



## ***Texas School Ready! Program School Readiness Certification System Fall 2008***



### **What is Texas School Ready!™?**

Texas School Ready!™ is a program that certifies preschool education classrooms that effectively prepare their students for kindergarten. Texas School Ready!™ is based on the **actual linking** between:

- The quality instructional practices that must be in place in a preschool program to get children ready for kindergarten AND
- The children actually achieving scores showing they were on track in the areas of reading and social skills when they went to kindergarten.

### **Why was it developed?**

The Texas Legislature through Senate Bill 76 and 23 mandated the State Center for Early Childhood Development to develop and implement a state-wide school readiness quality rating system, equally available to all types of preschool classrooms including:

- Licensed (profit, non-profit and faith based) child care
- School district and charter school pre-kindergarten
- Head Start

### **How is the information for Texas School Ready!™ collected?**

The Texas School Readiness Certification System (SRCS) is a web-based application through which programs enter information to be considered for certification as a Texas School Ready!™ Program. The application includes four parts:

- **Preschool Student/School Report** on type and amount of instruction per student and monthly student attendance on all the preschool children who will be going on to kindergarten.
- **Preschool Facility Report** on such areas as staffing, curriculum, and professional development.
- **Preschool Teacher Report** on teaching practices completed by each preschool teacher in a program that has children going to kindergarten the following school year.
- **Kindergarten Report** on reading and social screeners of entering kindergarteners.

Decisions about items in the web-based applications were based on indicators of quality obtained from research studies (e.g., teacher-to-child ratio; child attendance, length of program day) as well as characteristics of the classroom environment and teaching beliefs and behaviors. Refinement of the items was based on choosing those that were found to be most reliable as established by observation and interviews by external evaluators. This was critical to assure that what was being collected through teacher and director reports could be reliably reported.

### **How is this information processed to determine certification?**

These multiple data points are brought together, in both pre-k and k, and statistically analyzed for an objective measure of certification. Characteristics of preschool programs, preschool classroom instruction, and preschool classroom environments are initially analyzed separately and reduced to their most predictive components. The resulting components, together with children's kindergarten outcomes, are then analyzed. The kindergarten outcomes include (a) preschool classrooms' average pass

rates on the Texas Primary Reading Inventory (TPRI) or Tejas LEE (TJL) and (b) preschool classrooms' average score on the social screener (Social Competence and Behavior Evaluation-SCBE). The analysis identified three types of classrooms:

- The first group was composed of classrooms that demonstrated high quality preschool programming and good kindergarten outcomes.
- The second group was defined by low quality preschool programming and poor kindergarten outcomes.
- The third group was defined by low quality preschool programming yet good kindergarten outcomes

Only those preschool classrooms with both high quality preschool programming and good kindergarten outcomes are awarded certification.

**Three key school readiness indicators** were found to be particularly important in predicting kindergarten school readiness:

- High quality professional development/training of teachers in instructional practices focused on school readiness,
- Teachers' identification and use of intentional practices of activities with children, and
- Teachers' practices around literacy and opportunities for writing for children.

### **Why is Texas School Ready!™ certification important?**

The Texas State Center for Early Childhood Development, housed in the Children's Learning Institute at the University of Texas-Houston, has very in-depth experience in conducting early education research. Our research and the research in the field at large shows clearly that if children do not experience a high quality preschool program that focuses on getting them ready for school, they will often have trouble when they go to kindergarten.

### **How will I recognize a Texas School Ready!™ program?**

When classrooms earn certification, they receive the Texas School Ready!™ seal which is posted in the early childhood education center or school. The seal has the year the certification was awarded. This powerful seal tells parents, the community, and others that the children who graduated from these classrooms went to public kindergarten with the fundamental skills in place to be successful. In addition, the [TexasSchoolReady.com](http://TexasSchoolReady.com) website allows parents and the community to search for programs with Texas School Ready!™ certification.



