

VKRP Executive Summary

Excerpted from the VKRP
Annual Report for the
Chairmen of House
Appropriations and Senate
Finance Committees for the
2024-2025 School Year



Acknowledgments

This Executive Summary is excerpted from the [VKRP Annual Report \(2024-25\)](#). Prepared by the University of Virginia's Center for Advanced Study of Teaching and Learning (CASTL) and the Virginia Department of Education (VDOE), supported through an appropriation from the Virginia General Assembly to the Virginia Department of Education subcontracted to CASTL. Correspondence concerning this report should be addressed to Jenna Conway, Chief of Early Learning and Specialized Populations, VDOE (Jenna.Conway@doe.virginia.gov). The Virginia Kindergarten Readiness Program (VKRP) is implemented by CASTL under the direction of Amanda Williford (williford@virginia.edu).

VKRP empowers educators, families, and leaders by providing actionable information about young students' learning and growth.

Executive Summary

In the October 2025 data report¹ of the [Virginia Kindergarten Readiness Program \(VKRP\)](#) to the General Assembly, we report on the fall, mid-year, and spring kindergarten data collected during the 2024–2025 academic year, kindergarten data trends from fall 2019 through spring 2025, and 2024–2025 pre-kindergarten fall, mid-year, and spring data for three- and four-year-old publicly-funded pre-kindergarten children. The report also provides an update on the mathematics, self-regulation, social skills, and mental health well-being assessment pilot in first through third grades (1-3 Assessment Pilot) and shares future goals of the VKRP system for the 2025–2026 year and beyond.

VKRP empowers Virginia's families, teachers, and education leaders by providing a more comprehensive assessment system that shines a spotlight on pre-kindergarten and kindergarten students' learning and growth. VKRP is a Virginia standards-aligned, multi-year early learning assessment system that produces actionable information to guide decisions at the student, classroom, school/program, and division levels from the beginning of pre-kindergarten through the end of kindergarten to support student learning. VKRP provides assessments of mathematics, self-regulation, and social skills to complement Virginia's longstanding literacy [screeners](#) (Virginia Language & Literacy Screener: Kindergarten (VALLS: K) and Virginia Language & Literacy Screener: Pre-K (VALLS: Pre-K)). Literacy data in this 2024–2025 report includes data from the VALLS: K, VALLS: Pre-K, and historical Phonological Awareness Literacy Screener-Kindergarten (PALS-K) data. Throughout the report, it will be specified where historical PALS-K data is included. Additional information on the literacy screeners can be found on the [VLP website](#).

The 2024–2025 literacy data gathered from VALLS: Pre-K and VALLS: K come directly from Virginia Literacy Partnerships (VLP). This is the first year of statewide implementation of the VALLS: K. The new literacy screening system better reflects the component skills necessary for children to be successful in literacy over time and is more sensitive to literacy risk. As such, more children were classified as at high-risk for literacy difficulties at kindergarten entry as compared to previous years when the Phonological Awareness Literacy Screener (PALS-K) was implemented.

From 2014 through 2018, the [Center for Advanced Study of Teaching and Learning \(CASTL\) at the University of Virginia](#) designed, piloted, and implemented VKRP in kindergarten through a voluntary rollout where, each year, an increasing number of school divisions elected to administer VKRP. Virginia began statewide mandatory kindergarten administration of VKRP in the 2019–2020 school year.

The VKRP team developed a four-year-old pre-kindergarten extension of VKRP between 2018–2021. In the 2021–2022 school year, VKRP became available to all publicly-funded pre-kindergarten programs to assess four-year-old children's skills in fall 2021 and spring 2022. Additionally, the VKRP team developed a three-year-old extension of VKRP, which became available to all publicly-funded pre-kindergarten programs to assess three-year-old children's skills in the 2022–2023 school year. In 2024–2025, VKRP became available for an optional mid-year assessment timepoint.

Defining Readiness for Summative Purposes

Virginia defines school readiness as, “the capabilities of children, their families, schools, and communities that best promote student success in kindergarten and beyond.” For summative purposes, kindergarten students are categorized as *ready or meeting the overall benchmark* (fall) or *meeting the overall benchmark* (spring) if their assessment scores indicate that they demonstrate minimally expected skills for the fall or the spring (depending upon data timepoint) as indicated by being at or above the benchmark in mathematics, self-regulation, and social skills, and in the

¹ This report was submitted to satisfy the requirement that, “the Department shall submit such findings using data from the prior year's fall assessment to the Chairmen of House Appropriations and Senate Finance Committees no later than October 1 each year.”

Moderate- or Low-Risk Band for literacy. If a kindergarten students' assessment scores do **not** indicate that they are demonstrating the minimally expected skill **in one or more** areas as indicated by being below the benchmark in mathematics, self-regulation, and social skills, and/or in the High-Risk Band for literacy at the respective timepoint (fall or spring), they are categorized as not ready or below the overall benchmark (fall) or below the overall benchmark (spring).

VKRP does not publish benchmarks for pre-kindergarten children's skills. Instead, for pre-kindergarten, VKRP uses Skill Development Bands (Beginning, Growing, and Strong) to help educators, programs, schools, and families interpret and use VKRP pre-kindergarten data. Separate bands are established for the fall and spring to represent children's skill development as compared to expectations at that particular point in time. The Skill Development Bands indicate where children are in their development of early learning skills so that teachers can provide appropriate support and instruction. Skill Development Bands are not intended to serve as benchmarks. The Skill Development Bands indicate where children are in their development of early learning skills so that teachers can provide appropriate support and instruction. VLP created separate Skill Development Bands for VALLS: Pre-K. For more information on the VLP Literacy Skill Development Bands, see the [VALLS: Pre-K specific reports](#) on the VLP website.

The VKRP Mental Health Well-being Items provide valuable information about student behavior that is important for their successful school adaptation. However, they are not part of the overall benchmark in kindergarten or the Skill Development Bands in pre-kindergarten. Information from these items is shared with teachers to help facilitate conversations between educators, instructional leaders, school counselors, other school personnel, and families on how best to support students.

VKRP and the COVID-19 Pandemic

The COVID-19 pandemic disrupted young students' early learning environments, contributing to losses in foundational school readiness skills. These impacts were especially pronounced for students from families with low-income backgrounds and students with limited access to high

quality, robust early learning opportunities. Although schools and communities have worked diligently to support recovery, continued efforts are needed to reduce early learning gaps and mitigate negative long-term effects. Kindergarten students in the 2024-2025 school year were required to be five years old by September 30, 2024, meaning most students were born in 2019. These students were infants and toddlers during the height of the COVID-19 pandemic, and many may have experienced early developmental disruptions. VKRP's longitudinal data collection allows for monitoring school readiness trends over time, offering insight into how students are recovering, and where additional investments are needed.

How Statewide VKRP Data Can Be Used in Virginia

VKRP highlights the strengths of Virginia's pre-kindergarten and kindergarten children, bringing attention to areas where students need support to maximize their learning. For teachers and school personnel, VKRP data can help drive day-to-day instruction, guide conversations with families, and inform decisions about educators' professional development needs (Figure 1). At the state level, VKRP data inform policy decisions and help identify schools, programs, divisions, and regions that may need more support or can serve as exemplars.

