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# Michigan Kindergarten Entry Observation (MKEO)

Pilot Project Update  
May 8, 2018  
State Board of Education

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Washtenaw ISD  
A REGIONAL EDUCATIONAL SERVICE AGENCY

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# History

- 2009-11 Joint work between MDE, ECIC, and MAISA to explore possible Kindergarten Entry Assessment Tools
  - 2011 Federal Race to the Top Early Learning Challenge Grant (RTTT-ELC) RFP issued.
  - 2011 Michigan Legislature approves supplemental funding of \$3.75 million for KEA pilot project
  - 2013 Michigan applies for RTTT-ELC and receives \$51.7 million in Phase III (note pages 204-208 of application regarding Michigan's KEA commitment)
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# TS Gold Pilot Project

- 2011-12 RFP process to select vendor following supplemental appropriation
  - 2012- 13 Teaching Strategies Gold selected
  - 2013 Year One Pilot--Approximately 3600 students assessed
  - 2014 Year Two Field Test--Approximately 3200 students assessed (far fewer than planned)
  - 2015 MDE continued funding for TSGold on optional basis for districts
  - 2016 Re-engaged with Maryland/Ohio through Maryland State Department of Education lead on the Enhanced Assessment Grant (Michigan was an inactive partner in those conversations)
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# Michigan Kindergarten Entry Observation

- **2016** Worked with Senator Hansen to secure funding in Section 104 for pilot KRA (now MKEO) using the Maryland/Ohio model
- **2017** Expanded funding with expectation that all kindergarten classrooms in Prosperity Regions 4, 5, and 9 will implement by fall 2018
- **2018** Budget--level funding in House and increase by \$1 million and expansion to all prosperity regions except 1 and 10 by fall 2019
- **2020** Expectation for statewide implementation by fall 2020

\*2016-17 Pilot: 59 classrooms from 22 districts

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# Policy Implications

- \$130 million increase in GSRP funding--total investment of nearly \$250 million
  - Top Ten in Ten Goal: Universal Pre-K for 3 and 4 year old children
    - Goal 1, Strategy 1.1 and 1.2
    - Including this guiding principle from Top 10 in 10: “To be successful at becoming a Top 10 performing state in 10 years, Michigan must develop a *coherent* and *cohesive* strategy for the children, and implement that plan with continuity for multiple years. Education reform takes time; we must implement, use evidence and data to correct course, and continue with progress on key goals.”
  - Data needed to demonstrate effectiveness of GSRP investment--uniform assessment required to make the case with elected officials
  - Current district assessments focus on *academic* domain only--misalignment with Michigan early childhood expectations as approved by SBE
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# Equity Matters

- Equity is achieved when all students have the resources they need, such as exceptional teachers and high-quality early childhood programs
- Investing in educational equity yields academic gains, reduces achievement gaps and creates significant returns on investment. The highest rate of return comes from investing as early as possible.



# ? What is the **K**indergarten **R**eadiness **A**ssessment?

The KRA looks at the **WHOLE CHILD**- knowledge, skills, and behaviors of kindergarteners across four domains:



Language & Literacy



Mathematics



Social Foundations



Physical Well-Being and Motor Development

\*Not previously assessed



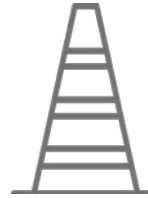
# KRA Development Process



Cognitive Interviews  
(Winter 2012–13)



Pilot Test  
(Spring 2013)



Field Test  
(Fall 2013)



Operational Administrations (Fall 2014–2017)

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The process allowed progressive refinement of the content and administration procedures.





