



# Guam School Readiness Plan

May 2013



# Kindergarten Programs and Classes

## Public GDOE Schools

Name	Contact Info
Adacao Elementary, Mangilao	Tel: 300-1035
Agana Heights Elementary, Agana Heights	Tel: 477-8040/60/5798
Astumbo Elementary, Dededo	Tel: 635-4363/4/9/70
C.L. Taitano Elementary, Sinajana	Tel: 475-4502-6
Carbullido Elementary, Barrigada	Tel: 734-4341/735-4230
Chief Brodie Elementary, Tamuning	Tel: 647-4444/4554/4536
D.L. Perez Elementary, Yigo	Tel: 653-2646/0404
Finegayan Elementary, Dededo	Tel: 632-9364/635-0687/633-1521/2/4
H.S. Truman Elementary, Agat	Tel: 565-5195/2533
Inarajan Elementary, Inarajan	Tel: 828-8641/2
J.M. Guerrero Elementary, Dededo	Tel: 632-1540/7102/633-6066
J.Q. San Miguel Elementary, Toto	Tel: 477-9368/70/1
L.B. Johnson Elementary, Tamuning	Tel: 646-5046/49/8871
Liguan Elementary, Dededo	Tel: 300-1680
M.A. Ulloa Elementary, Dededo	Tel: 632-8090/5176
M.U. Lujan Elementary Lujan Elementary, Yona	Tel: 789-1535/3651
Machananao Elementary, Yigo	Tel: 635-4381/2
Marcial Sablan Elementary, Agat	Tel: 565-2238/2946
Merizo Martyrs Elementary, Merizo	Tel: 828-2562/8779/8680
Ordot-Chalan Pago Elementary, Ordot	Tel: 477-9645/472-4687
P.C. Lujan Elementary, Barrigada	Tel: 734-3971/2
Price Elementary, Mangilao	Tel: 734-2159/7766/7
Talofofo Elementary, Talofofo	Tel: 789-1171/1386-3218
Upi Elementary, Yigo	Tel: 633-1382/74/653-1371/2
Wettengel Elementary, Dededo	Tel: 632-7770/7870/7970

## DoDEA Schools

Name	Contact Info
Andersen ES, AAFB	Tel: 366-1511/1522
Commander William C. McCool ES, Santa Rita	Tel: 339-8676/8

## Catholic Schools

Name	Contact Info
Bishop Baumgartner Memorial Catholic School, Sinajana	Tel: 472-6670
Dominican Child Development Center, Ordot	Tel: 477-7228
Dominican Catholic School, Yigo	Tel: 653-3021
Infant of Prague, Mangilao	Tel: 734-2785
Maria Artero Nursery & Kindergarten, Agana Heights	Tel: 472-8777
Mercy Heights Nursery, Tamuning	Tel: 646-1185
Our Lady of Mount Carmel Catholic School, Agat	Tel: 565-3822/5128
Saint Anthony's Catholic School, Tamuning	Tel: 647-1140
Saint Francis Catholic School, Yona	Tel: 789-1350
Santa Barbara Catholic School, Dededo	Tel: 632-5126
San Vicente Catholic School, Barrigada	Tel: 735-4240/43/49

## Other Private Schools

Name	Contact Info
Bambini Montessori School Center, Tamuning	Tel: 649-2636
Guam Adventist Academy, Yona	Tel: 789-1515
Guam Evangelical Christian Academy, Chalan Pago	Tel: 734-3241
Harvest Christian Academy, Barrigada	Tel: 477-6341
International Montessori School, Mangilao	Tel: 734-7919
Providence International Christian Academy, Tamuning	Tel: 969-1981
Saint Paul's Christian School, Harmon	Tel: 637-9855/8534/8544
St. John's School, Upper Tumon	Tel: 646-8080
Southern Christian Academy, Agat	Tel: 565-7020
The Japanese School Guam, Mangilao	Tel: 734-8024
United Chinese School, Upper Tumon	Tel: 646-6700

## Hafa Adai!

Project Tinituhon under the Early Care and Education Strategic Management Team (SMT) created the School Readiness Focus Group, which first met on July 7, 2011 to identify the needs for a school readiness plan. The focus group consisted of representatives from the Guam Early Learning Council, Project Tinituhon, Guam Department of Education (GDOE) Head Start and Early Childhood Special Education Preschool Programs, and early childhood centers. The focus group identified that GDOE had no Kindergarten Entry Assessment. Research about school readiness and entry assessments was conducted locally and nationally to inform the focus group. On September 7, 2011, the focus group looked at various local resources that potentially promote school readiness—Head Start and its online toolkit, GDOE’s district action plan, and the GDOE Striving for Literacy grant. The focus group decided to invite GDOE administration to join the group. On December 14, 2011, the focus group reviewed the State Advisory Council grant requirements for kindergarten readiness and the existing Guam Head Start program’s school readiness plan. The focus group also identified a list of all known kindergarten programs on island as well as a list of all potential kindergarten entry assessment tools, such as Brigance, DiBELS, Success For All entry assessment, Direct Instruction placement test, DIAL-3, and others.

A Kindergarten School Readiness Survey was developed, revised, and pilot tested from September 2011 to July 2012. The survey needed approvals from the University of Guam Institutional Review Board (UOG IRB), GDOE, and Catholic Schools before dissemination in November 2012 to January 2013. An analysis of the completed surveys was finalized in February 2013. A report on the data analysis was shared with the Guam Early Learning Council on March 12, 2013.