VKRP can be used by various stakeholders to better understand and support students' academic and social-emotional learning and development, as well as their mental health well-being.

Virginia Connects for Kids Integrates VDOE's Early Childhood Data Systems

Three of Virginia's key early childhood data collection initiatives include LinkB5², the Virginia Language & Literacy Screening System (VALLSS), and VKRP. These initiatives are central to understanding and supporting young learners. In 2022, VDOE provided funding through the federal Preschool Development Grant Funds and American Rescue Plan Act to a team of researchers within UVA's School of Education and Human Development (EHD) to develop and implement a coordinated and integrated technology strategy and shared

² LinkB5 is the data system used to collect and analyze measurement and improvement data across early childhood programs participating in Virginia's unified system, Virginia Quality Birth to Five (VQB5). The use of LinkB5 is a requirement for all publicly-funded sites as part of VQB5.

FIGURE 1: How Statewide Data Can Be Used in Virginia



infrastructure between the growing state data collection initiatives (LinkB5, VALLSS, VKRP) to maximize the impact and potential of these data systems. The integrated data system, Virginia Connects for Kids (VACconnects), ensures that each project can not only sustain individual growth and expansion, but also work together to prioritize the integrity and continuity of data needed to inform and strengthen Virginia's sizeable investment in learners—birth through eighth grade (Figure 2).

The goals of the integrated data system are to build a robust, coordinated system with enhanced hosting infrastructure and security features; shared data warehousing reflecting effective data governance; consistent, aligned, and integrated reporting; and a more streamlined user interface. In 2024–2025, the VACconnects team worked in partnership with VDOE to continue establishing security infrastructure, developing and implementing a Data Governance Framework, improving the user interface and reporting services, and launched statewide for VALLSS: K-3 users for data entry and reporting. VACconnects will fully launch in August of 2025 with more than 80,000 users expected to log in this fall.

Once fully launched, VACconnects will link early childhood classroom and site quality with assessment results for thousands of children in the Commonwealth. These complex datasets will give stakeholders across Virginia the

ability to clearly understand the impact of investments in early childhood on school readiness, literacy, mathematics, social-emotional learning, and other academic outcomes. In addition to connecting data for each child across initiatives like VQB5³, VKRP, and VALLSS, VACconnects will also link data for individual children across years. For the first time, Virginia will have insight into children's birth-to-five and K-12 experiences in a single continuum of data while still protecting student privacy and prioritizing security.

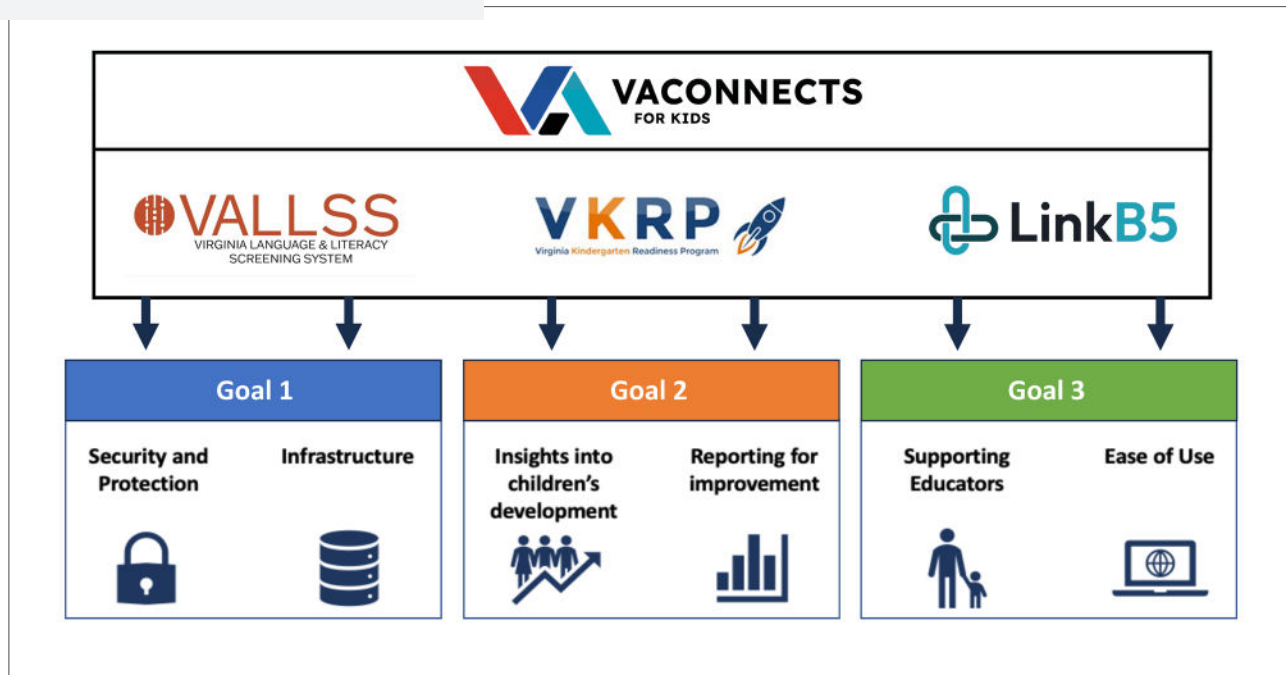
By leveraging Virginia's other technology initiatives like the Virginia Longitudinal Data System (VLDS), VACconnects can fill the gap on data for the youngest children in the Commonwealth and contribute to a deeper understanding of insightful education and workforce development data, beginning in early childhood. Over time, policy makers will understand how decisions and investments in early childhood can impact downstream outcomes like high school graduation, higher education attainment, workforce participation, and more.

2024-2025 Kindergarten Students Assessed with VKRP

In fall 2024, kindergarten teachers assessed approximately 97% of kindergarten children using the Virginia Language & Literacy Screener: Kindergarten (VALLS: K) and the Early Mathematics Assessment System (EMAS) mathematics

³ Virginia Quality Birth to Five System (VQB5) is a system designed to measure and help improve the quality of all publicly-funded birth-to-five classrooms and support families to choose quality programming across program types.

FIGURE 2: VAConnects Goals



assessment. Similarly, approximately 96% of eligible kindergarten students were rated by teachers on their self-regulation and social skills using the Child Behavior Rating Scale (CBRS) and Mental Health Well-being Items. Statewide, 95% of assessed kindergarten students had complete VKRP data on all four measures – literacy (VALLS: K), mathematics (EMAS), and self-regulation and social skills assessments (CBRS) in fall 2024.

In spring 2025, approximately 97% of kindergarten students were assessed using VALLS: K literacy screener and the EMAS mathematics assessment and were rated by teachers on self-regulation and social skills using the CBRS and Mental Health Well-being Items. Statewide, 96% of assessed kindergarten students enrolled in spring 2025 had complete VKRP data for the four domains – literacy, mathematics, self-regulation, and social skills.

