



ECDataWorks

Advancing Early Childhood Policy and Programs
through Strategic Use of Integrated Data

School Readiness Reporting Guide

*Guidelines and Tools for Creating and Using
School Readiness Reports*

November 2018

What Is School Readiness?

School readiness traditionally includes several factors that, when combined, indicate how prepared a child is to enter kindergarten and to succeed in school. These factors include the child's early math skills; language and pre-literacy skills; cognitive abilities (including problem solving and reasoning); social, emotional, and behavioral development; and health and physical development (Romano, Babchishin, Pagani, & Kohen, 2010; Rhode Island KIDS COUNT, 2005). Specific school readiness factors can vary by state, type of program (e.g., Head Start versus prekindergarten), and guiding framework.

The concept of school readiness is important because evidence suggests that young children's preparedness when entering school can predict their future academic success in both the short and long terms (Morrissey & Vinopal, 2018). Research also suggests that achievement gaps in youth outcomes emerge early—often by kindergarten entry—and grow during elementary school (Reardon, 2011). Educators, families, and service providers need to understand children's readiness to enter kindergarten in order to best address their needs and prepare them for their futures.

The term “school readiness” often is used interchangeably with “kindergarten readiness.” This guide uses “school readiness.”

How Has the Definition of School Readiness Been Expanded?

All states have defined school readiness by determining the skills and capabilities that children should develop by kindergarten entry (Child Trends, 2010). Some states also have expanded their focus on school readiness beyond the child to include schools and communities. Specifically, these states want to examine whether the schools and communities are ready to support the children entering kindergarten. This expanded definition of school readiness emphasizes preparing schools and communities to be “student ready.” Children's readiness for school is shaped by their early experiences and, as such, children and families have unique needs. Schools and communities need to be able to address these needs and commit to supporting the success of all children and families.

Although much work is being done to develop supports and strategies for student-ready schools and communities, these areas are less clearly defined than traditional, student-centered models of school readiness. This is especially true for operationalizing data collection and reporting efforts to inform student-ready schools and communities and integrate school and community-level data. This guide will build on current methods of defining and reporting on school readiness to integrate and help develop ready students, ready schools, and ready communities.

Defining School Readiness

One state focused on developing student-ready schools is North Carolina,¹ in partnership with the W.K. Kellogg Foundation. North Carolina identified three linked components of school readiness: “ready children,” “ready schools,” and “ready families & communities.” All three components are critical to ensuring that children achieve optimal outcomes (Action for Children North Carolina, June 2008). Hawai'i is another example of this work,² where the state is focused on preparing school-ready families and school-ready communities (DeBaryshe, Yuen, & Ripke, 2008).

Beyond state agencies, the Gates Foundation also supports student-ready schools through a four-part model focusing on “strong and shared leadership,” “high expectations,” “data-driven improvement,” and “great teaching” (Burke, 2017, August), all of which are crucial to building student-ready schools. Head Start programs also broaden the definition of school readiness by including both families and schools.³ For Head Start, families who are ready to support learning and schools that are ready to support children are key elements of school readiness.

1 See North Carolina's School Readiness Report at http://www.ncchild.org/wp-content/uploads/2014/05/School_Readiness_Report_finalforWeb.pdf.

2 See Hawai'i's School Readiness Report at <http://uhfamily.hawaii.edu/publications/brochures/SchoolReadinessHawaii.pdf>.

3 Learn more about Head Start's definition of school readiness at <https://eclkc.ohs.acf.hhs.gov/school-readiness>.

About This Guide

This School Readiness Reporting Guide offers an overview of the types of data frequently included in school readiness reports, provides suggestions for including school- and community-level data elements in those reports, and demonstrates how those data can be presented to inform key audiences.

This guide contains the following sections:

- **Creating School Readiness Reports** discusses common components of a school readiness report and outlines important considerations when planning the content and format of an expanded school readiness report that includes information about student-ready schools and communities.
- **Using School Readiness Reports** provides four use cases to help bring school readiness reporting to life. The use cases contain analytic questions, sample data visualizations, key takeaways, and actions that can result from using the reports. This section also provides information about next steps for school readiness reporting.
- **Additional Resources** offers links to related products and tools for further information on this topic.
- **References** includes studies and research related to school readiness that are cited in this guide.

The guide was developed by the Early Childhood Integrated Data Systems (ECIDS) School Readiness Reporting Workgroup, facilitated by the Statewide Longitudinal Data Systems (SLDS) Grant Program State Support Team in collaboration with ECDataWorks. The information presented does not necessarily represent the opinions of the SLDS Grant Program. We thank the following people for their valuable contributions.

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What Is Commonly Included in a School Readiness Report?

A school readiness report—sometimes referred to as a kindergarten readiness report—outlines measures of children’s readiness for kindergarten and provides insight into how well early childhood programs and services prepare children for kindergarten. Many states use—or are planning to use—school readiness reports to

- identify best practices and improve instruction;
- inform allocation of funding for early childhood programs;
- identify needs for teachers, programs, and classrooms; and
- track progress toward state kindergarten readiness goals.

School readiness reports can be created for different audiences depending on their interests. Schools and communities can and are using school readiness reports to make important decisions about professional development and resource allocation. However, most school readiness reports present only student-level data. To truly understand how they can support children before, during, and after their transition into school, state and local leaders need tools that facilitate decision-making and support partnerships. The **Using School Readiness Reports** section of this guide offers use cases for expanded school readiness reports that shift focus away from kindergarten entry assessment scores and onto a more holistic definition of “readiness” that helps promote action at the local level.

Getting Started: Guiding Questions

There are several key issues that states should consider prior to or early in the process of developing a school readiness report, especially a report that has been expanded to include and integrate data about students, schools, and communities. Although each state’s unique needs will influence decisionmaking, the following guiding questions will help states consider key decisions and issues that might arise while developing and using school readiness reports. The guiding questions are numbered, but states can address them in any order that supports their priorities and progress toward school readiness reporting.

Question 1: What is school readiness?

