



Blueprint for School Readiness Transition Materials

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Blueprint for Zero to Five



Blueprint for School Readiness **Kindergarten Transition Plan**

Mission: To implement an effective community-wide transition plan so that all children entering kindergarten have the best chance for success.

Goals:

- To maintain ongoing communication and cooperation between early learning and kindergarten staff
- To prepare children and families for the transition to kindergarten
- To provide program continuity through developmentally appropriate practice and common expectations for preschool and kindergarten

Components:

- ✓ Joint professional development opportunities with early learning and kindergarten teachers
- ✓ A preschool to kindergarten transition form used by parents and “sending programs” sent to kindergarten teachers prior to enrollment, including information about children’s early learning experiences
- ✓ A comprehensive strategy for reaching parents of preschoolers during the year before they will enter kindergarten, including visits among programs, parent open house and classroom visitation, field trips for sending programs, and parent orientation packet with all information about school enrollment requirements
- ✓ A common set of skills (Pre-K Checklist) widely distributed to early learning providers and parents that describes what will help children be successful in kindergarten
- ✓ A guide for parents about how they can assist in their child’s success in kindergarten
- ✓ A preschool brochure for parents and preschool teachers that provides concrete activities and suggestions related to school readiness
- ✓ A simple assessment to be used at kindergarten entry to assess school readiness, developed from the Pre-K Checklist
- ✓ An on-going mechanism for continually updating the Transition Plan through regular feedback from parents, teachers, and advocates

“The best way to improve our schools is to improve the students sent to them.” – James J. Heckman, Nobel laureate in economics, Wall Street Journal, January 2006.



Blueprint for School Readiness **Kindergarten Transition Teams**

The APC has worked with multiple state and local partners over the past five years to build consensus about what young children should know and be able to do in order to be successful in kindergarten. Materials from around Alabama and the country were studied, and the best practices were adapted and compiled to build a consistent, simple plan.

Many early childhood programs provide extensive transition plans and activities, and many schools reach out to young children and the programs they are in to ease the transition. But, young children and their families are very mobile, and there are no “school zones” for early childhood programs. It is in the best interest of young children and families to develop a community-wide *transition plan* that is consistent across all programs, services, and schools.

Materials provided through the Transition Team are considered to be the minimum – we know that most of you do much more. The goal is that these materials be commonly and widely used throughout the community to continue to build consensus and understanding about what young children should know and be able to do so that they enter school optimally prepared to succeed. If there are common expectations, common language, and common messages across systems, parents and families can better understand how to fulfill their roles as children’s first and most important teachers. We hope you will join with others in your community to assess the transition plan and materials and continue to build a comprehensive strategy for ensuring the best start for all children when they enter school. Materials are provided in this format so that pages can be easily copied. You may also download an electronic copy and view other school readiness materials at www.smartstartalabama.org.

This work has developed over the years with input from across the state: Anniston/Calhoun County, Birmingham/Jefferson County, Dothan/Houston County, Huntsville/Madison County, Decatur/Morgan County, and other areas of the state. Transition Teams are made up of early education teachers and directors (child care, preschool, Pre-K, Head Start); kindergarten and first grade teachers, school administrators; home visiting and parenting staff; and early intervention and others interested in better child outcomes and readiness for school success.

The following six pages can be copied front and back to make the following materials:

1. Pre-K Skills for School Readiness/Parent’s Guide to Kindergarten Readiness (for parents)
2. Kindergarten Readiness Assessment (two pages)
3. Kindergarten Transition Information form (two pages)



Pre-K Skills for School Readiness

What should my child know and be able to do when she gets to kindergarten? These are the important kinds of things that will help your child be “ready”. You can use everyday activities to help your child with these skills during the year before kindergarten.

These will help your child with learning:

- speaks in complete sentences
- understands and follows directions with at least two steps
- understands words related to position, direction, size such as alike/different, top/bottom, first/last, big/little, up/down
- talks about a story being read and thinks about what happens next
- matches two like pictures
- can sort objects that are alike by size, color, and shape
- can sing simple songs, repeat stories
- can do simple puzzles up to five pieces
- can point to five colors
- can recognize his own name in print
- tries to write his name
- knows how to use a book, front and back, first page and last
- can name words that rhyme
- can name 10 alphabet letters that I point to

These can help your child be ready for math:

- can count a number of things (up to five)
- can name three shapes (circle, square, triangle)
- understands adding to or taking away
- can put numbers 1-5 in order
- can count to 10
- understands “more than” and “less than”
- understands time concepts, like today, tomorrow, summer, bedtime

These can help your child work and play:

- can tell if he/she is a boy or girl
- can tell first and last name
- can tell parent’s first and last name
- can tell own age
- is able to tell what she needs to friends and grownups
- plays and works with other children well
- is excited about learning new things
- can take care of basic needs like dressing, washing hands, bathroom use
- can be away from parents and family without stress
- knows how to work in a group by sharing and taking turns
- can ask for help when she needs it
- can draw a person with a body, head, legs, and arms

Other things that will help your child in kindergarten:

- can use pencils and pens and small scissors to cut a line across paper
- can copy things like a straight line, circle, X, triangle
- can run, skip, hop, jump
- can catch and bounce a ball
- uses the same hand most of the time (left or right)

Because of developmental differences and/or physical capabilities, every child is not expected to master every skill before entering kindergarten. If you have concerns about your child’s development, please contact the special education department in your local school district.



