



KENTUCKY DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION

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READINESS RESULTS HIGHLIGHT NEED FOR QUALITY EARLY LEARNING

(FRANKFORT, Ky.) – Many Kentucky students are at a disadvantage for learning before they even start school, according to Kindergarten Readiness Screener data released by the Kentucky Department of Education.

Slightly more than half of the students entering kindergarten in 2017-18 were considered ready, the Kentucky Board of Education learned at its meeting in Frankfort today. School readiness is defined in [704 KAR 5:070](#) as “a student entering school ready to engage in and benefit from early learning experiences that best promote the student’s success.”

“This data is so important for our schools and teachers,” Commissioner of Education Stephen Pruitt said. “The screener is not a test and students aren’t required to make a certain score to begin kindergarten. Rather, the screener is an evaluation that provides educators information on where a student is starting, and how the school can support the student and meet his or her individual needs as we work together to close the achievement gap by 50 percent in the next 13 years.”

The results showed a modest increase in school readiness among many groups, including low-income, African American and Hispanic students, students with limited English proficiency and students with disabilities.

Kindergarten Readiness by Group

Group	Number Tested				Kindergarten Ready Percentage			
	2014-15	2015-16	2016-17	2017-18	2014-15	2015-16	2016-17	2017-18
All Students	49,089	46,789	46,582	41,987	50.0	50.1	50.1	51.4
Male	25,130	24,065	23,856	21,731	44.6	45.2	45.5	47.2
Female	23,959	22,724	22,726	20,256	55.6	55.2	55.0	55.8
White (Non-Hispanic)	37,389	35,538	35,170	31,910	52.1	52.7	52.3	53.4
African American	5,158	4,818	4,855	4,047	46.3	44.5	46.9	47.9
Hispanic	3,486	3,362	3,389	2,949	28.7	27.7	28.6	31.2
Asian	737	804	835	845	64.2	59.1	63.4	65.4
American Indian/Alaska Native	55	55	72	47	45.5	50.9	52.8	42.6
Native Hawaiian/Pacific Islander	51	61	58	60	49.0	31.1	48.3	45
Two or more races	2,210	2,150	2,203	2,129	51.0	50.9	50.5	49.8
Limited English Proficiency	2,886	2,788	2,951	2,571	28.7	26.0	26.9	30.1
Free/Reduced-Price	31,600	29,840	29,805	25,455	39.4	39.7	39.8	41.3
Students with Disabilities	7,034	6,076	5,542	5,359	27.6	31.1	29.7	32.1

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Studies show that children who attend high quality early learning environments have better math, language and social skills. Additionally, they are less likely to be retained in a grade, have a lower likelihood of being chronically absent in their primary and secondary school years, and they are more likely to graduate from high school.

Kentucky is focused on improving the quality of early care and education programs and increasing educational outcomes and success for all preschoolers. One way it is doing that is through the [Kentucky All STARS](#) program, a five-star quality rating and improvement system that serves all early care and education programs that receive public funding, including child care centers, Head Start and public preschool. Kentucky All STARS is based on Kentucky's Early Childhood Standards and research-based indicators of quality, and recognizes programs that have made a commitment to continuous quality improvement.

This is the fifth year that the Kentucky Readiness Screener has been given statewide to all incoming kindergarten students.

Teachers administered the BRIGANCE K Screener to 41,987 students in all 173 school districts at the beginning of the 2017-18 school year. The number of students screened this year is smaller than previous years due to the state changing the cutoff date for kindergarten enrollment from Oct. 1 to Aug. 1.

Students are asked their name and age, to stand on one foot for ten seconds, to recite the alphabet and count to 30, among other tasks.

The screener provides a snapshot of student readiness in the following domains: academic/cognitive, language development and physical development. Performing at a certain level is not a requirement to enter kindergarten.

As part of the screener, parents also fill out a survey on their child's ability to help him or herself and social-emotional development, though this information is not factored into readiness scores. Results for social-emotional development are reported separately.

Parents also are asked to fill out a survey about what type of setting the child was in the year before kindergarten.

The questionnaire does not distinguish whether the program was a half-day or full-day program, or the duration a child spent in a particular setting. Students can be included in multiple prior settings.

The settings include:

- State-Funded Preschool – State-funded preschool serves 3- and 4-year-old children. Three-year-old children qualify based on developmental delay; 4-year-old children qualify based on developmental delay or family income.
- Head Start – Federally-funded program serving 3- and 4-year-old children. Children qualify based on developmental delay and family income.
- Child care – Privately owned, licensed child care facilities and certified homes; usually private pay and subsidized.
- Home – Home with parent or guardian.

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- Other – Non-licensed child care facilities, baby sitters, kin care.
- Unknown – No data gathered from families.

The results did show consistent growth for students enrolled in state-funded preschool programs.

Kindergarten Readiness by Prior Setting

Prior Setting	Number Tested				Kindergarten Ready Percentage			
	2014-15	2015-16	2016-17	2017-18	2014-15	2015-16	2016-17	2017-18
State Funded Preschool	17,396	16,559	16,339	14,791	47.4	48.1	49.5	50.3
Head Start	6,615	6,603	6,942	6,041	44.5	45.8	48.0	47.0
Child Care	10,652	10,673	10,994	9,427	69.9	70.1	69.7	69.9
Home	13,629	12,618	13,568	11,175	37.9	36.2	36.1	37.8
Other	5,596	5,190	4,915	4,509	61.3	61.2	62.0	63.4
Unknown	2,171	1,947	2,039	2,917	41.0	41.1	39.9	48.3

Resources to support quality learning experiences are available for parents and for early care and education providers on the [Kentucky Department of Education](#) and the [Governor’s Office for Early Childhood](#).

To learn more about kindergarten readiness or to review an [early childhood data profile](#) in your area, visit the [Governor’s Office for Early Childhood](#) website

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