Define “school readiness.” States should use definitions and terminology that are clear and will resonate with the intended audience of reports. Depending on the audience and purpose of the school readiness report, a definition may be critical to meeting reporting objectives. For example, state leaders often want to see summary-level information; a definition for school readiness would allow reports to show clear readiness trends more easily. Arriving at a definition can be a long and complex process involving collaboration and input from many stakeholders. A state’s comprehensive definition of school readiness goes beyond data from assessment tools, which are designed to evaluate children’s competencies at a certain age but do not define what it means for a child to be ready for kindergarten—or, further, for schools and communities to be ready to support children entering kindergarten.

Defining school readiness also might include developing definitions for student-ready schools and communities. For example, a “community” might include all programs and services outside of the school for young children and families. The concept of student-ready schools and communities might be less familiar to stakeholders, so providing clear definitions can also help obtain buy-in from audiences and support for the use of school readiness data beyond student-level data.

Question 2: Who are the audiences for school readiness reports?

Identify the audiences for school readiness reports. Potential audiences might include kindergarten teachers, early childhood service providers, school staff, district administrators, early childhood advocates, governors, legislators, staff at state agencies (e.g., public instruction, early learning, health), and families. Understanding the diverse needs of such audiences and what information they need to make decisions is critical. These reports can also play a crucial role in facilitating partnerships among various audiences. For example, community and state partners can use these reports to help develop and align their systems to meet children’s needs.

Report developers must understand their audiences' cultures around and attitudes toward school readiness data. In some states, school readiness goals include a specific percentage of students who meet the definition of school readiness. The audiences in those states will expect to see high-level, summary results that clearly indicate whether the goals are being met. In other states, school readiness data are intended to be used in formative assessment tools for students, teachers, and schools. The audiences in those states likely will expect reports that emphasize student-, school-, and community-level progress.

Question 3: What data are needed, and how will they be collected?

Identify which data are needed for each measure that will be included in the report based on the state's definition of school readiness. Determine how these data will be collected. Collaborating with school and community leaders can help secure their support for decisions about data use.

Student-level data that are commonly used in a school readiness report include assessment data and measures for such things as health, nutrition, and social development. Determine which assessment data will go into the school readiness report. Some states allow districts or individual schools to select from an approved list of kindergarten entry assessments rather using a single assessment tool statewide. Although local choice can be critical for supporting participation in assessments at the local level, states might need to create a crosswalk process to compare assessment results effectively.

School- and community-level data might include staff credentials, training and professional development, staff and population demographics, transition practices, and family engagement policies. These data might be more difficult to collect than student-level data, so outlining data collection plans with roles, timelines, and data governance processes will be particularly useful.

See the section on **Data Types** for more details on possible data to include in each of the three areas.

Question 4: For which populations are school readiness data available?

Determine the availability of data for different populations covered by the reports. Data on school readiness are unlikely to be available for all children entering kindergarten, or for all schools and communities in the state. Consider a phased approach to report development. What data are available to include in the first year of this new, expanded report? Ideally, what data could be gathered in future years to continue to expand on identifying and informing school-ready students and student-ready schools and communities?

Understanding the population for whom data are collected will inform what analyses can be conducted as well as strategies and methodologies for preparing and analyzing the data. For example, if a state is using a phased approach to collecting school readiness data, prioritizing the most at-risk populations and adding lower-risk populations over time, then trend data would be skewed in the early phases toward the characteristics and results of the at-risk students. One strategy to address this issue would be to use a randomized, representative sample of student data so that the results do not skew toward the at-risk population. This approach might not be possible in the early stages if the sample set is not large or diverse enough. Another option would be to show trend data categorized by students' level of risk so that any impacts resulting from the data collection method can be clearly seen in the report. Alternatively, states could acknowledge this bias in reporting and caution against overemphasizing or generalizing trends.

Question 5: Will any initiatives, policies, or legislation inform the report?

State initiatives, policies, or legislation may inform the development of school readiness reports. Many early learning agencies, public K12 institutions, legislatures, governor's offices, and policy groups have developed specific school readiness goals. Setting school readiness goals for the state can help prioritize content for the report, such as whether specific targets should be included to determine whether a goal has been met.

For example, the governor's office in Washington State tracks a set of goals that includes increasing by 2 percent each year between 2012-13 and 2015-16 the percentage of children who demonstrate kindergarten readiness in the areas of social-emotional, physical, language, cognitive, literacy, and math skills as measured by the Washington Kindergarten

Inventory of Developing Skills (WAKIDS). In this case, state-level reports might need to include progress toward achieving the goal of an annual 2-percent increase in student readiness. Knowing the goals also can help states determine which data can be included or excluded because existing reports already meet the needs of legislative, agency, or organization requirements or initiatives.

Question 6: How will school readiness reports be used to take action?

Now that the audiences, data, and populations have been considered, determine how these reports will be disseminated to and used by their audiences. It can be helpful to align each phase of data collection and reporting with a clear use case—that is, identify how the intended audiences can take actions based on the data and reports. Teachers might use the reports to identify which children require individualized support. Schools and communities might use the reports to complement other technical assistance activities. The reports also might help identify current capacities and areas of need at multiple levels. The integration of data across the student, school, and community levels can help inform more advanced, multi-tiered decisionmaking. See the **Using School Readiness Reports** section of this guide for examples of school readiness report use cases.

Designing a School Readiness Report

This section discusses the data sources, data types, and visualizations that can be included in a school readiness report that integrates data from students, schools, and communities. The examples are not exhaustive but can be a good starting point for states developing school readiness reports. Responses to the guiding questions in the previous section can help determine the types of analytics to include.

