



SC EDUCATION OVERSIGHT COMMITTEE

Reporting facts. Measuring change. Promoting progress.

Results of the Modified 2020-21 Kindergarten Readiness Assessment (KRA)



Background

Section 59-152-33 of the South Carolina Code of Laws requires the adoption and administration of a school readiness assessment by the State Board of Education. The results may not be used to deny a student admission or progress to kindergarten or first grade but instead should demonstrate progress toward improving school readiness.

In 2014, the Kindergarten Readiness Assessment (KRA) was selected as the readiness assessment for use by the state of South Carolina, and it has been used since. Proviso 1A.58 of the 2019-20 General Appropriation Act directs the South Carolina Department of Education to expend up to \$2.0 million in Education Improvement Act (EIA) funds to administer the Kindergarten Readiness Assessment (KRA) to “each child entering kinder-

garten in the public schools. The assessment of kindergarten students must be administered at a minimum of once during the first forty-five days of the school year with the results collected by the department.”

Act 135, signed by the Governor on May 18, 2020, continued normal operations of State government following interruptions related to the COVID-19 pandemic, thus requiring the continued administration of the KRA.

Due to conditions related to the COVID-19 pandemic, the full version of the KRA developed for South Carolina was not administered in 2020. Instead, a shortened KRA was used at the beginning of the 2020-21 school year, referred to in this report as the Modified KRA.



The complete report is available on the EOC’s website at:
<https://tinyurl.com/ttnc5vuu>

What is the Modified KRA?

The KRA used by South Carolina public schools in fall 2020 was modified for use during COVID-19 pandemic conditions. Only 33 of the 50 items on the full KRA assessment were used. The omitted 17 items required observation of students interacting with others, activities limited by pandemic health measures of social distancing and mask-wearing.

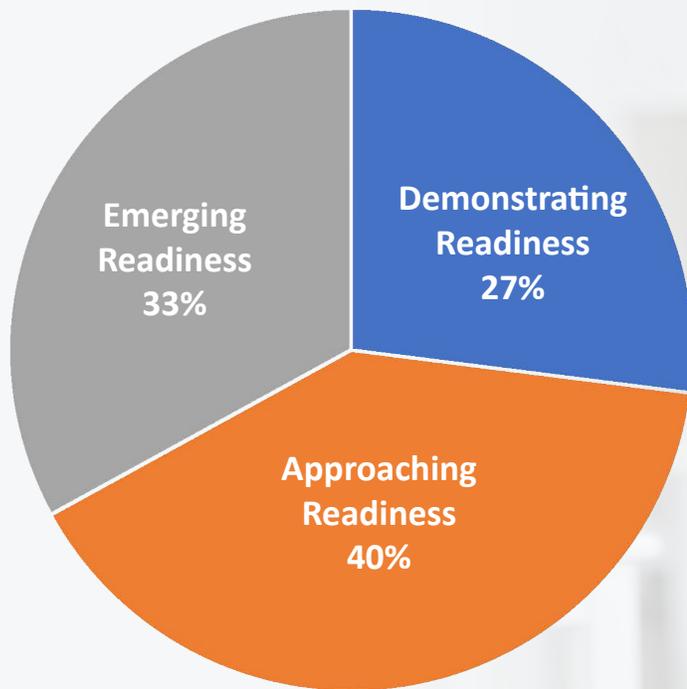
This Modified KRA version omitted two items from the Language and Literacy domain and three items from the Physical Well-Being and Motor Development domain; all 12 items from the Social Foundations do-

main were eliminated. The reduction of items prevented generation of scores for the Physical Well-Being and Motor Development and the Social Foundations domains. All available information obtained contributed to the calculation of the Modified KRA Overall readiness score and readiness classification level.

The KRA publisher, WestEd, recommends that only the KRA Overall score be reported for the 2020 administration of the modified form, due to the changes made to the domains. Additionally, they suggest caution in interpretation of the Modified KRA Overall score.

