



## Procedure Letter 40

**TO:** Early Care and Education Stakeholders

**FROM:** Kara B. Wentz, Director

**DATE:** February 17, 2026

**SUBJECT:** 2026 Kindergarten Readiness Boot Camp

### **Background**

Improving kindergarten readiness statewide is a priority of the Ohio Department of Children and Youth. The transition into kindergarten marks a pivotal milestone in a child's educational journey, setting the stage for future academic and social success. Starting Kindergarten is a big adjustment for both the child and the family, and we know that when children can anticipate what comes next, they feel safer and behave confidently. To assist with transition, and to ensure Ohio's children have the best possible start to their K-12 experience the Ohio Department of Children and Youth (DCY), in partnership with the Ohio Department of Education and Workforce (DEW), is launching the **2026 Ohio Kindergarten Readiness Boot Camp**.

The Kindergarten Readiness Boot Camp provides children entering Kindergarten in the 2026/2027 school year targeted programming to deliver high-quality preschool instruction designed to:

- Build familiarity with school routines, expectations, and learning environments.
- Provide instruction grounded in the Science of Reading and aligned with Ohio's Early Learning and Development Standards.
- Engage families as active partners in the transition to kindergarten.
- Strengthen children's social, emotional, and academic readiness for kindergarten.

Instructional activities will emphasize literacy development grounded in the Science of Reading, foundational math concepts, and executive functioning skills such as self-regulation, cooperation, and following routines.



**Eligibility**

**Kindergarten Readiness Boot Camp Partners:** this opportunity is open to public school districts that are currently Early Childhood Education (ECE) grantees.

**Children:** Children entering Kindergarten in the 2026/2027 school year are eligible in accordance with Ohio Revised Code Section 5104.53 which states families must not exceed two hundred percent of the federal poverty level or meet one of the following:

- children with IEPs
- children in foster or kinship care
- children experiencing homelessness

**Program Expectations:** Programs will operate between June 1 and August 28, 2026, for a minimum of four weeks and at least 75 total instructional hours. Districts may select either Program A or Program B, as defined in the application guidance. Program A includes a licensed kindergarten teacher and one additional classroom staff member per class, while Program B includes those standards plus access to licensed intervention specialists or related service providers.

Program Type	Amount Per Child Served
Program A	\$1,000
Program B	\$1,500

**Application & Reporting**

Application information is now available on the [DCY website](#). A technical assistance webinar will be held on **February 25, 2026, at 10am** to help potential applicants understand program requirements, allowable costs, and reporting expectations.

Districts who submit an application **by March 13, 2026** will be notified of award status by March 27, 2026. Applications will be accepted and reviewed on a rolling basis between March 14 and April 1. **April 1, 2026** is the final application deadline. Grant agreements will then be executed through DEW’s grants management platform.

Districts must submit a Final Expenditure Report (FER) by September 30, 2026. Additional reporting will include participation data, family engagement outcomes, and feedback on implementation quality to inform future readiness initiatives.



### **Monitoring and Support**

DCY will provide technical assistance, monitor implementation for fidelity to program requirements, and collect data to evaluate outcomes. Evaluation will include analysis of family surveys, program participation metrics, and comparison of KRA results between participating and non-participating cohorts.

### **Funding**

Funding levels are structured to enable each participating district to serve at least the number of children needed to raise its “demonstrating readiness” percentage to between 48 and 60 percent based on 2024–2025 Kindergarten Readiness Assessment (KRA) data. Through this initiative, Ohio aims to ensure that children have access to readiness programming, more children enter school prepared to learn, and more families experience a smooth and confident kindergarten transition. This opportunity will be funded through the Early Childhood Education state general revenue funding and will utilize the same process as the current ECE grants through DEW’s grants management system.