



The GKIDS Readiness Check Frequently Asked Questions (FAQ) System and School Leaders

The Georgia Department of Education (GaDOE), in partnership with the Georgia Department of Early Care and Learning (DECAL), is pleased to announce the operational launch of the GKIDS Readiness Check.

The GKIDS Readiness Check is a new component of the Georgia Kindergarten Inventory of Developing Skills (GKIDS) and is designed to provide teachers with important information about children’s learning and development as they enter kindergarten. As part of GKIDS, the GKIDS Readiness Check offers an early assessment window to support teachers in designing individualized instruction. The GKIDS Readiness Check is designed to be developmentally appropriate and will be used primarily for planning and instructional purposes.

The following are some key questions about the GKIDS Readiness Check.

General Questions

1. **What is the GKIDS Readiness Check?**

The GKIDS Readiness Check is a new component of the Georgia Kindergarten Inventory of Developing Skills (GKIDS). It consists of twenty assessment activities that represent three essential domains of learning: Foundations of School Success, English Language Arts, and Mathematics. Teachers use a variety of methods such as direct tasks, observations, and checklists to measure student performance on each of the twenty activities.

2. **How was the GKIDS Readiness Check developed?**

The GKIDS Readiness Check was developed by the Georgia Department of Education (GaDOE) in collaboration with the Georgia Department of Early Care and Learning (DECAL). The GKIDS Readiness Check was developed with input from Georgia educators and reflects recommendations throughout the development process.

3. **Who participates in the GKIDS Readiness Check?**

The GKIDS Readiness Check is designed to provide baseline information for *all* students as they enter kindergarten. Because teachers have the freedom to assess according to the individual needs of each student, standard accommodations are allowed if the accommodations are a part of the students’ IEP, IAP, or EL/TPC plan.

Late enrollees or students who transfer during the GKIDS Readiness Check assessment window may be assessed. There is no minimum number of days enrolled to be assessed during the assessment window. Teachers may administer some, if not all, of the activities to these students. We encourage districts to make assessment decisions based on what is appropriate for their instructional program to guide and benefit teaching and learning.

4. How is the GKIDS Readiness Check part of the GKIDS?

The GKIDS is designed to be used throughout the kindergarten year, whereas the GKIDS Readiness Check is specifically designed for administration during the first six weeks of instruction.

5. What does the GKIDS Readiness Check measure?

The GKIDS Readiness Check measures children’s growth and development around three essential domains of learning: Foundations of School Success, English Language Arts, and Mathematics. There are twenty activities on the GKIDS Readiness Check aligned to skills and concepts determined most essential for kindergarten readiness by Georgia educators.

6. How should the GKIDS Readiness Check be used?

The GKIDS Readiness Check should be used formatively by teachers to individualize instruction and by school leaders for planning purposes. Results from the GKIDS Readiness Check can also be used to communicate with families regarding their child’s knowledge and skills at kindergarten entry. As children progress, the GKIDS Readiness Check can be helpful in demonstrating children’s growth and development.

7. How should the GKIDS Readiness Check NOT be used?

The GKIDS Readiness Check will not be used to assign a “readiness” score to a child. The activities are not designed to be summed or compiled into one score. The GKIDS Readiness Check is not to be used to prevent children’s entry to kindergarten; all children are ready for kindergarten. In addition, the Readiness Check will NOT be used for accountability or high-stakes purposes (e.g., to evaluate teachers or Pre-K programs).

Questions before Administration

8. When is the GKIDS Readiness Check administered?

Teachers administer the GKIDS Readiness Check during the first six weeks of kindergarten. It is not necessary to administer the items all at one time. Some of the GKIDS Readiness Check activities can be directly assessed and some may require repeated observations over time.

Each administration window is unique to a district and is based on the district’s start date. The administration window closes 6 weeks from the first day of school (30 school days). These dates are automatically calculated and will be communicated by July 1.

9. How are logins and passwords for the GKIDS website assigned to system and school test coordinators?

All system coordinator, school coordinator, and teacher information, including logins and passwords, in the GKIDS website for the 2016-17 school year will remain intact unless requested otherwise by systems.

- School coordinators should assign login names and passwords to new teachers at the beginning of the school year.
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- Step-by-step guidance, including screenshots, is included in the GKIDS Administration Manual.
- If you are a new system test coordinator or, if as a coordinator, you have transitioned to a new system or role, please contact the Georgia Center for Assessment regarding your login credentials.

10. Who may administer the GKIDS Readiness Check?

Certified teachers and paraprofessionals who hold licensure in the state of Georgia are eligible to administer the GKIDS Readiness Check. In addition to holding certification in the state of Georgia, anyone administering the GKIDS Readiness Check must complete all training required by the Georgia Department of Education and local districts prior to the first day of school/the beginning of the administration window.