In 2012, Project Tinituhon’s School Readiness Focus Group became part of the Guam Early Learning Council School Readiness Plan Workgroup. The workgroup used the research and data analysis from the Kindergarten School Readiness Survey to inform the School Readiness Plan for Guam. The plan was intended to include considerations for all schools islandwide. The workgroup consisted of representatives from the Guam Early Learning Council, Project Tinituhon, GDOE, Catholic schools and other private schools at the school level as well as public and private early childhood centers around the island.

The workgroup met on January 14, January 29, February 14, February 27, March 5, and March 26, 2013 to develop the School Readiness Plan for Guam and to make decisions regarding kindergarten entry assessments. On March 12, 2013 representatives from the School Readiness Plan Workgroup shared the workgroup’s progress and the current draft of the plan. On March 29, 2013, a draft was sent to the workgroup and to all schools and early childhood centers around the island to have the opportunity to provide feedback to make the plan more relevant and meaningful to kindergarten children on Guam. Feedback was collected and compiled and incorporated into the latest draft of the plan.

A truly collaborative effort, the Guam Early Learning Council presents to you the Guam School Readiness Plan.



**Christine M.S. Calvo**  
First Lady of Guam  
Co-Chairperson



**Elaine B. Eclavea**  
Project Tinituhon Director  
Co-Chairperson

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The first five years of children's lives are critical to their future success in school and in life. Early experiences influence children's brain development, which is the foundation for language and literacy, problem solving, social and emotional skills, and behavioral skills. These early experiences help prepare children for learning in school. Parents, families, caregivers, preschool teachers, future schools and teachers, service providers, health care providers, policymakers, and the community all play a part in helping children get ready for school. Children's readiness for school can be ensured with the availability of well-trained child care providers and increased access to quality child care as well as with the creation of policies that ensure smooth transitions to kindergarten and school.

A universal definition of school readiness in Guam is needed to communicate to all stakeholders what is necessary to prepare all children of different ages, ethnicities, cultures, languages, abilities, needs, and previous experiences to transition and be successful in school.

## NATIONAL CONTEXT

The focus of school readiness does not focus only on academic preparation. Children's development is holistic and should include physical, health, social and emotional, language and literacy, and cognitive development. Furthermore, school readiness includes children's approaches to learning that is necessary for lifelong development and success. The following findings are based on national and various states' initiatives, research on young children's development and learning, and feedback from Guam's early childhood professionals.

School readiness becomes even more complex when we look at what it means to have, not only ready children, but also ready families, ready communities, ready services, and ready schools.

In 1990, the National Education Goals Panel (NEGP) met to plan for children's educational success. The Panel's first educational goal, "By the year 2000, all children in America will start school ready to learn" began the initiatives for school readiness (Action Team on School Readiness, 1992). The three focuses for readiness include readiness in the child, school's readiness for children, and family and community supports and services. The NEGP defined readiness in the child with five dimensions: (1) physical well-being and motor development, (2) social/emotional development, (3) approaches to learning, (4) language development, and (5) cognition and general knowledge. School readiness still remains a priority as evidenced with recent initiatives within the Obama administration, such as the State Advisory Council grants and Race to the Top – Early Learning Challenge (RTT-ELC) initiative (Wat, Bruner, & Hanus, 2012).



# National Context/Common Core State Standards

Research on the topic of school readiness on the state and national levels revealed many findings. The following are a sampling of frameworks from different states:

- Oregon developed its Oregon Kindergarten Readiness Survey, which included 5 domains and 16 indicators and aligned with NEGP's 5 dimensions of readiness.
  - Oregon Kindergarten Readiness Survey was a voluntary, annual survey completed by kindergarten teachers
  - Developed from 10 years of surveys and stakeholder input
- In Arizona, the State Board on School Readiness was created, a 5-year action plan was implemented, and a school readiness website was publicized.
  - Included considerations for health, parent education and family support programs, child care subsidies to access quality child care and preschool, a developed professional development system, Early Education Fund, Advisory Committee, State School Readiness Board, Accountability System
- Colorado, Minnesota, Washington, Oklahoma, and Illinois have developed assessments to align with their state-adopted standards and indicators.
- Twenty-seven (27) out of 48 states with SACs promote linkages between ECE and early elementary education, especially with school readiness plans and kindergarten entry assessments

Third grade academic success is a strong predictor of long-term student achievement. However, in order to achieve student success in 3rd grade, children need earlier supports and positive experiences in kindergarten and with school readiness prior to kindergarten entry. Thus, school readiness is linked to long-term student achievement.

Recently, policies and services have supported children at risk of school failure, including the development of early childhood Quality Rating and Improvement Systems (QRIS); Early Head Start and Head Start; state-funded preschool programs; Good Start, Grow Smart; and American Recovery and Reinvestment Act of 2009 (ARRA, see Public Law 111-5) funding for various early childhood initiatives.

## Common Core State Standards

The Common Core State Standards (CCSS) initiative was developed to bring diverse state curricula into alignment with each other by following the principles of standards-based education reform and is sponsored by the National Governors Association Center for Best Practices and the Council of Chief State School Officers (2010). The purpose of the CCSS, for kindergarten to 12th grade, is to ensure college and career readiness, in which kindergarten/school readiness must precede. As of Fall 2012, 46 states have adopted the evidence-/research-based Common Core State Standards. According to the National Association for the Education of Young Children (NAEYC, 2011), some considerations need to be made at the early childhood



education level in order to address the adoption of the Common Core State Standards:

- The Common Core State Standards are at odds with early childhood education. This continues the trend of increasing academic focus and narrowing instructional approaches focusing on language arts and mathematics.
- Any maintenance or adoption of standards in other developmental domains will not likely be common across states.
- The Common Core State Standards was developed very quickly with limited stakeholder input and limited ECE voice. The “push-down” and “push-up” balance between K-12 and ECE is a concern. There is a need to identify mismatches between K-12 and ECE. CCSS is still under consideration by the early childhood profession.