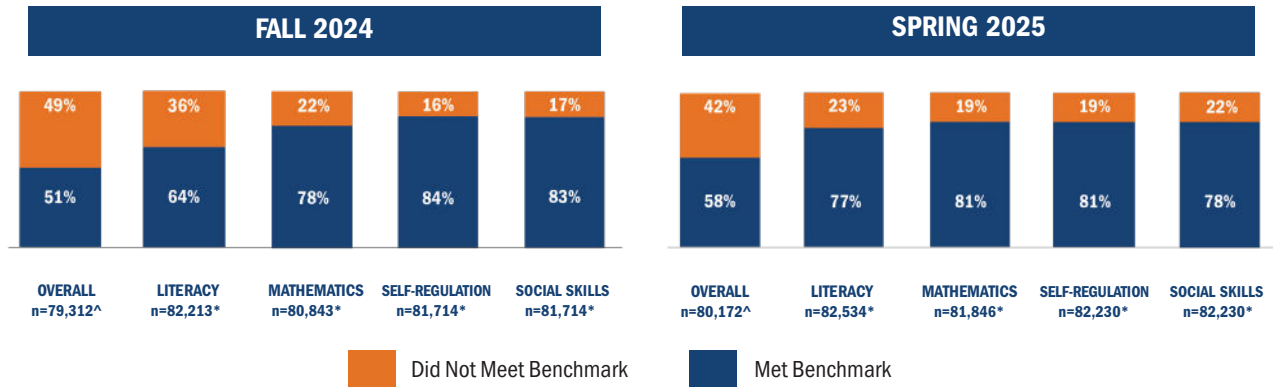
Over 78,000 kindergarten students were assessed in both fall 2024 and spring 2025 in all four domains.

2024-2025 VKRP Kindergarten Key Findings

Fall 2024 and Spring 2025 VKRP Kindergarten Data

In fall 2024, approximately 51% of kindergarten students had scores that met the overall benchmark or minimum competency level in literacy, mathematics, self-regulation, and social skills. This means that 49% of Virginia's kindergarten students began the school year still needing to build skills in literacy, mathematics, self-regulation, and/or social skills (Figure 3). This is the first year of statewide implementation of the VALLS: K. The new literacy screening system better reflects the component skills necessary for children to be successful in literacy over time and is more sensitive to literacy risk. As such, more children were classified as at high-risk for literacy difficulties at kindergarten entry as compared to previous years when the Phonological Awareness Literacy Screener (PALS-K) was implemented. For reference, in the fall of 2024, 36% of kindergarten students were classified as at high-risk for developing reading difficulty, according to VALLSS; however, in the fall of 2023, 21% of

FIGURE 3: Fall 2024 and Spring 2025 Kindergarten Overall and Domain Benchmark Estimates



Note. If a kindergarten student does not demonstrate the minimally expected skill in one or more areas at the respective timepoint (fall or spring), they are categorized as not ready or below the overall benchmark (fall) or below the overall benchmark (spring).

[^] These data represent 114 divisions who used the PALS-K measure during the 2023-2024 school year. They do not include the 17 school divisions who piloted the Virginia Language and Literacy Screener: Kindergarten.

^{*} Students who complete data on each individual measure were included to obtain these estimates.

kindergarten students were below-benchmark, according to PALS. For more information, see previous VALLSS and PALS [data reports](#).

In spring 2025, approximately 58% of kindergarten students had scores that met the overall benchmark or minimum competency level in literacy, mathematics, self-regulation, and social skills. This means that 42% of Virginia's kindergarten students ended the school year below expected levels in literacy, mathematics, self-regulation, and/or social skills. These results indicate a 7% increase in kindergarten students meeting the overall VKRP benchmark from fall 2024 to spring 2025. When looking across fall 2024 and spring 2025, for literacy and mathematics, more kindergarten students had scores that were below the benchmark in fall compared to spring. The pattern for self-regulation and social skills was the opposite with a greater percentage of kindergarten students who had scores that fell below the benchmark in spring 2025 as compared to fall 2024.

2024-2025 VKRP Kindergarten Benchmark Estimates Across Demographics

Students who had scores falling below the overall VKRP benchmark at the beginning and/or end of kindergarten were disproportionately more likely to be students from low-income

backgrounds, students with a disability, students who are English language/multilingual learners (EL), Black or African American students, and Hispanic/Latino of any race students (Table 1).

These differential patterns in skill development illustrate the need for opportunities for all children to access high-quality educational experiences.

2024-2025 VKRP Kindergarten Mental Health Well-being Data

Teachers reported being moderately, very, or extremely concerned about the well-being for 15% of kindergarten students in fall 2024 and 13% of kindergarten students in spring 2025.

Additionally, in both fall 2024 and spring 2025, students whose teachers were concerned for their well-being were much more likely to not meet the overall benchmark and fall below the benchmark academically and social-emotionally when compared to students whose teachers did not report well-being concern (Figure 4).

These results indicate that teacher concern is an important indicator of which students likely need comprehensive and intensive intervention to be successful in school.

TABLE 1: 2023-2024 Kindergarten Demographics Percentages

Kindergarten Student Demographic Characteristics	Percent Below the Overall Benchmark	
	Fall 2024	Spring 2025
From low-income background ^a	61.3%	54.3%
Has a disability ^b	69.8%	68%
Is an English language/multilingual learner ^c	74.3%	59.3%
Student race		
American Indian or Alaska Native	40.6%	36.6%
Asian	35.7%	27.5%
Black or African American	55.5%	54.8%
Hispanic/Latino of any race	65.6%	53.0%
White, not of Hispanic origin	46.7%	29.9%
Native Hawaiian or other Pacific Islander	44.2%	39.4%
Non-Hispanic/Latino of any race, two or more races	40.3%	33.5%

^a Source: SRC Disadvantaged Status Flag. Students are identified as having a low-income background if, at any point during the school year, the student: 1) is eligible for Free/Reduced Meals, 2) receives TANF, or 3) is eligible for Medicaid.

^b Source: SRC Primary Disability Code. Students are identified as having a disability if any code is present except, “*Qualified Individual under Section 504.*”

^c Source: Student Record Collection (SRC) EL Services Code. Students are identified as English language/multilingual learners (EL) if code is, “*Identified as EL and receives EL services,*” “*Identified as EL but has refused EL services,*” or “*Identified as formerly EL for each of the four years after exiting EL services.*”

Teacher concern is an important indicator of which students likely need comprehensive and intensive intervention to be successful in school.

2024–2025 VKRP Kindergarten Benchmark and Growth Data

In terms of overall benchmark status, 43% of kindergarten students met the overall benchmark for both fall 2024 and spring 2025, while 32% did not meet the overall benchmark in either fall 2024 or spring 2025. Smaller percentages of students shifted in their overall benchmark status across the 2024–2025 school year—either meeting the overall benchmark in fall 2024 and not meeting it in spring 2025 (9%) or not meeting the overall benchmark in fall 2024 and meeting in spring 2025 (16%) (Figure 5).

