

April 2025



Pennsylvania
Office of Child Development
and Early Learning

PA KEI Update

[Get info about the KEI](#)

**Please note: The PA KEI data system is closed for SY 2025-20256 data entry.
Information will be available in read only.**



Sign up NOW for School Year 2025-2026 implementation

All elementary schools are encouraged to implement Pennsylvania's Kindergarten Entry Inventory (PA KEI) in the 2025-2026 school year to assist in meeting federal requirements.

PA KEI is a reliable reporting tool that offers teachers an instructional strategy for understanding and tracking a student's proficiency at kindergarten entry. The PA KEI is available to all local education agencies (LEAs) at no cost.

The PA KEI collects information on a consistent set of standards-based indicators across the Commonwealth. The PA KEI is based on Pennsylvania's Learning Standards for Early Childhood and the Pennsylvania Core Standards. PA KEI includes 30 indicators and provides a comprehensive profile that includes the domains of: Social and Emotional Development; English Language Arts; Mathematics; Approaches to Learning; and Health, Wellness and Physical Development. PA KEI is intended to be used by kindergarten teachers to record a student's demonstration of skills within the first 45 calendar days of the kindergarten year. More information is available at www.kei-pa.org.

The Every Student Succeeds Act (ESSA) provides opportunities to strengthen the contribution of high-quality early childhood education in school reform and improvement efforts. The law

recognizes that school success starts before a student enters the K-12 setting and calls on states to describe how they will assist LEAs and elementary schools to collaborate with early childhood education programs, and to invest in evidence-based practices.

ESSA supports early learning and LEA collaboration in three main ways: (1) expanding access to high-quality early learning; (2) encouraging alignment and collaboration from birth through third grade; and (3) supporting educators. The PA KEI is a tangible tool to assist LEAs in understanding the comprehensive learning strengths and needs of students entering the K-12 setting, establishing common expectations and language for beginning and extending collaborative conversations with pre-kindergarten programs and families, and planning and implementing joint professional development opportunities that focus on strengthening evidence-based practices for young learners.

Implementing the PA KEI requires a Point of Contact (POC) who will serve as the liaison between LEA administrative staff, implementing kindergarten teachers, the Office of Child Development and Early Learning (OCDEL), and data systems staff. A dedicated POC ensures effective communication and implementation throughout the PA KEI process.

To initiate PA KEI participation in the 2025-2026 school year, send the POC name, email address, and phone number to RA-PWOCDELKEI@pa.gov by May 30, 2025.

All kindergarten teachers who have not previously participated must complete a required professional development online course and obtain a certificate of completion. Teachers with an expired proficient user certificate (more than five years since certification) must also complete the professional development online course. More information about taking the online course is available [here](#).

Below is the tentative training schedule and timeline for participation:

- **March-September:** Required professional development online course available
- **August-September:** PA KEI systems professional development opportunities available
- **By the start of school:** Implementing kindergarten teachers must have a required professional development online course certificate of completion on file in order to gain systems access
- **45 calendar days from start of school:** Observation and evidence collection/scoring completed
- **60 calendar days from start of school:** Data submissions (student outcomes) **finalized** within data system.

Questions about this communication may be sent to RA-PWOCDELKEI@pa.gov.



Want to find out more about the KEI? Attend an informational session.

The Office of Child Development and Early Learning along with Central Susquehanna Intermediate Unit will offer two informal KEI informational sessions in April. If you want to learn about KEI implementation in your school or have any specific questions relating to the KEI, please plan to join a session scheduled on:

Thursday, April 24, 2025, at 10 a.m.

Thursday, April 24, 2025, at 1 p.m.

The Sessions have been created, and a signup link is available [on the website](#).



Professional Development Options

All kindergarten teachers who have not previously participated in PA KEI implementation must complete the required professional development course to ensure fidelity of implementation, obtain a certificate of completion, and gain access into the web-based system.

Teachers who obtained a proficient user certificate since April 2020 do not need to repeat the professional development protocol as they are within the five-year window of completion.