Parent's Guide to Kindergarten Success

Parents are children's first and most important teachers and help set the tone for school success. Working with your school and your child's teachers, you can ensure a successful beginning when your child enters school in kindergarten. With your support and encouragement, your child learns that school is important and that you look forward to a successful and fun year! With everyday activities, you can help your child be ready for success!

- I go to my child's school for a visit or open house before the first day. I take my child for a visit if this is possible.
- I make sure I know everything I need to enroll my child so that he can start on the first day.
- I make sure the school knows how to reach me during the day, including updating any changes during the year.
- I read and respond to the school letters sent home to parents and display the school calendar.
- I make sure we have routines for daily activities including bedtime, tooth- brushing, bathing, mealtimes, reading together, and talking about her daily activities.
- I let my child know that his learning is important and that I want him to do well.
- I have guidelines about how she should behave so that she can do her best.
- I limit the amount of TV and screen time and check the types of programs and games my child views.
- I read with my child and help my child in a learning activity for at least 15 minutes each day.
- I see that my child gets:
 - 8-10 hours of sleep on school nights
 - at least an hour of active play each day
 - 5 servings of fruits and vegetables each day (and limit sugary drinks/food)
- I send my child to school in comfortable play clothes and label all clothing and belongings and help her learn to take care of her things.
- I show a positive attitude about school and show an interest in school projects.
- I make sure my child is **at school every day and on time**, unless he is sick.
- I make sure that my child has health insurance, regular health and dental checkups, and I follow up on any referrals and recommendations.
- I communicate regularly with my child's teacher about any special concerns, needs, or possible problems.



Kindergarten Readiness Assessment

Child's Name _____ Date of Birth ____/____/____

Attendance: (select the ones that best describe child's school attendance)

rarely tardy frequently tardy average tardiness
 rarely absent frequently absent average attendance

Circle the number that best describes what is typical for this child.

Almost Always – 3	Sometimes – 2	Rarely – 1
Expressive and Receptive Language	<u>Speaks in complete sentences</u>	3 2 1
	Understands and follows directions with at least two steps	3 2 1
	Understands vocabulary related to position, direction, size and comparison:	
	like/different	3 2 1
	top/bottom	3 2 1
	first/last	3 2 1
	big/little	3 2 1
	up/down	3 2 1
	Makes simple predictions and comments about a story being read	3 2 1

Approach to Learning and Cognition

Matches two like pictures in a set of five pictures	3 2 1
Classifies (same/different, alike/not alike) objects by physical features:	
shape	3 2 1
size	3 2 1
color	3 2 1
Organizes objects that go together in groups	3 2 1
Recognizes, copies or repeats patterning sequence	3 2 1
Demonstrates the ability to correctly put in order up to three story pictures	3 2 1
Participates in repeating a familiar song, poem, finger play, nursery rhyme	3 2 1
Retells a simple story after listening to a story with pictures	3 2 1
Does simple puzzles (up to five pieces)	3 2 1
Identifies or points to five colors	3 2 1
Stays with a chosen activity at least 10 minutes	3 2 1
Initiates activities in the classroom	3 2 1
Demonstrates simple problem-solving capabilities	3 2 1

Phonological Awareness and Print Knowledge

Recognizes own name in print	3 2 1
Points to and/or recognizes letters in own name	3 2 1
Attempts to write letters in own name, showing left to right direction	3 2 1
Recognizes familiar signs, words and logos in the child's environment	3 2 1
Demonstrates book awareness:	
front cover and back of book	3 2 1
left to right order	3 2 1
holds book right side up	3 2 1
Identifies two words that sound the same when given rhyming picture words	3 2 1
Recognizes ten alphabet letter names by pointing to requested letter	3 2 1
Matches three letters with the sounds they make	3 2 1
Uses symbols or drawings to express ideas	3 2 1

Almost Always – 3

Sometimes – 2

Rarely – 1

Mathematics

Counts number of objects in small group (up to five objects)	3	2	1	
Matches a numbers (0-5) to a group with that number of objects	3	2	1	
Demonstrates an understanding of “adding to” or “taking away”	3	2	1	
Arranges numerals in order 1-5	3	2	1	
Identifies/points to three shapes:	circle	3	2	1
	square	3	2	1
	triangle	3	2	1
Counts in sequence 1-10	3	2	1	
Understands concepts of more and less	3	2	1	
Understands simple time concepts (today, summer, bedtime)	3	2	1	