Design considerations

- *Multidimensional readiness:* States and programs have different ways of defining the dimensions used to measure school readiness. However, a multidimensional approach that includes domains such as early academic, social, emotional, health, and physical development offers a more holistic picture of a child's development. The Race to the Top – Early Learning Challenge program's essential domains of readiness⁴ and the Head Start Early Learning Outcomes Framework⁵ offer examples of multidimensional school readiness measures. School- and community-level data are also included in this multidimensional approach to examining school readiness.
- *Apply a systems-thinking lens:* School readiness assessments often are given as formative assessments. They are designed to help educators determine how best to support an individual child according to their current developmental needs. The design of school readiness reports should be mindful of this context and, where possible, avoid showing just children's scores without additional information about system supports.
- *Contextualizing data:* It can be difficult for report users to find meaning and take action from raw numbers without context on how to interpret them. Although this challenge is not unique to expanded school readiness analytics, it can be particularly challenging given the broad group of organizations, institutions, families, and individuals with a stake in the early childhood systems who might be audiences for this type of report. There are two main approaches to presenting school readiness data, and reports likely will use both to help users interpret results:
 1. Compare data from one jurisdiction to statewide data or data from another, larger geographic unit that is relevant e.g., compare school results to the district results).
 2. Compare data against performance targets or goals. Ideally these targets would be incorporated directly into the report, but in cases where goals vary greatly across the state it might be up to the report users to bring this context to their interpretations.

Key sections of a school readiness report

To provide a more complete picture of school readiness, reports should include data on ready students, ready schools, and ready communities. These data can be presented separately in the report, but they might be more effective when integrated. Data visualizations or dashboards can be used to display integrated data to promote more holistic comparisons and decisionmaking and to facilitate collaboration among stakeholders. The following table provides an overview of each section within this school readiness framework, along with general questions that the data in these sections will help answer.

⁴ Learn more about the Early Learning Challenge and its essential domains at <https://eric.ed.gov/?id=ED583117>.

⁵ See <https://eclkc.ohs.acf.hhs.gov/school-readiness/article/head-start-early-learning-outcomes-framework>.

Ready Students	<p>Data on ready students can be used to examine whether students are prepared for school. These data help answer questions such as the following:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • How prepared are the children to enter and succeed in school? • What supports do children need?
Ready Schools	<p>Data on ready schools can be used to determine whether schools are ready to meet the needs of children and families. These data help answer questions such as the following:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • What programs and services are in place to help support and provide educational opportunities for students? • What resources exist to help support and build teacher capacity? • What is being done to engage families and build parental capacity to support children?
Ready Communities	<p>Data on ready communities can be used to determine whether communities are ready to meet the needs of children and families. These data help answer questions such as the following:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • What support and programs are in place to provide early learning opportunities for children before they enter school? • For which areas of development can the community provide more intentional support to the children served prior to kindergarten entry? • What professional development activities and resources are in place to support the workforce? • What supports and programs are in place for parents?

Data Types

The types of data included in a school readiness report will depend on a state's responses to the guiding questions above. Following are examples of types of data relevant to each of the three readiness report categories: ready students, ready schools, and ready communities.



Ready Students

Student-level data in school readiness reports can include information from multiple developmental domains. These data can help identify needs for individual students as well as current capacities and areas of strength. Ready-student data should be used to inform decisions such as services needed, potential interventions, and individualization of instruction. These data also can be used to examine gains over time.

Example of ready-student data include the following:

- Student demographic data
- Screening data
- Assessment data
- Health data



Ready Schools

Data on ready schools can help identify current capacities and needs at the school level as well as areas of strength. Ready-schools data should be used to inform school-level decisions in areas such as teacher professional development and training, family engagement, funding, student-teacher ratios, and other areas that can affect the school's ability to address the needs of incoming students and families.

Examples of ready-schools data include the following:

- Staff workforce data
 - Demographic data
 - Credentials
 - Training and professional development opportunities
- Policies and practices
 - Family engagement
 - Transitions
- Student-teacher ratios
- Additional measures of staff capacity (e.g., cultural competency)
- School administration
 - School characteristics (e.g., public, charter)
 - Financial data



Ready Communities

Data on ready communities can help identify needs at the community level as well as current capacities and areas of strength. Ready-communities data should be used to inform decisions about early childhood workforce professional development, pre-service teacher training, family engagement, health services, and other areas that can impact the ability of the programs and services in the community to address the needs of children and families.

Examples of ready-communities data include the following:

- Population demographic data
- Community risk factors
 - Aggregate-level Adverse Childhood Experiences (ACEs)
 - Birth registry (e.g., teen birth rate, premature births, education level of parent)
 - Child maltreatment
 - Multigenerational poverty
- Early childhood programs and services
- Early childhood provider quality ratings
- Early childhood workforce data
 - Demographic data
 - Credentials
 - Training and professional development opportunities
- Community literacy/reading programs
- Community health and healthcare access
- Parental education policies and practices

Data Visualizations

Presenting the data in an easily digestible manner that helps the audience draw conclusions, inform decisionmaking, and determine actions is an important part of school readiness reporting. Effective presentation can be especially important when integrating data across multiple categories of school readiness and attempting to foster collaboration and collective decisionmaking. The following section, **Using School Readiness Reports**, offers use cases with examples of data visualizations that could support a variety of audience needs. Each of the use cases includes multiple visualizations aligned to analysis questions and discusses possible actions that could result from the data.

The use cases in this section were developed using mock data to provide examples of how to integrate student, school, and community data to help inform decisions and facilitate partnerships. The format of these use cases—including the alignment of analysis questions, data visualizations, key takeaways, and actions—can be helpful for states building school readiness reports. When applying this format, it also can be useful to include key definitions, timeframes (e.g., school years), footnotes, and technical notes to provide a state-specific context that will resonate with the intended audience.

Use Case 1: Preparing Our School's Workforce

Analysis goal

Determine how prepared school staff members are to address the cultural and linguistic needs of kindergarten students.

Analysis questions

1. Are there any populations in our community that are not well represented by our staff?
 - a. What are the percentages of staff within each demographic category?
 - b. How do the percentages of staff within each demographic category compare to the percentages of students in each category?
2. Do any children require linguistic support that our staff cannot offer?
 - a. What percentage of students speak Spanish (or other languages) as their household language?
 - b. What percentage of staff speak Spanish (or other languages)?
3. Are school staff members trained in cultural competency?
 - a. What percentage of staff members have received cultural competency training in the last 12 months?
 - b. What percentage of staff members are making culturally competent decisions in their classrooms?

