



OVERVIEW for Kindergarten Families

Kindergarten Readiness is Key

A young child's learning in areas such as language and literacy, mathematics, and social and emotional learning, and development of skills such as curiosity, creativity, and perseverance can better prepare the child for success in school. Understanding students' individual strengths, challenges, and dispositions when they arrive at kindergarten allows educators and families to take a strengths-based approach, building from what children already know and can do. The Kindergarten Individual Development Survey (KIDS) helps teachers better understand their children and that improves their teaching. A strong experience in kindergarten builds a foundation for a child to learn and grow all through school.

KIDS Helps Teachers, Kids & Families

KIDS helps teachers understand the abilities and behaviors they observe in children who have just begun kindergarten. KIDS focuses on the skills and competencies that are very important for a child's long-term success. Information from KIDS also can help families learn more about what their child is learning in kindergarten and what they can do at home to continue to support their child's healthy growth and development.

Prior to 2017, Illinois school districts used a variety of methods to understand how children are doing when they enter kindergarten. As a result, educators and policymakers did not have a full picture of how all Illinois students are doing until third grade, making it difficult to ensure that every child had appropriate support prior to entering into kindergarten.

For the first time in Illinois, beginning in 2017-2018, KIDS will provide a single, statewide picture of kindergarten readiness among all students, no matter their zip code. This will promote collaboration across grade levels, helping districts to smooth the transition for families and children from preschool and child care into kindergarten.

Combined information from KIDS will go to the State Board of Education so it can inform advocates and policymakers of how best to align resources to most efficiently serve families and children.

For More Information

Talk to your child's kindergarten teacher, or check out the resources on isbe.net/KIDS.

HOW KIDS WORKS

- Beginning in Fall 2017, all kindergarten teachers will use the KIDS tool to observe students on 14 measures across four learning domains during the first few weeks of school. These include:
 - Approaches to Learning and Self-Regulation
 - Social and Emotional Development
 - Language and Literacy Development
 - Cognition: Math
- Observations will happen while children are playing, working, lining up, and other parts of the regular school day. Children likely won't even notice teachers observing.
- Teachers use the observations to place each child's abilities on a learning pathway. The information will be entered into a secure, online system called KIDSTech.
- Teachers and districts will go through this process at least once per year, but they might choose to enter observations more often or on more areas of development.