

County Needs Assessment Report Draft

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Kindergarten Entry Assessment & Early Childhood Data Systems (KEDS)

Developed for White Pine County, Nevada



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This document contains information collected during the planning process that is specifically from and related to the county. Assets and needs are documented for the purpose of understanding the existing systems and circumstances within each of Nevada’s counties. The ultimate goal of the project is to support the development of a **statewide kindergarten entry assessment and early childhood data system that supports school readiness toward long-term success of each child.**

This project was funded with federal stimulus funds (under the American Recovery & Reinvestment Act). It was envisioned and made possible by the Early Childhood Advisory Council, which is managed by the Nevada Head Start Collaboration and Early Childhood Systems Office (HSC & ECSO).



Introduction

This report summarizes the findings for White Pine County that are the result of a statewide needs assessment conducted in the first half of 2012 related to the Kindergarten Entry and Data System project (KEDS). “KEDS” is a statewide effort to build a comprehensive early childhood education and care (ECE) system that supports the ability of all children in Nevada to enter kindergarten ready to learn. The Nevada Early Childhood Advisory Council, (NECAC) managed by Nevada’s Head Start Collaboration and Early Childhood Systems (HSC&ECS) Office, in collaboration with the Nevada Department of Education (NDE), is leading this effort, which has identified two major components of system change as priorities for implementation:

- a) Adoption of a Common Kindergarten Entry Assessment; and
- b) Development of a Coordinated Data System that links pre-K to K-12 (and beyond) in order to support early childhood educators to understand and utilize child assessment data to improve programs, curriculum and environments.

The vision for this project, known as KEDS for short, is defined by the NECAC as follows:

Nevada’s statewide data system leads to a shared understanding of school readiness. Everyone who touches children’s lives will have a broad awareness of the strengths, needs and status of Nevada’s children; and information that improves children’s development and learning.

To carry out this vision, a comprehensive needs assessment was launched in January 2012 with a focus on determining the feasibility at both the state and county level for adopting a statewide approach. To ensure that every one of Nevada’s 17 counties were represented in the needs assessment process, an extensive effort was made to obtain local stakeholder input regarding county-level needs, assets, and buy-in related to participating in the implementation of a Statewide Early Childhood Data System and a Common Kindergarten Entry Assessment.

The needs assessment process included focus groups and site visits in all 17 counties and school districts to understand current practices, resource needs, specific barriers, and level of willingness to participate in this statewide systems change initiative. This needs assessment will allow Nevada to determine the most sensible approach for improving each county’s ability to ensure that its children enter kindergarten ready to learn, socialize, and thrive. This report summarizes the needs assessment process and findings specifically for White Pine County and concludes with a subjective assessment of the feasibility for implementing KEDS in White Pine County.

County Profile

White Pine County is located in east central Nevada, at the crossroads of U.S. 93 and U.S. 50. The town of Ely is the county seat. In addition to Ely, White Pine is comprised of the unincorporated towns of McGill, Ruth, Baker, Lund, Cherry Creek and Preston, in addition to a number of ghost towns. White Pine County is the tenth largest county (by population) in Nevada, covers approximately 8,900 square miles and accounts for nearly 8.1 percent of Nevada’s total land surface of 110,540 square miles. In the southeastern part of the county is Great Basin National Park and Wheeler Peak, the tallest mountain wholly within Nevada.

White Pine County schools are very highly rated, and the County is home to Great Basin College. White Pine’s economic prosperity has traditionally been tied to the mining industry, and has both prospered and suffered through the boom-and-bust cycles so common in the West. In recent years the economy has again come to be dominated by mining. As the dominant sector of the local economy, the mining boom during the past couple of years has had a direct impact on education. The positive impact is seen in increased funding resources for the school district and the local community. In addition to mining, the Ely State Prison, Federal offices and tourism form the basis of the county’s economy.

