

VKRP Teacher Survey Executive Summary

Excerpted from the VKRP Teacher Survey Report, Fall 2022



ACKNOWLEDGMENTS:

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INTRODUCTION

In this May 2023 data report of the Virginia Kindergarten Readiness Program (VKRP), we report on data collected through the fall 2022 VKRP Teacher Survey. The report includes information about teachers' demographic characteristics and professional background. It also includes both quantitative and qualitative feedback on VKRP training, assessments, reports, and resources. Finally, there is information included about teacher-reported family engagement practices.

The Virginia Kindergarten Readiness Program (VKRP, vkrponline.org) is an initiative focused on building a more comprehensive understanding of school readiness and success. VKRP empowers Virginia's teachers and education leaders by providing a 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, and division level 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 literacy screeners (Pre-K Language and Literacy Screener, PALS-K).

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SURVEY DESIGN AND DISTRIBUTION

The Virginia Kindergarten Readiness Program (VKRP) Fall 2022 Teacher Feedback Survey included questions related to:

1. teachers' **demographic characteristics**,
2. their **professional background and teaching practices**,
3. feedback on **VKRP training, assessments, reports, and resources**, and
4. teachers' **family engagement** practices

Some questions were asked only of kindergarten teachers, while some were specific for pre-kindergarten teachers. Questions were in both multiple-choice or quantitative format as well as open-ended or free form responses. Responses to both types of questions are integrated into the results presented below.

The survey was sent to 7,100 teachers in the VKRP system. The **overall response rate was 26.03% (n=1,848)**. The response rate for **pre-kindergarten teachers was 38.44% (n=943)** and for **kindergarten teachers was 19.47% (n=905)**.

In the graphs and tables where questions were asked to both pre-kindergarten and kindergarten teachers, the results are disaggregated by grade level.

PARTICIPANTS' DEMOGRAPHIC CHARACTERISTICS

Table 1

Pre-kindergarten and Kindergarten Teachers Identified Gender, Ethnicity, Race

		Pre-Kindergarten Teacher (%)	Kindergarten Teacher (%)
		N=943	N=905
Gender	Woman	98.0%	98.6%
	Man	1.8%	1.4%
	Nonbinary	0.2%	0.0%
Ethnicity	Hispanic, Latino, or Spanish origin	5.5%	4.0%
	Not Hispanic, Latino, or Spanish origin	94.5%	96.0%
Race*	American Indian or Alaskan native	0.7%	1.0%
	Asian	2.7%	2.7%
	Black or African American	19.7%	10.4%
	Native Hawaiian or other Pacific Islander	0.3%	0.4%
	White	66.8%	86.2%
	Some other race, ethnicity, or origin	0.5%	1.7%

*Note. Self-identification of racial group membership was not mutually exclusive, and teachers were able to select more than one race (percentages do not equal 100%).

Mean age of **pre-kindergarten teachers was 46 years** (SD=11 years) and was **44 years** (SD= 12 years) for **kindergarten teachers**.

Table 2

Education and Endorsements

		Pre-Kindergarten Teacher (%)	Kindergarten Teacher (%)
		N=943	N=905
Education	Less than a Bachelor's degree	14.3%	0.3%
	A Bachelor's degree	31.9%	32.1%
	Some graduate work or graduate degree	53.8%	67.6%
Teaching Endorsements*	Early Childhood for 3- and 4-year-olds	41.5%	15.0%
	Early/Primary Education	35.4%	38.3%
	Elementary Education	38.3%	76.7%

*Note. This does not include the complete list of endorsements. Full list can be found in Teacher Survey Report. Teachers can select more than one endorsement (percentages do not equal 100%).

Table 3
Teaching Experience

		Pre-Kindergarten Teacher	Kindergarten Teacher
		<i>M (SD)</i>	<i>M (SD)</i>
		N=943	N=905
Teaching Experience	Years as teacher	16.3 (10.0)	15.7 (10.0)
	Years teaching this grade	9.9 (8.4)	9.2 (8.1)
	Years taught in current school	7.8 (7.8)	8.5 (8.0)

VKRP ASSESSMENT FEEDBACK

Pre-kindergarten teachers only were asked for feedback on the Early Mathematics Assessment System (EMAS) mathematics measure, the Child Behavior Rating Scale (CBRS), which is a teacher report measure of students' self-regulation and social skills, and teacher report items on students' mental health well-being.