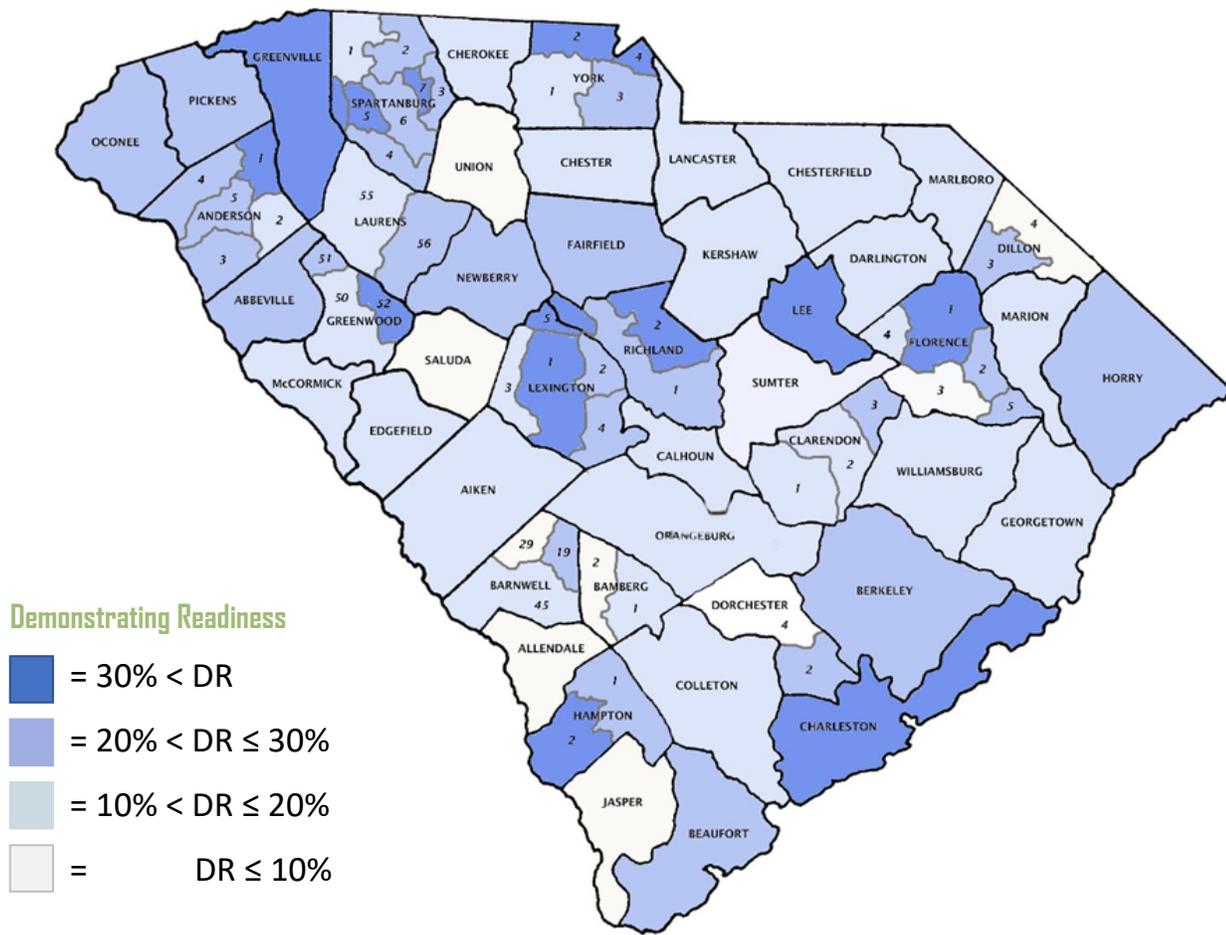
2020-21 Modified KRA Results in South Carolina

The Modified KRA was administered to 48,521 kindergartners in public schools in South Carolina.



The KRA is not designed to rank children by ability, nor is it used for identifying gifted or students with exceptional needs. This tool is primarily to help teachers get to know children in a way that does not interrupt the child's learning. Because the KRA administration was modified, results are not comparable with results from other years.