## GUAM CONTEXT

2010 U.S. Census Data: Student Population	
Preschools	1,651
Kindergarten	2,737
Grades 1-8	22,994
<b>Total population (3 years old and older)</b>	<b>48,137</b>

The National Center for Quality Teaching and Learning (2011) reported that out of all territories of the United States, Guam was one of the three that had early learning standard benchmarks, and the Guam Early Learning Guidelines, Ages Birth to 36 Months and Three to Five Years Old (Early Childhood Care & Education Committee, 2005, 2007). Additionally, the Guam Evaluation and Improvement Rating System (GEIRS) is currently piloted as the Quality Rating and Improvement System (QRIS) for Guam administered through the Department of Public Health and Social Services, Division of Public Welfare, Child Care Development Fund (CCDF). The Guam Department of Education (GDOE) Head Start Program is the only known early childhood program that adheres to a school readiness plan. There is no known school readiness plan at the elementary school level.

In Guam, the Guam Early Learning Council’s School Readiness Initiative began in 2011 with its ARRA funded School Advisory Council Grant in collaboration with Project Tinituhon, Guam’s Early Childhood Comprehensive System, University of Guam Center for Excellence in Developmental Disabilities Education, Research & Service (Guam CEDDERS), Guam Department of Education’s Division of Curriculum & Instruction and the Head Start Program, child care centers, Catholic schools, and other private schools. The State Advisory Council Grant includes the following:

- Goal 3 stipulates that Guam will have a plan for ensuring all young children enter school ready for kindergarten
  - ◆ Objective 3.2: To develop a school readiness plan.
  - ◆ Activity: Conduct a survey of all kindergarten programs of assessment tools used for entering kindergarten students.
- Goal 4 stipulates that Guam will have a process for data collection and sharing, aligned with the early childhood performance indicators, across various early childhood serving agencies and programs
  - ◆ Objective 4.1: To identify data banks that track performance indicators in collaboration with all early childhood agencies and partners.
  - ◆ Activities: Review performance indicators for each focus area that was endorsed by the Guam Early Learning Council. Strategic Management Team focus area work groups will develop a list of data banks that can provide needed data under each performance indicator. (Guam CEDDERS, 2010)

A School Readiness Focus Group first met on July 7, 2011 to identify the needs for a school readiness plan. A Kindergarten School Readiness Survey was developed and pilot tested from September 2011 to July 2012. The survey needed approvals from the University of Guam Institutional Review Board (UOG IRB), GDOE, and Catholic Schools before dissemination in November 2012 to January 2013. An analysis of the completed surveys was finalized in February 2013.

### Kindergarten School Readiness Survey

The Guam Early Learning Council in coordination with Project Tinituhon and Guam CEDDERS disseminated a Kindergarten School Readiness Survey to all schools enrolling kindergarteners in November 2012 to January 2013. The purpose of the survey was to aid in understanding the school context for kindergarteners. The survey was completed by the principal, director, or administrator, as appropriate to the school setting. Thirty-three (33) out of 49 schools (or 67%) completed the survey.

- 2 out of 2 DoDEA Schools
- 11 out of 25 Public GDOE Schools
- 11 out of 11 Catholic Schools
- 9 out of 11 Other Private Schools

The following tables, on pages 8 and 9, summarize the data provided in the completed surveys.

# Kindergarten School Readiness Survey

	Public GDOE Schools	Catholic Schools	Other Private Schools	DoDEA Schools
<b>Birthday cut-off date for enrollment in kindergarten</b>	July 31	December 31	April 1 – December 31	September 1
<b>Number of kindergarten classrooms</b>	2-7 classrooms per school, total of 53 classrooms	1-3 classrooms per school, total of 21 classrooms	1-3 classrooms per school, total of 12 classrooms	5,8 classrooms per school, total of 13 classrooms
<b>Number of students in each classroom</b>	15-21 students per class; average of 19 students in each class	12-33 students per class; average of 22 students in each class	10-25 students per class; average of 19 students in each class	Average of 18 students in each class
<b>Teacher-student ratio</b>	1:16 - 1:25	1:10 - 1:28	1:6 - 1:20	1:18
<b>Curriculum used in kindergarten</b>	6 Direct Instruction, 2 Success For All, 3 standards-based	Archdiocesan curriculum	2 A Beka®, 2 A.C.E. Curriculum, 1 Alpha Omega Publications®, 1 BJU Press®, 1 Chinese, 1 Japanese, 1 Montessori, 1 North American Division Curriculum	Everyday Math, Reading Streets, McGraw Hill Science, Pearson Social Studies
<b>Standardized assessment at kindergarten entrance</b>	9 out of 11	3 out of 11 (1 Brigance®)	1 out of 11 (1 A.C.E. curriculum®)	No
<b>Instructional units/ lesson plans</b>	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes
<b>Individualized program evaluations</b>	9 out of 11	Yes	9 out of 11	Yes
<b>Supports for counseling, tutoring, for English Language Learners, and for students with disabilities</b>	11 have counseling support, 10 have tutoring support, 10 have support for English Language Learners, and 10 have support for students with disabilities	7 have counseling support, 7 have tutoring support, 4 have support for English Language Learners, and 9 have support for students with disabilities	5 have counseling support, 8 have tutoring support, 6 have support for English Language Learners, and 8 have support for students with disabilities	2 have counseling support, 2 have tutoring support, 2 have support for English Language Learners, and 2 have support for students with disabilities
<b>Types of data maintained for each student</b>	Demographics, ESL status, free/reduced lunch status, attendance, health record, discipline record, assessments	Health record, assessments; mix of the following for some schools: student registration record, SAT 10, progress reports, injury reports, financial report, parent information, cumulative folder	Health record, assessments; mix of the following for some schools: accident reports, progress reports, diagnostic tests	Health record, assessments