Teachers responded to several questions on a 1-5 scale (1: Strongly disagree, 2: Disagree, 3: Neither disagree nor agree, 4: Agree, 5: Strongly agree).

Early Mathematics Assessment System (EMAS)

- ◆ Pre-kindergarten teachers agreed that they understood that there were different assessment versions for 3-year-olds and 4-year-olds ($M=4.29$ out of 5).
- ◆ Pre-kindergarten teachers disagreed that pre-kindergarten students were able to stay engaged through the full assessment ($M=2.47$ out of 5).

Child Behavior Rating Scale (CBRS)

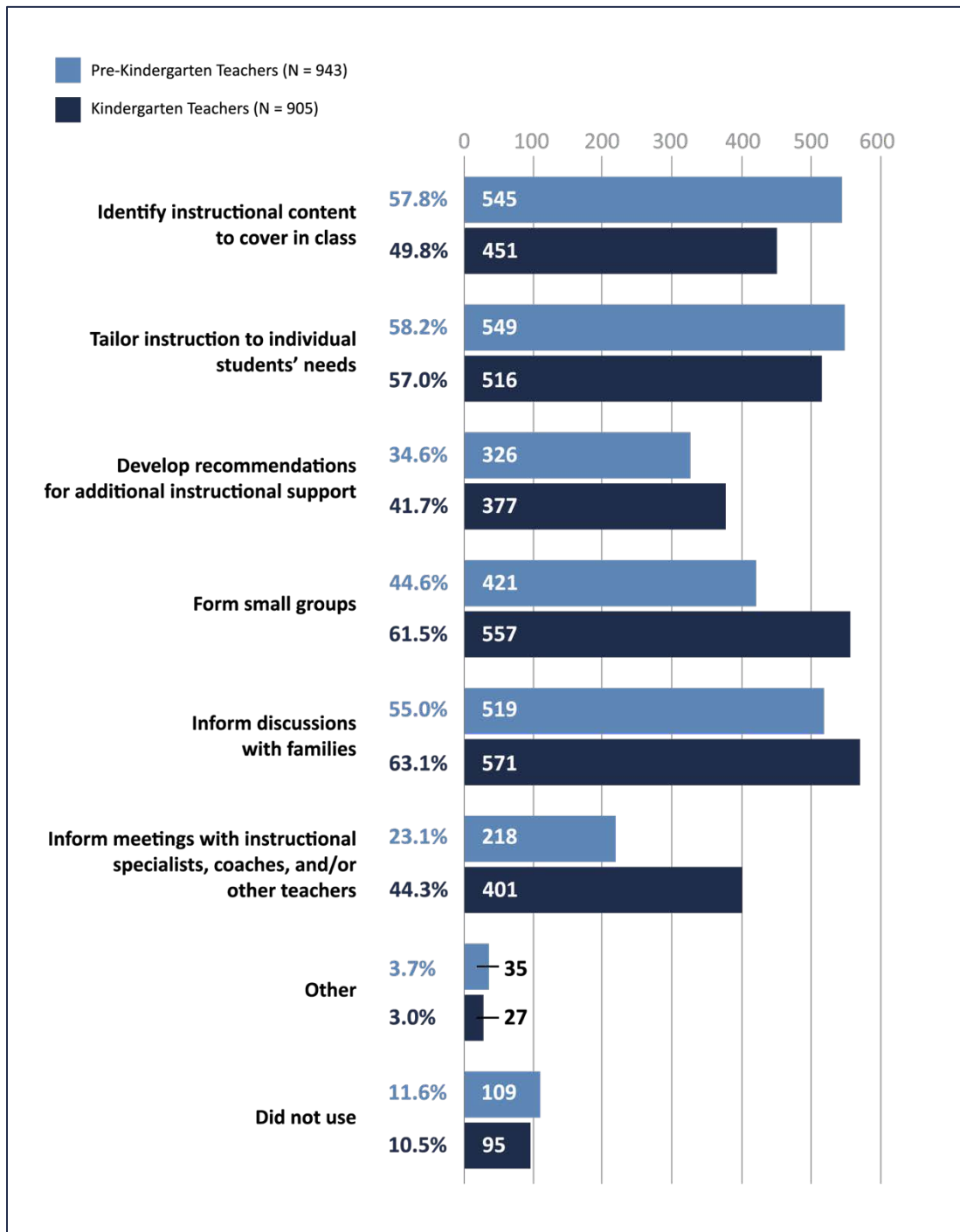
- ◆ Teachers agreed that they knew their students well enough to answer questions on the CBRS ($M=4.38$ out of 5).
- ◆ Teachers agreed that the mental health well-being items were useful ($M=3.74$ out of 5).