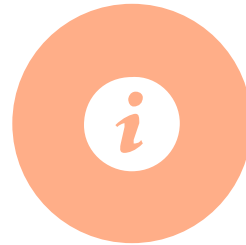
# KRA Design

Supports growing knowledge and research about the variability of young children's growth, development, and learning



Identifies children's performance across multiple domains and aligns with best practice for assessing young children

Provides insight into children's readiness for kindergarten



Informs prior early learning and development to ensure that children are entering kindergarten ready to learn



# Purpose of the MKEO

**To support and advance children's early learning and academic achievement.**

The data collected from the assessment **can inform instruction and decision making** that:

- Benefits children
- Assists teachers
- Informs families
- Advises school leaders and early childhood programs
- Instructs community leaders and policy makers



# Data Use

- Do our K students demonstrate readiness?
- In which domains do they need support?
- How do children from low-income households fare?
  - Minority children?
  - English Learners?
  - Children with disabilities?
  - Homelessness?
  - Foster care?
  - Immigrants?
- What can we use to address the achievement gap?
- What are we doing to support families?
- What more can we do to support educational equity?



# Integrating Developmental Sciences

- Developmentally appropriate instruction that is fully in tune with unique needs of young learners is what it takes to close the preparation and achievement gaps before third grade
- [Young children benefit from authentic activities and embedded assessment within their daily routines and lives.](#)
- We want to assess young children without them knowing they are being assessed- observational. “One shot” assessments tend to be less representative of what young children know and can do, and their learning predispositions.



# Observing Young Children: Why?

- Each child is unique!
- Gain insights into a child's thinking
- See how children are developing and learning
- Witness a child's depth of knowledge and understanding
- Provide documentation
- Use the information to appropriately challenge and support children





# ★ Observing Young Children- **How?**

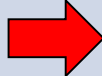
- Watch and listen...listen and watch
- Include different types of observation
- Focus on objectivity—just the facts!
- Avoid making assumptions and comparisons
- Use the information to enhance learning and development
- Give time and space for children to show their learning and development





# KRA Domain Assessment

The Language & Literacy domain is approved as an initial screener to meet Michigan's Third-Grade Reading Law requirements.

DOMAIN	Selected Response	Performance Task	 Observation
Social Foundations	0	0	12
Mathematics	3	11	0
Language & Literacy	6	9	2
Physical Well-being & Motor Development	0	0	7
Total Items	9	20	21

# Classroom Level Impact- as seen in Piloting District

Kindergarten and Young 5 teachers make professional **observations** as they meet their students each year. KRA provides a way for teachers to turn the **observations into data** (\*We've not previously had).

They **use the observations to inform their instruction and determine the necessity to complete further diagnostic assessments.**

The KRA data also provides **information the teacher can bring to student study teams** to get additional supports for a student.

KRA provides teachers with the **data necessary to complete IRIPs** that are required to meet Michigan's Third-Grade Reading Law.



# Building Level- Piloting

KRA provides an opportunity to **gather observational data** and share it with other providers.

**At-risk providers** can use the data collected from KRA to form small groups to improve areas of concern.

**Grade levels** can use the data to create needs based groups across the grade level for another way of preparing students to read.

# District Level- Piloting

The observations and assessment data can provide information for staffing and professional development needs across the district.

The KRA Language and Literacy Domain [aligns to Michigan Academic Standards for Kindergarten](#)

Future Determination: What Essential Instructional Practices could be addressed in PD based upon what KRA results say in Language and Literacy?

Providing a bridge for communication from PreK-K

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# \*MI Pilot Teacher Survey Results

January 2017 and 2018

- 39 teachers responding:
  - **79%** rated “excellent, very good, or good” experience with administration
  - **80%** strongly agreed or agreed skills and behaviors addressed were appropriate for K.
  - **50%** planned to use KRA results in their instructional planning and to communicate with families.
  - **100%** strongly agreed/agreed that students with disabilities and EL students were able to access KRA.
- What it’s showing us about K instruction:
  - “Academic K” - observational item skills are not easy to observe due to current structure.