# Kindergarten School Readiness Survey

	Public GDOE Schools	Catholic Schools	Other Private Schools	DoDEA Schools
<b>Process for retention</b>	Notify parents, counselor, and administration; form documentation; form Child Study Team; plan; intervention; possibility of ESL or SPED referral	Notify parents, teachers, and principals; conference; review student data; monitor progress; summer school referral; possibility of SPED referral; recommendation for tutoring	Teacher/parent/principal conference; summer school recommendation; extra lessons, tutoring; dependent on examinations with allowances for retesting for most other private schools; 2 schools avoid retention	Only parents can request for retention but the school can recommend retention for consideration by the principal

Entrance Requirements				
	Public GDOE Schools	Catholic Schools	Other Private Schools	DoDEA Schools
<b>Toilet trained</b>	No	10 out of 11 Yes	Yes	No
<b>Required Documents</b>	School registration form, ID (birth certificate/passport), proof of residency (mayor's verification, utility bill, lease agreement), health clearance (physical exam, immunizations record, recent TB test) for all public schools	School registration packet, ID (birth certificate), health clearance (physical exam, immunizations record, recent TB test) for Catholic private schools; additionally, 1 school requires baptismal certificate (if applicable), 1 school requires a placement test	Enrollment form, ID (birth certificate, SSN), health clearance (physical exam, immunizations record, recent TB test) for other private schools; additionally, 1 school requires motivation to learn, 1 school requires understanding, 1 school requires maturity, 1 school requires diagnostic test	PCS orders/certification letter, school forms, birth certificate, passport, immunizations record
<b>Teacher Qualifications vs. Educational Backgrounds</b>	High school diploma, DOE screening process and training, experience preferred vs. 3 have high school diploma, 1 has Associate's degree, all have Bachelor's degree or higher for all public schools	High school diploma, police & court clearances, 2 require Associate's degree and 1 year experience, 3 require Bachelor's degree vs. 1 has high school diploma/GED, the rest have Associate's degree or higher, 1 has Doctoral degree for Catholic private schools	High school diploma, 2 require police & court clearances and health certificate, 2 require some college, 3 require training, 1 requires experience with children, 1 requires U.S. citizenship or work visa, 1 requires literacy in a specified language, experience preferred vs. all have high school diploma, 1 has a CDA, 1 has Associate's degree, 7 have Bachelor's degree or higher for other private schools	College degree with a minimum of 34 college credits in early childhood vs. Associate's and Bachelor's degrees with 34 college credits in early childhood and/or ECE/CDA certificate

# Guam Department of Education

Guam Department of Education SY2011-2012	
SY2011-2012 Student Population	
Total of 40 public schools	31,095 students
26 elementary schools (grades kindergarten to 5)	13,813 students
Total of kindergarteners enrolled in 126 kindergarten classrooms in 26 elementary schools	2,106 students
Total of preschoolers enrolled in 41 preschool classrooms in elementary schools	750 students
Total 534 preschoolers enrolled in public school in 27 Head Start classrooms in 20 elementary schools, 141 preschoolers in 5 Part B Early Childhood Special Education classrooms in 4 elementary schools (of which 51 are also enrolled in Head Start), and 126 preschoolers in 9 GATE preschool classrooms in 7 schools	534 preschoolers

First Grade SAT10 Performance-Based Assessment				
	Below basic level	Basic level	Proficient level	Advanced level
<b>SY 2011-2012 results for Reading</b>	17%	36%	39%	8%
<b>SY 2011-2012 results for Math</b>	16%	56%	25%	3%
<b>SY 2011-2012 results for Language</b>	29%	61%	9%	4%

*\*From the previous SY 2010-2011, there was a decrease of 3 percentage points for those that performed at the proficient and advanced levels. Furthermore, there was a continue decline in performance at the proficient and advanced levels since SY 2007-2008.*

SY2011-2012 Passing or Promotion Rate	
	Passing Rate
<b>Kindergarten</b>	100%
<b>Elementary School (Kindergarten to 5)</b>	100%
<b>Middle School (Grades 6 to 8)</b>	86%
<b>High School (Grades 9 to 12)</b>	77%
<i>*The dropout rate in high school grades 9 to 12 is 5.3% (or 522 total) (Fernandez, 2012).</i>	





The Guam Department of Education has followed the national initiatives as the Guam Education Board adopted the K-12 Language Arts/English and Mathematics Common Core State Standards on February 29, 2012. This is an opportunity for the existing Guam Department of Education content standards and performance indicators other than language arts and mathematics to remain or be revised.

Guam's Comprehensive Education Improvement Plan, or Goals 2000, included school readiness as its first goal. Goal 1 stated that, "All children on Guam will start school ready to learn." The following section will detail the proposal to achieve the goal of school readiness.

