



CHICAGO PUBLIC SCHOOLS

Barbara T. Bowman
Chief Officer

Community Partnership Program

March 15, 2011

Dear Agency Director and Preschool Teacher and Teacher Assistant:

The **Kindergarten Readiness Tool (KRT)** kits will be delivered to the Community Partnership office during the first week of April. Prior to the arrival of this year's kits, please make sure you have stored last year's edition of the KRT to avoid using the wrong materials for the 2011 assessment sessions. Each preschool teacher should receive a kit. The kits are available in English and Spanish only; therefore, check the kits for the appropriate language for your students.

This year's KRT maintains its focus on the Illinois early learning benchmarks and self-regulation and social maturation skills that have been found to be predictive of kindergarten and later school success. Teachers are asked to engage children in activities, either individually or in small groups, as well as to observe and record their behaviors and emotional development in the classroom setting. The KRT covers language and literacy, as well as mathematics and student behaviors and work habits. The activities are divided into two sections: small group and individual. The student behaviors and work habits section is scored based on teacher observations.

Each KRT kit includes:

- Instructions with scripted dialogue
- Materials needed for each assessment activity
- Web site addresses to **Kindergarten Readiness Tool, Online Resources**

Approximately half of the KRT items are administered to a small group of two or three children; the other half must be completed individually. However, you do not need to administer the interview items all at once or all small group items together. Administering items in shorter sessions is easier and children are more likely to remain engaged. Only complete as many of the items in one sitting as the children can easily handle. Items may be administered on different days and the small group membership may change from one session to another. Please note that during our KRT 2010 pilot we learned that each small group session should not exceed three children at one time. Therefore, early dissemination of the KRT 2011 kits should enable you to plan regular classroom activities around your assessment sessions.

The Student Behaviors and Work Habits section may be completed at any time since it is based on the teacher's observation of the child over the last several weeks.

All children who will turn five on or before September 1, 2011 (those scheduled to attend kindergarten in the fall of 2011) should be assessed. All assessments must be completed and the results entered into



Survey Monkey by **Friday, June 3, 2011**. To access the online resources for data entry instructions and the data entry sites, visit the OECE Web site homepage at www.ecechicago.org, under "Recent News," and select the **Kindergarten Readiness Tool 2011, Online Resources** link.

Children with IEP's should also be assessed. We recommend teachers make appropriate accommodations for children with IEP's, as well as for students they know will need special adjustments or support. Assessment support strategies may include allowing longer response time, repeating instructions, and/or demonstrating the activity examples more than once. It may also require, ending an activity when it is evident that a child has no knowledge of how to complete the task even though the child may guess the correct answer.

Most of the items in the KRT can be administered to children with diverse language backgrounds. The beginning sound and rhyme sections have alternative items in Spanish that should be used if you are administering the assessment in Spanish.

The importance of NOT overwhelming or frustrating children while conducting the assessment cannot be over-emphasized. In all instances where a child shows signs of withdrawing or inattentiveness, we suggest special adjustments or support be applied for the child's benefit. If the behavior persists, then we suggest ending the session immediately and resuming at a later time or day.

If you are interested in receiving additional training, contact Sheila O'Connell at (773) 553-1998. These in-person training sessions will be held at Doolittle West, 521 East 35th Street, Chicago, Illinois 60616. Session dates and times are as follows:

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| ➤ Friday, April 15, 2011 | Session I: 8:30-10:30 A.M. | Session II: 12:00-2:00 P.M. |
| ➤ Saturday, April 16, 2011 | Session I: 9:00-11:00 A.M. | Session II: 11:30 A.M.-1:30 P.M. |
| ➤ Friday, April 22, 2011 | Session I: 8:30-10:30 A.M. | Session II: 12:00-2:00 P.M. |
| ➤ Saturday, April 23, 2011 | Session I: 9:00-11:00 A.M. | Session II: 11:30 A.M.-1:30 P.M. |

NOTE: A maximum of 30 participants per session.

If you have any questions or concerns regarding the KRT project, contact the Community Partnership Program office at (773) 535-3245 or e-mail oece@cps.k12.il.us.

Thank you in advance for your support with this initiative.

Sincerely,



Barbara T. Bowman

BTB:kc

c: Paula A. Cottone
Karen Carradine
Christine Ryan