\*MAISA: Berrien, Newaygo, Ottawa, Saginaw, St. Clair, Washtenaw, West Shore

**PRIOR CARE EXPERIENCE:**

<b>ISD:</b>	<b>Total Children</b>	<b>% Male</b>	<b>% Female</b>	<b>% of Children in GSRP</b>	<b>% of Children in Head Start or Head Start Blend</b>	<b>% of Children in GSRP or Head Start</b>	<b>% of All Children Demonstrating Readiness</b>
Berrien	127	52.0%	48.0%	3.1%	0.8%	3.9%	<b>22.9%</b>
Newaygo	180	48.9%	51.1%	56.1%	1.1%	57.2%	<b>32.2%</b>
Ottawa	155	48.0%	52.0%	19.4%	2.6%	22.0%	<b>35.5%</b>
Saginaw	196	52.9%	47.1%	37.8%	14.8%	52.6%	<b>24.5%</b>
St. Clair	89	51.5%	48.5%	36.0%	9.0%	45.0%	<b>30.3%</b>
Washtenaw	255	52.8%	47.2%	26.7%	10.2%	36.9%	<b>43.5%</b>
West Shore	129	54.3%	45.7%	17.8%	7.0%	24.8%	<b>29.6%</b>
<b>TOTAL:</b>	<b>1131</b>	<b>52.0%</b>	<b>48.0%</b>	<b>29.4%</b>	<b>7.0%</b>	<b>36.4%</b>	<b>33.2%</b>

