
Eligibility Determination for Transitional Kindergarten

Transitional Kindergarten (TK) is a kindergarten program *for children not yet age five who do not have access to high-quality early learning experiences prior to kindergarten and have been deemed by a school district, through a screening process and/or other instrument(s), to be in need of additional preparation to be successful in kindergarten the following year.* Schools offering TK will need a “screening process and/or instrument(s) which measure the ability or the need, or both, of an individual student to succeed in earlier entry” (WAC 392-335-025).

In order to determine eligibility for TK, screening procedures should include multiple sources of information, that include these components:

- 1) **Coordinated referral and enrollment** – Because TK seeks to fill a gap in high-quality early learning opportunities, it is necessary to take steps to assure that families are aware of all of the options available to them, as well as the potential benefits and outcomes of those options are. Find out who is providing care and education for four and five-year-olds in your area; learn about other services that are available for children and families; make contact with partner agencies and preschool providers to establish a plan for coordinated enrollment, including how to outreach to new families. See the [Coordinated Enrollment and Referral Planning Worksheet](#) for more information.
- 2) **Family interview** – Gathering information from families during the TK screening process is vital when making eligibility determinations. Families may give insight into developmental progress, share child and family histories, identify priorities and share concerns. Interviews are especially important when families don’t share the language or full economic advantages of the dominant culture.

Questions to ask families may include:

- What are your child’s unique strengths and needs?
- What are your child’s academic and behavioral strengths and needs?
- Do you have questions or concerns about your child’s development?
- Does your child need additional services or extra help?



Families who enroll in TK will get to participate in the Family Connection component of WaKIDS at the beginning of the program. This will provide another opportunity to get to know families and children.

3) Establishing developmental indicators for eligibility

Screening procedures should be culturally and linguistically relevant. Results should be reviewed with families for their input and feedback. Screening practices should also take into account that young children require flexibility and understanding when gathering assessment information. Stress in new situations, hunger or fatigue can cause children to become distracted from assessments or unwilling to participate. Professionals should be prepared to make modifications or reassess at a later time.

Listed below are examples of widely used, norm-referenced screening instruments that demonstrate reliability and validity, and take 30 minutes or less to administer.

Sample Screening Instruments:

- Ages and Stages Questionnaires® (ASQ®--3, ASQ®:SE-2), Brookes Publishing Company
- Battelle Developmental Inventory Screening Test, Riverside Publishing
- Speed DIAL-4, Pearson Assessments
- Early Screening Inventory-Preschool (ESI-P), Pearson Assessments

