



INDIANA
DEPARTMENT of
EDUCATION

KICKSTARTING KINDERGARTEN COLLECTION

Kindergarten Readiness

In 2014, Indiana's Early Learning Advisory Committee approved the following definition of kindergarten readiness,

"In Indiana, we work together so that every child can develop to his or her fullest potential socially, emotionally, physically, cognitively, and academically. Through growth in all of these domains, the child will become a healthy, capable, competent, and powerful learner."

In addition to kindergarten-readiness, research also highlights the importance of schools being ready to support all children and families. A ready school:

- Smooths the transition between home and school;
- Strives for continuity between early learning programs and elementary schools; and
- Changes practices and programs if they do not benefit children and/or improve outcomes.

This collection of resources is meant to support schools in both helping ensure children are ready for kindergarten, but also that schools are ready for them.

Kindergarten Entry

In Indiana, a school corporation is required to provide a kindergarten program for eligible students who are five years old on or before August 1 of the school year. However, a school corporation may enroll a student who is five by October 1, and still receive Average Daily Membership (ADM) funding. Select the bullets below for additional information.

- Kindergarten Entrance and ADM Funding Memo for Superintendents and CFOs.
- Kindergarten Enrollment FAQ for Families.



EARLY EXPERIENCES

Quality early childhood experiences increase a child's ability to succeed in kindergarten.



KICK START CAMP

This allows opportunities to become familiar with the routines of kindergarten.



TRANSITIONS

Effective transition practices can have a substantial positive impact on academic achievement.

KICKSTARTING KINDERGARTEN



EARLY EXPERIENCES

Sharing kindergarten readiness documents and other resources with incoming families and local community-based early learning providers can help clarify what children ideally would know before kindergarten, and ideas for activities to learn these skills. Links to resources below:

- **Kindergarten Readiness:**
English | Spanish
- **Kindergarten Literacy Readiness:**
English | Spanish
- **Kindergarten Mathematics Readiness:**
English | Spanish
- **Early Learning Family Guides:**
English | Spanish
- **Mighty Moments Video Clips:** Suggestions for families to implement routine-based interventions at home to build skills related to the Indiana Early Learning Foundations.
- **Early Learning Foundations Guidance:** This guide is meant to serve as a suggestion for practice for educators serving children from infancy to age five.



KICK START CAMP

Offering a summer enrichment program may be one way to ensure that all children arrive at kindergarten ready to learn (McCombs et al., 2019). An evaluation study revealed that children who participated in Fairfax County Public Schools' program gained four months of self-regulation skills during the three-week program and began kindergarten with similar literacy skills as their peers who attended a full year of preschool (Duncan et al., 2018).

Effective programs*:

- Require a three week program for at least four hours per day;
- Provide transportation, a snack or meal, and family engagement activities;
- Occur in the same school the child will attend;
- Are led by kindergarten teachers;
- Provide training for educators and staff;
- Give preference to children with limited in-person pre-K experience; and
- Administer assessments before and after to evaluate the effectiveness of the program.

**Adapted from Fairfax County Public Schools*



TRANSITIONS

Young children experience a variety of transitions throughout childhood, but often the most critical is the shift from early childhood settings into kindergarten. There is increasing evidence stating that:

- A positive start to kindergarten sets the child up for continued positive educational experiences and future life opportunities (Schischka et al., 2012).
- Implementing transition practices, particularly for high-risk children and families, can have a substantial positive impact on academic achievement and parent-initiated school involvement.

IDOE collaborated to develop a toolkit focused on Indiana's Five Transition Values with resources for all types of early learning providers and schools:

- Transition to Kindergarten Toolkit;
- Sample Transition forms for sharing between early learning programs and schools;** and
- Transition Theory of Action.

***From Alabama's transition toolkit. Must have written family consent to share.*



CONSIDERATIONS FOR STUDENTS WITH IEPS

The Division for Early Childhood (DEC) offers Recommended Practices as an initiative to bridge the gap between research and practice. These practices offer guidance to professionals who work with young children who have, or are at risk for, developmental delays or disabilities. The Transition (TR) section of these practices suggests that transitions involve activities on the part of professionals in collaboration with the family. There are two recommended practices, TR1 and TR2, and suggestions for what they may look like in the field, specific to the transition to kindergarten.

TR1

Professionals in both sending and receiving programs exchange information before, during, and after the transition about practices likely to support the child's successful adjustment and positive outcomes.

Practical Examples:

- A preschool teacher organizes a transition portfolio for each child progressing to kindergarten.
- A preschool director submits academic records for children moving to kindergarten (with family consent).
- A kindergarten teacher talks with the service provider or preschool teacher to learn more about the student's needs.

TR2

Professionals use a variety of planned and timely strategies with the child and family before, during, and after the transition to support successful adjustment and positive outcomes for both the child and family.

Practical Examples:

- A preschool and kindergarten teacher arrange a school visit for the preschool children. The children get to explore the kindergarten classroom, talk with the kindergarten children, see the bathrooms, and sit on the school bus.
- A service provider provides a list of kindergartens and open houses and offers to accompany families on their visits.

ADDITIONAL RESOURCES

- A Successful Kindergarten Transition for Children with Disabilities - This resource includes a sample Individualized Transition Plan.
- Transition from Preschool Special Education to Kindergarten Checklist -This resource can be used to develop an Individualized Transition Plan and encourage caregiver decision-making.
- Supporting Children with IEPs -This resource helps early learning programs and schools as families navigate the transition to kindergarten.
- How to Prepare Your Child with Disabilities for Kindergarten***
- Transitioning from Early Childhood Special Education to Kindergarten
- Making the Move from Preschool to Kindergarten

***From the Minnesota Parent Training and Information Center