Data visualizations

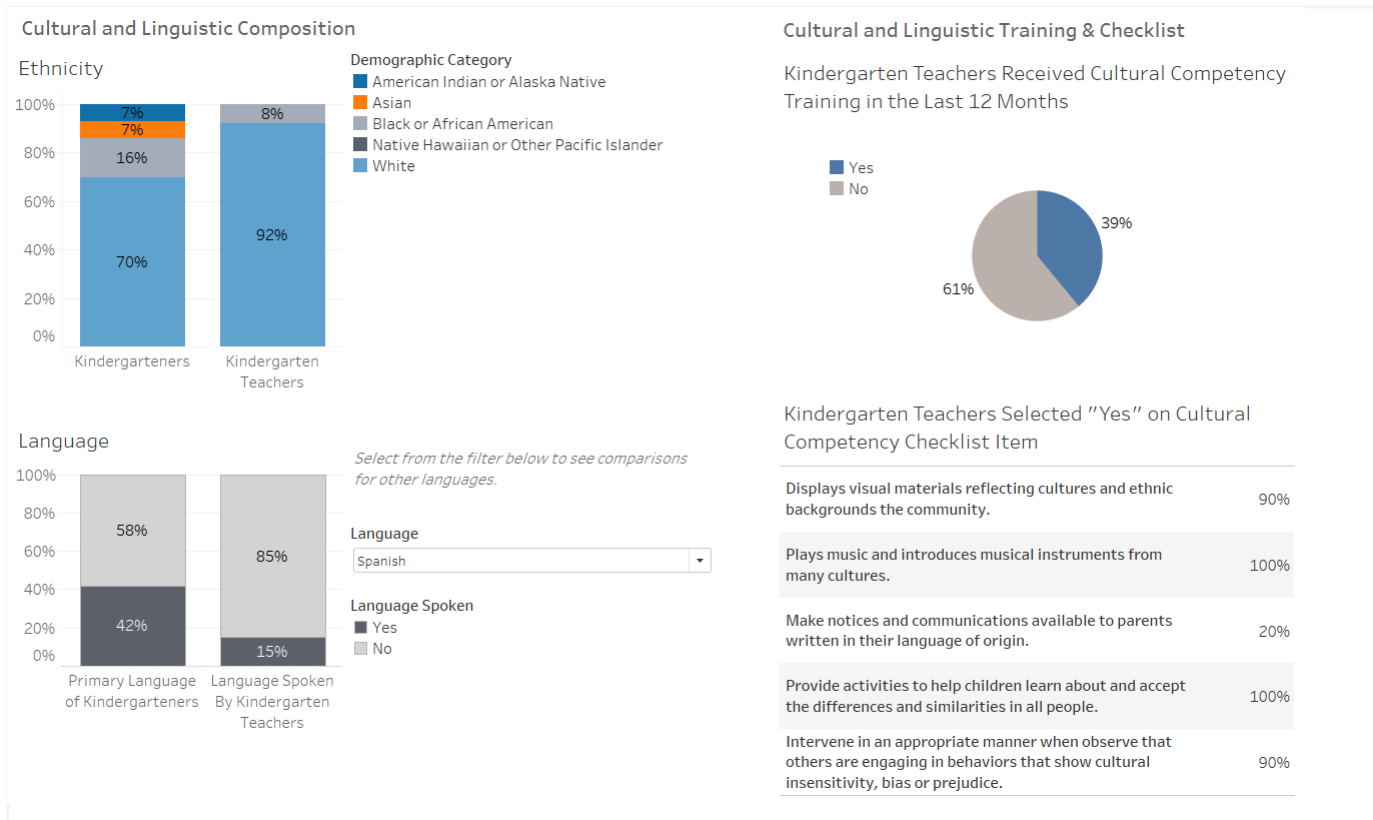


Figure 1. To answer the analysis questions, a school might create charts showing the race/ethnicity of students and staff members, their language background, and staff members' participation in and use of cultural competency training.

Key takeaways

After analyzing student and staff data, school leaders might reach the following conclusions:

- The cultural and linguistic composition of the staff and students is dissimilar. Notably, there are student populations that are not represented in staff demographic data.
- Although 42 percent of kindergartners speak Spanish as their primary language, only 15 percent of kindergarten teachers can speak Spanish.
- The majority of kindergarten teachers have not received cultural competency training in the last 12 months.

Actions

Given the diversity of students across demographic categories and the lack of staff within some categories, school leaders might decide that staff members could benefit from additional cultural competency training.

School leaders also might determine that the language needs of incoming Spanish-speaking students need to be addressed. The school might need to hire more Spanish-speaking staff or look at student assessments to determine the English language capacities of incoming students. Additionally, the cultural competency checklist data show that a low percentage of staff members are providing parents with communications in their native language, which might be due to a lack of capacity. School leaders can use this information to determine how to better meet the needs of their students and families.

Use Case 2: Training Our Community-Based Early Childhood Education Providers (Prekindergarten Teachers)

Analysis goal

Determine how prepared our early childhood education providers are to address gaps in school readiness for the incoming kindergarten cohort.

Analysis questions

- Are prekindergarten teachers receiving training across developmental domains to help address school readiness gaps?
 - What are the total prekindergarten teacher training hours in Region A?
 - How do the total prekindergarten teacher training hours in Region A compare to the average statewide total prekindergarten teacher training hours?
 - Are prekindergarten teachers in Region A meeting the number of annual required training hours?
- Are prekindergarten teachers receiving an appropriate level of training to address areas where incoming students need the most support?
 - How do the total prekindergarten teacher training hours by domain in Region A correlate to the student readiness scores by domain in Region A?
 - How do the student readiness scores in region A compare to the student readiness scores statewide?