REPORTS AND RESOURCES FEEDBACK

Pre-kindergarten and kindergarten teachers were asked about the different ways that they used the VKRP reports in the fall. Teachers were able to select more than one way that they used the reports.

Figure 1

Different Ways Pre-kindergarten and Kindergarten Teachers Use VKRP Reports



Pre-kindergarten teachers were also asked a series of questions regarding the newly available **Skill Development Bands**. There are three Skill Development Bands: (1) Beginning—children are beginning to develop key readiness skills, (2) Growing—children are demonstrating skills expected for their age in the fall of pre-k, and (3) Strong—children have a strong early foundation in key readiness skills.

Given that the bands were new to VKRP this year, we were especially interested in whether or not pre-kindergarten teachers found them easy to understand and if they used them to help support children's development. Overall, pre-kindergarten teachers agreed that the Skill Development Bands were easy to understand ($M=3.86$ out of 5) and that they used them to help support children in their classroom ($M=3.60$ out of 5).

Next, we asked an open-ended question about how pre-kindergarten teachers used the bands in the fall. Responses were coded and compiled into themes, which are provided below. We also include some key quotes here that are illustrative of different themes.

How Pre-Kindergarten Teachers Used the Skill Development Bands

Teachers reported using the Skill Development Bands to **form small groups for instruction**.

"They helped me to quickly identify strengths and weaknesses and allowed me to group the children appropriately."

Teachers reported using the Skill Development Bands to **inform lesson planning**.

Teachers reported using the Skill Development Bands to **plan individualized supports for children**.

Teachers reported using the Skill Development Bands to **inform teacher-family meetings**.

"I used them with explaining to parents where their child is during family conferences."

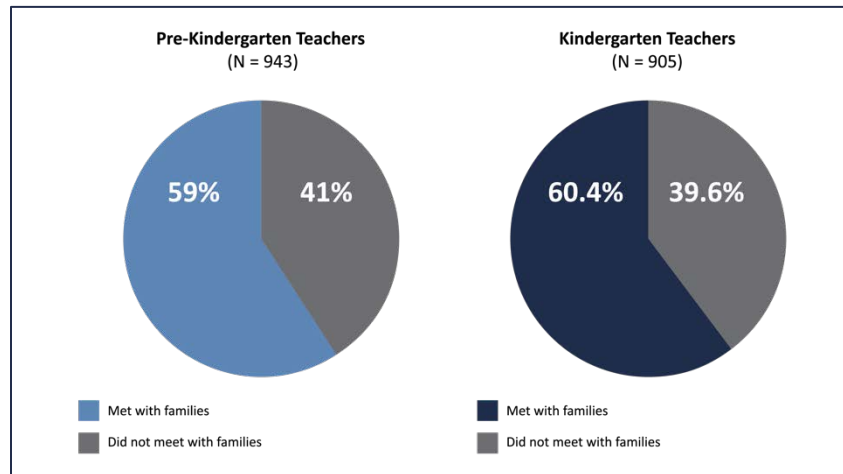
Kindergarten teachers were exclusively asked on a 1-5 scale (1: Strongly disagree, 2: Disagree, 3: Neither disagree nor agree, 4: Agree, 5: Strongly agree) if they felt that they understood how to interpret the VKRP reports. Overall, kindergarten teachers understood how to interpret VKRP reports (i.e., student-, classroom-, school-, and/or division-level reports) ($M=4.31$ out of 5).

FAMILY ENGAGEMENT PRACTICES

Pre-kindergarten and kindergarten teachers were asked a series of closed- and open-ended questions related to their family engagement practices. The information provided in this section highlights whether teachers met with families (and why not if they did not meet) and how teachers shared the VKRP data with families.

Figure 2

Percentage of Teachers Who Did and Did Not Meet with Families About VKRP Data



Below, we highlight several themes that emerged from teachers' responses to the question about what types of information were shared with families during meetings about VKRP data. We also include representative quotes from teachers.