White Pine County is also home to several Shoshone reservations. The Ely Shoshone Indian Reservation is located in and near the south side of the city of Ely. It has a population of around 500 and operates a preschool that is open to both tribal and non-tribal members. Part of the city of Ely lies within its territory. The Duckwater Shoshone Reservation is located near the southwest corner of White Pine County. It is primarily an agricultural community and has a number of services available, including a grade school and a health clinic. High school students travel 50 miles on a one-way via gravel road to attend school in Eureka, Nevada. The Confederated Tribes of the Goshute Reservation covers approximately 112,870 acres in White Pine County, Nevada on the Nevada/Utah state line.

White Pine County Demographics

Total Population (2010)¹	10,030
Number of Children Ages 0-5 (2010)²	634
Median Household Income (2010)³	\$49,376
Homeless population (school age group)	No Data Available
Food Insecure Children: Ages 0-18 (2012)⁴	520 or 26.7%
Enrolled in NV Checkup: Ages 0-18 (2012)⁵	39
Number of Children Receiving Early Intervention Services: Ages 0-3 (2010)⁶	32 (21.42 hours per child)

¹ (Nevada State Demographer)

² (Nevada State Demographer)

³ (U.S. Census Bureau)

⁴ (Feeding America , 2012)

⁵ (Nevada Check up, 2012)

Racial/Ethnic Breakdown (2010)⁷		
	Total Population	% of Total Population
Total	10,030	100%
Asian	97	1.0%
Black or African American	395	3.9%
American Indian or Alaska Native	419	4.2%
Native Hawaiian and Other Pacific Islander	10	0.1%
White	8,575	85.5%
Other	279	2.8%
Multi-Racial	255	2.5%
*Population that identify themselves as Hispanic or Latino.	1,326	13.2%

White Pine County: Snapshot of Early Childhood Education and Care

White Pine County School District (WPSD) operates on a four-day school week, (with the exception of Baker Elementary), as do schools in several neighboring counties. WPSD first implemented this school schedule in the 2009-2010 school year. A district wide survey indicated that 85% of parents responding favored the continuation of the four day school week. The district experienced a loss of instructional and support staff positions due to a decline in the state budget and the sun setting of several federal and state grants. Despite the loss of staff, the district has been able to maintain its educational programs, in part due to the willingness of teachers, administrators and support staff to do more for the same or reduced compensation.

The district’s total enrollment is 1,443 students, with individual school enrollment ranging from David E. Norman Elementary in Ely at 445 to Baker Elementary at 11. The average classroom size throughout the district is 17 to 19 students. WPSD’s district-wide student to teacher ratio is 19:1. Approximately 93% of students district wide qualify for the Free and Reduced Lunch (FRL) program. This is an indicator that families may struggle to meet basic needs. Meeting educational needs early in the child’s life can help to correct for these disparities in graduation and academic achievement.

There are four elementary schools in WPSD, one of which is located in Ely, one in McGill, one in Lund (39 students) and one in Baker, which serves students in 3rd to 6th grade. WPSD has a state-funded partial day pre-K classroom at McGill Elementary School, which has capacity for 16 students. As with every district in Nevada, kindergarten is not mandatory. However, the superintendent noted that he is not aware of

⁶ (Nevada Early Intervention Services, 2012)

⁷ (Nevada State Demographer)

any families that opt out. In fact, he would like to have McGill's Pre-K grandfathered in to the state pre-K regulations as a full-day kindergarten in order to better respond to demand. Conversely, there are a significant number of parents that don't enroll their children in any preschool or day care, according to focus group participants. In the smaller communities, such as Lund, many of the parents don't work and therefore do not need day care. However, in the case of the state-funded pre-K classroom, state regulations prohibit families from outside the school zone to enroll, so parents that live in Ely but work in McGill, which is 20 minutes away, are unable to access the state-funded pre-K resource.