VKRP also examined trends in student growth from fall 2024 to spring 2025 in mathematics, self-regulation, and social skills⁴. Kindergarten students, on average, tended to display strong growth in mathematics skills and modest growth in self-regulation and social skills. However, there was variation in students’ growth across all domains with most students showing growth, some students making robust gains, and a small percentage of students demonstrating negative growth from fall 2024 to spring 2025.

2024–2025 VKRP Kindergarten Mid-Year Data

A VKRP mid-year assessment timepoint became available to all divisions and programs beginning in winter 2025. The inclusion of an optional mid-year timepoint for VKRP allows teachers to better monitor students’ progress throughout the school year and to make instructional decisions to best meet students’ individual needs.

Participation in the mid-year assessment timepoint was optional. Divisions, schools, and classrooms had the option to participate, but it was not required. Additionally, within classrooms, teachers could administer the mid-year assessments to some or all of their students, and had flexibility in whether they administered the EMAS, CBRS, or both. Conversely, the VALLS: K mid-year assessment timepoint is required, see the [VALLS: K Mid-Year 2024 report](#). Because the sample of students participating in VKRP’s optional mid-year assessment timepoint and VALLS: K mid-year vary, we only present domain specific

⁴ Student growth in literacy skills as measured through VALLSS is examined by UVA’s VLP.

FIGURE 4: Mental Health Well-Being Concerns and Benchmark Status

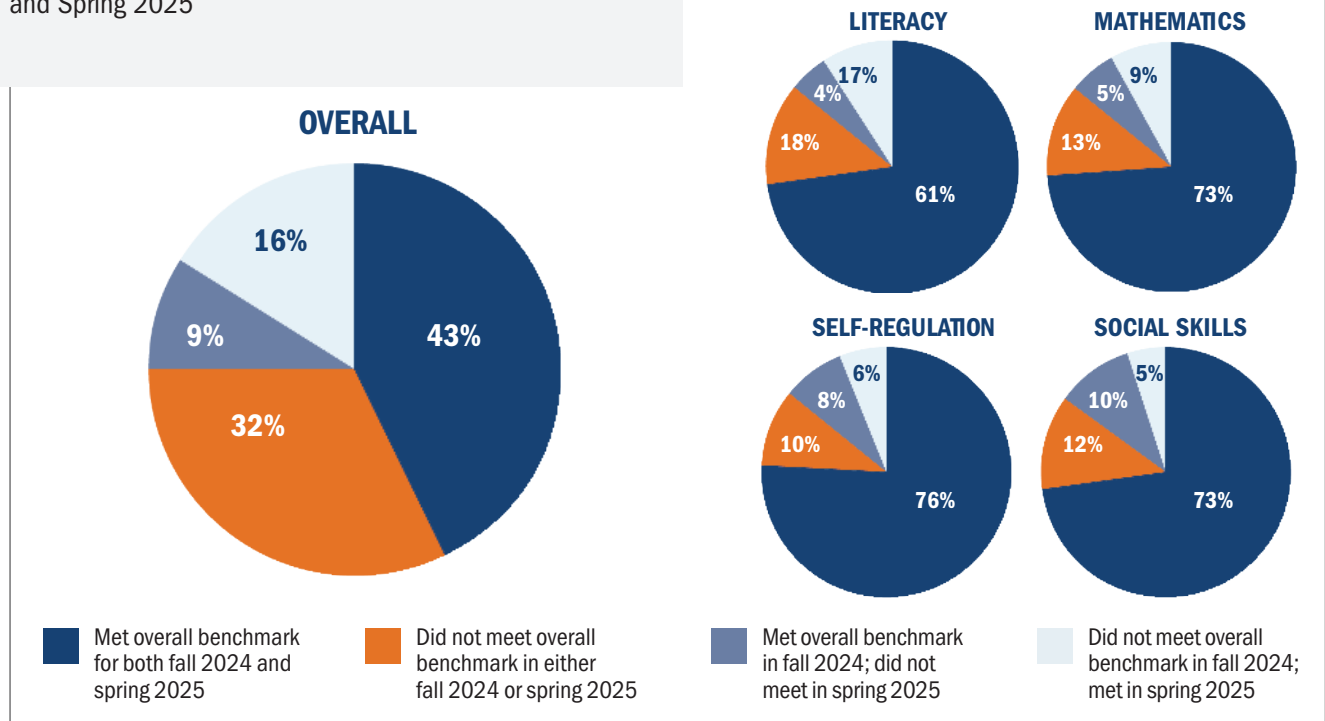


data for mathematics, self-regulation, and social skills, and don't present overall benchmark information.

46 school divisions voluntarily participated, and 195 Virginia schools implemented VKRP in mid-year 2025, resulting in data from 712 kindergarten classrooms and 9,933 kindergarten students. Compared to the statewide fall 2024 and spring 2025 samples, students assessed in the mid-year 2025 sample were more likely to be from low-income backgrounds, to be Black or African American, and were more likely to have public pre-kindergarten experience or no pre-kindergarten experience. Conversely, students included in the mid-year 2025 sample were less likely to be English language/multilingual learners and were less likely to have a disability compared to students in the statewide fall 2024 and spring 2025 samples.

The data from the optional mid-year 2025 assessment timepoint indicated that 14% of kindergarten students' scores

FIGURE 5: Kindergarten Benchmark Status for Fall 2024 and Spring 2025



*If a kindergarten students' VALLS: K assessment scores fell in the High-Risk Band for literacy at the respective timepoint (fall or spring), they were categorized as below the benchmark.

fell below the mid-year benchmark in mathematics. In mid-year 2025, 17% of kindergarten students' scores fell below the mid-year benchmark for self-regulation and 20% of kindergarten students' scores fell below the mid-year benchmark for social skills.

Teachers reported that most students had high levels of well-being based on the composite score in mid-year 2025. Based on the teacher concern item, kindergarten teachers reported to be moderately, very, or extremely concerned about the social-emotional well-being of 16% of their students in mid-year 2025.

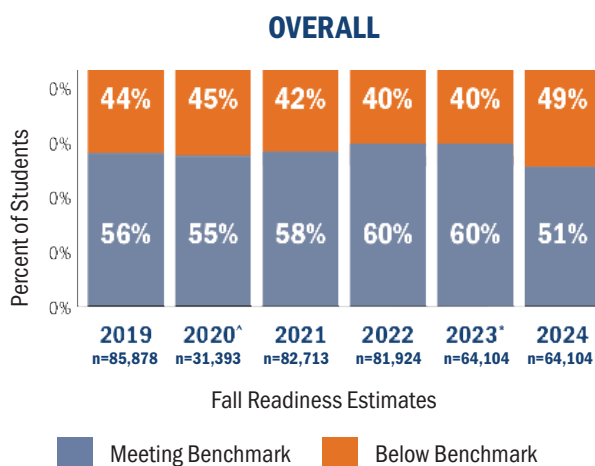
2019-2025 VKRP Kindergarten Trends Across Time Key Findings

Overall readiness estimates from fall 2019 to fall 2023 remained relatively stable. There was a slight decrease in the percentage of students meeting the overall benchmark from fall 2019 to fall 2020, followed by slight increases in fall 2021 and fall 2022. The percentage of kindergarten students meeting the overall benchmark remained stable from fall 2022 to fall 2023. From fall 2023 to fall 2024, the percentage of kindergarten students meeting the overall benchmark decreased by 9% (Figure 6).

