



Illinois State Board of Education

100 North First Street • Springfield, Illinois 62777-0001
www.isbe.net

Darren Reisberg
Chair of the Board

Dr. Carmen I. Ayala
State Superintendent of Education

Dear District Superintendent,

Thank you for your continued commitment to the Kindergarten Individual Development Survey (KIDS) in these unprecedented times. For the 2020-2021 school year, the State Superintendent of Education determined that:

- Districts began the 40-day observation window and data collection period on the first day of in-person instruction.
- The KIDStech data entry window will remain open until June 30, 2021, to allow maximum time to enter student ratings.
- KIDS is not required for students who remain in remote learning situations for the entire school year.

KIDS Student Exemption Reason Code Submission Guidelines:

As in past administrations of KIDS, there are specific cases in which:

- 1) Teachers were unable to rate a student on one or more of the 14 state-required measures.
- 2) Teachers were unable to observe students OR students did not or could not participate in KIDS at all, based on individual circumstances.

ISBE has established **KIDS Student Exemption Reason Codes** to ensure that the final KIDS report most accurately reflects children's developmental abilities upon entry to kindergarten. KIDS Student Exemption Reason Codes may be applied in situations in which teachers are unable to complete the KIDS assessment for a specific student. This year, ISBE has added specific codes for situations in which students or entire districts remained in remote learning the entire year. Use of the Student Exemption Reason Codes may affect district participation rates (positively or negatively), depending on the reason for non-completion.

The guidance below outlines appropriate use of Student Exemption Reason Codes for teachers **who did not rate one or more students on one or more of the 14 state-required KIDS measures**. A chart of the school year 2020-21 KIDS Student Exemption Reason Codes is attached with this letter, along with a KIDS Student Exemption Reason Codes Template Spreadsheet.

- Students without a scaled score will not be included in the state reports. That may affect district participation rates, depending on the reason/code selected.
 - Students without a rating entered for one or more of the 14 state-required measures will result in the student having no scaled score on the KIDS assessment.
 - Students with one or more of the 14 state-required measures marked "unable to rate" will result in the student having no scaled score on the KIDS assessment.
- Student Exemption Reason Codes may be used when a teacher is "unable to rate" a student on one or more of the 14 state-required measures.
- Student Exemption Reason Codes may be used when kindergarten student circumstances (including remaining in remote situations all year) prevent a teacher from being able to observe and gather evidence on one or more of the 14 measures.

- Use of a Student Exemption Reason Code for students who remained in remote learning all year may require further documentation, such as attendance calendars and parent requests.
- Use of a Student Exemption Reason Code may or may not result in the student's removal from the district's overall participation rates, depending on the reason/code selected.

FRAMING 2020-21 KIDS DATA

Please be aware that ISBE anticipates the statewide data set will be very unlike data from past years, and it should not be compared to previous data sets. The 2020-21 data set will not be reflective of "Readiness" because ratings were gathered at various points throughout the school year and were not necessarily based on student development at kindergarten entry.

The 2020-21 KIDS data will be most useful at the local level within each district to:

- Inform first-grade teachers of areas, especially potential learning gaps, in which students may need additional support next year.

- Tailor curriculum and guide instruction to best support our youngest learners.

- District use of Student Exemption Reason Codes is *optional* for school year 2020-21.
- **PLEASE NOTE:** Beginning in the 2021-22 school year, **state law will require annual assessment of all students entering public school kindergarten.**
 - This means that **statute will require that KIDS be implemented at the beginning of kindergarten, beginning fall 2021.**

KIDS Student Exemption Reason Codes for any kindergarten students enrolled but missing from the data set also must be submitted, beginning with the fall 2021 KIDS implementation. KIDS Student Exemption Reason Code Process: Districts that choose to apply Student Exemption Reason Codes for one or more students for the school year 2020-21 data collection must follow the process below:

- 1) Individual teacher(s) add the following information using the **KIDS Student Exemption Reason Codes Template Spreadsheet**, which is attached. (Other forms of documentation will not be accepted.)
 - a. School District Name
 - b. School/Site Name
 - c. RCDTS Code
 - d. Student ID
 - e. KIDS Student Exemption Reason Code for Each Student
 - f. Explanation/Notes (as necessary)
- 2) District representatives gather and compile all teacher spreadsheets and review for accuracy.
- 3) District representatives submit compiled spreadsheets to kids@isbe.net.
- 4) Spreadsheets **must be received no later than close of business July 16, 2021.**
- 5) ISBE will compare submitted exemptions with attendance records and calendars to ensure reporting accuracy.
- 6) ISBE will use the Student Exemption Reason Code selected and documentation submitted by district to make determinations of impacts to district participation rates for the purposes of the state report.

- 7) District participation rates will automatically be negatively impacted by enrolled kindergarten students who are missing from their district data set with NO Student Exemption Reason Code submitted.

As a reminder, districts have the *option* to use KIDS Student Exemption Reason Codes, as necessary, for the 2020-21 school year. However, **KIDS Student Exemption Reason Codes for any kindergarten students enrolled but missing from the data set must be submitted, beginning with the fall 2021 KIDS implementation.** Please contact Terri Lamb at tlamb@isbe.net with questions regarding this year's KIDS Student Exemption Reason Codes and process.

Sincerely,

Dr. Sean Clayton
Director of Assessment
Illinois State Board of Education
Springfield, Illinois 62777