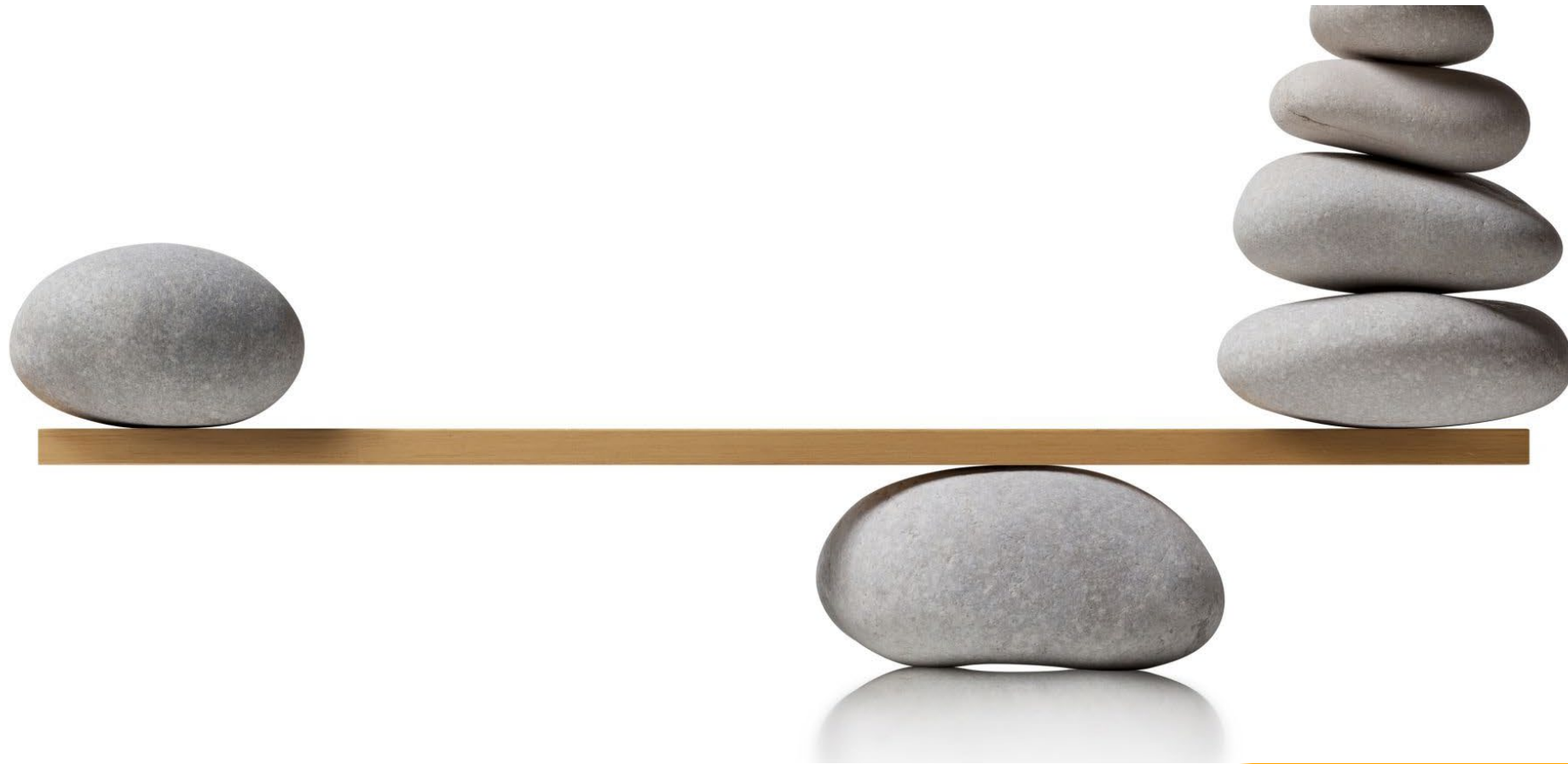
complete or obtain a current developmental screening to identify concerns regarding a child's developmental, behavioral, motor, language, social, cognitive, and emotional skills within 45 calendar days of when the child first attends the program

- Assessments

conduct standardized and structured assessments, which may be observation-based or direct, for each child that provide ongoing information to evaluate the child's developmental level and progress in outcomes aligned to the goals described in the *Head Start Early Learning Child Outcomes Framework*

Screenings and assessments must be valid and reliable for the population and purpose for which they will be used, including by being conducted by qualified and trained personnel, and being age, developmentally, culturally and linguistically appropriate, and appropriate for children with disabilities, as needed.