Data visualizations

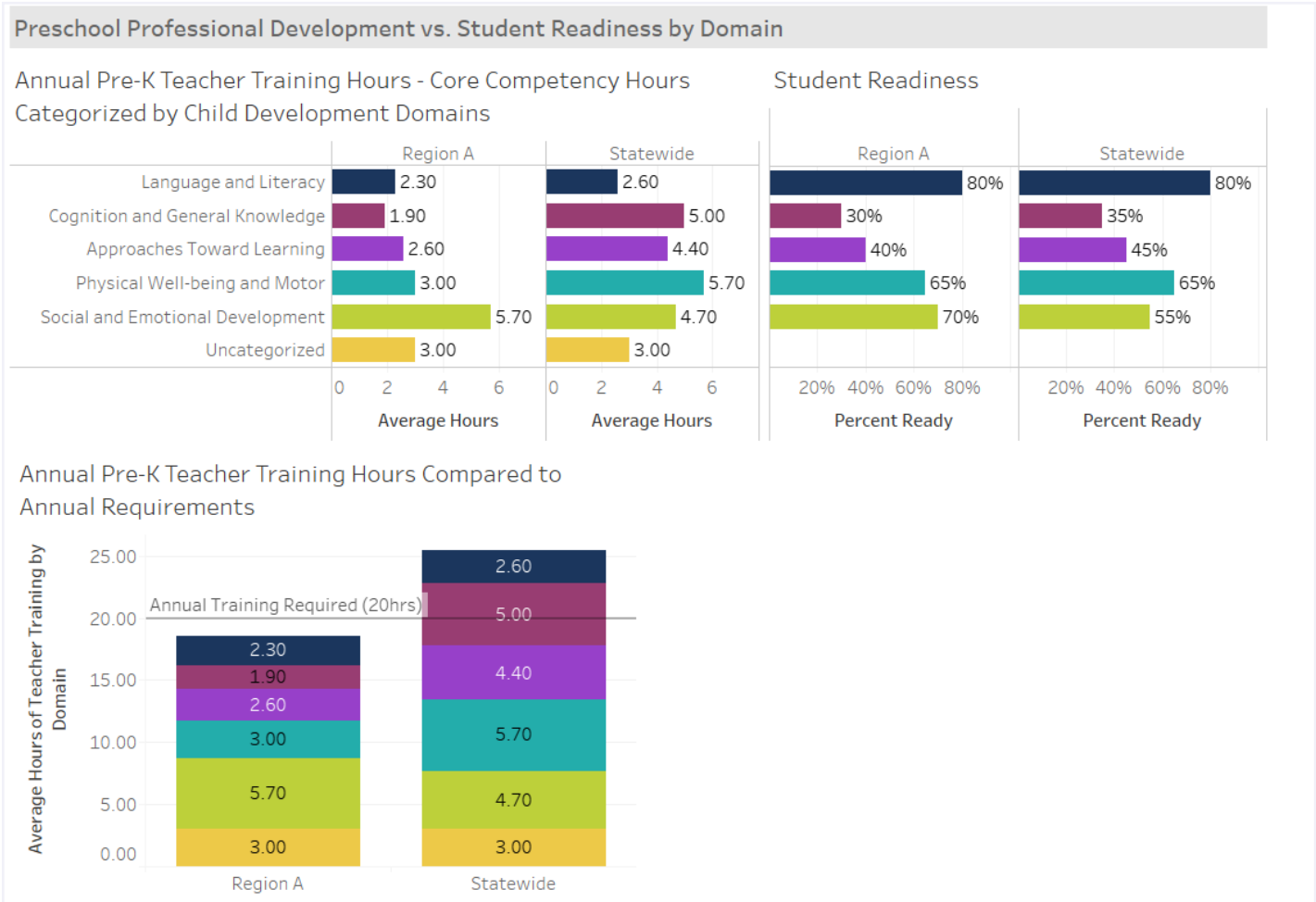


Figure 2. Bar charts showing core competency training hours across several child development domains can help assess educators' preparation in a community and highlight gaps.

Key takeaways

After analyzing training data, community leaders might reach the following conclusions:

- Prekindergarten teachers in Region A are receiving fewer hours of training than required and fewer than the statewide average.
- Region A prekindergarten teachers are receiving the fewest training hours in the two domains with the lowest percentages of ready students: “Cognition and General Knowledge” and “Approaches Toward Learning.”
- Prekindergarten teachers in Region A are receiving more training hours than the statewide average in Social and Emotional Development, and Region A has a higher percentage of ready students than the statewide average in this domain.

Actions

To determine how to allocate prekindergarten teacher training hours, community leaders might look at student readiness scores to see the domains in which children need the most support. Given the lower percentages of ready students in “Cognition and General Knowledge” and “Approaches Toward Learning,” community leaders might choose to allocate more training hours in those domains.

Community leaders also might use these data to identify areas of strength. In the “Social and Emotional Development” domain, Region A prekindergarten teachers are receiving more training hours than the statewide average. Region A also has a higher percentage of ready students in this domain than the statewide average. The correlation between training hours and student readiness suggests that Region A prekindergarten teachers might be well prepared to meet the needs of students in this domain.

Community leaders might decide that prekindergarten teachers in Region A need to receive more training, as they are currently receiving fewer hours than the statewide average and fewer than the annual training hours required by the state. Prekindergarten teachers in Region A are receiving a total of 18.5 hours of training each year, compared to the statewide average of 25.4 hours.

Use Case 3: Selecting a Provider That Aligns to Your Child’s Developmental Needs

Analysis goal

Determine how provider quality addresses children’s needs across developmental domains.

Analysis questions

1. Do providers with higher quality ratings better prepare children across developmental domains?
 - a. What are the percentages of ready students in each domain by provider quality rating?
 - b. What are the percentages of ready students in each domain from unrated providers?