The superintendent reported that half of the first graders in McGill have Individual Education Plans (IEPs). David E. Norman Elementary and McGill Elementary are both recipients of the 21st Century Grant, which provides multi-year funding for afterschool tutoring and academic enrichment activities for participating students. WPSD has no developmental preschool option, and special education is integrated into regular classrooms (unless classes are full). WPSD's Speech Therapist and Special Education Coordinator make daily visits to the preschools in Ely and McGill to facilitate children in mainstreaming once they are enrolled in kindergarten. Additionally, they spend 30 minutes twice a week conducting a play group at Magic Carpet with children that are qualified as speech or developmentally delayed.

According to the WPSD superintendent, the district has no real issues in terms of serving English Language Learners (ELL), because parents make it a point to be involved and typically care a great deal about their child's education. As a result, most students from families with a native language other than English are at the level they need to be. Focus group participants indicated that the same is true for children in the Head Start program, with the exception that they don't have access to the ELL Coordinator from WPSD.

Early childhood education and care resources are scarce in White Pine County, and are inadequate to meet the demand. According to a 2009 report issued by the Children's Cabinet, licensed child care in White Pine County can only meet 37.19% of the demand for child care for children ages birth to 5, decreasing to 21.17% for children ages birth-9. When combining licensed child care capacity and average daily attendance of school-age programs, only 22.25% of the demand for care for children ages birth to 14 is met. There is a sense of urgency in the community for developing more day care options specifically for mining employees. In response, the Robison mine has plans to open a day care center for its employees.

There are two private licensed preschools in White Pine County, and both are located in Ely. **Magic Carpet Preschool** provides both partial day/partial year preschool as well as day care/afterschool programs, and can serve up to 42 children, ages 2 ½ to 12 years. **Little People's Head Start** operates both a Head Start program as well as an Early Head Start program. The Head Start program can accommodate up to 54 children, ages 3 to 5 years. The Early Head Start Infant/Toddler nursery has capacity to serve up to 13 children, from birth to 3 years. Both of these centers maintain a waiting list. There is also a tribal preschool located on the Ely Shoshone Indian Reservation that serves both tribal and non-tribal members, as space is available. Currently, the colony has three children enrolled.

Focus group participants indicated that there is some sense of competition among the private centers, even though they all maintain a waiting list. The WPSD superintendent noted that data for incoming kindergarten students reflects that there is a variance in the quality of preschools in White Pine County, with children coming from Magic Carpet achieving the highest scores and children transitioning from the state pre-K classroom are not far behind. He stated that children coming from the Shoshone preschool score the lowest, and need the most outreach.

Magic Carpet, which has higher tuition rates than Head Start, serves the community’s more affluent families, and there tends to be a perception among them that Magic Carpet provides a higher quality preschool environment than Head Start, which serves lower-income families. However, the providers interviewed attribute the variances in kindergarten readiness among the children that attend Magic Carpet versus Head Start to other factors, including the child’s socioeconomic status and home environment.

County Early Childhood Education and Care Resources	#	Enrollment Capacity	Children Enrolled in District Classrooms (2011)	
			Pre-K	K
Public Schools (elementary)	4	N/A	42	97
Charter Schools (elementary)	0	0		
Private Schools (elementary)	0	0		
Licensed Family Child Care	1	6		
Licensed Group Child Care	0	0		
Licensed Child Care Centers	2	96		

Sources: Nevada Registry, Nevada Department of Education

According to focus group participants and the WPSD superintendent, there is a charter school currently in development in Ely that intends to serve K-5 students when it is open. The opening date is unknown, but is targeted for the upcoming school year.

School Readiness in Nevada

An important goal of the county-level needs assessment for this project was to solicit feedback from stakeholders at the local level in order to support adoption of a Nevada-specific definition of school readiness. A working definition was developed and shaped at a statewide School Readiness Summit held in February 2012, and subsequently reviewed by hundreds of ECE stakeholders, including parents and providers, who were asked to provide input on the working definition as well as to validate the need for a common statewide kindergarten entry assessment and coordinated early childhood data system. Feedback from White Pine County stakeholders indicated support of the working Nevada definition of school readiness, which was formally adopted in June 2012 by the NECAC.

