

May 2026



PA KEI Update

www.kei-pa.org

Sign up NOW for School Year 2026-2027 implementation

All elementary schools are encouraged to implement Pennsylvania's Kindergarten Entry Inventory (PA KEI) in the 2026-2027 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 in collaborating with early childhood education programs and in investing 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 2026-2027 school year, send the POC name, email address, and phone number to RA-PWOCDELKEI@pa.gov by May 30, 2026.

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 at [Professional Development – Pennsylvania Kindergarten Entry Inventory](#).

Below are the tentative training schedules 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 system access
 - **45 calendar days from start of school:** Observation and evidence collection/scoring completed
 - **60 calendar days from the start of school:** Data submissions (student outcomes) finalized within the data system.

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

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, to obtain a certificate of completion, and to gain access into the web-based system.

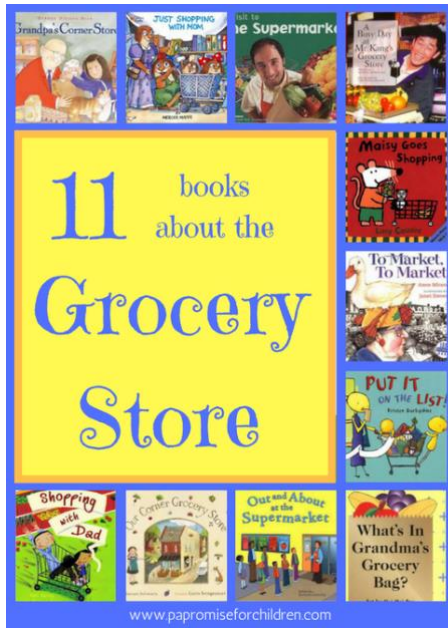
Teachers who obtained a proficient user certificate since May 2021 do not need to repeat the professional development protocol as they are within the five-year window of completion.

Teachers who obtained a proficient user certificate prior to May 2021 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 \(kei-pa.org\)](#). Participants will need their PPID number and LEA AUN to receive log in credentials.



Learning is Everywhere – The Grocery Store!

Learning can take place everywhere, especially in the grocery store, which acts as a giant interactive classroom for kindergarteners. Children can build literacy and phonics skills by helping to read the shopping list or identifying letters on colorful product packaging. You can also play games like I Spy to focus on initial letter sounds as you walk through the aisles.

The store is an ideal environment for practicing early math, such as counting out specific quantities of fruit or sorting items into categories like refrigerated goods versus pantry staples.

Measurement and estimation come to life at the produce scales, where kids can compare the weight of different vegetables or guess how many oranges make up a pound.

Beyond math and reading, children can identify various 2D and 3D shapes and name the diverse colors found in the produce section to learn about eating a healthy variety of foods.

Finally, involving children in the shopping process teaches valuable social and life skills, such as budgeting and distinguishing between needs and wants.

Below are some wonderful books to share with families about the grocery store.

- *Grandpa's Corner Store* by DyAnne DiSalvo-Ryan
- *Out and About at the Supermarket* by Kitty Shea
- *Put It On the List* by Kristen Darbyshire
- *A Visit to the Supermarket* by Blake A. Hoena
- *Our Corner Grocery Store* by Joanne Schwartz and Laura Beingessner
- *A Busy Day at Mr. Kang's Grocery Store* by Alice K. Flanagan
- *To Market, To Market* by Anne Miranda
- *Shopping with Dad* by Matt Harvey and Miriam Latimer
- *What's in Grandma's Grocery Bag?* by Hui-Mei Pan

- *Just Shopping with Mom* by Mercer Mayer
 - *Maisy Goes Shopping* by Lucy Cousins
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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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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.](#)