11. How will teachers be trained to administer the GKIDS Readiness Check?

Training for the administration of the GKIDS Readiness Check will be facilitated via online webinars and training modules. The training webinars will be offered May – July, 2017, and all webinars will be recorded and available for viewing after the live session. Teachers will need to attend/view one training webinar. The training modules are available in the Statewide Longitudinal Data System (SLDS), beginning in May. Training for the GKIDS Readiness Check should occur prior to the first day of school for all educators who will administer any of the activities. Certified teachers or paraprofessionals who will administer the GKIDS Readiness Check **must** complete training, including Module 4 with the quiz component, prior to the administration window. There is no minimal score needed on the quiz found in Module 4. This quiz is provided as an opportunity for teachers to receive feedback as they rate student performance in the samples provided in Module 4. Teachers may view this module and take the quiz as needed to feel confident in the administration of the GKIDS Readiness Check.

Module 4 should be viewed individually. Modules 1-3 as well as Modules 5 and 6 may be viewed as a group or individually by teachers. Districts should determine how to monitor and document training. Districts or schools may choose to require teachers to provide printed copies of the completion certificates provided upon completion of the online training modules. These copies may be kept as documentation in the school testing log.

12. Do teachers who participated in the inaugural launch in fall 2016 need to complete the modules again?

Yes, the GaDOE will facilitate training directly to kindergarten teachers via online training webinars and modules, rather than the train-the-trainer model used for the inaugural launch in fall 2016. The six training modules have been updated and revised based on teacher feedback. Additionally, a new module and next steps resource have been created, centered on using the GKIDS Readiness Check to inform instruction.

13. How will students be added to the GKIDS platform for the GKIDS Readiness Check?

Districts should decide whether teachers will manually add students at the beginning of the year or, if at the system level, a roster of kindergarten students will be uploaded to the GKIDS platform.

The roster upload is a new feature of the GKIDS platform for the 2017-18 school year. This roster upload functionality eliminates the need for the pre-ID cycle and the associated “downtime” when the GKIDS platform is unavailable.

More information about the creation of class rosters, teacher accounts and the GKIDS platform will be provided in the GaDOE webinars in the spring and early summer of 2017 as well as in the GKIDS Readiness Check Administration Manual and Training Module 5.

14. Are there resources to help prepare for administration?

The GKIDS Readiness Check resources can be accessed through the GaDOE website GKIDS Readiness Check landing page (beginning in May) and the GKIDS platform (beginning in mid-July). Resources include documents such as the GKIDS Readiness Check Administration Manual, Optional Resources (e.g., checklists which may be used to collect data, a materials list for planning, etc.), Reminders and Considerations, and Next Steps Guide for instructional planning.

<http://www.gadoe.org/Curriculum-Instruction-and-Assessment/Assessment/Pages/Readiness.aspx>

Questions during Administration

15. Is the GKIDS Readiness Check appropriate for children who are dual language learners and students with disabilities?

As with all other state assessments, the GKIDS Readiness Check is administered in English. Additionally, the GKIDS Readiness Check is appropriate for all kindergarten children, including students with disabilities and students who are English Learners (EL).

Because teachers have the flexibility to assess according to the individual needs of each student, standard accommodations are allowed if the accommodations are a part of the student's IEP, IAP, or EL/TPC plan.

16. What is the role of district and school leaders during the administration of the GKIDS Readiness Check?

District and school leaders should support and monitor the administration of the GKIDS Readiness Check by providing access to associate resources as well as answering questions that may arise. In addition, leaders may answer questions related to the GKIDS website, data collection and use to support instructional decisions in the classroom.

Questions after Administration

17. What type of reports will be available?

Newly designed report templates will be available for the GKIDS Readiness Check. Reports will be available at the student, class, school and system level by activity. The newly designed student-level report provides a parent-friendly description of the GKIDS Readiness Check as well. As with the GKIDS, teachers will be able to generate reports within the GKIDS platform which can be printed and shared with parents or used for planning purposes.

18. When will summary reports be available?

Summary reports can be generated as soon as the assessment window ends.

19. How will the information be communicated to families?

Teachers may use information from the GKIDS Readiness Check in their on-going communication with families. The data can be used to inform progress reports, conferences, and other assessments. As mentioned, a newly designed, parent friendly student report by activity will be available for fall 2017.

Additionally, the GaDOE is developing a parent resource website which will provide additional support for parents by providing information about young learners and ways parents can help their child at home.

<http://www.gadoe.org/Curriculum-Instruction-and-Assessment/Assessment/Pages/GKIDSReadinessCheck.aspx>

<http://GKIDSReadinessCheck.gadoe.org>

20. How will GaDOE use the GKIDS Readiness Check data?

The GaDOE will use state-level GKIDS Readiness Check data to better understand children’s growth and development as they enter kindergarten. The data will help the GaDOE and other partners such as the Department of Early and Care and Learning (DECAL) develop additional resources to support early childhood education in Georgia.

Other Questions

21. Who can I contact for more information?

Questions about the GKIDS Readiness Check should be directed to the GaDOE: Dr. Ashley Hope, Assessment Specialist, at ahope@doe.k12.ga.us or (404) 657-0312 or Dr. Jan Reyes, Test Development Program Manager, at jreyes@doe.k12.ga.us or (404) 463-6665.

Questions about the GKIDS platform should be directed to GCA: Kay Elder, Assistant Director, at kselder@uga.edu or (888) 392-8977.

Questions about the SLDS should be directed to the GaDOE technology department: Angie Baker, at abaker@doe.k12.ga.us or (404) 656-2135.