

# Kindergarten Entry Assessment Case Studies

## PreK Director Interview Protocol

### Introduction and Purpose of Interview

Thank you for your willingness to participate in this interview. We are talking with state and district administrators, principals, kindergarten teachers, preschool administrators, and professional development staff in your state about the Kindergarten Entry Assessment, including the development and implementation of the assessment and how the data are used. We'd like to learn what is working well in addition to the challenges and how people are overcoming them. We believe information about your experiences will be valuable for other states and districts interested in implementing KEAs. Your experience also can help inform federal policy and help the U.S. Department of Education build technical assistance that is useful for all states tackling this important effort. A public report will be available at the end of the study to promote sharing of lessons learned but it will not identify any individual districts, schools, or people.

This interview will take approximately 45 minutes. We might ask questions that do not apply to your state, district, or schools. If so, please just let us know that this is the case.

### Consent Process

*Have each respondent read and sign the consent form. Ask permission to audio-record the conversation.*

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**We understand that your state has [selected or modified XX measure or developed its own measure XX] as your kindergarten entry assessment. First, we want to learn a few details about [local KEA name] itself and the nuts and bolts of administering it.**

1. When did you first learn about [local KEA name]?
2. What did the state, district, or local schools communicate to you, the PreK Director, about the purpose of the [local KEA name] and what it is trying to assess? Who provided that information?
3. What information did the PreK teachers in your program receive about the purpose of the [local KEA name] and what it is trying to assess?
  - a. How was the information presented (e.g., in meetings, written reports)?
- ★ Could you provide me with a sample of the information provided?
4. How does the [local KEA name] measure relate to the goals and focus of your PreK program?
5. Do PreK program administrators receive the results of [local KEA name]? If yes, what information do you receive?
  - ★ Could you provide me with a sample report of the results?

6. Please describe any training, supports, or resources you received to help you interpret and use [local KEA name] results.
  - a. Which training, supports, or resources were most useful?
  - b. What other training, supports, or resources would have been useful?
7. Describe how you or your PreK program have used or plan to use the results.

*After getting a description, probe:* Do you use results to:

- Identify specific skills where students need improvement to inform teaching of individual students or groups of students or curriculum planning? If so, how?
- Engage families in knowing children's strengths and needs and ways to support learning at home? If so, how?
- Promote dialogue between early childhood and elementary educators about ways to increase children's readiness (e.g., align expectations and/or instruction)? If so, how?
- Help teachers understand where children should be on a comprehensive set of domains and how to assess children's progress? If so, how?

Make decisions about [district-wide or program level]:

- Budget allocations or targeting of investments? If so, how?
- Curriculum? If so, how?
- Professional development for PreK or K-12 teachers? If so, how?
- Early childhood policies and practices? If so, how?
- K-12 policies and practices? (e.g., District-wide planning for Kindergarten) If so, how?
- Other (specify): \_\_\_\_\_

Please give me some specific examples of how you have used the results.

- a. After thinking about how you use the data, what information from the [local KEA name] do you think is most useful?
  - b. What other information would have been useful?
8. Are results discussed among staff in your PreK program or between your PreK program staff and local elementary schools? If yes,
    - a. If results were discussed across teachers in your PreK program, please describe the discussion, including what topics were discussed. Did you find these discussions helpful in using the data to [refer to uses of the kindergarten entry assessment that respondent noted in previous question]?
    - b. If PreK staff from your program discussed the results with kindergarten teachers, please tell me with which elementary schools and about the discussion, including what issues were discussed and the duration of the discussion.
      - i. Is talking with elementary school staff and kindergarten teachers about school readiness skills a new development?
      - ii. Did you find these discussions helpful in using the data to [refer to uses of the kindergarten entry assessment that respondent noted in previous question]?

- c. If no, are there any plans to discuss the *[local KEA name]* results within your program or with local elementary schools? If so, please describe those plans.
9. Do you administer assessments in PreK? If yes,
- Tell me about the assessments your program staff administer.
    - What kind of data do they provide?
    - How, if at all, do you use that data to inform instruction?
  - How do you communicate about results with kindergarten teachers?
  - How do *[local KEA name]* and the existing PreK assessments work together?
10. What have been the most important *factors in supporting* the use of *[local KEA name]* results to improve students' educational experience in associated PreK programs?
11. What have been the biggest *challenges for PreK programs regarding using results from the [local KEA name]*?
- Lack of training, If so, how?
  - Reports hard to interpret, If so, how?
  - Lack of alignment with standards, If so, how?
  - Timing of when results are shared, If so, how?
  - Lack of perceived reliability, If so, how?
  - Lack of buy-in, If so how?
  - No information is shared with PreK programs
  - Other (specify): \_\_\_\_\_
- a. What solutions have you identified for addressing those challenges?

**This is our final set of questions! In closing, we'd like you to reflect on any lessons learned about the adoption, implementation, and use of results from *[local KEA name]*.**

12. Looking back over the *[local KEA name]* implementation, how well do you think it has gone? Has the *[local KEA name]* served the purposes it was intended to serve? [Probe: *refer back to the general purpose they say has been communicated.*]
- What concerns did you have going into implementation? Do these concerns still remain now that the *[local KEA name]* implementation has begun? Do you have new concerns about the *[local KEA name]*?
  - What parts of implementation have gone especially well?
  - How could implementation be improved?
13. Are there lessons learned or recommendations you can share with other states, districts, elementary schools, and PreK programs about kindergarten entry assessment selection, implementation, and use of kindergarten entry assessment results to inform policy and practice?

**Thank you for your time and thoughtful responses.**