Social/Emotional

Identifies self as a boy or girl	3	2	1
Knows first and last name	3	2	1
Knows parent’s first and last name	3	2	1
Can tell own age	3	2	1
Is able to express own needs in a way understandable to adults and peers	3	2	1
Plays and works with other children in an age-appropriate way	3	2	1
Is excited and curious about learning and activities during the day	3	2	1
Comforts a child who is crying or upset, hurt or in distress	3	2	1
Demonstrates independence in washing hands, dressing, bathroom use	3	2	1
Separates from parents by appearing comfortable and secure without parents	3	2	1
Stays with a teacher-directed activity for 10 minutes	3	2	1
Follows simple 2-3 step directions	3	2	1
Plays/works in a group – shares, takes turns, and uses self control	3	2	1
Asks for help when needed	3	2	1
Draws a person with a body, head, legs, and arms	3	2	1

Physical Development

Uses writing and drawing tools and child-sized scissors	3	2	1	
Copies figures such as:	straight line	3	2	1
	circle	3	2	1
	X	3	2	1
	+	3	2	1
Demonstrates gross motor skills:	hops	3	2	1
	jumps	3	2	1
	skips	3	2	1
	catches and bounces a ball	3	2	1
Shows an established hand preference (right vs. left)	3	2	1	
Appears to be well-rested (not tired, sleepy, or irritable during the day)	3	2	1	
Appears to be in good health	3	2	1	

Gender: M___ F___

Primary language spoken in the home_____

Race: White___ Black___ Hispanic___ Asian___ Other___ Free or Reduced Lunch Yes___
No___

Teacher’s Name_____

Date Completed_____



Kindergarten Transition Information

Child's Last Name: _____ First: _____ Birthday: ____/____/____

Home Address: _____

Elementary School Zone: _____

___ Boy ___ Girl Race: _____ Primary Language: _____

Preschool Program Attended: _____

half-day preschool licensed child care Head Start other: _____

Preschool Teacher Name: _____ Teacher Phone: _____

Preschool Curriculum/Approach Used: _____

How long at this program? ___ less than 1 year ___ 1 year ___ 2 years ___ 3 years

Special services child receives or received in past year (*check all that apply*):

___ Speech/language ___ OT/PT ___ Early Intervention ___ Counseling

Agency/agencies providing special services: _____

Child has been referred for special education services through the school: ___ Yes ___ No

Status of referral: _____

Health or development concerns (*that might limit participation in program activities*):

Strengths of this child: _____

Areas needing more development: _____

This child's family has: (*Note: N/A means not available, not applicable, not asked*)

attended parent meetings regularly	___ Yes	___ No	___ N/A
participated in program activities	___ Yes	___ No	___ N/A
volunteered in the classroom or for special events	___ Yes	___ No	___ N/A
communicated regularly by phone or notes	___ Yes	___ No	___ N/A
sent materials to support activities or events	___ Yes	___ No	___ N/A
participated in and welcomed home visits	___ Yes	___ No	___ N/A
followed up on any recommended referrals/concerns	___ Yes	___ No	___ N/A

All of us have different learning styles, but this is a snapshot of approaches to learning on a given day. When involved in classroom activities, this child is usually: (check all that apply)

- | | |
|---|---|
| <input type="checkbox"/> easily engaged in activities | <input type="checkbox"/> slow to engage in activities |
| <input type="checkbox"/> confident | <input type="checkbox"/> tentative |
| <input type="checkbox"/> playful and engaged | <input type="checkbox"/> withdrawn |
| <input type="checkbox"/> focused | <input type="checkbox"/> easily distracted |
| <input type="checkbox"/> persistent | <input type="checkbox"/> easily frustrated |
| <input type="checkbox"/> quick to respond | <input type="checkbox"/> slow to respond |
| <input type="checkbox"/> talkative | <input type="checkbox"/> quiet |
| <input type="checkbox"/> easy to transition | <input type="checkbox"/> difficult to transition |

When engaged in classroom activities, this child usually responds best when given which cues?
(These are ways to describe the three pathways to learning that children use; rank 1-3, with 1 the best choice.)

- visual cues (what the child can see) auditory cues (what the child can hear)
- kinesthetic cues (hands-on, touch, movement, action)

Please share any additional information that would be helpful to better meet the needs of this child as he/she moves into kindergarten:

Our goal is to provide a positive transition from preschool into kindergarten. Parent or legal guardian signature here indicates permission for preschool staff to share this form and information with the school's kindergarten staff regarding the child's needs and services received in preschool. We will share the following materials with the school (please initial):

developmental assessment health and immunization records portfolio of work

Printed Name of Parent/Guardian: _____

Signature of Parent/Guardian: _____

Date Signed: ____/____/____ Preschool Teacher: _____