Teachers who obtained a proficient user certificate prior to April 2020 will need to renew their certificate of completion by completing the revised online professional development course. These teachers have already been contacted via email by OCDEL staff.

All teachers, regardless of proficiency status, should review the PA KEI materials (Inventory and User Manual at minimum) each year. All resources can be found at www.kei-pa.org.

The professional development protocol consists of self-paced, asynchronous, online learning lessons, and a final knowledge check. After viewing each lesson, participants will take a 10-question final knowledge check and must score at least 80% to receive their proficient user certificate, which is valid for five years from the date of completion.

The professional development protocol can be accessed at [Professional Development – Pennsylvania Kindergarten Entry Inventory \(kei-pa.org\)](https://www.kei-pa.org).

Participants will need their PPID number and LEA AUN to receive log in credentials.



Research, Reports and Resources

The Power of Play: Investigating Student Success in Kindergarten Classrooms

A study, [*The Power of Play: Investigating Student Success in Kindergarten Classrooms*](#), by Karyn Allee at Georgia's Mercer University suggests that academic rigor can go hand in hand with the stimulation and engagement that mark a playful classroom.

The study compared reading and math gains in two kindergarten classes. Both teachers followed the same curriculum but differed in their implementation styles. One hewed to a didactic approach, including assigned seating and limited chances for students to choose. The other pursued what the paper calls a “playful approach,” with flexible seating and time for movement, music, play, and reading and math skills. Children in the more playful classroom made greater gains in reading and math.

Kindergarten, Here I Come and Recipes for Readiness

Two resources are available from the PA Office of Child Development and Early Learning (OCDEL) at for families of children' preparing for kindergarten entry.

The Kindergarten Here I Come activity guide and Recipes for Readiness help families prepare their child for kindergarten. Kindergarten Here I Come provides monthly learning activities, resources and information to help their preschool-age child.

Recipes for Readiness provides family-friendly activities to help develop skills that kindergarten teachers look for as children enter their classrooms. Activities are designed for children aged three to five and are aligned to Pennsylvania's learning standards for early childhood. Both are great resources to share with families during kindergarten registration.

- [Click to view and print Kindergarten, Here I Come Activity Guide \(English\)](#)
- [Click to print the Kindergarten, Here I Come Activity Guide \(Spanish\)](#)
- [Click to print Recipes for Readiness \(bilingual resource in English and Spanish\)](#)

Sign up to receive *Kindergarten, Here I Come* newsletter. Each month, receive tips and information to help your preschooler prepare for kindergarten. [Sign up now.](#)

Order hard copies of Recipes for Readiness at no cost by sending an email to Mary Hall at marhal@pakeys.org. Be sure to include the number you're requesting, and a mailing address.

Need a Password Reset?



Resetting your password for PA KEI data system:

1. Go to the website: <http://kei-pa.org>
 2. Select the *Data System Login* tab.
 3. Click on the *I forgot my password* link located below the login boxes.
 4. You will be asked to enter your Username, which should be your school email address.
 5. A password reset email will be sent to you.
 6. Follow the instructions in the email.
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Keeping the PA KEI Software Account Up to Date

If your email address has changed, contact the PA KEI Technical Support for assistance at KEI@csiu.org. It is important to keep email addresses updated to continue to receive important information about the PA KEI system.

Need Help With the KEI?



Each implementing school and/or district has designated a school or district point of contact (KEI-POC). Implementing teachers should request contact information for the designated KEI-POC in your school or district. In addition, the following supports are available:

GENERAL QUESTIONS about the KEI or any of the information in this newsletter should be directed to OCDEL staff at RA-PWOCDELKEI@pa.gov.

TECHNICAL SUPPORT is available by phone on weekdays from 8am-4pm.

- Jeff Kay: 570-523-1155, Ext. 2137
- Email your questions during off-hours to KEI@csiu.org

Subscribing to the eNewsletter

If you have a co-worker who is participating in KEI, but does not receive the newsletter, email Christy at cveitch@csiu.org to request to be added to the listserv.

[Access archived editions.](#)