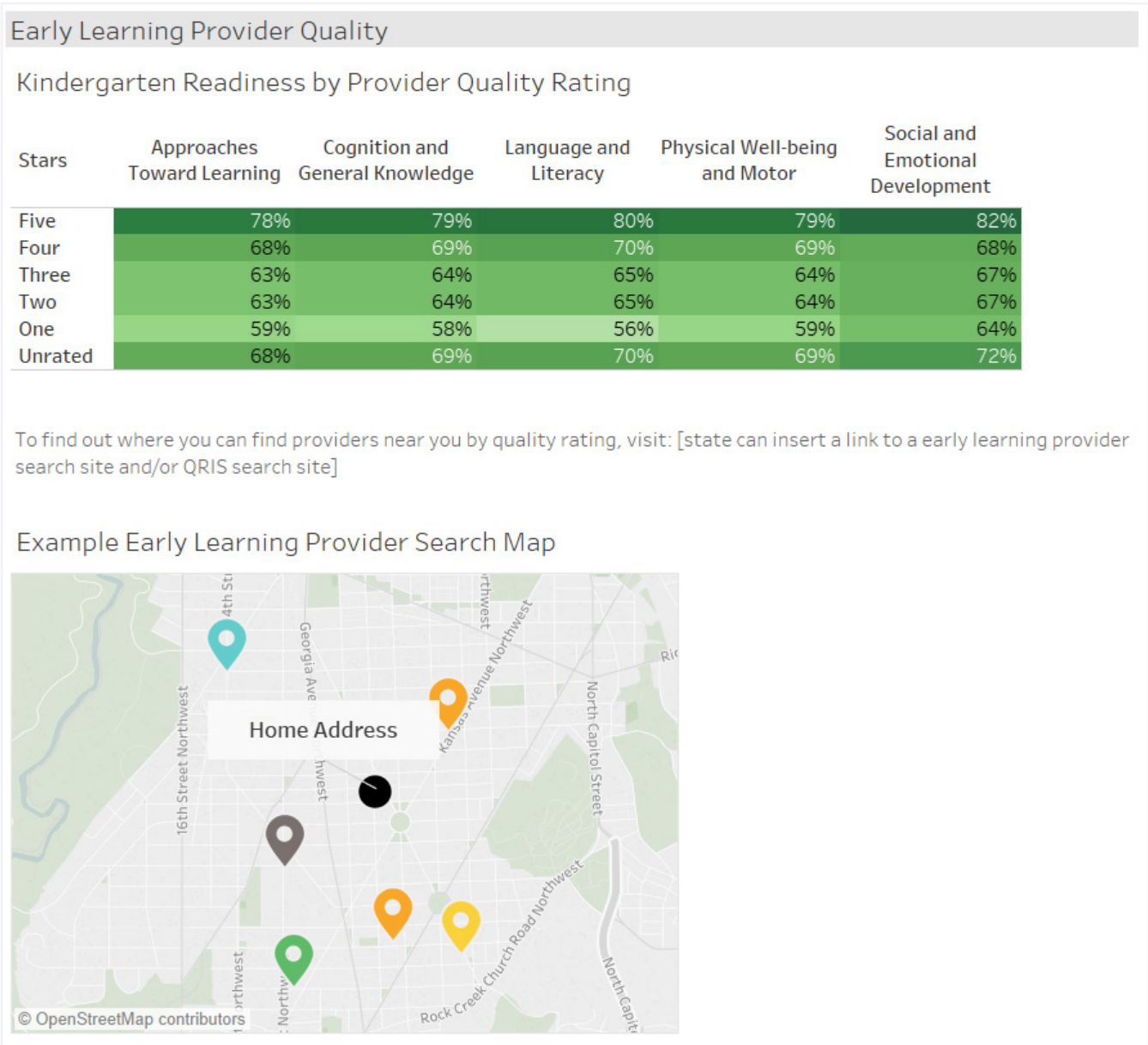


Figure 3. Families can use tables of student readiness scores for child care providers with different quality ratings to compare and select providers for their students. A map allows users to search for providers in their communities and view their quality ratings.

Data Visualizations

Key takeaways

After analyzing provider quality and student readiness data, families might reach the following conclusions:

- Providers with five-star ratings have the highest percentage of ready students across all domains.
- Providers with two- and three-star ratings have similar percentages of ready students across all domains.
- Providers with four-star ratings having similar percentages of ready students to unrated providers in all domains except “Social and Emotional Development.”

Actions

Families can use this information to educate themselves about what provider quality ratings mean in terms of preparing children for school. They might make decisions about where to send their children based on the provider quality ratings.

A family whose child has specific needs within a particular domain, such as “Social and Emotional Development,” might see that the difference between provider quality ratings is smaller in their region in this domain. If they have other reasons for preferring a provider with a slightly lower rating, such as the provider being closer to their home, they might use this information to inform their choice.

Use Case 4: Developing Strategic Partnerships to Support Students and Families

Analysis goal

Examine the landscape of prekindergarten experiences of children entering kindergarten and the potential for strategic school- and community-level partnerships.

Analysis questions

1. What early childhood education experiences did students have prior to entering kindergarten?
 - a. What are the percentages of incoming students from each early childhood provider?
 - b. What is the percentage of students who did not participate in any early childhood programs or services?
2. What impact do specific early childhood providers appear to have on the readiness of students by cohort?
 - a. What are the percentages of ready students within each cohort and from each provider?
3. Are there strategic partnerships that can be formed or strengthened to better prepare for student needs?
 - a. How much overlap exists between early childhood education providers and school districts in percentages of student they serve?
 - b. Which early childhood education providers and school districts use common assessment instruments and curricula?

