Virginia Kindergarten Readiness Program (VKRP)

Frequently Asked Questions

Overview of VKRP and Requirements

What is the Virginia Kindergarten Readiness Program (VKRP)?

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). For more information on VKRP, visit www.vkrponline.org.

Who is required to participate in VKRP?

All kindergarten students must be assessed in the fall and spring. The mid-year timepoint is optional.

For 2025-2026, the following publicly-funded three-year-old and four-year-old children are required to participate in VKRP in the fall and spring:

- **VPI classrooms.** This includes students enrolled in a VPI classroom but who may not be funded through VPI state dollars (e.g., an ECSE student or a locally funded student in a classroom supported by VPI). This includes **VPI students** in a community-provider setting.
- **VECF Mixed Delivery Classrooms.**

Pre-kindergarten classrooms in public schools that are not funded by VPI (such as a full ECSE classroom, Head Start classroom, Title I classroom, or other locally supported pre-k classroom) are encouraged to use the VKRP assessments with their students, but they are not required.

When do students participate in VKRP?

VKRP and Virginia Literacy Partnerships (VLP) strategically plan assessment terms to help reduce overlap and burden on educators. It is recommended that the VKRP mathematics assessment (the Early Mathematics Assessment System; EMAS) be administered by teachers during the two weeks immediately prior to the start of the school division or program's literacy assessment (Virginia Language & Literacy Screener: Pre-K; VALLS: Pre-K and Virginia Language & Literacy Screener: Kindergarten; VALLS: Kindergarten) to allow time for the EMAS assessments to be completed before beginning literacy assessments. The VKRP social skills and self-regulation rating scale (Child Behavior Rating Scale; CBRS) should be completed by teachers after four to six weeks of instruction to allow adequate time for teachers to observe students' skills in a multitude of contexts. The VKRP assessment calendar can be found on the VKRP public website.

Does participating in VKRP require any costs from school divisions and/or programs?

No. VKRP provides training for school personnel and all the assessment materials without any cost to school divisions/programs.

VKRP in Virgina Connects for Kids (VAConnects)

What is VAConnects?

VAConnects is an integrated data system that brings together three state data collection systems, Virginia Language & Literacy Screening System (VALLSS), the Virginia Kindergarten Readiness Program (VKRP), and LinkB5. The goals of VAConnects are to: 1) Build a robust, coordinated system with enhanced security features; 2) Create a streamlined interface for improved user experience; 3) Develop shared data governance; and 4) create consistent, aligned, and integrated reporting.

What will be different in VAConnects?

- VAConnects will have a new and upgraded look and feel.
- Users of multiple initiatives will only need one login and password for VAConnects in order to access LinkB5, VALLSS, and VKRP. Teachers can find more information about how to log in and reset their password on the VAConnects website under Resources > User Management.
- Historically, all student/child management was done through PALS. In VAConnects, student/child management is done through VAConnects. Updates that teachers make to their classrooms and students/children will be shared across initiatives, so that they only enter information in one place.

What will be the same in VAConnects?

- There will be minimal changes to information collected by VKRP.
- Programmatic requirements and deadlines will not change and will continue to be determined by VKRP official guidelines.
- Users will still have access to hotline support through chat, phone, and email.

VKRP Assessments

What assessments are included in VKRP?

VKRP includes a coordinated set of assessments that measure a student's skills in early language and literacy (through Virginia Literacy Partnerships; VLP), mathematics, self-regulation, and social skills.

Virginia Literacy Partnerships collects data using the **Virginia Language & Literacy Screening System (VALLSS),** using both the Virginia Language & Literacy Screener: Pre-K (VALLS: Pre-K) and the Virginia Language & Literacy Screener: Kindergarten (VALLS: Kindergarten).

The **Early Mathematics Assessment System (EMAS)** is used to measure students' mathematical thinking. The EMAS is a reliable and valid assessment that draws on modern cognitive science, developmental, and educational research. The EMAS is a direct assessment of early mathematics skills, administered by teachers, and takes about 20-25 minutes per student.

The **Child Behavior Rating Scale (CBRS)** is used to measure teachers' perceptions of students' self-regulation and social skills. Teachers complete a short rating scale that measures their perception of a child's behavior with other students and adults, as well as their engagement with materials and tasks in the classroom. The CBRS takes one to three minutes per student to complete.

Teachers also report on five items that focus on students' mental health well-being. There is also an item that allows teachers to indicate whether they have concerns about a student's social-emotional well-being. These items are designed to provide standardized information about teacher perceptions of students' mental health well-being. This information can help facilitate conversations between teachers, instructional leaders, and families on how to best support students.

More information regarding VKRP, and the components of the assessments can be found on the VKRP public website.

Does VKRP have a Mid-Year assessment timepoint?

Beginning in the 2024-2025 school year, VKRP added an optional mid-year timepoint in pre-kindergarten and kindergarten. Teachers, educational leaders, and families across Virginia expressed interest in understanding how to better monitor students' progress and growth across the school year and how to better align with literacy assessment practices.

After opting to participate, divisions and programs determine which classrooms or students will use VKRP at the mid-year timepoint. Kindergarten and publicly-funded pre-kindergarten classrooms required to use VKRP in the fall and spring are encouraged, but not required, to use VKRP at the mid-year timepoint.

Is the EMAS developmentally appropriate?

Yes. The EMAS is developmentally appropriate for children. The EMAS was intentionally designed to measure a wide range of young children's early mathematics skills. To best ensure developmental appropriateness for young children, VKRP partnered with early childhood mathematics experts including Virginia teachers and mathematics specialists to create, revise, and provide feedback on the EMAS items.