There is consensus, based upon a wealth of research, that a child’s readiness for school should be measured and addressed across five distinct but connected domains⁸:

Physical Development and Health--This domain covers such factors as health status, growth, and disabilities; physical abilities, such as gross and fine motor skills; and conditions before, at, and after birth.

Social and Emotional Development--This domain combines two interrelated components affecting children’s behavioral health and learning. Social development refers to children’s ability to interact with others and their capacity for self-regulation. Emotional development includes children’s perceptions of themselves, their abilities to understand the feelings of other people, and their ability to interpret and express their own feelings.

Approaches to Learning--This domain refers to children’s inclination to use skills and knowledge. Key components include enthusiasm, curiosity, and persistence on tasks.

Language and Early Literacy Development--This domain includes communication and emergent literacy. Communication includes listening, speaking, and vocabulary. Emergent literacy includes print awareness, story sense, early writing, and the connection of letters to sounds.

Cognition and General Knowledge--This domain refers to thinking and problem-solving as well as knowledge about particular objects and the way the world works. Mathematical knowledge, abstract thought, and imagination are included.

As the graphic on the previous page indicates, Nevada’s definition of school readiness incorporates these five domains into the following equation: **READY FAMILIES + READY EDUCATORS + READY SCHOOLS + READY COMMUNITIES + READY SYSTEMS = CHILDREN ARE READY FOR SCHOOL**. Each factor necessary for the outcome that “Children are Ready for School” is further defined below:

“**Ready Families**” have adults who understand they are the most important people in the child’s life, understand age appropriate development, and support the child’s school readiness. Adults recognize their role as the child’s first and most important teacher, providing steady and supportive relationships, ensuring safe and consistent environments, promoting good health, and fostering curiosity, excitement about learning.



⁸ Based on findings from the National School Readiness Indicators Initiative: A 17-State Partnership and reviewed and revised at the Nevada School Readiness Summit, 2012.

“Ready Educators” are skilled teachers, who understand age appropriate development, possess the skills to develop appropriate curriculum based on children’s development, recognize, reinforce, and extend children’s strengths and who are sensitive to cultural values and individual differences, including children with special needs.

“Ready Schools” accept all children and provide a seamless transition to a high-quality developmentally appropriate learning environment by engaging families and the whole community. A ready school welcomes all children and their families with opportunities to enhance and build confidence in their skills, knowledge, and abilities. Children in ready schools are led by skilled teachers as defined above.

“Ready Communities” play a crucial part in supporting families in their role as primary stewards of children’s readiness. Ready communities, including businesses, faith-based organizations, early childhood education and care service providers, community groups and local governments, work together to support children’s school and long term success by providing families affordable access to information, services, high-quality child care, and early learning opportunities.

“Ready Systems” describes the availability, quality, and affordability of proven programs that influence child development and school readiness. It also includes the degree to which public and private agencies promote policies and practices including data collection that enhance access to needed supports, information and tools that help all other components (family, educators, schools and children) be ready for children to be ready for school.⁹

Children’s readiness for school is made up of multiple components and shaped by numerous factors. Improving school readiness, therefore, must address children’s development of skills and behaviors as well as the environments in which they spend their time. Early childhood education and care leaders at the state and national level agree that efforts to improve school readiness must address three interrelated components:

- Children’s readiness for school.
- School’s readiness for children.
- The capacity of families and communities to provide developmental opportunities for young children.

Ultimately the goal is that children are ready for school, families are ready to support their children’s learning, and schools are ready for children. School readiness is an ongoing process from the moment of birth, to prekindergarten, and through the transition into elementary school and beyond. It is the foundation defined by the intersection of two critical components:

- 1) Children’s condition to learn based on the five identified domains of learning, and
- 2) The school’s capacity to meet the needs of all children to prepare them for future school success and the 21st century.