***The Texas State Center for Early Childhood Development is pleased to share the Texas School Ready! Program School Readiness Certification System results for 2008.***

**Texas Widely Represented in the Certification System**

- 155 Texas cities and towns have certified Texas School Ready! classrooms.
- 75 Texas counties have certified classrooms.
- 1123 Texas prekindergarten classrooms are certified (Public School, Head Start, and Child Care).
- 612 buildings (schools and centers) house certified classrooms.

**Number of Classrooms Eligible to be Considered for Certification Increases Dramatically**

To be eligible to be considered for Texas School Ready! Certification requires that BOTH the prekindergarten data and the kindergarten data must be in place.

- 1508 classrooms were eligible.
- Up from 700 classrooms eligible last year.
- 422 classrooms were ineligible.

**Rate of Certification Up**

- Rate of certification is 75% of all classrooms eligible.
- Up from 66% last year.
- 16.7% of eligible classrooms are in the low category (i.e., low scores in both prekindergarten and kindergarten).
- 8.8% of eligible classrooms are in the mixed category (i.e., either low scores in prekindergarten or in kindergarten)

**Randomized Match Confirms Stability of the System**

A randomized match between certified status on 400 classrooms from last year and this year was conducted.

- 86% of the classrooms remained certified
- 64% of the classrooms moved from the low category to certified
- 60% of the classrooms moved from the mixed category to certified
- 4.7% of the classrooms moved from certified to the mixed category
- 4.7% of the classrooms moved from certified to the low category

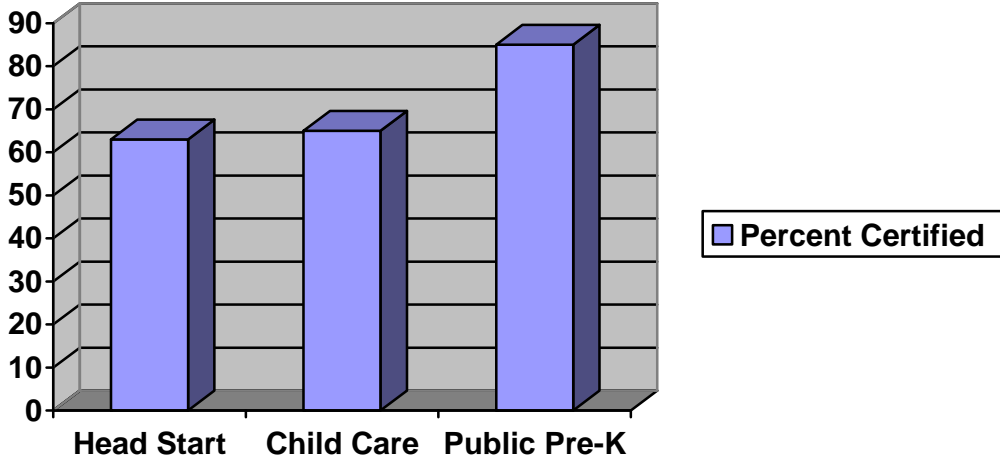
**Certification Rates High for Both TEEM (Texas Early Education Model) and Non-TEEM**

- More than 76% of the TEEM classrooms are certified.
- 59% of the non-TEEM classrooms are certified.

**All Types of Classrooms Very Well Represented**

- 63% of Head Start classrooms are certified.
- 65% of Child Care classrooms are certified.
- 85% of the public school prekindergarten classrooms are certified.

The graph below shows the percent of preschool classrooms that were certified as Texas School Ready! by program type in the second year of the program (2006-2007).



**Figure 1. Percent Classrooms Certified by Program Type 2006-07**

The graph below shows the increase in the number of preschool classrooms that were eligible to be considered for certification (i.e., all necessary information was submitted) from the first year of the Texas School Ready! program (2005-06) to the second year of the program (2006-07); as well as the increase from the first to the second year in the number of classrooms earning Texas School Ready! certification.



**Figure 2. Increase in Eligible Classrooms for School Readiness Certification and Awarded Texas School Ready! Certification from 2005-2006 to 2006-2007**

To learn more about the Texas School Ready! Program and the results of the School Readiness Certification System, please visit: [www.TexasSchoolReady.com](http://www.TexasSchoolReady.com)