Balance is Key



Developmentally Appropriate Methods of Assessment



Formal vs. Informal Assessments

Formal

- Compare student performance against standards, benchmarks or peers
 - Assessment tools
 - Questionnaires
 - Standardized testing

Informal

- Provide immediate, formative feedback to guide instruction
 - Observation
 - Collecting data
 - Child work samples

Both should be Valid and Reliable

Observations

Can be made with minimal or no intrusion into children's activities. Educators can observe all facets of development, including intellectual, linguistic, social-emotional and physical development, on a regular basis.

Examples

- LETRS Early Literacy Checklist
- Daily Observations

Portfolios

A record of data collected through the work children have produced over a period of time. The collection clearly shows the progress of a child's development. Portfolios can be an important tool in helping facilitate a partnership between teachers and parents.

Examples:

Could include things like drawing and writing samples through the school year, photos of projects the child has done through the year to meet standards, and progress reports.

Educator Ratings

Useful in assessing children's cognitive and language abilities as well as their social emotional development, these ratings can be linked to other methods of assessment, such as standardized testing or other assessment tools.

Examples:

- Bracken (BSRA-4)
- Developmental Indicators for the Assessment of Learning (DIAL-4)
- Early Screening Inventory ESI-3
- Battelle Developmental Inventory BDI-3

Parent Ratings

Integrate parents into the assessment process. Parents who are encouraged to observe their child can help detect and target important milestones and behaviors in their child's development.

Examples:

- Ages and Stages Questionnaires
- Parent-Child Rating Scale (P-CRS)
- DIAL-4 Parent Questionnaire

Standardized Tests

Tests created to fit a set of testing standards. These tests are administered and scored in a standard manner and are often used to assess the performance of children in a program.

Examples:

- Brigance Inventory of Early Development
- Peabody Developmental Motor Scales
- DIAL-4
- Assessment, Evaluation, and Programming System (AEPS)

NAEYC's Position Statement on Developmentally Appropriate Observing, Documenting and Assessing Children's Development and Learning

A. Observation, documentation, and assessment of young children's progress and achievements is ongoing, strategic, reflective and purposeful.

B. Assessment focuses on children's progress toward developmental and education goals. Such goals should reflect families' input as well as children's background knowledge and experiences.

C. A system is in place to collect, make sense of, and use observations, documentation, and assessment information to guide what goes on in the early learning setting.

D. Methods of assessment are responsive to the current developmental accomplishments, language(s), and experiences of young children and allow children to demonstrate their competencies in different ways.