⁹ Bruner, C. and Coperman, A. (2003, March). Measuring children’s school readiness: options for developing state baselines and benchmarks. A paper prepared for the State Early Childhood Policy Technical Assistance Network, pp. 1-2.

This includes, but not limited to providing access to high quality services for all children including aligned standards and curriculum, supportive relationships, engaging environment, smooth transitions and strong family and community connections.¹⁰

School district administrators and early childhood educators in Pershing County reacted favorably to this definition of school readiness, noting that their biggest complaint about state-funded pre-K is that a child has to enter kindergarten at age five, whether or not they are ready. Focus group and interview participants liked the fact that the school readiness definition addresses the role of parents and the community, noting that parents need a great deal of support and education in order to understand what they can do, beginning at birth, to support their child’s readiness to enter school.

There was also broad support for the focus on multiple developmental domains, rather than a more singular focus on academic readiness. Educators noted that fine motor skills are much less developed in kindergarteners than they used to be, and indicated that it would be helpful if the readiness definition for the domains that incorporate motor skills and social skills would align with Nevada’s Pre-K and Common Core Standards. The Little People Head Start Director reported that there is a push now in Head Start programs to define school readiness, and it is being measured in the assessments they conduct three times yearly. She emphasized that children need to be prepared with skills to learn: social/emotional, sense of discovery, curiosity; these are more important than learning numbers, letters and shapes – which they can learn more readily.

Kindergarten Entry Assessment

Description of Existing Kindergarten Entry Assessment

WPSD uses the **Brigance Early Childhood Development Inventory** for its kindergarten entry assessment. More information about this tool is summarized in the table below. Private preschools (with the exception of the tribal preschool) also use the Brigance.

Instrument/Tool	Notes
<p>The Brigance measures children’s strengths and weaknesses across basic skill areas such as physical development, language development, early numeracy and emergent literacy skills, social-emotional development, and self-care daily living skills.</p> <p>The IED-II Standardized is designed for use with children from birth to 7 years old and may be administered by teachers, school psychologists, developmental experts, and other early childhood education and care professionals.</p>	<p>Type of Assessment:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Observation, parent interview, parent report, teacher report, and direct child assessment <p>Age Range and Administration Interval:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Children age 0 to 7 years old <p>Personnel, Training, Administration, and Scoring Requirements:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Administered by a teacher, school psychologist or developmental expert, or other early childhood

¹⁰ Nevada working definition from bill draft request

Instrument/Tool	Notes
<p>Each assessment includes directions specifying whether the assessment method is a parent interview, child observation, and/or performance (i.e., behaviors/actions elicited from children).</p> <p>Some assessments require manipulatives such as toys, objects to count, and colored blocks. These and other manipulatives such as pencils, scissors, and crayons are included in the Accessories Kit available from the publisher.</p>	<p>education and care professionals.</p> <p>Five domains cover 10 sub domains, 8 composites, 44 assessments, and 706 items. Assessments may be administered in any order, and assessors may select assessments from any domain for administration. Guidelines exist for determining which assessments to administer based on the child’s age and needs. Most are appropriate for preschool and kindergarten-age children, with four assessments used exclusively for infants and toddlers.</p>

As part of the requirement related to operating state-funded pre-K classroom, McGill Elementary School is required to administer the Peabody Picture Vocabulary Test (PPVT) and Expressive One-Word Picture Vocabulary Test (EOWPVT) at the beginning and end of the year. The PPVT is an untimed, test of receptive vocabulary for Standard American English and provides a quick estimate of their verbal ability or scholastic aptitude. The test is given verbally and takes about 20–30 minutes. No reading is required by the individual, and scoring is rapid and objective.

Goals and Attributes for a Common Kindergarten Assessment

White Pine County stakeholders interviewed noted several priorities, goals and attributes that should be considered related to implementing a common kindergarten assessment.

