



# An Authentic Assessment for Des Moines School District Use

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# Kindergarten Readiness Definition

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- What Children Know and Can Do at Time of Kindergarten Entry Across Five Domains:
  - Physical health and motor development
  - Approaches to learning
  - Social and emotional development
  - Language and literacy
  - General cognition

*1<sup>st</sup> National Educational Goal Expert Panel*



# Valid (and Different) Uses of Student Assessments

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- Tracking progress of cohort of students over time
- Tracking progress of individual students over time
- Comparing different groups of students
- Identifying individual student needs or strengths for special attention
- Informing parents of student achievement and areas for attention
- NOT FOR – high stakes testing, holding students back



# Current DMPS Needs for General Assessment Information on all Children

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- Student progress in preschool and readiness for kindergarten
- Status of children at kindergarten entry
- Growth and development of children during kindergarten



# Conditions Assessment Should Meet

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- Consistent with Iowa Early Learning Standards
- Consistent with learning goals (& curricula) in preschool/kindergarten
- Helpful to parents
- Meeting reporting needs (progress reports, infinite campus, state kindergarten readiness)
- Teacher friendly
  - Clear and straightforward to administer accurately
  - Not duplicative, but meeting other reporting needs
  - Seen as helpful
- Inexpensive



# Assessment Options

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- Authentic assessment (teacher observation//work sampling)
- Standardized assessment (child response to battery of questions//literacy, numeracy, cognition)
- Parental reporting (parent reports on health, development)
  
- Not mutually exclusive – have different strengths



# Goals for Authentic Assessment

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- Covers all five domains
- Measures progress over (pre-school and kindergarten) year and gives indication of readiness at kindergarten entry
- Is manageable (25 or so items) and scalable (0-3)
- Makes sense to teachers
- Provides guidance to parents



# Individual Assessment Items

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- Short statement to parents of skill
- Longer description of skill
- Description of how to assess skill on a continuum
  - 1-Beginning
  - 2-Developing
  - 3-Mastering
  - [0-Yet to Begin]
- Information to help parents



# Language and Literacy Skills

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- Speaks and conveys ideas
- Follows, retells stories
- Enjoys and handles books
- Recognizes name in print
- Scribbles/writes to express
- Knows sounds/parts of words
- Recognizes alphabet
- Shows reading readiness

# Speaks to convey ideas -- Excerpt

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- **Description:** "Learning to listen, understand, and speak is fundamental to all learning. ..."
- **Beginning:** Child shows comprehension of simple concepts and speaks to express what child wants and needs. Much is in single words and phrases..."
- **Developing:** Child often uses sentences to convey meaning and tries to put together longer sentences to provide multiple meaning.
- **Mastering:** Child engages in conversations that include abstract concepts and complex sentences. Child puts together two or more concepts in expressing self.
- **What Parents Can Do:** Parents can help children express themselves by asking questions about what the child has heard and showing an interest in responses. This dialogue is best in the language the parent feels most comfortable with.



# Approaches to Learning

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- Understands/follows instructions
- Tries new activities/invents
- Engages and persists in tasks



# Social and Emotional Development

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- Expresses needs and wants
- Shares and plays with others
- Follows classroom rules/routines
- Shows caring and concern
- Develops personal relationships



# Physical Development and Self-Care

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- Moves with balance and control
- Uses scissors and tools
- Cares for self, health practices
- Cares for self, objects and clothes



# Skills and Knowledge

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- Knows colors, shapes, and parts of body
- Counts and compares, sorts objects
- Contributes in music, art, and drama
- Identifies similarities and differences in the world
- Knows self in context of family, community



# Possible Next DMPS Steps

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- Further discussion and modification for initial application – DMPS Group
- Vetting with select preschool and kindergarten teachers and any further revision
- Initial testing with one or two classrooms
- Review of results and revision



# Possible Next Iowa Steps

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- State review group on kindergarten assessment – Department of Education and Early Childhood Iowa Stakeholders Alliance
- State – DMPS discussion on relevance to Statewide Longitudinal Data System
- Presentation to select state legislators and legislative staff