Readiness Level by SC School District



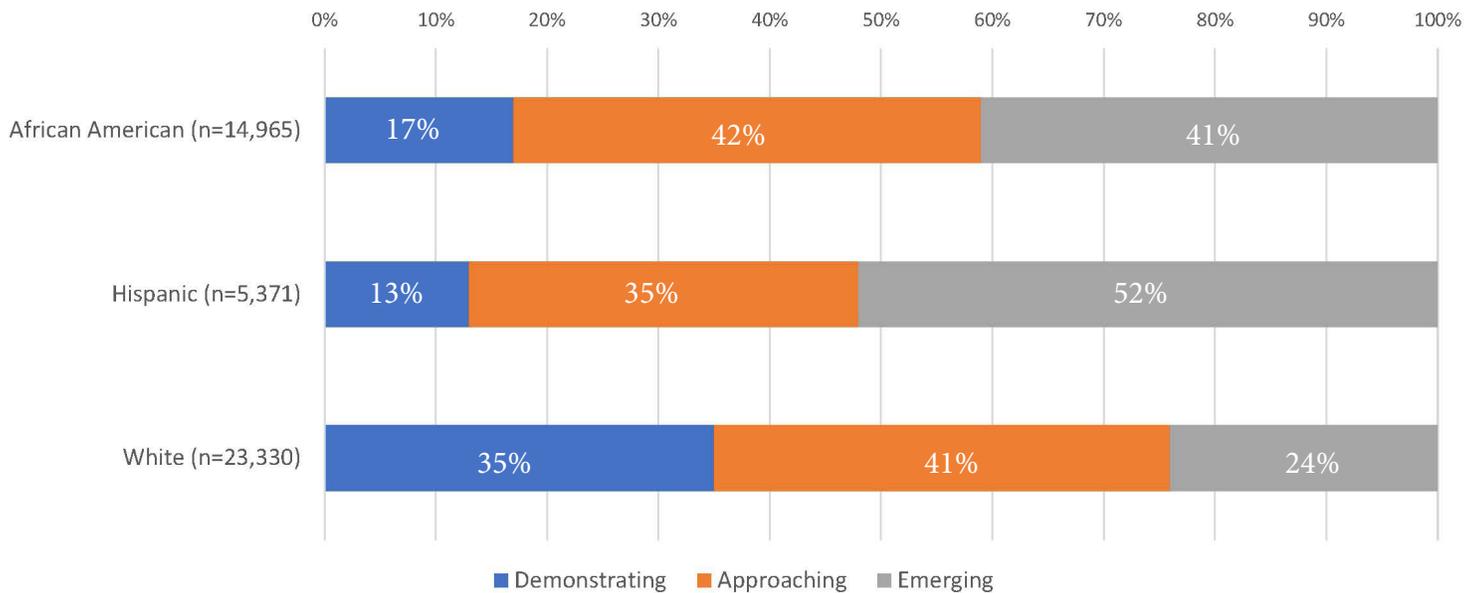
KRA Performance Higher for Students served by State-funded 4K

An analysis of student performance using data from Pupils in Poverty (PIP) served by State-funded 4K (CERDEP) and Pupils in Poverty (PIP) NOT served by State-funded 4K (CERDEP) shows that the State's investment in four-year-old kindergarten is beneficial for student readiness.

Poverty Status	Number	Emerging Readiness	Approaching Readiness	Demonstrating Readiness
First Steps (CERDEP in Private Centers)	2,345	30%	44%	27%
Public CERDEP (PIP only)	8,744	35%	45%	20%
All CERDEP PIP:	11,089	34%	45%	21%
Formal Private 4K (PIP only)	8,702	37%	42%	20%
Informal 4K Settings (PIP only)	3,415	55%	34%	11%
All Non-CERDEP PIP:	12,117	42%	40%	18%

The Readiness Gap

A readiness gap exists. About 35 percent of White children performed at the *Demonstrating Readiness* level on the Modified KRA, while 17 percent of African American children and 25 percent of Hispanic children performed at the *Demonstrating Readiness* level.



Note: The process of race/ethnicity reporting of children involves the self-selection of both during registration for school.

Recommendations

1. Moving forward, record date of KRA administration.
2. Survey other states' readiness assessments to inform decisions about future administrations of the KRA in SC.
3. Favor shorter, less time-consuming assessment of students.
4. Consider comparability to other state populations.
5. Find ways to reduce time required to deliver results.
6. Create uniform system for improved data collection and reporting.
7. Continue to survey educators and seek stakeholder input.
8. Provide access to assessments given during 4K for 5K teachers.
9. Explore use of more detailed school locale classifications (i.e., urban, rural, etc.)