- Assessment needs to be formative rather than stressing benchmarks. WPSD prefers the growth model, and stresses that parents need to hear more about their child’s growth when attending parent-teacher conferences, so schools cannot just dwell on standards.
- Community/parent engagement is critical, and there are a whole range of things that they need to know beyond academics so that parents can start to support in the early years.
- Flexibility is a key factor. The process that gets adopted needs to accommodate the reality that some days, kids just are not able to be assessed, so the timing and type of assessment needs to allow for that.
- A common statewide kindergarten entry assessment tool and process should offer an opportunity for more teamwork and linkages between kindergarten and pre-k cross-county interaction and peer-to-peer learning. Ideally, teachers and coordinators from both sides could meet and train together one day each week.
- The tool should be developmentally appropriate, and align with the Common Core State Standards. Timing of the assessment should begin in preschool, and be administered at least three times per year (and ideally quarterly). Additionally, assessments should follow the development and growth of one student in a common format over the years. WPSD is interested in utilizing the Measures of Academic Progress (MAP) earlier (e.g. “Kindergarten in a Box”) and creating study materials to support families with child readiness goals.

- The adoption of a Common Kindergarten Entry Assessment needs to result in an increase in the value that the community and parents place on the importance of early childhood education and care, and should facilitate the ability for the community to come to a collective agreement on what it means to be kindergarten-ready, and demonstrate how important Pre-K is to child development.

Summary of Assets

The input gathered from White Pine County stakeholders identified a number of assets in the current community and ECE environment that could potentially facilitate adoption of a statewide kindergarten entry assessment. These include:

- Early childhood education and care is highly valued in White Pine at both school administrator level and by the superintendent. Most parents are positive, engaged and involved, and are interested in getting information that helps them support their child's development and readiness for school.
- WPSD is invested in early childhood education and care and would like to establish an Early Childhood Council that includes all of the relevant players to share best practices, resolve sensitive issues between providers, and leverage assets that already exist in the community without the district having to seek additional funding. The Board of Trustees is supportive, and is working with the superintendent and others, including parents, to determine the best approach for implementation.
- Great Basin College is a good resource for teacher preparation, and has an agreement with UNLV for a 2+2 program which allows for a bachelor's (rather than associate's) degree in early childhood education and care.
- Mining money is a big blessing right now for the entire community. However, the School Board's plan is to maintain current resources and focus growth-related expenditures on infrastructure than can be sustained in the event that mining goes through a bust cycle.

Summary of Barriers

In addition to the assets noted above, those providing input for this needs assessment also noted some existing challenges that need to be considered when developing the implementation plans for a common kindergarten assessment.

- There needs to be equitable and available access to early childhood education and care resources, and the gap between what is available and what families can afford needs to be reduced.
- Data about children needs to be available for pre-K teachers that help them to better prepare children. This is especially a concern when it comes to children that do not participate in preschool programs. While a common tool and assessment may assist with instruction in kindergarten for those children that have been in preschool, it will function as more of a screen for those that have not.
- Training and education resources are insufficient, and WPSD has difficulty finding qualified staff to fill open positions.

- The cultural barriers that exist within the community need to be addressed, and better linkages and relationships need to be formed with minority communities, including the tribe.
- There is some concern that it may be difficult to adopt a new tool and process because there is a high investment on “testing” and “teacher accountability” in Nevada to the point that it may be difficult to make change.

Early Childhood Data System

Description of Existing Efforts Related to Early Childhood Data

Like most of Nevada’s rural counties, White Pine County uses PowerSchool , a web-based student information system for K-12, and also participates in uploading data to BigHorn, Nevada’s longitudinal data system. The following table summarizes the technology capacity for the elementary schools in the district. WPSD has put a priority on upgrading its use of technology, including an overhaul of the school district website and upgraded technology resources to improve ability to track and monitor performance at every level.