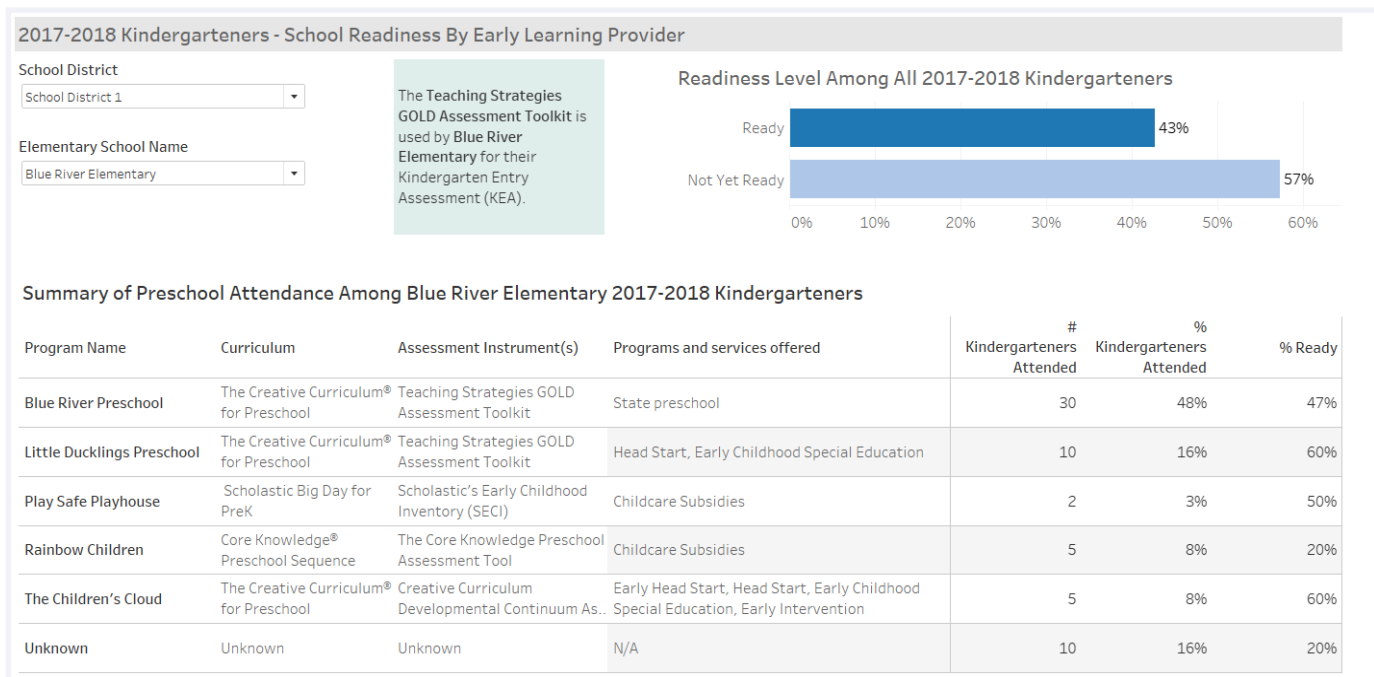


Figure 4. Ready-schools data visualizations in a school readiness report might include charts and tables showing the types of curricula and assessments used at each early childhood education provider, the programs and services they offer, and the number of students meeting readiness benchmarks.

Key takeaways (ready schools view)

School leaders and families reviewing ready-school data might reach the following conclusions:

- 43 percent of students in the incoming kindergarten cohort at Blue River Elementary are ready for school.
- The highest percentage of students entering Blue River Elementary are coming from Blue River Preschool, followed by Little Ducklings Preschool and students with an unknown preschool experience. The two early childhood education providers use the same assessment and curriculum. The programs and services offered through these providers varied.
- The highest percentages of ready students entering Blue River Elementary are coming from Little Ducklings Preschool and The Children's Cloud.

Data visualizations (ready communities view)

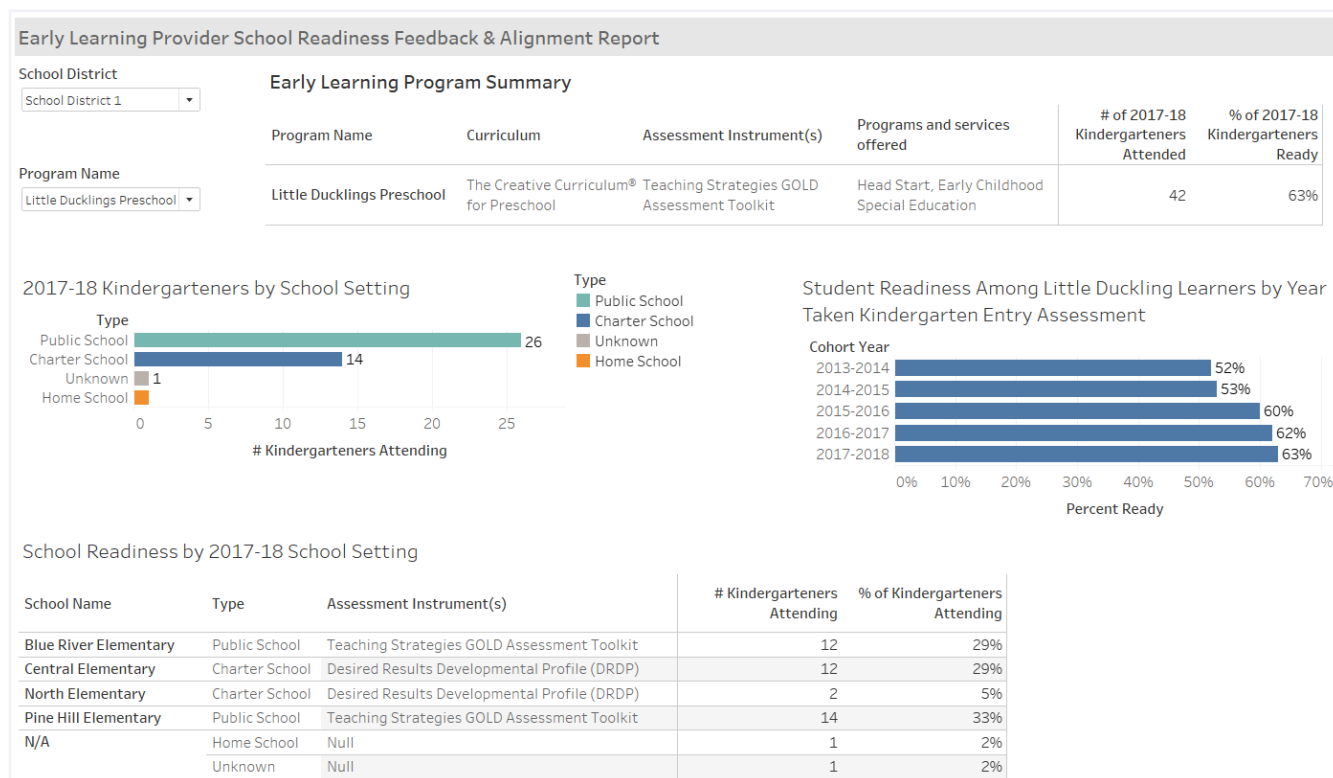


Figure 5. Ready-communities data visualizations might include charts summarizing the types of schools serving young children in an area and students' readiness results at each school.

