

A strong academic foundation is essential to individual student success. When a student enters first grade without basic literacy skills, he/she is unable to function effectively. This learning deficit often continues to increase over time.

To ensure that all students have a strong academic foundation right from the start, the Jasper School District will be conducting **Kindergarten Exit Assessments\*** (KEAs) starting this school year. These KEAs will be part of a comprehensive program of Scientific Reading Instruction, and are designed to help teachers and administrators review individual student readiness before they begin first grade.

KEAs are composed of screenings based on the **Five Essential Components of Reading** identified by the National Reading Panel. These include:

- 1) Letter/Sound Identification (phonics)
- 2) Phonemic Awareness (sounds)
- 3) Sight Word Identification (vocabulary)
- 4) Reading Comprehension
- 5) Reading Fluency

KEAs will be administered one-on-one by a qualified staff member who is not the student's teacher. Testing will take place near the end of the final nine-weeks, and each administration will be completed in a single sitting.

A student who does not score proficient may be retained in Kindergarten, subject to recommendations from the RTI Intervention Team. In addition to the KEA score, the team will use multiple data points (DIBELS, Istation, teacher observations, etc.) to help evaluate what is best for the student.

If retention is recommended, the student's parents have the option of sending him/her to "K Kamp," the district's summer intervention program. K Kamp provides intensive remediation in essential literacy skills. Once the student has completed the program, he/she will be given the opportunity to retake the KEA.

The KEA will not be used to identify students for special education services, nor is it intended to show mastery of state standards. Its primary purpose is to help identify students who exhibit difficulty with foundational reading and language skills, and who may require focused interventions in the future.

\* Adapted from multiple sources including the *National Reading Panel report*, Eunice Kennedy Shriver National Institute of Child Health and Human Development (2000); *First Grade Beginning Baseline Evaluation*, U.S. Educational Information Resource Center (2013), *Phonetic Connections* "Sight Word" list (2017).