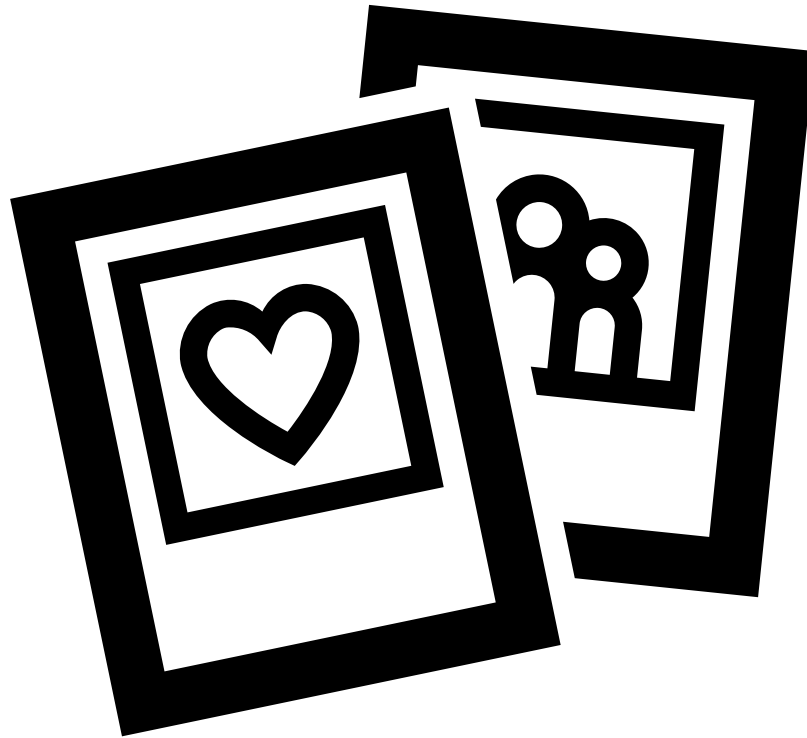
NAEYC's Position Statement on Developmentally Appropriate Observing, Documenting and Assessing Children's Development and Learning (Cont.)

E. Assessments are used only for the populations and purposes for which they have been demonstrated to produce reliable, valid information.

F. Decisions that have major impact on children, such as enrollment or placement, are made in consultation with families.

G. When a screening assessment identifies a child who may have a disability or individualized learning or developmental needs, there is appropriate follow-up, evaluation, and if needed, referral.

Get a Clear Picture



Selecting Assessments



Resources from Head Start

Ongoing Child Assessment: A Guide for Program Leaders : <https://headstart.gov/child-screening-assessment/article/ongoing-child-assessment-guide-program-leaders>

Appendix B- Ongoing Child Assessment Planning and Implementation Worksheet from HS
<https://headstart.gov/sites/default/files/pdf/no-search/oca-guide-9-appendices.pdf>

NWEA.org

WHITE PAPER

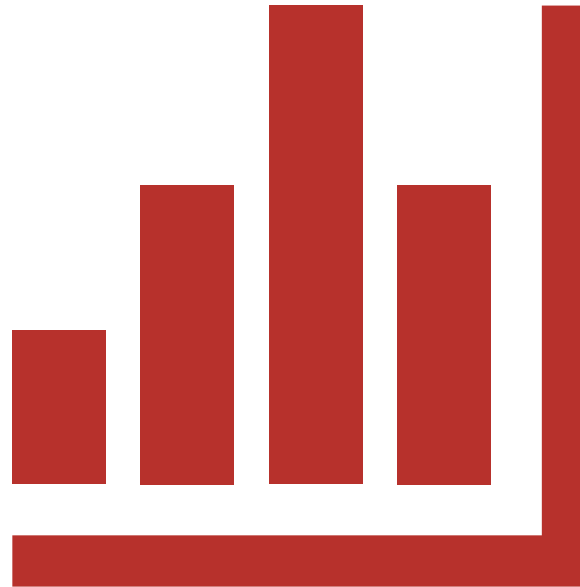
How to navigate early childhood assessment

A research-based guide to inform assessment planning in the early grades

Cindy Jiban, PhD



KSDE Data



Preschool-Aged At-Risk Approval Form data is available upon request.

Using the Data



Remember... Purpose of Assessments



ELIGIBILITY
DETERMINATION



INSTRUCTIONAL
PLANNING



EVALUATION

Using ASQ Data

- How are you currently using your ASQ Data?
- Have you tried using your data to...
 - discover each child's strengths and where they need more support
 - partner with families
 - share learning activities with families to work on areas that need support
 - see areas where multiple children are struggling
 - plan extra classroom activities
 - arrange classrooms
 - plan topics for parent nights
 - plan community-wide supports and resources

Use your Data!

- What assessments are you using?

- How are you using it?

Walk around to each assessment that you are using. Write down how you use the data gathered from that tool.

Takeaways





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