



Research News

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125 South Clark Street, 9th Floor
Chicago, Illinois 60603

The Kindergarten Readiness Tool (KRT) is a performance and observational assessment focusing on 16 prekindergarten skills and 10 self-regulation/social skills. Specifically, this instrument is designed to:

- Assess preschoolers' knowledge and skills associated with academic success.¹
- Provide kindergarten teachers with a basis for planning for incoming children.
- Provide preschool teachers with information on children's knowledge so they can strengthen the preschool program.
- Provide parents, community programs, and teachers with examples of the kinds of knowledge and skills children should be acquiring.

The results of the KRT are to be used for four main purposes:

1. Familiarize parents, program administrators, and preschool and kindergarten teachers with appropriate expectations for children entering kindergarten.
2. Provide kindergarten teachers with information on children who attended preschool for planning purposes.
3. Provide CPS with information to assess what children are learning in preschool.
4. Assist in planning professional development for both preschool and kindergarten teachers.

The KRT is not a test. Testing young children rarely yields results that are sufficiently reliable and valid to use for high stakes decisions. KRT is a series of activities that are or should be a part of the preschool day. When the KRT data is aggregated, the results can provide valuable evidence for parents, administrators, and teachers regarding how children are being prepared for school.

Results

CPS preschool teachers typically teach name writing and number recognition, counting, and "math" vocabulary, and most children knew basic number concepts and how to write their names. Many also were able to sequence a story using picture boards and do basic adding and subtracting of concrete objects. However, children were less proficient on letter identification, letter sounds, rhyming, and sorting by more than one attribute. Some may be just beginning to emphasize phonemic awareness activities such as letter sounds (i.e., beginning/ending sounds/rhyming).

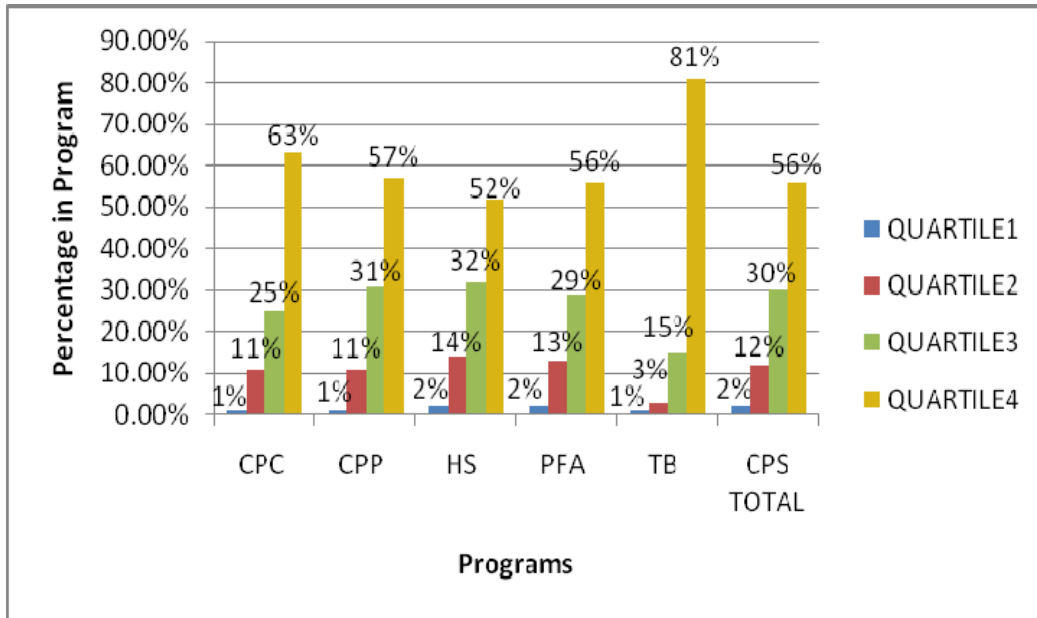
Considerable variability is evident across classrooms. A weak showing may be partly attributed to the children's lower entry-level skills, language issues, student attendance, or child or teacher mobility. Thus class level results combined with personal knowledge about individual classroom situations should guide program administrators and teachers in how to improve children's skills and knowledge.

Children's competencies in each area are available at the beginning of the kindergarten year to aid the receiving teachers in providing rigorous individualized programs that build on each child's current knowledge and skills right from the start. Preschool then becomes the intentional beginning of an aligned pre-K-3 approach.

¹ The characteristics were culled from research on predictors of success in kindergarten.



Figure 1. Distribution of Assessed Students by Quartile and Program



Note: Quartile 1: Percentage of students scoring between 0 and 23 points
 Quartile 2: Percentage of students scoring between 24 and 47 points
 Quartile 3: Percentage of students scoring between 48 and 69 points
 Quartile 4: Percentage of students scoring between 70 and 93 points

Teacher Feedback

The leading concern expressed by teachers was administration time. The Office of Early Childhood Education (OECE) will ensure that the KRT materials/instructions are delivered to schools earlier this year, allowing more time for completion.