Information that was shared at Pre-Kindergarten and Kindergarten Teacher Meetings with Families

Teachers reported discussing **children's strengths and needs** for support with families.

Teachers reported discussing ways to **support skills at home** with families.

Teachers explained **what VKRP is and discussed corresponding data** with families.

Teachers reported sharing **goals they had for children** this year with families.

Teachers reported **using data to support the overall family meetings**.

"I used the data to inform meetings for students who were struggling academically. I did not specifically share the reports but used the data from them to discuss academics and next steps with parents."

Why Teachers Didn't Meet with Families to Review the VKRP Assessment Data

Teachers reported **sending family reports only home** to families.

Teachers reported feeling VKRP was **not a good representation of children's skills**.

"Because I work with students in a self-contained room and the assessment is not a true depiction of their skills. If the assessment started at a lower level, then I could at least show something that they know, but when the assessment starts with shapes or school math skills, they do not know about it is sad to report all very low scores to parents."

Teachers reported **sharing their own data to track students' progress**.

Teachers expressed that **they did not yet teach the skills** that were being assessed.

Teachers discussed data, but **the meetings were not exclusively for VKRP.**

“I conferenced with families about progress and reviewed VKRP results but did not specifically meet just to discuss VKRP. VKRP is one source of information that helps present how a student performed on one test but does not always match how a student performs or achieves in class.”

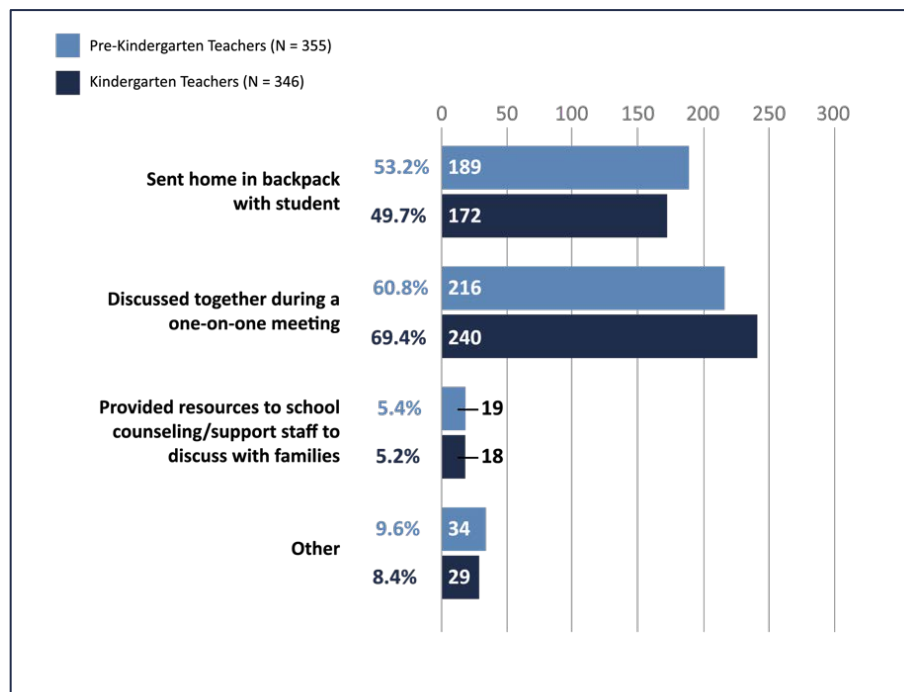
FAMILY RESOURCES

Pre-kindergarten and kindergarten teachers were asked a series of questions about their knowledge of different family resource materials as well as if and how they shared these resources.

- ◆ **Fifty-six percent of pre-kindergarten teachers** and **59% of kindergarten teachers** reported knowing the Family Resource Packet was available to share with students’ families.
- ◆ **Fifty-three percent of pre-kindergarten teachers** and **54% of kindergarten teachers** reported knowing the “For Families” Resource page on the VKRP public website was available to share with families.
- ◆ Of the teachers who knew family resources were available, **62% of prekindergarten teachers** and **61% of kindergarten teachers** shared these resources with students’ families.

Figure 3

Different Ways Pre-Kindergarten and Kindergarten Teachers Shared Family Resources



Below, we highlight several themes that emerged from teachers’ responses to the question about why they did not share resources with families. We again also include representative quotes.

