



Karen B. Salmon, Ph.D.
State Superintendent of Schools

TO: Members of the State Board of Education

FROM: Karen B. Salmon, Ph.D.

DATE: August 25, 2020

SUBJECT: Request for Waiver of the Requirement for the Administration of the Kindergarten Readiness Assessment

PURPOSE:

To review the request for a waiver for the 2020-2021 school year to administer the Kindergarten Readiness Assessment (KRA) as required by COMAR 13A.08.01.02-3 *Kindergarten Readiness Assessment*.

BACKGROUND/HISTORICAL PERSPECTIVE:

The Maryland Together: Maryland's Recovery Plan for Education was developed to plan for the reopening of schools, with an understanding that the health, safety, and wellness of students, families, educators, and staff must be a priority. All local school systems have created their local Recovery Plans and have posted their plans on their website. All local school systems have announced that they are opening virtually for the start of the 2020-2021 school year. Ten of the 24 local school systems have announced that they will be virtual for the first semester (end of January 2021). The remaining 14 local school systems are opening virtually with plans with various timelines to move to a hybrid model as the year progresses most specifically for small groups of at-risk students.

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY:

The Kindergarten Readiness Assessment (KRA) is a developmentally appropriate assessment tool administered to incoming public-school kindergarteners that relies on a set of 50 selected response items, performance tasks, and observations of children's work and play to measure specific skills and behaviors across four learning domains: Language and Literacy, Mathematics, Social Foundations, and Physical Well-Being and Motor Development. Administered by kindergarten teachers at the start of the school year, the KRA looks at the Prekindergarten knowledge, skills, and behaviors necessary to be successful in starting kindergarten.

At the May 27, 2020, State Board Meeting, the State Board granted an extension to November 1 for the administration of the KRA with the expectation that schools would have been able to open with a face-to-face model.

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Due to all school systems beginning with a virtual program and given that Maryland remains in Stage 2 based on the Governor's Executive Order, the Maryland State Department of Education, on behalf of the 24 local school superintendents, requests a waiver of the administration of the KRA for the 2020-2021 school year. It is not possible to administer the entire KRA virtually and to screen for all of the KRA skills, knowledge, and behaviors before the November 1 end of the administration window.

ACTION:

Request approval of the waiver of the administration of the KRA for the 2020-2021 school year.

ATTACHMENT:

COMAR 13A.08.01.02-3 *Kindergarten Readiness Assessment*

COMAR 13A.08.01.02-3 Kindergarten Readiness Assessment

A. Definitions.

(1) For the purpose of this regulation, the following terms have the meanings indicated.

(2) Terms Defined.

(a) "Department-approved kindergarten readiness assessment" means the kindergarten readiness assessment developed and approved by the Department for the purpose of measuring school readiness.

(b) "Representative sample" means a sample of sufficient size to produce valid and reliable assessment information on all and major subgroups of students in the local school systems as of the first day of school and as identified by the Department.

B. Representative Sample Assessment Process.

(1) Each school year, each local school system shall complete the administration of the Department-approved kindergarten readiness assessment to the representative sample in the following areas:

(a) Social development;

(b) Language and literacy skills;

(c) Academic knowledge in mathematics, science, and social studies; and

(d) Physical development.

(2) The Department shall provide each local school system with the representative sample identified for the local school system by the Department for assessment.

(3) The Department shall report the results of the representative sample assessment to local school systems in a format developed by the Department.

C. Full-Census Assessment Process.

(1) A local county board of education or a principal and a teacher who are in mutual agreement may decide to assess all students entering kindergarten in a school year using the Department-approved kindergarten readiness assessment.

(2) The superintendent of a local school system shall notify the Department that:

(a) The local county board of education has decided to conduct a full census assessment of all students in all kindergarten classes; or

(b) A principal and teacher in a school in the local school system have agreed to conduct a full census assessment of all students in that teacher's kindergarten class.

(3) A teacher who is administering a full census assessment shall complete the assessment on or before October 1 of the school year.

(4) The Department shall return to the local school system the aggregate results of the full census assessment within 45 days after the administration of the assessment.

D. Publication of Results of Assessments. The Department shall publish and disseminate to local school systems the aggregated assessment information no later than November 15 of each year.