

Transition to Kindergarten: Self-Assessment Template for Systems Leaders and/or Planning Teams

Considerations for effective transitions planning:

Identifying a transitions self-assessment tool and taking stock of current transitions activities at the state and local levels is an important first step in planning. In creating this tool, we used the self-assessment tools from New York, Massachusetts, and Illinois as models. It is designed to be used by both state and district offices to understand the work districts and schools have done to improve transitions. Results from this self-assessment will show current efforts as well as areas where more work is needed. Assessment should include listening to families, prioritizing children and families who are furthest from opportunity, and tailoring investments to address their needs. Planning should include continuously checking to ensure that those farthest from opportunity are a focus of policy considerations and everyday practices.

How to use this self-assessment:

Look-Fors	Evidence/Current Practices	Rating (0–3)	Next-Step Priority (High, Medium, Low)	Planning Implications
Each question addresses an action the state may be taking to advance healthy transitions.	In this box, write about current practices and their underlying evidence. Be as specific as possible in the evidence you provide, using experiences you’ve had in your role.	0 = Not in place 1 = Partially in place 2 = Mostly in place 3 = Fully in place	Your rating here will indicate if you think this is an urgent action.	Describe next steps: how could this action work? What barriers are present? Outline realistic actions the planning team can take to move forward on the “look-for.”

Transitions Activities

Look-Fors	Evidence/Current Practices	Rating (0–3)	Next-Step Priority (High, Medium, Low)	Planning Implications
Do schools coordinate with pre-K providers, Head Start programs, home-based child care providers and child				

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care centers to gather data (evaluations, developmental or other assessments, parent surveys, etc.) on incoming K students?				
Are there state-supported, district-, or school-level transitions events so incoming K students can meet staff and peers?				
Are there opportunities like literacy or numeracy development for incoming students during summer transitions academies?				
Is there a state, district, and school staff member responsible for managing transitions?				
Does school staff and leadership promote collaboration across grade levels (B–3) to create healthy transitions?				
Does school staff receive training to foster positive transitions?				
Are transitions practices/events common across all districts, schools, grade levels, and classrooms in the state?				
Does the state seek out students and families farthest from opportunity when coordinating transitions practices and events? (For example, offering times for parents who work non-traditional hours, outreach and events with families experiencing homelessness, and				

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partnerships with immigrant communities or communities where English is not the dominant language)				
Are students farthest from opportunity matched with educators and staff that can best support them?				
Are pre-K programs located in areas close to feeder schools? Are there policies in place that allow children transition to K at the elementary school parents have chosen for pre-K?				
Does the state help districts to gather information on K students' previous enrollment to understand feeder patterns?				

Community-Wide Collaboration

Look-Fors	Evidence/Current Practices	Rating (0–3)	Next-Step Priority (High, Medium, Low)	Planning Implications
What collaboration and/or communication takes place among pre-K providers and kindergarten educators?				
Is there a state, district, or local transitions planning committee that includes both child care and school-based teachers?				
In what ways do pre-K providers contribute to transitions planning?				

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Are there outreach efforts to partner with local organizations (in health, commerce, etc.) around transitions?				
Is interested party input incorporated into transitions planning? If so, how?				
What efforts are made to hire teachers and staff that represent the student body, particularly students of color?				
Is there a person responsible for managing school-community partnerships?				
Does the state proactively leverage the skills, capacities, and assets within each community when designing learning experiences that meet the needs of all students?				

Parent and Family Engagement

Look-Fors	Evidence/Current Practices	Rating (0–3)	Next-Step Priority (High, Medium, Low)	Planning Implications
Do families have the opportunity to learn about transitions practices ahead of their child’s enrollment in K?				
In what ways are K staff and faculty trained to engage families throughout the transitions process?				
Are communications regarding transitions made accessible to all families/caregivers in being, for example, properly translated				

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and delivered in ways preferred by its audience?				
In what ways are families made aware of the community resources available to them as their child transitions to K?				
What opportunities are there for families to communicate their child's specific needs with their school?				
Are families given opportunities to provide goals for their students?				

Professional Development

Look-Fors	Evidence/Current Practices	Rating (0–3)	Next-Step Priority (High, Medium, Low)	Planning Implications
Is PD centered around the goals and needs of effective transitions offered?				
Do principals and other school leaders receive training on fostering positive transitions?				
Does the state partner with other agencies to facilitate PD around evidence-based practices based on challenges in the community?				
Does PD include principles of child development and discussion of K standards?				
Does PD include social-emotional				

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strategies/curricula and trauma-informed practices?				
Does PD address gaps identified in transitions?				
Are there incentives for staff and faculty to participate in PD related to transitions?				

Data-Driven Continuous Improvement

Look-Fors	Evidence/Current Practices	Rating (0–3)	Next-Step Priority (High, Medium, Low)	Planning Implications
Are data collected to understand enrollment patterns in elementary schools and to update feeder patterns from preschools in order to appropriately allocate resources?				
Do all staff have appropriate access to the data they need?				
Are faculty and staff given a common planning time to analyze data and identify student needs?				
Are data used to develop strategies for interventions and the PD needed for implementation?				
Are data used to track the effectiveness of interventions and/or accommodations and plan for modifications?				
How are data used to implement trauma-informed strategies and support				

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students at the margins?				
Do teams coordinate to make data-based decisions to ensure that strategy implementation improves the outcomes of all learners?				
Is there a system in place to regularly analyze data and share outcomes with all who are interested?				