The fall 2019 to fall 2023 readiness estimates include literacy data from the PALS-K, and the fall 2024 readiness estimate includes literacy data from the VALLS: K. The new literacy screening system better reflects the component skills necessary for children to be successful in literacy over time and is more sensitive to literacy risk. As such, more children were classified as at-risk for literacy difficulties at kindergarten entry as compared to previous years when the Phonological Awareness Literacy Screener (PALS-K) was implemented.

Overall benchmark estimates from spring 2021 to spring 2023 increased and then remained stable from spring 2023 to spring 2025 (Figure 7). There was a large increase in kindergarten students meeting the overall benchmark from spring 2021 (48%) to spring 2022 (56%). There was a slight increase from spring 2022 to spring 2023 (59%) in kindergarten students meeting the overall benchmark. The percentage of kindergarten students meeting the overall benchmark from spring 2023

FIGURE 6: Fall Overall Kindergarten Readiness Estimates 2019-2024

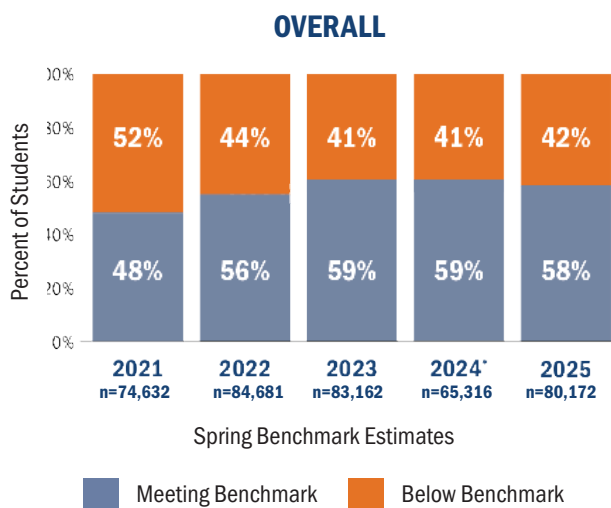


Note. Overall benchmark estimates from fall 2019 to fall 2023 utilized the PALS-K as the measure of literacy readiness. Beginning in fall 2024, the VALLS: K was used as the measure for literacy readiness.

[^] These data represent students who were assessed in-person in the fall of the 2020-2021 school year, prior to the availability of remote assessments.

^{*} These data represent 114 divisions who used the PALS-K measure during the 2023-2024 school year. They do not include the 17 school divisions who piloted the Virginia Language & Literacy Screener: Kindergarten.

FIGURE 7: Spring Overall Kindergarten Benchmark Estimates 2021-2024



^{*} These data represent 114 divisions who used the PALS-K measure during the 2023-2024 school year. They do not include the 17 school divisions who piloted the Virginia Language & Literacy Screener: Kindergarten.

to spring 2024 (59%) and from spring 2024 to spring 2025 (58%) remained stable. Spring VKRP data was not collected prior to the 2019–20 school year, and the spring assessment was not administered in 2020 due to the onset of the COVID-19 pandemic and universally mandated public-school closures. The spring 2021 to spring 2024 readiness estimates include literacy data from the PALS-K, and the spring 2025 readiness estimate includes literacy data from the VALLS: K.

2024-2025 Pre-kindergarten Students Assessed With VKRP

Beginning in the 2022–2023 school year, VKRP participation became a requirement for publicly-funded three- and four-year-old children enrolled in Virginia Preschool Initiative (VPI) and Virginia Early Childhood Foundation (VECF) Mixed Delivery classrooms. This requirement continued in fall 2024 and in spring 2025.

Other publicly-funded pre-kindergarten programs, including Head Start, Early Childhood Special Education (ECSE), Title I, and locally funded classrooms, were not required to administer VKRP assessments, but had the option to administer. Table 2 shows the VKRP requirements for participation by pre-kindergarten funding type. Many of these programs chose to participate

voluntarily, often in connection with initiatives such as STREAMin³ or through engagement with the Virginia Quality Birth to Five (VQB5) system.

Three-Year-Old Assessment Completion Data

In fall 2024, teachers assessed approximately 85% of enrolled⁵ three-year-old pre-kindergarten children on the VALLS: Pre-K and 84% of enrolled three-year-old pre-kindergarten children using the EMAS mathematics assessment. Approximately 85% of enrolled three-year-old pre-kindergarten children were rated by teachers on self-regulation and social skills using the Child Behavior Rating Scale (CBRS) and Mental Health Well-being Items. Statewide, 87% of assessed three-year-old pre-kindergarten children had complete VKRP data on all four measures – literacy (VALLS: Pre-K), mathematics (EMAS), and self-regulation and social skills assessments (CBRS) in fall 2024.

In spring 2025, approximately 78% of enrolled three-year-old pre-kindergarten children were assessed on the VALLS: Pre-K literacy screener, 77% were assessed using the EMAS mathematics assessment, and 77% were rated by teachers on self-regulation and social skills using the CBRS and Mental Health Well-being items. Statewide, 86% of assessed three-year-old pre-kindergarten children enrolled in spring 2025 had complete VKRP data on the four assessments – literacy (VALLS: Pre-K), mathematics

TABLE 2: VKRP Requirements by Preschool Funding Type

	VPI	Title I, Local, or Other School Based Preschool	ECSE	Mixed Delivery	Head Start	Child Care Subsidy Program (CCSP)
Ages Served	3-5	3-5	2-5	0-5	3-5	0-12
VKRP Requirement	Required	Optional	Optional	Required	Optional	Optional
Program Size (Number of ECCE Classrooms)^a	2,161	632	1,544	366	607	5,544
Preschool Enrollment (Ages 3-4)	23,526	11,295 ^b	9,741	2,063	10,434 ^b	12,511
Total Enrollment (All Ages)	23,526	34,821	9,741	2,738	14,696	43,550

^a Classrooms may utilize multiple streams of funding, therefore reported counts are not mutually exclusive.

^b Estimated

⁵ Three- and four-year-old pre-kindergarten children were enrolled if they were in a participating VKRP classroom.

(EMAS), self-regulation and social skills (CBRS) assessments.

Over 6,300 three-year-old pre-kindergarten children were assessed in both fall 2024 and spring 2025 in all four domains – literacy (VALLS: Pre-K), mathematics (EMAS), and self-regulation and social skills assessments (CBRS).

