# K–3 Self-Assessment Validation System (K–3 SAVS)

Office of Kindergarten to Third Grade Education

Division of Early Childhood Services

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## Protocol: Sample Agendas and Touchpoints for Team Work

### Purpose

A meaningful self-assessment is more than a to-do list and a checklist of completed tasks. It requires thoughtful planning, organizing, and scheduling. The information in the *Guide to Using the K–3 SAVS*and this protocol present practical steps to support a realistic time investment in self-assessment through the K–3 SAVS. Based on individualized goals and needs, districts create their own timeline and meeting agendas.

A group of children smiling and lying in the grass.


In the K–3 SAVS tools and protocols the term “Touchpoint(s)” means communication, interaction, or an action step between stakeholders regarding implementation of the K–3 SAVS. Interaction may include technical assistance, district organization, outreach from a K–3 SAVS Team, or Team Lead.

#### These sample agendas and touchpoints were created and successfully used by districts that piloted the K–3 SAVS.

* A meaningful self-assessment and improvement effort require time and thoughtful planning. The *Sample Agendas and Touchpoints* are planning suggestions created by the K–3 SAVS pilot districts as a practical guide to organize and support the work of the team. As districts consider a simple or complex evaluation of their program practices, the samples can help teams benefit from the organization of the pilot districts and adapt their own plans.
* Systemic, continuous program quality improvement is likely to occur when districts use the K–3 SAVS protocol over a full school year building a cycle of review and improvement into the regular program operation.
* Alternatively, it is possible for districts to implement portions of the K–3 SAVS at various points in the school year, such as team–building, use of the Framework and Plan for a High-Quality K–3 Education Program to study the quality criteria and indicators; use the Analytic Rubric to assess the strength of alignment between the quality indicators and the district’s evidence of practice; and at the end of the school year, set goals and prepare a growth plan for strategic planning and implementation at the end of the school year.
* It is also a successful strategy to plan a full day of professional learning to utilize the entire K–3 SAVS at the beginning of a school year and self–assess the outcome at the end of the year.
* The NJDOE, Office of Kindergarten to Third Grade Education (Office of K–3) recommends that districts use all tools in the K–3 SAVS during the first year of implementation. A planning and preparation year allow districts to create a team, become familiar with the tools and protocols, record baseline information, and obtain any resources needed to create a plan and implement it with success. Below is an overview of the K–3 SAVS protocol.

### K–3 SAVS Implementation Overview

#### Build a Unique K–3 SAVS Team

* Identify individuals who have diverse knowledge, expertise, and authority to impact systems, structures, and operation of the K–3 program.
* Identify other district committees, groups, parents, and community members that can contribute information.

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#### Guide to Using the K–3 SAVS

* As a team, collaboratively review the K–3 SAVS tools, protocols, and Q&As. Supporting References for the Framework are included at the end of the Guide.

#### Framework and Plan for a High–Quality K–3 Education Program

* Review and discuss the quality criteria, indicators, Analytic Rubric, and Growth Plan.
* Consider and take notes on the district’s evidence of practice as it relates to the quality indicators.
* Identify and highlight indicators that have little or no aligned evidence of current practice.
* At the end of each section, click: “Go to the Growth Plan Template for Section 1.” (Section 2 and Section 3, respectively)

#### Analytic Rubric

* Review the Analytic Rubric at the top of each Growth Plan Template.
* Refer to the team’s notes from each of the three sections.
* Self-assess evidence of practice and strength of alignment with the quality indicators.

#### Growth Plan Template

* Create and prioritize goals based on areas of need and district values for the K–3 program.
* Populate a Growth Plan Template for each section. (Enter as many plan components as desired.)
* Combine the three templates, and if desired, utilize the information in other district strategic plans.

#### Quality Review and Validation Cycle Infographic

* Articulate the details and flow of the Growth Plan by creating a step-by-step cycle of review and improvement.
* Use the Quality Review and Validation Cycle Infographic with the Growth Plan to communicate about how the district will strengthen alignment between evidence of current practice and the quality indicators in the Framework and Plan for a High-Quality K–3 Education Program.
* Enhance communication with the Protocol titled: Sample Template for K–3 SAVS Communication with Families.

### Protocol: Sample Touchpoints for K–3 SAVS Teams

The sample timeframe below reflects a full continuous quality validation cycle beginning in the fall and culminating at the end of the school year.

#### Touchpoint #1 Initiation of K–3 SAVS

* 1. Annually, the NJDOE Office of K–3 will send district and K–3 program leaders a brief communication about the K–3 SAVS, the benefits of self-assessing early childhood program quality, and a link to the tools and resources in the system. The notice will also contain highlights of any changes to the K–3 SAVS and a date for a virtual Q&A session.

#### Touchpoint #2 NJDOE Virtual Technical Assistance and Q&A

* 1. District and program administrators access [K–3 SAVS webpage](https://www.nj.gov/education/earlychildhood/grkto3/savs.shtml) resources to review the purpose, tools, and protocols of the self-assessment program quality review.

1. The Office of Kindergarten to Third Grade staff will lead a statewide technical assistance virtual discussion about the K–3 SAVS process and resources. There will be a question and answer session.