Educational Technology	# of classrooms	# of classrooms with Internet access	# of labs, libraries and media centers	# of labs, libraries and media centers with Internet access	# of classroom instructional computers	# of classroom instructional computers with Internet access
Baker ES	2	2	1	1	4	4
DENorman ES	21	21	4	4	162	162
Lund ES	3	3	0	0	13	12
McGill ES	11	11	2	2	55	55

Goals for Early Childhood Data System

The district continues to work on implementation programs in support of student academic growth, including: upgrading its network capability and information technology (hardware and software), and upgrading technology to further encourage/support parental involvement. Private providers are interested in aligning their framework with local curriculum and state pre-K standards, ensuring that what they measure relates to what children need to be prepared for school entry, and that both assessment and instruction align with standards.

Goals and Attributes for Early Childhood Data System

The priority issues that need to be addressed related to implementing a coordinated ECE data system in White Pine County include identifying how it will be funded and how data will help WPSD communicate the value of early childhood education and care in order to help “level the playing field” by increasing investment in public preschool. WPSD would like to see a uniform measurement for cross-classroom/school/county comparisons, and sees an advantage to adopting universal measurements “so

they don't think we are making it up". The superintendent emphasized how critical data is to justify policy, expansion, and additional investments.

Teachers would like data in the aggregate to help them know what interventions might be needed in "real time" (if done 3 to 4 times a year). Implementation of (and participation in) a coordinated statewide ECE data system would need to be supported with sufficient training and technical assistance support to ensure that teachers in both pre-K and kindergarten classrooms, as well as administration and support staff, could become proficient without taking away from instruction time. They also noted that the system should be designed to allow counties to continue utilizing effective practices and upload student information without having to significantly revamp local tools and processes. Funding to support implementation is likely to be necessary.

The following attributes were identified related to what an early childhood data system should include:

- Data sharing and reporting need to be efficient for teachers and data entry staff.
- Data needs to be easy to understand and share with parents as well as students.
- Data should facilitate a better understanding of how White Pine compares at every level – child, teacher, provider, school, district, county, state and nationally – about performance, student achievement, and school readiness.

Summary of Assets

Assets in White Pine County that can be leveraged to support implementation and participation in a coordinated ECE data system include:

- An existing plan to strengthen the district's technology infrastructure.
- A relatively small student/county population allows for easier management of data entry and analysis, relationship building, and tracking progress over time.
- An invested Board of Trustees and a forward-thinking superintendent see the value of early childhood education and care and are willing to look at all options related to improving student, school, teacher and district performance.
- Infrastructure is already in place to allow for assessment to be done on line, since every classroom in the district has a teacher computer.
- Community involvement in the school remains high with support from both parents and the business community which are strong advocates for their students and the school.
- Professional Learning Communities (PLCs) set up in state pre-K allow for support and information sharing, spread of best practices, and peer support.
- Little People's Head Start has worked with the district on an informal basis to communicate about the scores of children transitioning to kindergarten from Head Start compared to other preschools so that they know what needs to be improved. The school district sees the value of sharing this information and tracking to see why children don't attend preschool.

Summary of Barriers

At this time, the burdens that exist in White Pine County related to data collection and reporting on children participating in early childhood education and care programs include the lack of funding to support such an effort and the lack of formal coordination between pre-K providers and the K-12 system. School administrators also noted that they lack the capacity, in terms of staffing, training and technology, to use data to guide decision-making and performance improvement, which should be a goal for the system. Other concerns noted included that parents don't consistently have the tools or skills or time to be able to help their children. As an example, a book club was conducted in the summer, but those who came were those already supported by parents. As a whole, White Pine is behind the times related to the use of technology, and just now understands the need to have a website and how to use social media tools.