Four-Year-Old Assessment Completion Data

In fall 2024, teachers assessed approximately 94% of enrolled⁵ four-year-old pre-kindergarten children on the VALLS: Pre-K and 92% of enrolled four-year-old pre-kindergarten children on the EMAS mathematics assessment. Approximately 92% of eligible four-year-old pre-kindergarten children were rated by teachers on self-regulation and social skills using the Child Behavior Rating Scale (CBRS) and Mental Health Well-being Items. Statewide, 91% of assessed four-year-old pre-kindergarten children had complete VKRP data on all four measures – literacy (VALLS: Pre-K), mathematics (EMAS), and self-regulation and social skills assessments (CBRS) in fall 2024.

In spring 2025, approximately 92% of enrolled four-year-old pre-kindergarten children were assessed on the VALLS: Pre-K literacy screener, 91% were assessed using the EMAS mathematics assessment, and 91% were rated by teachers on self-regulation and social skills using the CBRS and Mental Health Well-being items. Statewide, 92% of assessed four-year-old pre-kindergarten children enrolled in spring 2025 had complete VKRP data on the four assessments – literacy (VALLS: Pre-K), mathematics (EMAS), self-regulation and social skills (CBRS) assessments.

Over 25,000 four-year-old pre-kindergarten children were assessed in both fall 2024 and spring 2025 in all four domains of literacy, mathematics, self-regulation, and social skills-literacy (VALLS: Pre-K), mathematics (EMAS), and self-regulation and social skills assessments (CBRS).

2024-2025 VKRP Three-Year-Old Pre-kindergarten Key Findings

Fall 2024 and Spring 2025 Three-Year-Old VKRP Pre-kindergarten Data

In 2024-2025, VKRP and VLP piloted Skill Development

Bands (Beginning, Growing, and Strong) to help educators and schools/programs interpret and use their VKRP pre-kindergarten data. For more information regarding the Pre-kindergarten Literacy Skill Development Bands created by VLP for VALLS: Pre-K, see the [VALLS: Pre-K specific report](#).

For mathematics, self-regulation, and social skills, separate bands were established for fall 2024 and spring 2025 to represent children's development as compared to expectations at that particular timepoint.

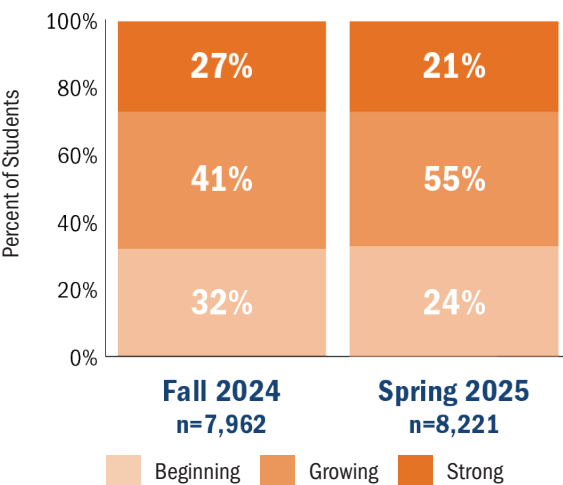
For mathematics, in fall 2024, the largest percentage of three-year-old children's scores fell into the Growing Skill Development Band (41%) and also in spring 2025 (55%) (Figure 8).

For self-regulation and social skills, the largest percentage of children's scores fell into the Growing Skill Development Band in both fall 2024 (67% and 72%, respectively) and in spring 2025 (67% and 67%, respectively) (Figure 9).

2024-2025 VKRP Three-Year-Old Pre-kindergarten Mental Health Well-Being Data

In fall 2024, teachers reported being moderately, very, or extremely concerned about the mental health well-being for 24% of three-year-old children enrolled in VKRP. Elevated teacher concern for three-year-old

FIGURE 8: Three-Year-Old Mathematics Skill Development Bands



pre-kindergarten children decreased in spring 2025, where teachers reported being moderately, very, or extremely concerned about 22% of children.

2024-2025 VKRP Three-Year-Old Pre-kindergarten Growth Data

As with the kindergarten data, VKRP examined trends in growth⁶ in children’s scores from fall 2024 to spring 2025 in mathematics, self-regulation, and social skills. Three-year-old pre-kindergarten children tended to display strong growth in mathematics skills and modest growth in self-regulation and social skills. There was variation in children’s growth across all domains with most children growing in their skills, some children making robust gains, and a small percentage of children losing ground from fall 2024 to spring 2025.

2024-2025 VKRP Three-Year-Old Pre-kindergarten Mid-Year Data

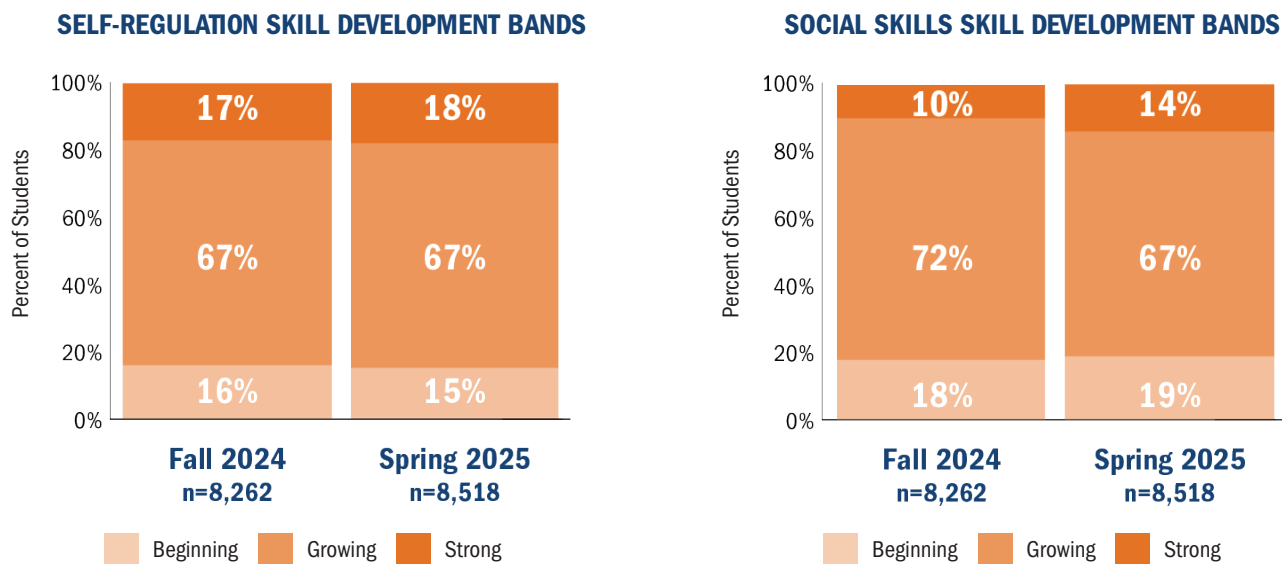
Beginning in winter 2025, VKRP became available to all pre-kindergarten divisions and programs for a mid-year timepoint. This optional mid-year assessment window helps pre-kindergarten teachers monitor children’s developmental progress across the school year and make more informed, responsive instructional decisions to meet each child’s needs. Head Start programs are encouraged

to participate, as the VKRP mid-year timepoint supports their alignment with the Head Start Program Performance Standard 45 CFR §1302.102(c)(2)(ii), which calls for collecting and analyzing child-level assessment data three times per year. To further support this process, VKRP mid-year reports were available through the VKRP web portal to assist educators in identifying and promoting growth in children’s early learning skills.

