

Addendum G: ELI Preschool and Kindergarten Information

1. **Preschool and Kindergarten Guidance.** The ELI Law has provided the state of Iowa with an opportunity to clarify expectations for early childhood programs. Original separate guidance provided on November 12, 2014, is included here, and any further information will be updated in this appendix. Information here is specific to the Department funded programs, and provides clarification for Iowa’s public schools specific to the definition, condition for enrollment, required standards and assessments and funding for preschool and kindergarten programs. For preschool and kindergarten programs, the Department provides funds through Statewide Voluntary Preschool Programs (SWVPP), state aid through certified enrollment for kindergarten programs, and special education weighting.

Table C1.

Preschool and Kindergarten

Program	Age	Conditions for Enrollment	Standards	Assessment	State Funding		
					SWVPP	Special Education	Certified Enrollment
Statewide Voluntary Preschool Program for Four-Year-Old Children [SWVPP]	4	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Child is a resident of Iowa Open Enrollment does not apply 	Iowa Early Learning Standards (IELS)	GOLD online assessment [required]	Yes	No	.5
	4-IEP support services only				Yes	No	.5
	4 – IEP	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Child is a resident of Iowa Open Enrollment applies 		IGDIs online assessment for Universal Screening [optional]	No	Yes	1.0 + special education through weighting
Kindergarten [Age on or before 9/15]	5	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Open Enrollment applies Grade Level is District Determined 	Iowa Core	District Determined Assessments [required]	No	No	1.0
	5 – IEP support services only				No	No	1.0
	5 – IEP			Department approved universal screening assessment. The Department supports administration of FAST. FAST may also be used as the district’s KLA measure. [required]	No	Yes	1.0 + special education through weighting

Once a child has completed any programming prior to kindergarten [e.g., transitional, alternative, beginning] and is age eligible for first grade, there are two options:

- **The child attends kindergarten.** If 1.0 funding was used to support a child to attend previous programming such as transitional, alternative or beginning programs, then the child would be considered as being retained in kindergarten.
- **The child attends first grade.** If 1.0 funding was used to support a child to attend previous programming such as transitional, alternative or beginning programs, then the child would be considered as being appropriately promoted to first grade.

Source: <https://www.educateiowa.gov/sites/files/ed/documents/EarlyLiteracyTechnicalAssistanceAppendices-Revised08-31-2016.pdf>

Programs identified locally as transitional kindergarten, prep kindergarten, or junior kindergarten and receive 1.0 funding in state aid are viewed as kindergarten programs by the Department of Education. This funding is intended for kindergarten programming, which includes curricula and instruction aligned to Iowa Core, district determined assessments for kindergarten, and more recently, assessment addressing [Early Literacy Implementation \(ELI\)](#) legislation ([281—Iowa Administrative Code 62](#)). Many times, this last component is addressed in the administration of FAST or other state-approved assessments. In addition, kindergarten programs must also meet the instructional days/hours determined by the district, either following a calendar for number of days or a calendar based on instructional hours. In general, based on guidance for instructional-hours-vs-days from 2014, the elementary grade length of school day is 6 hours. Because some districts have elected to offer half day kindergarten programming, the minimum requirement for kindergarten programming would be at minimum half of that length. So if the elementary grade length of day is 6 hours (based on the instructional hours versus days guidance) then the minimum requirement for the kindergarten length of day would be 3 hours. This would be reflected in the same number of days per week. This figures out to be 15 hours weekly.

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