## **Head Start**

The Guam Head Start's School Readiness Plan, which was officially formalized with 45CFR §1307, Policies and Procedures for Designation Renewal of Head Start and Early Head Start Grantees (see Appendix), included four steps to ensure school readiness, with the deadline of December 11, 2011 for compliance:

- School readiness goals—aligned with 5 dimensions of readiness: social emotional development, approaches to learning, language and literacy, cognitive and general knowledge, and physical development and health
- Implement a plan of action
- Assess child progress regularly
- Analyze data in order to revise, develop, and implement a plan for program improvement

The Head Start framework to school readiness includes staff, child, family, community considerations, services, outcomes, and goals. Guam Head Start has adopted Dial-3™ as the entrance developmental screen when children enter the program and conducts regular ongoing assessments using Teaching Strategies GOLD®, which is then reported three times during the school year.

For SY 2011-2012, Head Start served 534 children, ages 3-5 years old. A total of 578 children were enrolled but did not complete the program. Of this population, 282 were Chamorro, 126 were mixed ethnicities, 106 were from the Freely Associated States (FAS), 59 were Filipino, and 4 were other ethnicities. In terms of ages, 81 were 3-years-old, 494 were 4-years-old, and 2 were 5-years-old. Fifty-six (56) of these students had identified special needs. In SY 2011-2012, the Head Start fall report showed that 85-90% of children who entered the program in 2011 were below age expectancy in four out of the five dimensions of readiness (Guam Head Start, 2013a). This pattern shifts later in the year, during winter and spring, showing that children have made substantial gains while in the program. In the spring, 85% of children exceeded age expectations in all areas of development. This pattern is also repeated for SY 2012-2013 (Guam Head Start, 2013b).

## **Private Schools**

In 2013, the total student enrollment in Catholic private schools for preK-4 was 339 students and for kindergarten was 438 students. Thirteen (13) of these students had identified special needs. Of the 438



# Private Schools/Military Schools/Homeschool/Guam Research

kindergarteners, 283 were Chamorro, 222 were Filipino, 34 were Caucasian, 30 were Korean, 20 were Japanese, 34 were other Asian ethnicities, 14 were Micronesian, and 181 were other/mixed ethnicities. The seven Catholic private preschools have chosen to universally implement the DIAL-R™ for all of its preschool children beginning in SY2013-2014. Plans for training and implementation are currently ongoing.

The kindergarten student population information from other private schools was not available.

## DoDEA Schools

The United States Department of Defense Education Activity (DoDEA) has two elementary schools on Guam, Andersen Elementary and Commander William C. McCool Elementary Schools, for children of military members. DoDEA eligibility includes: a child being four years old by September 1 to attend universal pre-kindergarten and five years old by September 1 to enroll in kindergarten and the requirements outlines in Section 2164 of title 10 United States Code and Department of Defense Instruction (DoDI) 1342-26, "Eligibility Requirements for Minor Dependents to Attend Department of Defense Domestic Dependent Elementary and Secondary Schools."

## Homeschool

The Guam Department of Education's Board Policy No. 352: Home Study Program indicates the allowances for the home school protocol (see Appendix). Therefore, due to the various types of home school programs available to families, the data collection is a challenge. The kindergarten student population information for those being schooled at home was not available.

## Guam Research

Only one study was found on the topic of school readiness in Guam. The study found that Guam's parents' and teachers' definitions of readiness differed (Cruz, 2003). Parents had a more academic focus when preparing their children whereas teachers had a more holistic developmental perspective,

including social, emotional, physical, and cognitive skills needed in the kindergarten classroom. The following is a list of parents' and teachers' definitions of readiness:

Parents' Ideas of Readiness	Teachers' Ideas of Readiness
	*Are motivated to learn
	*Follow class schedule
	*Are able to listen
*Follow directions	*Follow directions
*Obey rules	*Obey rules
	*Are able to focus and stay on task
	*Are self-disciplined and self-controlled
	*Have developed social-emotional skills
	*Use the restroom independently
	*Hold a pencil properly
*Identify and spell name	*Use a glue bottle
*Recite phone number and address	*Have basic information of self and family
*Identify ABCs, numbers, colors, shapes	*Know letters, numbers, colors, shapes, nursery rhymes, songs

It is important to understand parents and teachers expectations for school readiness because in order for children to be successful with transitioning into Kindergarten it is quite helpful to have a good understanding and agreement on what readiness means.

Keeping the Guam context in mind, the School Readiness Plan for Guam follows.





## PLAN FOR GUAM

### **Purpose**

Research shows that educational achievement gaps exist at kindergarten entry (School Readiness Indicators Initiative, 2005). Too many children enter kindergarten with delays in their physical, social, emotional, language, and cognitive development that could have been addressed before entering school, which led to the necessity of a plan that promotes school readiness for all children in Guam.

The purposes of this plan are to:

- Create a set of measurable indicators related to school readiness that can be tracked regularly over time,
- Provide data on children's growth and well-being, which includes how prepared children are when entering school and with being ready to learn,
- Analyze data on children's school readiness in order to understand and provide for their needs, and
- Develop policies, strategies, and programs to improve children's student outcomes in kindergarten and through to completion of high school.

### **Definition of Readiness**

Guam's current definition of school readiness is based on children's chronological age as stated in Guam Public Law and in Guam Education Board Policy, which collectively states that children who are age five by July 31 of the current year shall attend kindergarten.