#### Touchpoint #3 Organization for Use of the K–3 SAVS

* 1. District and program administrators communicate about a commitment to allocating the time and resources for staff and cross-district K–3 SAVS team members to implement the K–3 SAVS.
  2. Districts identify a Team Lead to organize and facilitate the K–3 SAVS. The Team Lead can hold any position in the district and uses the protocol titled *Building a Unique K–3 SAVS Team* to identify stakeholders who are invested in K–3 education, continuous quality, and the success of the district’s program. (i.e., The tool contains language to describe the purpose and benefits of a diverse K–3 SAVS Team.)
  3. The Team Lead:
     1. Identifies a diverse group of stakeholders and communicates with them about the opportunity to participate in the K–3 SAVS.
     2. Confirms team membership and communicates with district and program leadership.
     3. Communicates with the K–3 SAVS team and provides links to the tools and protocols. Team members are asked to review the document titled*Guide to Using the K–3 SAVS* prior to the first meeting.
     4. Communicates with program K–3 staff and families about using the K–3 SAVS as part of the district’s comprehensive commitment to high-quality early education programming. (A sample template for a high-level of K–3 SAVS communication with families is available in the Appendix.)
  4. District leaders reflect on their understanding of the K–3 SAVS priorities of high-quality K–3 programming and provide the time and resources to support the team’s work.
  5. The Team lead schedules and prepares to facilitate meetings.

### Sample K–3 SAVS Team Meetings and Agendas

The sample agenda topics below contain key insights and suggestions from pilot districts during in-person technical assistance sessions with the Office of Kindergarten to Third Grade Education. The samples include topics that prompted stronger P–3 alignment and a different approach to planning and implementing change (i.e., reorganize buildings by grade levels, shift in classroom environments to reflect developmentally appropriate learning needs aligned with child development, change in funding levels, move from half-day to full-day Kindergarten, the role of an early childhood advisory council, etc.).

K–3 SAVS Teams are encouraged to use all the system tools and protocols over 3–4 meetings to build and implement a Continuous Quality Validation Plan and prepare a cycle of continual improvement strategies for the future.

#### Team Meeting #1

(Suggestion: Hold the meeting before the end of November)

The goals of Meeting #1 require the greatest time investment in the SAVS process and may require a full-day Professional Learning Community (PLC) or work session.

* Clarify each stakeholder’s role on the team.
* Review highlights of the tools and protocols.
* Use the Framework and Plan for a High-Quality K–3 Education Program and discuss the quality criteria and indicators.
* After the team has a collective understanding of what a high-quality K–3 program looks like, use the Quality Review and Validation Cycle Infographic to identify evidence of practice.
* Use the embedded Analytic Rubric and self-assess the level of alignment between the quality indicators and the evidence of practice. (This provides a picture of the level of program quality.)
* Use the tools and protocols to develop a Growth Plan for each of the three sections of the Framework.
* The K–3 SAVS Team presents the Growth Plan and Quality Review and Validation Cycle Infographic to district leaders and K–3 program staff.
* The Team uses the Sample Template for K–3 SAVS Communication with Families to share the district’s plan and dedication to high–quality early childhood education.
* The Team Lead facilitates initial implementation.

#### Team Meeting #2

(Suggestion: Hold the meeting before the end of March)

The goals of Meeting #2 include plan and alignment review, validation of new evidence, and recalibration of the plan if progress warrants. Meeting #2 may require a full-day Professional Learning Community (PLC) or work session.

* Review the Quality Review and Validation Cycle Infographic.
* Use the Analytic Rubric to self-assess any changes in the strength of alignment between the quality indicators and the evidence of practice.
* Validate quality improvements with new evidence of practice.
* Record progress, and if appropriate, revise goals for stronger alignment.
* The K–3 SAVS Team meets with District leaders and K–3 program staff to present progress and identify any additional resources or support needed to continue the program improvement process.
* The Team Lead facilitates next steps listed in the Quality Review and Validation Cycle Infographic.

#### Team Meeting #3

(Suggestion: Hold the meeting before the end of June)

Meeting #3 may require a half or full-day PLC or work session. The goals include plan review, analysis of change in the strength of alignment with quality indicators, and validation of program improvement with new evidence of practice. The team may also continue the quality validation cycle and review the *Framework* from the perspective of next step planning, align quality indicators with current evidence of practice, update needs and goals, and draft a plan to prepare for the next school year.

* Review all details of the Quality Review and Validation Cycle Infographic.
* Carefully review initial evidence of practice and the strength of alignment with the quality indicators.
* Identify any new evidence of practice related to the quality indicators.
* Use the Analytic Rubric and self-assesses the strength of alignment between the new evidence of practice and the quality indicators.
* Record the change in program quality.
* Review the continuous quality review and validation cycle to draft an updated plan for the next school year.
* Make plans to update the education community and begin planning for the next year.
* Celebrate the district’s commitment to continual improvement!

If the K–3 SAVS Team or individual team members wish to share feedback on their experience using the K–3 SAVS with the Office of Kindergarten to Third Grade, they can complete the tool titled *Optional Feedback on Use of the K–3 SAVS* and email it to [K-3Office@doe.nj.gov](mailto:K-3Office@doe.nj.gov). The *Optional Feedback Tool* provides a way for districts using the K–3 SAVS to voluntarily share feedback about their experience using the tools and protocols. Districts are not responsible for state reporting, however, the Office of Kindergarten to Third Grade Education values partnerships with districts and offers opportunities for input that will contribute to the state’s commitment to high-quality education. Comments will be used for the sole purpose of improvements to the K–3 SAVS tools and protocols.