Key takeaways (ready communities view)

School and community leaders and families reviewing ready-community data might reach the following conclusions:

- Most Little Ducklings Preschool students attend public school for kindergarten. The highest percentages of children go to Pine Hill Elementary, followed by Blue River Elementary and Central Elementary.
- Since 2013-14, the percentage of ready students in each kindergarten cohort has increased. Sixty-three percent of students in the 2017-18 cohort were ready for school.
- Local charter schools are using a different assessment instrument to determine school readiness than Little Ducklings Preschool.

Actions

This information might help school leaders better understand the early learning experiences of their incoming students. They might decide to provide additional support to families whose children did not attend preschool to support their transitions into school.

School and community leaders might identify possible strategic partnerships where there is a high degree of overlap in children attending their programs. For example, if Blue River Elementary and Blue River Preschool do not already have an existing partnership, they might decide to form one given that they share a relatively large percentage of students.

Based on the data presented, school and community leaders also might decide to align assessment instruments and curricula to support the transition between early childhood education and elementary school. They might develop transition opportunities for families whose children are coming from the same early childhood programs, or for those who need additional support.

Early childhood education providers might use these data to monitor trends in the percentages of ready students by cohort. Community and school leaders might work collaboratively to identify practices that promote school readiness both before and after students enter kindergarten.

Taking Action from a School Readiness Report

The use cases above outline some examples of actions that can be taken using school readiness reports. There are many actions and decisions that can be informed by reporting on ready students, ready schools, and ready communities beyond those discussed in this guide. In developing a school readiness report, it is important to consider the actions that audiences need to be able to take based on the data provided. The data visualizations in the report should emphasize key points and allow the audience to make connections easily based on the data presented, which will lead more effectively to action. It might be helpful to start by developing state- or community-specific use cases that identify the target audience, analysis goals and questions, key takeaways to be presented by data visualizations, and potential actions based on the data provided.


Following are examples of other potential actions that audiences might take based on integrated data presented in school readiness reports. The list is not exhaustive.

- Identify needs for teachers, classrooms, and programs
- Improve instruction
- Allocate resources to early childhood programs
- Identify professional development needs
- Identify and share best practices for education staff
- Integrate with kindergarten through third-grade data to identify sustained gains in student performance
- Identify the number of children meeting state goals (e.g., a target percentage of children successful in one or more domains)
- Identify gaps in domains that state efforts could address
- Provide accurate and timely information to legislators for decisionmaking
- Identify early childhood program sites that need additional resources, such as staff training
- Use the report as a tool for public outreach
- Allocate resources based on data
- Identify what practices and services are effective in a more timely manner than waiting for results from a national study
- Inform potential policy changes (e.g., implementation of statewide prekindergarten)
- Continue to focus conversations on kindergarten readiness

Next Steps for School Readiness Reporting

The goal of this School Readiness Reporting Guide is to support states that are developing ready students, schools, and communities to strengthen and operationalize their reporting efforts. It also is intended to help states that are considering or just starting school readiness reporting to broaden their definitions of school readiness. More work is needed on this topic to ensure that all schools and communities are prepared to meet the needs of every child and family.

To help states plan and build school readiness reports, essential data elements have been compiled into a Common Education Data Standards (CEDS) Connection. The Connection, titled *What percentage of children, who received any early childhood program or service birth through age 5, enter kindergarten ready to learn?*, is being revised to cover data elements and analysis recommendations related to expanded definitions of school readiness. More information about the Connection and how states can use it to create their own school readiness reports will be included in future updates to this guide.



Learn more about CEDS
<https://ceds.ed.gov>

School Readiness Reporting Connection
<https://ceds.ed.gov/connectReport.aspx?uid=3094>

ADDITIONAL RESOURCES

A Primer on Distinct Count of Children: SLDS Issue Brief

<https://slds.grads360.org/#communities/pdc/documents/9435>

Community Profiles: Getting Started: SLDS Guide

<https://slds.grads360.org/#communities/pdc/documents/15108>

Identifying SLDS Users and Their Information Needs: SLDS Issue Brief

<https://slds.grads360.org/#communities/pdc/documents/2753>

QRIS and ECIDS: SLDS Webinar

<https://slds.grads360.org/#communities/pdc/documents/6541>

Unique Identifiers: Beyond K12: SLDS Issue Brief

<https://slds.grads360.org/#communities/pdc/documents/4564>

What Is an Early Childhood Integrated Data System? SLDS Issue Brief

<https://slds.grads360.org/#communities/pdc/documents/4441>

State School Readiness Reports and Data Tools

Georgia Kindergarten Inventory of Developing Skills (GKIDS) Readiness Check

<http://gkidsreadinesscheck.gadoe.org/>

Texas P-16 Public Education Information Resource (TPEIR) Kindergarten Programs & Readiness Reports

<http://www.texaseducationinfo.org/Home/Topic/Kindergarten%20Programs%20and%20Readiness?br=PK-12>

Washington Education Research & Data Center Early Learning Feedback Report

<http://www.erd.c.wa.gov/data-dashboards/early-learning-feedback-report-0#tableau1>

Washington Kindergarten Inventory of Development Skills (WaKIDS) Fall 2016 Data Summary

<http://www.k12.wa.us/WaKIDS/Data/WaKIDS2016FallDataSummary.pdf>

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