The School Readiness Plan for Guam will follow statutory law and education/school board policy (see Appendix). By no means should kindergarten-aged children be excluded from entry into schools.

However, the definition of school readiness should include measures to ensure that children enter school with the ability to learn and be successful in school. According to NAEYC (1995), school readiness requires "(1) addressing the inequities in early life experience so that all children have access to the opportunities that promote school success; (2) recognizing and supporting individual differences among children including linguistic and cultural differences; and (3) establishing reasonable and appropriate expectations of children's capabilities upon school entry." (p. 1)

NAEYC also believe in shifting the responsibility of readiness solely from the child and instead place an emphasis of readiness on that of children, schools and teachers, and parents and families. Ready schools and teachers mean being responsible for meeting "the needs of children as they enter school and to provide whatever services are needed in the least restrictive environment to help each child reach his or her fullest potential" (NAEYC, 1995, p. 1). Ready parents and families mean being responsible for helping children develop and prepare for school and addressing the emotional struggles with the transition process. The School Readiness Plan for Guam acknowledges the entire community's roles and responsibilities with helping children prepare for kindergarten.

# Kindergarten Entry Assessment

## Kindergarten Entry Assessment

Kindergarten Entry Assessment is a tool for gauging and supporting children's readiness for kindergarten. In May 2010, the Race to the Top – Early Learning Challenge (RTT-ELC) initiative was established with \$500 million federal dollars. In 2011, 35 out of 37 RTT-ELC grant applicant states included Kindergarten Entry Assessments in their plans. All nine states that received RTT-ELC first-round funding included KEA work in their applications with a schedule for implementation by SY 2014-2015. (Wat et al., 2012)

Currently, fourteen states, California, Colorado, Connecticut, Florida, Hawaii, Illinois, Kansas, Minnesota, Montana, North Carolina, Oklahoma, Pennsylvania, Vermont, and Washington have developed their own Kindergarten Entry Assessments to align with their state-adopted standards and indicators. Twelve states are using existing standardized Kindergarten Entry Assessments. Thirteen states indicated that they are currently using no assessment at kindergarten entry. The majority of states have reported the need to develop, revise, or expand their statewide Kindergarten Entry Assessments to include all five domains of school readiness and which aligned with the state's early learning standards. (Wat et al., 2012)

Since 46 states have adopted the Common Core State Standards, this practice of Kindergarten Entry Assessments will likely change to reflect these newly adopted standards. Since Guam has also adopted the Common Core State Standards, the same consideration may be made in the future.

### Purpose:

The purposes of Kindergarten Entry Assessments include: to monitor school readiness statewide, to screen or inform instruction for individual children, to report data to the state, to improve existing supports and services to children, and to identify at-risk populations to plan for additional supports and services. Numerous assessments exist for this purpose. In order to be beneficial, a model Kindergarten Entry Assessment should include measures for all five dimensions of readiness: (1) physical well-being and motor development, (2) social/emotional development, (3) approaches to learning, (4) language development, and (5) cognition and general knowledge. Kindergarten Entry Assessments, when properly implemented, can contribute to the success of early childhood programs, intervention services, and school systems, especially kindergarten classrooms (Snow, 2011).

### Goals:

- The goals with conducting a model Kindergarten Entry Assessment are to:
- Standardize the definition of school readiness in Guam,
- Identify an established set of measurable school readiness

indicators that can be tracked regularly over time,

- Identify areas in children's development that differ from other children of the same age, and
- Align to the Guam's Early Childhood Comprehensive System, the Guam Early Learning Council Early Childhood State Plan, and its data systems.

A developmental screen was the preferred type of Kindergarten Entry Assessment by the Guam Early Learning Council to identify strengths and needs with children's development and indicate the need for further assessment when children's development differs substantially from typical development based on same-age norms.

## Kindergarten Screen and Assessment

In the Guam public schools, the Brigance® assessment tool was adopted and administered to all incoming kindergarten students from the late 1980s to early 1990s. The Brigance Early Childhood Screen® is used to quickly and accurately identify children who may have developmental delays or may be academically talented or gifted. It has been credited as a model assessment for kindergarten entry both nationally through research and application in numerous school districts, and locally with the historical use within the Guam Department of Education and the endorsement of the Guam Early Learning Council.

As part of the recent Title V-A Consolidated Grant, Improving Student Learning & Achievement (ISLA) Program, the Brigance K & 1 Screen® has been identified to be implemented for incoming kindergarten students beginning with SY 2013-2014. The purpose of this grant-funded activity is to provide K-3 early childhood educators training opportunities and tools "to better prepare students for entry into the higher rigors of education" (GDOE, 2012, p. 50). As part of the budget appropriations, Activity 0230, District-wide Assessments & Training, \$50,000 was identified for Common Assessments, specifically Brigance K & 1 Screen®. The intent is to purchase the Brigance® screen for every kindergarten classroom and teacher to utilize as "a basic screener for school readiness for all kindergarten students in order to provide teachers, school and district assessment information to help determine their specific educational and development needs" (Guam DOE, 2012).

## Guam's Model Kindergarten Entry Assessment

The Brigance® assessments have been nationally standardized, and collect highly reliable, valid, and accurate data on young children (Halle et al., 2011). The Guam Early Learning Council's School Readiness Plan Workgroup, which was comprised of representatives from the Guam Early Learning Council, Project Tinituhon, the Guam Department of

# Kindergarten Entry Assessment, cont.

Education, including Head Start, the Catholic schools, and several private schools and child care centers, have all given their endorsement for the Brigance Early Childhood K & 1 Screen®. Individual schools may choose to use the Brigance Early Childhood K & 1 Screen® or other comparable quality Kindergarten Entry Assessment.