Administering the EMAS provides an opportunity for teachers to observe the extent to which the essential big ideas of mathematics were formalized through instruction and other learning experiences. This information can serve as a tool to help teachers determine what a child knows and can do mathematically, and, by extension, what instruction and experiences should come next.

How do we conduct assessments with English Language/Multilingual Learners (EL)?

VKRP and the VDOE provide guidance and best assessment practices for conducting assessments with young students who are ELs. This information can be found in the VKRP Teacher Manuals. The Virginia Literacy Partnerships (VLP) also provide guidance on using the literacy screenings (VALLS: Pre-K and VALLS: Kindergarten) with students who are ELs.

When can a student be exempted from participating in VKRP?

VKRP is a statewide assessment system that Virginia uses to measure student readiness and growth; therefore, all eligible pre-kindergartners and kindergartners, including students with disabilities, should be assessed.

There are, however, limited reasons for exemptions:

- A student's IEP **specifically** lists that the EMAS and/or CBRS should not be given.
- A serious illness or medical condition which prevents a student from participating during the assessment period.
- A family requests an exemption. In this case, it is important to inform families that non-participation means teachers and families will not receive information on student readiness and progress contained in the assessment score reports.

Can modifications be made when administering the assessments?

For the EMAS, most students will complete the EMAS under standard administration conditions. There are allowable accommodations for students that can be made to the assessment administration that still fall under the **Standard Administration** category because they do not change the constructs being measured.

However, in some cases, students will be assessed under non-standard administration conditions. Modifications made for **Non-Standard Administration** could change the constructs being measured. Examples include simplifying or altering directions. Teachers should refer to the VKRP Teacher Manual for details on additional non-standard administration examples.

What if I make an error when entering information into the VKRP assessments?

We realize that mistakes sometime happen when inputting data. The guidance below provides information about what to do when this happens:

VALLSS:
- Contact the VLP hotline (888-882-7257 or literacy@virginia.edu)- if you have questions regarding information entered into the VALLS: Pre-K or VALLS: Kindergarten.

EMAS:
- If you enter the wrong information for an item, the system allows you to go back one item to correct the error.
- If you enter the wrong information for several items, contact the VKRP hotline (866-301-8278 or vkrp@virginia.edu) who can reset the EMAS to a certain module/task number.

CBRS:
- The CBRS may only be reset as a complete assessment (e.g. individual items cannot be changed).
- Contact the VKRP hotline for assistance if an assessment needs to be reset.
- Be sure to enter any observational notes prior to submitting the assessment. The CBRS cannot be reopened to enter notes once scores have been submitted.

Preparing to Administer VKRP

How can teachers and administrators access VKRP?

In the fall, once educators have a VAConnects account, teachers can enter VKRP by logging into the VAConnects website with their username and password and using the left-hand navigation to select "**VKRP**."

What training will teachers receive?

VKRP offers a "Train the Trainer" model with representatives from divisions and programs who are trained on VKRP and how to train others. Trainers then facilitate teachers' participation in division/program-led in-person or online training, which includes an overview of the VKRP assessments, reports, and instructional resources available.

On the **VKRP Resources Overview Landing page**, teachers can access the **Training & Support** tab to link to the training resources: **Training Modules, Manuals, and Demo Videos.** The Teacher Manual details assessment protocol as well as instructions on how to access the reports and instructional resources.

What if VKRP users have a problem with technology?

Users should consult their VKRP Teacher Manual, specifically the Troubleshooting Technical Issues section. If needed, contact VKRP for support via phone (866-301-8278), email (vkrp@virginia.edu), or through the chat feature within the VAConnects website.

Can we see the assessments in advance for planning our curriculum in the fall?

Yes. A copy of [the Child Behavior Rating Scale (CBRS)](#) is available on the VAConnects Resources page. VKRP can share a copy of the items included on the Early Mathematics Assessment System (EMAS) if requested.

What if EMAS kits are missing materials?

Teachers should make sure their EMAS kits are complete before and after each assessment term and let school/program contacts know if they are missing items. The full inventory of EMAS materials is listed in the VKRP Teacher Manuals.

School/program contacts notify the VKRP Division/Program Contact of what needs to be ordered for future terms and the Division/Program Contact collects this information. Then, before the next term, VKRP sends order forms and ships materials to division/program contacts based on division and program requests.

Data Use

What reports are available?

VKRP provides detailed information at the student, classroom, program, school division, and state levels. It provides a snapshot of students' skills in the fall, mid-year (for those who participate), and spring for mathematics, self-regulation, social skills, and mental health well-being. Reports also show student growth across the year.

A separate document, **Interpreting Reports**, includes an overview of all available classroom and student-level reports and information on how to access and interpret them. This document is available on the VKRP > Resources > Data Interpretation page of the VAConnects website.

Does VKRP provide any training for using the reports and data?

A VKRP specialist can support your team in understanding and using the VKRP reports. Teachers have reported that these data trainings are beneficial in terms of disaggregating and interpreting the VKRP data. Please reach out if your school/program is interested in scheduling Reports & Data Use training at vkrp@virginia.edu or 866-301-8278.

How can school divisions and programs share VKRP data and resources with families?

VKRP provides a [family letter template](#) that can be used and personalized to inform families about the purpose of VKRP.

Family Information Reports are available on the VKRP Reports page on VAConnects. They are available in the fall and spring (in English and Spanish) and have information about students' mathematics, self-regulation, and social skills. Teachers are encouraged to use the Family Information Report during family/teacher conferences.

Additionally, family-friendly resource documents, [Family Resource Packets](), are available in both English and Spanish. These resources include strategies and activities for skill development in each domain that families can use at home.

The VKRP website also includes a webpage [specifically for families]() that contains links to carefully vetted resources and websites and can be useful to support students' school readiness skills at home.