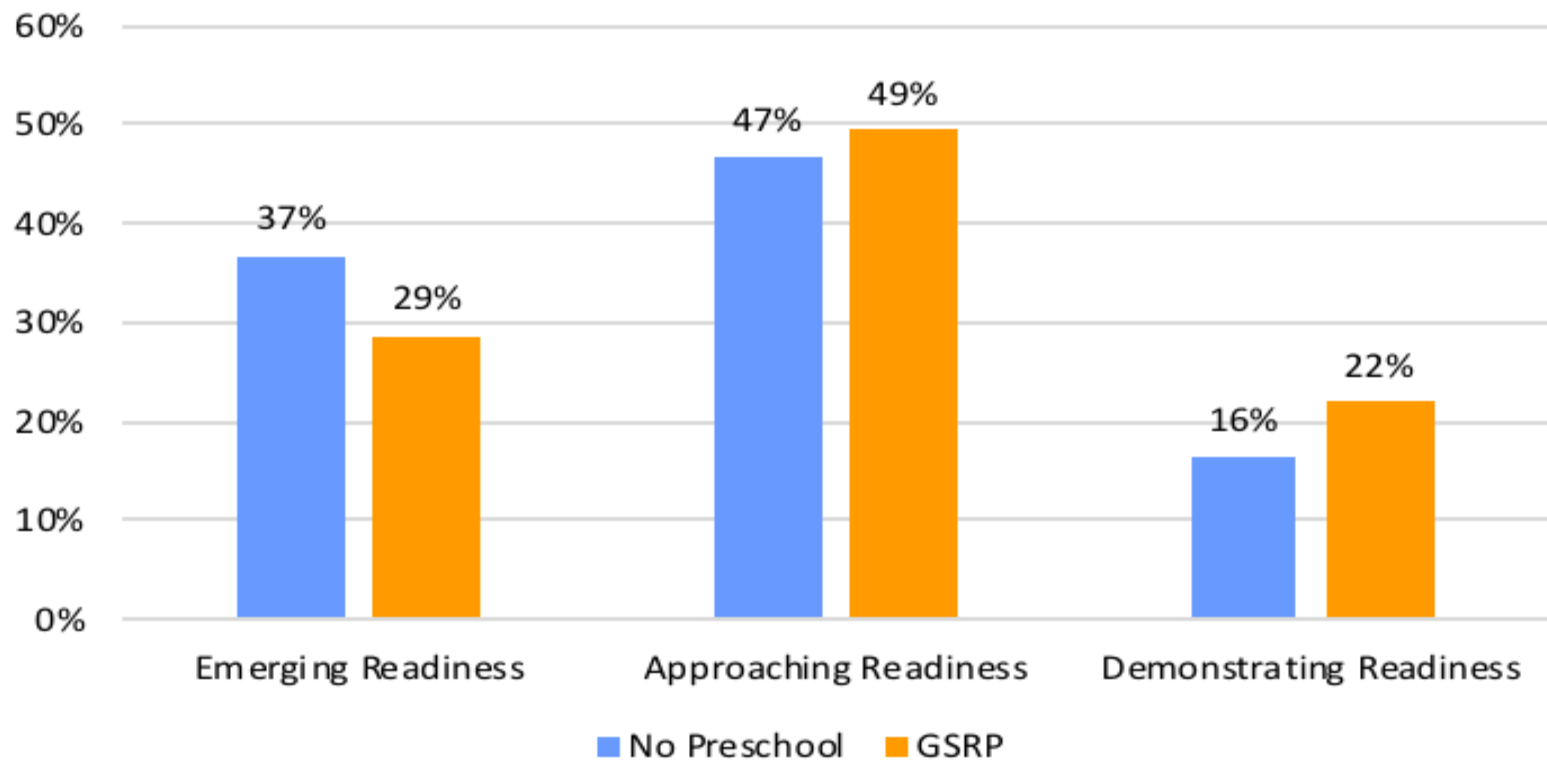


# Performance Levels

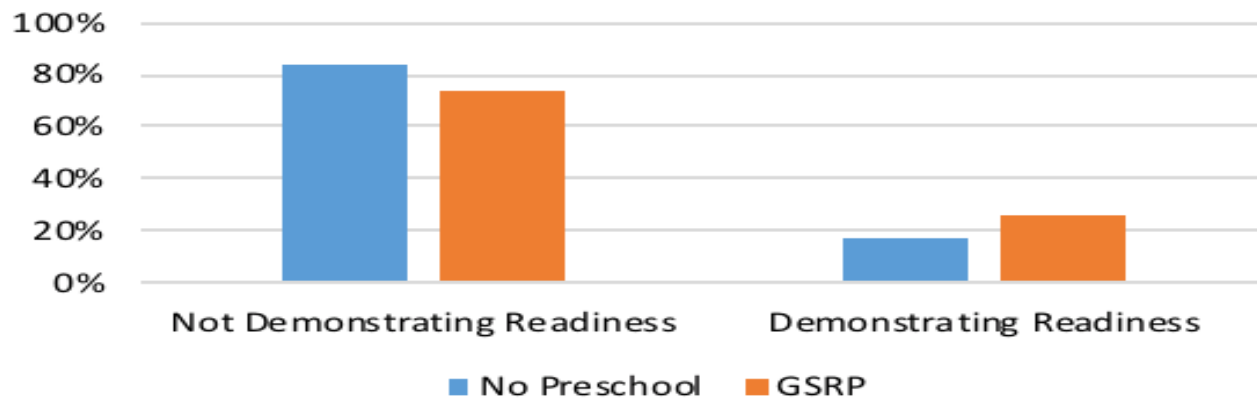
- **Demonstrating Readiness:** The child demonstrates foundational skills and behaviors that prepare him or her for instruction based on kindergarten standards.
- **Approaching Readiness:** The child demonstrates *some* foundational skills and behaviors that prepare him or her for instruction based on kindergarten standards.
- **Emerging Readiness:** The child demonstrates *minimal* foundational skills and behaviors that prepare him or her for instruction based on kindergarten standards. (below 263 on LL)