The Brigance K & 1 Screen®:

- Is intended for 5-8 years olds
- Is 10-15 minutes in length
- Is a checklist based on classroom activities
- Is a screening and instructional assessment
- Provides a sampling of child's skills and behaviors, identifies needs for more comprehensive assessment, assist in program/instructional planning, monitors child's growth
- Measures physical, social/emotional, language & literacy, cognition
- Has established reliability and validity
- Has widespread use
- Is available in English; alternate test forms in Spanish, Tagalog, Vietnamese, Laotian, Cambodian, and for children with special needs
- Is aligned with Common Core State Standards and DIAL-3™.

According to the Brigance® Inventory of Early Development II, there are several sequential comprehensive skills within the physical, language, cognitive, daily living, and social and emotional developmental domains (Brigance, 2010). The Inventory of Early Development II spells out specific comprehensive developmental milestone skills that fall within

each developmental age level. There are specific sets of skills related to the prekindergarten (four years to five years) and kindergarten (five years to six years) ages (see Brigance, 2010). The categories directly related to academic readiness for kindergarteners are: (1) Attitude, (2) Work Habits, (3) Emotional Stability, (4) Mental Maturity, (5) Vision, (6) Hearing, and (7) Physically Fit and Healthy.

Some of the indicators under the categories for academic readiness include:

- Being motivated to learn (Attitude);
- Liking school (Attitude);
- Having the ability to follow 1- or 2- step directions (Work Habits);
- Being confident (Emotional Stability);
- Understanding how one's actions affects others (Emotional Stability);
- Having the ability to recall a sequence of events (Mental Maturity);
- Seeing the classroom chalkboard, whiteboard, or screen clearly (Vision);
- Recognizing sounds and rhymes in familiar words, songs, and stories (Hearing); and
- Having an adequate energy level (Physically Fit and Healthy) (Brigance, 2010, p. 407).

By adopting the practice of implementing a Kindergarten Entry Assessment, the State Advisory Council Grant Goal 4 is addressed. The Kindergarten Entry Assessment will provide useful data on school readiness to the state of Guam.



# Recommendations

1. Continue to refine the current School Readiness Plan for Guam, as needed.
2. Connect the differing perspectives and priorities with early childhood education and elementary education for the sake of the children.
3. Align with the GDOE adopted standards (Common Core State Standards), the Archdiocesan curriculum standards, and other private schools' adopted curriculum standards, all from the school level, as well as the Guam Early Learning Guidelines at the early childhood/preschool level
4. Align with the Guam Early Learning Council model of Kindergarten Entry Assessment (Brigance K-1 Screen®) and other school-adopted Kindergarten Entry Assessments
5. Develop action steps and strategies to develop readiness in children, parents/families, schools/programs, and teachers/service providers, and community:

## CHILDREN:

- ◆ Provide children with services and programs to enrich their development and prepare them for school
- ◆ Help children cope with the transition process

## PARENTS/FAMILIES:

- ◆ Provide information and training to parents and families to help their children foster the attitudes, knowledge, and skills that define readiness
- ◆ Help parents and families cope with the transition process

## SCHOOLS/PROGRAMS:

- ◆ Ensure all schools accept all children entering school
- ◆ Ensure all schools provide for children's individual needs in the least restrictive environment possible
- ◆ Foster safe and healthy environments which are supportive for learning and where children's challenging behaviors are addressed
  - ◆ Promote definite rules and codes of conduct around the school and in classrooms

## KINDERGARTEN TEACHERS/SERVICE PROVIDERS:

- ◆ Provide kindergarten teachers and service providers with training to screen/assess children
- ◆ Provide kindergarten teachers and service providers with training to utilize Kindergarten Entry Assessment data to individualize plans for instruction and services

## PRE-KINDERGARTEN TEACHERS/SERVICE PROVIDERS:

- ◆ Provide pre-kindergarten teachers and service providers with training to understand children's readiness skills
- ◆ Provide pre-kindergarten teachers and service providers with training to plan for instruction and services to help children develop readiness

## COMMUNITY:

- ◆ Provide public awareness to the community on Guam's definition and plan for school readiness
- ◆ Support providing appropriate documentation and clearances needed for school enrollment, such as physical exam, immunizations, TB test, birth certificate, passport, social security card, mayor's verification, utility bill, lease agreement, etc.
- ◆ Provide community supports/programs to help children and their families get ready for school

The Guam Early Learning Council will include the School Readiness Plan for Guam as a priority in its initiatives and the Early Childhood State Plan.



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# Appendix: School Compulsory Laws and Policies

The following Guam public laws outline compulsory age:

Guam Public Law No. 24-26, An Act To Amend §6103 and §6104 of Chapter 6 of Title 17 of The Guam Code Annotated, Relative To The Age at Which Children May Enroll in School.

- §6103: Children who Have Reached the Age of Five (5) Years Eligible to Attend.
  - ◆ Any child whose fifth birthday falls on or before the commencement date of classes may, in such year, enroll in the kindergarten of any public school within the Territory which he is otherwise eligible to attend, except that any child whose fifth birthday falls within one hundred twenty-five (125) after the beginning date of classes on the school calendar in the attendance area where they live, and are designated to attend, may enroll in kindergarten, subject to the approval of the principal of the school pursuant to the policy mandated by Section 3 of this Act.
  - ◆ The effective date of this Section shall be the start of school year 1998-1999.