Needs Assessment Summary

Overall, the stakeholders in White Pine County expressed support for participating in KEDS as a county. There appears to be a general willingness to explore participation in this statewide initiative, as long as it does not come in the form of an unfunded mandate or require implementation of tools and processes that don't make sense in White Pine. For it to be feasible to implement KEDS, the following issues need to be addressed in White Pine County:

- The community and district have relatively few resources in place devoted to early childhood education and care. However, the current mining boom might potentially serve as an asset to support community goals related to improving school readiness for children.
- No formal linkages exist currently between pre-K centers and K-12 programs. However, informal linkages are in place as a result of the cordial referral relationships that have been developed.
- Aligning pre-K assessments and kindergarten assessments would provide a more of a longitudinal sense of how kids are doing, and stakeholders agree that parents would like having this information. This could also assist to project a child's trajectory and ensure that s/he receives the necessary services and supports to succeed.
- White Pine sees an advantage on having the data on students coming in to the county, and doesn't think it would be a big deal to upload it.
- Kindergarten teachers should be involved in creating the assessment to facilitate buy-in. WPSD would have no problem adopting a new tool, as long as it meets the goals stated earlier.
- District leadership (Board of Trustees, superintendent, and elementary school principal) is supportive of early childhood education and care and is willing to invest resources if they are available.

- Early childhood education and care personnel is invested in the developmental progress of young children, and has demonstrated an interest in looking at model programs, working collaboratively with peers in their own and other counties, and adopting innovative solutions.

As part of implementation, the factors will be re-assessed to determine feasibility of a statewide kindergarten entry assessment and data system in the fall of 2012. Using the results from the first phase of this project, the findings for each county will be synthesized and prepared into a preliminary paper to frame draft goals for both Early Childhood Data System and Kindergarten Entry Assessment System, including recommendations. The results will then be documented into implementation plans and implementation templates for each individual county. After distributing the template to the counties, SEI consultants will work with them to provide assistance and direction in completing their plans, based on their readiness and unique needs.

Summary of Contacts and Information Sources for White Pine County

Individual Interview

Bob Dolezal, Superintendent, White Pine County School District

Group Interviews/Focus Groups

Jenny Ahlvers, Early Childhood Teacher, David E. Norman Elementary School

Laura Dennis, Director, Magic Carpet Preschool

Mary Eldridge, Director, Little People's Head Start

Mary Flanagan, Teacher, McGill Elementary School

Julie Krch, Director, Learning Bridge Center

Shawna Wooldridge, Kindergarten Teacher, Lund Elementary School

Other Information Resources

- Children's Cabinet, Child Care Report by County for 2009
- ESEA Title I Allocations to Local Educational Agencies – NEVADA;
<http://www2.ed.gov/about/overview/budget/titlei/fy11/nevada.pdf>
- Insight, Center For Community Economic Development, The Economic Impact of Early Care and Education in Nevada
- KEDS Parent survey results and KEDS Provider survey results
- Nevada Annual Reports of Accountability, <http://www.nevadareportcard.com/>
- Nevada Department of Education, <http://nde.doe.nv.gov/SD.htm>
- Nevada Department of Education, <http://www.doe.nv.gov/Resources/QuickSTATS.pdf>
- Nevada Department of Education, NRS 387.303 Report for Fiscal Year Ended June 30, 2011,
http://nde.doe.nv.gov/SchoolFunding_Stats.htm
- Nevada Department of Health and Human Services
- Nevada Health Division, Licensed Child Care Facility List;
<http://health.nv.gov/childcare/ChildCareFacilityList.pdf>
- Nevada Health Division Nevada Early Intervention Services Rural and Frontier Rate Study Report, 2011, http://health.nv.gov/PDFs/New/EI_RuralFrontier_v5.pdf

- Nevada Institute for Children's Research and Policy
- Nevada Registry: http://www.nevadaregistry.org/fb_files/State05.12.pdf
- Nevada State Demographer, 2010 Census Profiles by County, <http://nvdemography.org/nevada-2010-census/2010-census-profiles-by-county/>
- Running With A Spork: Nevada Child Nutrition Programs, 2009-10, Nevada Department of Education, Office of Child Nutrition & School Health
- White Pine County School District website: www.whitepine.k12.nv.us
- White Pine County website: <http://www.rootsweb.ancestry.com/~nwwhitep/>