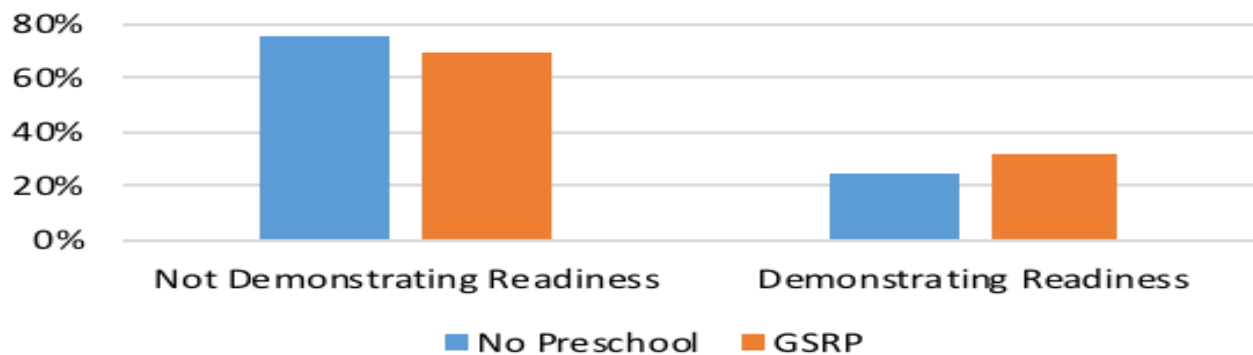
## Overall Readiness Measure



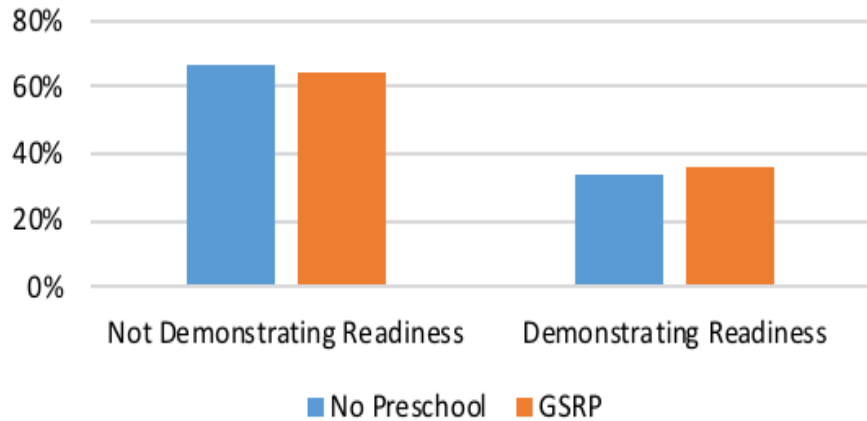
## Language and Literacy



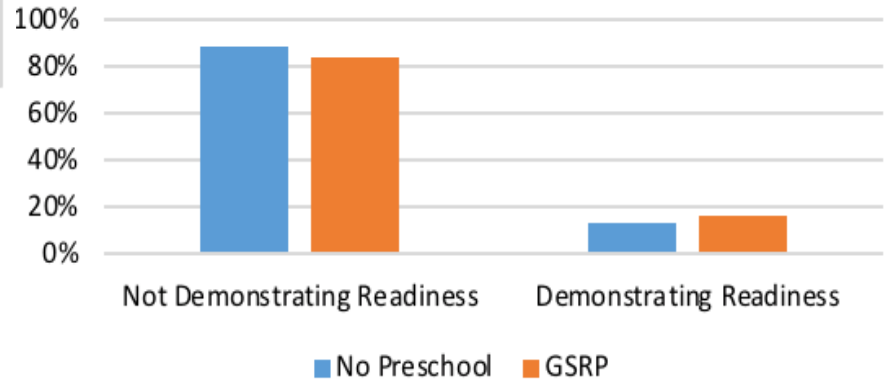
## Social Emotional Skills



## Physical Development



## Mathematics





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# Opportunities

- We can discuss child-friendly, **developmentally appropriate** Kindergarten classrooms
- Informs **instruction** for kindergarten teachers
- Inform the **IRIP process**
- **Validates observation** as a legitimate and important form of assessment
- It can create a **communication** point between PreK and K teachers