Guam Public Law No. 25-153, An Act To Amend §6102 of Article 1, Chapter 6, Division 2 of Title 17 of The Guam Code Annotated, Relative To Clarifying The Compulsory Attendance Age Range For Children on Guam.

- §6102. Duty to Send Children to School.
  - ◆ Any parent, guardian or other person having control or charge of any child who is at least five (5) years of age and has not reached the age of sixteen (16) years, not exempted under the provisions of this Article, shall send the child to a public or private full-time day school for the full-time of which such schools are in session, except that the starting date of school for children five (5) years of age shall be determined by the provisions of §§6103 and 6104 of this Article.
  - ◆ The Director of Education is authorized to establish attendance areas.
  - ◆ Any parent, guardian or other person having control or charge of any such child who is at least five (5) years of age and has not reached the age of sixteen (16) years who fails to comply with the provisions of this Section, unless excused or exempted therefrom, is guilty of a violation for the first offense, and subject to a fine of not more than Fifty Dollars (\$50.00). For each subsequent offense, the person is guilty of a petty misdemeanor.

Guam Public Law No. 26-104, An Act To Amend Chapters 5 and 6, And To Repeal Article 2 of Chapter 6, All of Title 17 of The Guam Code Annotated, Relative To Restoring the 'Non-Governance/ Administrative Provisions' Enacted By P.L. Nos. 24-142 and 24-299.

- §6102. Duty to Send Children to School.
  - ◆ Any parent, guardian or other person having control or charge of any child who is at least five (5) years of age and has not reached the age of sixteen (16) years, not exempted

under the provisions of this Article, shall send the child to a public or private full-time day school for the full-time of which such schools are in session, except that the starting date of school for children five (5) years of age shall be determined by the provisions of §§6103 and 6107 of this Article.

- ◆ The Superintendent is authorized to establish attendance areas. Any parent, guardian or other person having control or charge of any such child who is at least five (5) years of age, and has not reached the age of sixteen (16) years, who fails to comply with the provisions of this Section, unless excused or exempted therefrom, is guilty of a violation for the first offense, and subject to a fine of not more than Fifty Dollars (\$50.00). For each subsequent offense, the person is guilty of a petty misdemeanor.

The following Guam Education Board Policy outlines compulsory age:

Guam Education Board Policy No. 330, Entrance and Attendance Ages: Registration and Removal.

- Part I: Introduction
  - ◆ Two principles govern the placement of students into their proper grades.
    1. Guam law 26-104 requires students who are from five (5) through fifteen (15) years of age to attend school. However, students who turn five after 31 July cannot be enrolled in Kindergarten for that school year. [Source: 17GCA §6105.1]
    2. Guam law requires that all students who are from five through fifteen must be in school. The Office of Civil Rights has established criteria for determining the proper placement of these children. (Amended: 10/04/05) [Source: 17GCA §6102]
- Part II: Entrance
  - ◆ A child must be five (5) years of age by July 31 in order to be enrolled in Kindergarten for that school year. A birth certificate is required as proof of age. If a birth certificate cannot be obtained by the parent or guardian, other proof of age satisfactory to the principal will be accepted. (Amended: 10/04/05)
  - ◆ The Guam Education Policy Board may use the last day of the month in which classes begin for determining the minimum age a child shall attend school in cases where the beginning date of classes in the school calendar is advanced to an earlier starting date to accommodate special events or programs. At least three (3) months' notice shall be given of any changes to advance the beginning date of classes in the school year calendar, to include which date will be used in determining the minimum enrollment age that children shall attend classes. (Amended: 10/04/05) [Source: 17GCA §6106]

# Appendix: School Readiness Policies and Procedures

## Appendix: Home School Policy



### Head Start's School Readiness Policies and Procedures

The following federal laws outlines Head Start's goals for school readiness:

45 CFR §1307, Policies and Procedures for Designation Renewal of Head Start and Early Head Start Grantees.

- §1307.3: Basis for determining whether a Head Start agency will be subject to an open competition.
  - ◆ After December 9, 2011, taken steps to achieve the school readiness goals described under paragraph (b)(1) of this section demonstrated by:
    - ◆ Aggregating and analyzing aggregate child-level assessment data at least three times per year (except for programs operating less than 90 days, which will be required to do so at least twice within their operating program period) and using that data in combination with other program data to determine grantees' progress toward meeting its goals, to inform parents and the community of results, and to direct continuous improvement related to curriculum, instruction, professional development, program design and other program decisions; and
    - ◆ Analyzing individual ongoing, child-level assessment data for all children birth to age five participating in the program and using that data in combination with input from parents and families to determine each child's status and progress with regard to, at a minimum, language and literacy development, cognition and general knowledge, approaches toward learning, physical well-being and motor development, and social and emotional development and to individualize the experiences, instructional strategies, and services to best support each child.



### Home School Policy

The following Guam Education Board Policy outlines allowances for home schools:

Guam Education Board Policy No. 352: Home Study Program.

- It is the policy of the Department of Education that students who do not attend public schools in accordance with this law shall not be considered as public school students in any manner. Consequently, the Department shall have no regulatory authority over these students, now shall these students be entitled to receive any of the services or academic recognitions and designations provided by the Department to public school students-inclusive of but not limited to the granting of credits to be used for obtaining a high school diploma-except for those services and academic recognitions and designations as may be required by federal or local laws and regulations.





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