Participation in the pre-kindergarten mid-year VKRP assessment was optional. School divisions, sites, and classrooms could choose whether or not to participate. Within classrooms, teachers also had flexibility to assess all or just some students, and to select whether to administer the EMAS (Early Mathematics Assessment System), the CBRS (Child Behavior Rating Scale), or both. VALLS: Pre-K administration is also optional at the mid-year timepoint. However, the sample of children participating in VALLS: Pre-K and the EMAS and CBRS varied. Therefore, we only present domain specific data for mathematics, self-regulation, and social skills.

In total, 162 pre-kindergarten programs implemented VKRP in mid-year 2025, resulting in data from 2,497 three-year-old pre-kindergarten children. Compared to the fall 2024 and spring 2025 samples, three-year-old children assessed in the mid-year 2025 sample were more

FIGURE 9: Three-Year-Old Self-Regulation and Social Skills Skill Development Bands



⁶ Growth scores on the pre-kindergarten literacy screener are still being finalized. Currently, pre-kindergarten literacy scores represent children’s outcomes at each distinct timepoint (i.e., fall and spring).

likely to be Black or African American and were more likely to be enrolled in Head Start or Title I Programs. Conversely, three-year-old children assessed in the mid-year 2025 sample were less likely to have a disability compared to children in the fall 2024 and spring 2025 samples.

In the optional mid-year 2025 assessment, most three-year-old children's scores fell into the Growing Band for mathematics (60%), self-regulation (71%), and social skills (73%). In mid-year 2025, teachers reported being moderately, very, or extremely concerned about the social-emotional well-being for 20% of three-year-old children.

2024-2025 VKRP Four-Year-Old Pre-kindergarten Key Findings

Fall 2024 and Spring 2025 Four-Year-Old VKRP Pre-kindergarten Data

Four-year-old pre-kindergarten children also displayed a range of skills across mathematics, self-regulation, and social skills in fall 2024 and spring 2025 (Figure 10).

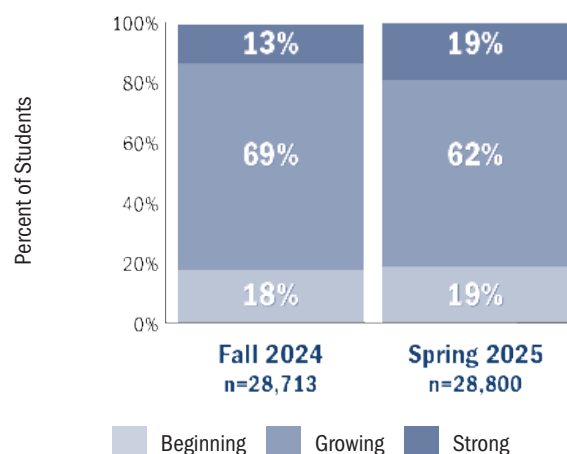
For mathematics, in fall 2024, the largest percentage of four-year old children's scores (50%) fell into the Beginning Skill Development Band. In spring 2025, the largest percentage of four-year old children's scores (53%) fell into the Growing Skill Development Band.

For self-regulation and social skills, the largest percentage of four-year-old children's scores fell into the Growing Skill Development Band in both fall 2024 (69% and 68%, respectively) and in spring 2025 (62% and 63%, respectively) (Figure 11).

2024-2025 VKRP Four-Year-Old Pre-kindergarten Mental Health Well-Being Data

In fall 2024, teachers reported being moderately, very, or extremely concerned about the mental health well-being for 19% of their four-year-old children. Elevated teacher concern for four-year-old pre-kindergarten children decreased slightly in spring 2025, where teachers reported being moderately, very, or extremely concerned about 18% of their four-year-old children.

FIGURE 10: Four-Year-Old Mathematics Skill Development Bands



2024-2025 VKRP Four-Year-Old Pre-kindergarten Growth Data

The VKRP team examined trends in growth⁷ of four-year-old children's scores from fall 2024 to spring 2025 in mathematics, self-regulation, and social skills. Four-year-old pre-kindergarten children tended to display robust growth in mathematics skills and modest growth in self-regulation and social skills. There was variation in children's growth across all domains with most children making gains, some making strong gains, and a small percentage showing a decrease in skills from fall 2024 to spring 2025.

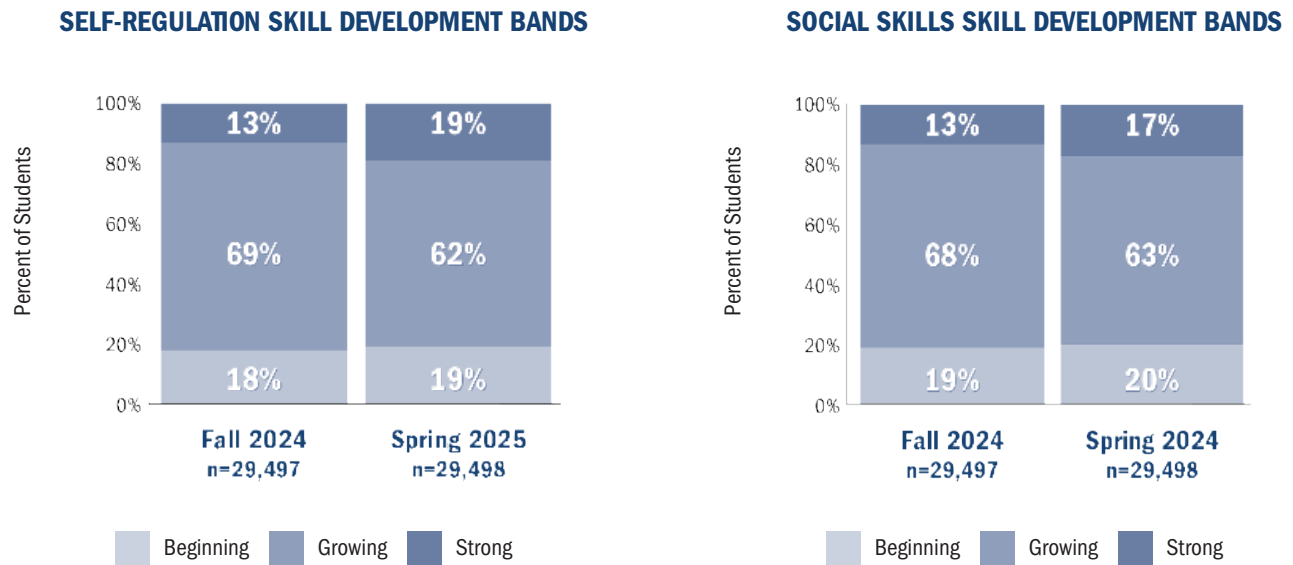
2024-2025 VKRP Four-Year-Old Pre-kindergarten Mid-Year Data

In total, 294 pre-kindergarten programs implemented VKRP in mid-year 2025, resulting in data from 8,614 four-year-old pre-kindergarten children. Compared to the fall 2024 and spring 2025 samples, four-year-old pre-kindergarten children included in the mid-year 2025 sample were more likely to be Black or African American and were more likely to be enrolled in Head Start or VPI. Conversely, four-year-old pre-kindergarten children included in the mid-year 2025 sample were less likely to have a disability compared to four-year-old pre-kindergarten children in the fall 2024 and spring 2025 samples.

