



Ready Schools

The e-Newsletter of the CCSSO School Readiness Project

Issue 6 December 2005

The Ready Schools e-newsletter is a monthly publication from CCSSO that provides information, ideas and resources to support schools as they strive to become more prepared and ready to meet the needs of all children. A "ready school" is a critical component of the school readiness conversation and school improvement efforts. Through this newsletter, we will highlight efforts at the state and local level that support schools in their process toward becoming "ready schools".

Ready Schools Support Children's Transition to Kindergarten

Community Transition Planning: A Guide to Support Communities in Developing a Step-by-Step Process for Supporting Families and Children

<http://www.transitiononestop.org/Documents/Publications/01-09-2006/Community%20Transition%20Planning%206%2029%2005.doc>

This document, from the **Kentucky** Early Childhood Transition Project, is organized to support community wide planning around the transition planning process. Several tools are included such as a checklist for potential local key partners, an interagency transition self-assessment tool and a sample transition calendar.

Ready Schools Encourage Continuity and Alignment between Early Care and Education Programs and Elementary Schools

Kindergarten and Beyond: State Kindergarten Policies – Straddling Early Learning and Early Elementary School

This online article from *Beyond the Journal*, a publication of the National Association for the Education of Young Children (NAEYC), provides a national perspective on several kindergarten issues. Topics discussed include defining kindergarten, kindergarten provision and attendance, entrance age, state funding, standards and teacher qualifications. To view this article, see the March 2005 issue of *Beyond the Journal*: <http://www.journal.naeyc.org/btj/200503/01Kauerz.pdf>

Ready Schools Ensure High Quality Learning Environments

The Effects of State Prekindergarten Programs on Young Children's School Readiness in Five States

<http://nieer.org/docs/index.php?DocID=129>

This study from the National Institute for Early Education Research examines the effects of preschool in five states: **Michigan, New Jersey, Oklahoma, South Carolina and West Virginia.**

The study finds that children attending state-funded pre-k programs in the five states (Michigan, New Jersey, Oklahoma, South Carolina, and West Virginia) gained significantly regardless of ethnic background or economic circumstances. Their key findings were:

- Children who attended state-funded preschool showed gains in vocabulary scores that were about 31 percent greater than gains of children without the program. This translates into an additional three months of progress in vocabulary growth due to the preschool program at age 4. This outcome is particularly important because the measure is strongly predictive of general cognitive abilities and later reading success, the researchers said.
- State-funded preschool increased children's gains in math skills by 44 percent compared to children's growth without the program. Skills tested included basic number concepts, simple addition and subtraction, telling time and counting money.
- State-funded preschool produced an 85 percent increase in growth in print awareness among children enrolled compared to growth of children without the program. Children who attended a state-funded preschool program before entering kindergarten knew more letters, more letter-sound associations and were more familiar with words and book concepts.

You can view the entire report or access separate state reports at:
<http://nieer.org/docs/index.php?DocID=129>

Ready Schools Have Strong Partnerships with Parents and the Community

At the San Pedro 15th Street Elementary School in Los Angeles County, **California**, families learn and grow together in a literacy program. Highlighted recently in the San Pedro Peninsula News, the 15th Street Elementary School combines adult education, preschool education, parenting and parent-child interactive time for parents of their preschool age children. To read about the success of the 15th Street Elementary School Literacy Program, please see:

http://pvnews.nminews.com/articles/2005/12/05/local_news/news3.txt

Cleveland, **Ohio** Municipal School District's Department of Family and Community Engagement (FACE) provides quality workshops and programs for parents on how to help their children learn as well as on life skills for parents. The school district has strengthen its

parent/community partnerships by offering parent-child book clubs where parents, grandparents and/or guardians come and read with children, setting an example of partnering for the students. To learn more about Cleveland's FACE initiative, visit: <http://www.cmsdnet.net/parents/face.htm>. To review Cleveland's FACE Standards of Family Engagement and Empowerment, visit: http://www.cmsdnet.net/FACE/standards_of_family_engagement_a.htm

Ready Schools: Other Resources, Publications and Sites of Interest

The National Center for Family Literacy has developed a toolkit to assist adult literacy and family literacy programs in responding to the needs of the adult ELL populations. This resource, *Practitioner Toolkit: Working with Adult English Language Learners (ELLs)*, provides a variety of materials to help practitioners begin to meet the language and literacy development needs of the ELL adult students they serve. The entire toolkit can be viewed at the Center's Hispanic Learning Institute website at: <http://www.familit.org/Publications/Practitioner-Toolkit-ELL.cfm>

About the School Readiness Project at CCSSO

The School Readiness Project is part of the School Improvement Initiative housed at CCSSO and is supported through funding from the [Annie E. Casey Foundation](#). The school readiness project is designed to support states in the development and implementation of comprehensive systems of early childhood education in low-income communities with a particular focus on ready schools.

To submit a news item relevant to School Readiness-Ready Schools at the state or district level, provide feedback, or to subscribe/unsubscribe, send an email to Susan Taylor at susant@ccsso.org. PDF versions of all Ready Schools newsletters are available at http://www.ccsso.org/whats_new/newsletters/ready_schools/index.cfm.

The Council of Chief State School Officers (CCSSO) is a nonpartisan, nationwide, nonprofit organization of public officials who head departments of elementary and secondary education in the states, the District of Columbia, the Department of Defense Education Activity, and five U.S. extra-state jurisdictions. CCSSO provides leadership, advocacy, and technical assistance on the major educational issues. The Council seeks member consensus on major educational issues and expresses their views to civic and professional organizations, federal agencies, Congress and the public.

Our mission statement: The Council of Chief State School Officers, through Leadership, Advocacy, and Service, assists chief state school officers and their organizations in achieving the vision of an American education system that enables all children to succeed in school, work, and life.