Why Pre-Kindergarten and Kindergarten Teachers Did Not Share Resources with Families

Teachers reported **not knowing about the family resources**.

Teachers reported that the resources were **too much information to share**.

“It was too much to share in that setting at that time. I was already sharing a lot of information with my families. I did share the family report. I will go back and look and likely share the resources now. Having them over winter break would be helpful.”

Teachers explained that they **shared resources with families as needed**.

Teachers **felt parents were overwhelmed** and they did not want to burden them.

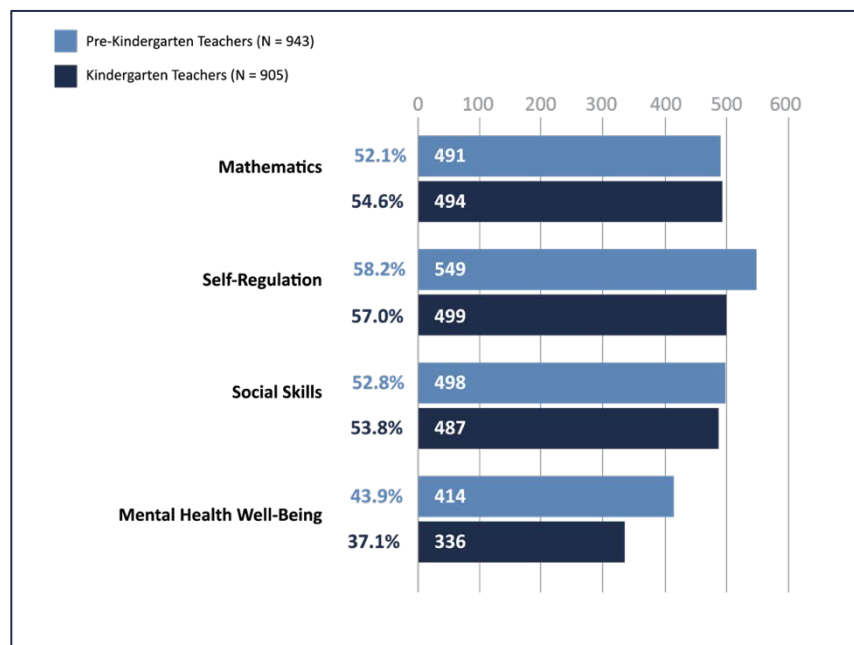
“There is already so much that goes home. My parents get overwhelmed and end up not using any of the resources. I try to minimize what is sent home and make sure it is relevant and deemed helpful from the teachers.”

Support from VKRP on Communication with Families

Pre-kindergarten and kindergarten teachers were asked what supports or resources they wanted VKRP to provide to help communicate with families about children’s skill development in mathematics, self-regulation, and social skills, and their mental health.

Figure 4

Areas of Requested Additional Support from Pre-kindergarten and Kindergarten Teachers



PUTTING FEEDBACK INTO ACTION: NEXT STEPS

After reviewing the feedback provided in the Fall 2022 Teacher Survey, VKRP, in collaboration with VDOE, has identified some key next steps to put the feedback into action. Key next steps fall into three major categories that include enhanced implementation supports, improved reports and resources for families and improved data use supports for teachers.

Continue to provide implementation support. VKRP will continue to support pre-kindergarten and kindergarten teachers' implementation of VKRP by providing in-person, remote, and online training, resources, and information for teachers as well as school-level and division-level administrators. VKRP will continue to partner with programs, schools, and divisions on how to conduct assessments that are engaging for students and use their growth data to promote student skill development over time.

Improve reports and resources for families. VKRP will continue to gather data this spring and summer from families and teachers to learn more about what school readiness means to families and how to improve the VKRP family reports and resources. Specifically, VKRP in partnership with VDOE will host several meetings with families in the Commonwealth to better understand successes and challenges to family engagement with schools and programs. Data will inform improved VKRP Family Information Reports and Resources for the 2023-2024 school year.

Improve data use resources for teachers. VKRP will continue to convene data use experts, administrators, and teachers to gather information and best approaches to understanding and using data. This information will be used to develop an improved suite of online, asynchronous resources to help schools, programs and teachers use the VKRP data to inform practice and support students' development.