In the voluntary mid-year 2025 assessment, most four-year-

⁷ Growth scores on the pre-kindergarten literacy screener (VALLS: Pre-K) are still being finalized. Currently pre-kindergarten literacy scores represent children's outcomes at each distinct timepoint (i.e., fall and spring).

FIGURE 11: Four-Year-Old Self-Regulation and Social Skills Skill Development Bands



old children's scores fell into the Growing Band for mathematics (43%), self-regulation (68%), and social skills (67%). In mid-year 2025, teachers reported being moderately, very, or extremely concerned about the social-emotional well-being for 18% of four-year-old children.

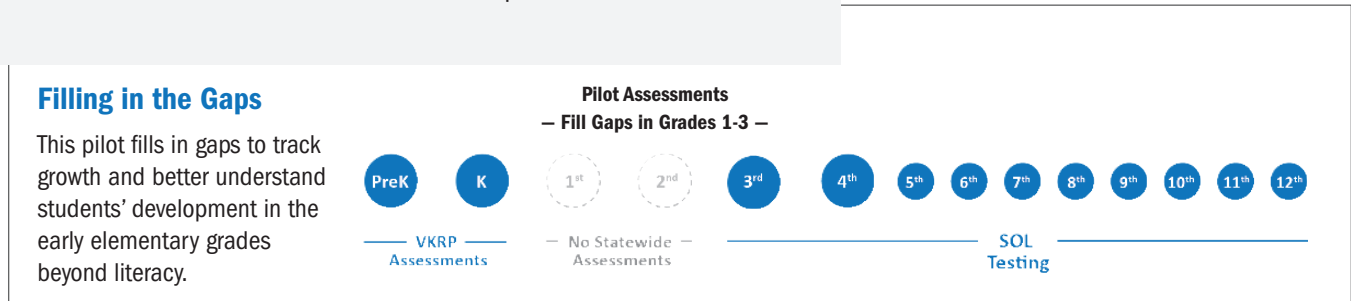
Grade 1-3 Assessment Pilot

In 2022-2023, VKRP, in partnership with VDOE, began conducting a mathematics, self-regulation, social skills, and mental health well-being assessment pilot in Grades 1 through 3 (1-3 Assessment Pilot). The pilot was required by Virginia's 2022-2024 Biennial Budget and was extended by the 2024-2026 Biennial Budget. The purpose of the pilot was to explore the utility of building longitudinal measures of mathematics,

self-regulation, social skills, and mental health well-being that could potentially extend to Grades 1 through 3. Per the Early Intervention Reading Initiative (EIRI), literacy screening has been required since 1997 for students in Kindergarten-Grade 3 (VALLSS beginning in fall of 2024, PALS prior to fall of 2024). Additionally, beginning in the fall of 2025, literacy screening will also be required for students in Grades 4 through 8.

Currently, there are several gaps in existing assessments (Figure 12). Apart from literacy, there are no statewide assessments that measure students' early learning in these areas for Grades 1 and 2. Additionally, there are no statewide assessments that universally track students' growth throughout the academic year and across academic years in these areas from Pre-kindergarten

FIGURE 12: How the Assessment Pilot Fills Gaps in Grades 1-3



through Grade 3 (noting there are growth assessments in mathematics starting in Grade 3).

During 2024–2025, VKRP continued pilot activities. Specifically, the CBRS items were revised to make them appropriate for students in Grades 1 through 3, and the VKRP team continued piloting and revising EMAS items that are developmentally appropriate for students in Grades 1 through 3. The VKRP team is actively recruiting teachers to participate in the 1-3 Assessment Pilot in fall 2025. The team has also done a thorough search, review, and evaluation of existing instructional resources in the areas of mathematics, self-regulation, and social skills to determine how and whether to link instructional resources with assessments in Grades 1 through 3, as VKRP does in pre-kindergarten and kindergarten.

Future Directions

In the 2025–2026 school year, VKRP will:

- **Support pre-kindergarten and kindergarten implementation.** VKRP will continue to support teachers', administrators', and divisions/programs' implementation of VKRP by providing in-person trainings, webinars, and online trainings and resources for teachers and school/division/program-level administrators.
- **Support 3- and 4-year-old pre-kindergarten participation.** VKRP will continue to be available for use in publicly funded 3- and 4-year-old pre-kindergarten classrooms with continued implementation support for programs required to participate (e.g., VPI funded classrooms, VECF Mixed Delivery) or who are voluntarily participating. VKRP will continue targeted outreach to those who are not yet participating but may choose to participate.
- **Continue the Grades 1-3 Assessment Pilot.** VKRP will conduct a 1-3 Assessment Pilot in teachers' classrooms across Grades 1-3. Data and teacher feedback from the pilot will be used to refine the assessments and develop reports.
- **Collaborate with the Virginia Literacy Partnerships (VLP) and LinkB5 teams.** Continuing in 2025–2026, VKRP will closely partner with the VLP team around their statewide implementation of the Virginia Language & Literacy Screening System (VALLSS). VKRP will also continue to collaborate with LinkB5 on their integration of VQB5 within VACconnects.
- **Collaborate with STREAMin³.** The STREAMin³ curriculum model supports skills and interactions that align to the Virginia Kindergarten Readiness Program (VKRP) and highly encourages use of VKRP as a progress monitoring tool. To support VKRP use in new STREAMin³ programs, the VKRP and STREAMin³ teams will continue to collaborate to encourage new programs, many of whom are small private childcare and family childcare programs, to use VKRP.
- **Improve and expand reports.** VKRP includes a robust reporting system that provides a detailed snapshot of students' academic and social-emotional skills in the fall, mid-year, and spring of each academic year. VKRP is enhancing reports to show growth in students' skills for both teachers and families.
- **Virginia Connects for Kids (VACconnects).** The VKRP team continues to collaborate with VLP and the LinkB5 teams to develop a coordinated integrated data system, Virginia Connects for Kids (VACconnects). By aligning these systems, VACconnects will be able to answer critical questions about how children's early care and education experiences across the first five years link to learning and social emotional outcomes and growth in pre-kindergarten through eighth grade. This system will integrate statewide early childhood data collection initiatives to leverage data to maximize the impact of the three separate data systems. In fall 2024, VALLSS launched statewide in VACconnects in Grades K-3 in all school divisions across Virginia. All three programs (VALLSS, VKRP, and LinkB5) will launch in VACconnects in fall 2025. We will also continue to explore building the Grades 1-3 assessments within VACconnects. ♦