



CHILD CARE PRICES AND AFFORDABILITY

A STRUGGLE FOR COLORADO FAMILIES & PROVIDERS

Presentation to the

Early Childhood and School Readiness Legislative Commission

July 28, 2014

THE WOMEN'S
FOUNDATION
OF COLORADO



Cost of Care Project

Through a grant from The Women's Foundation of Colorado, Qualistar Colorado and the Colorado Children's Campaign are investigating the issue of child care affordability in Colorado.

Brief 1: Released in June

Brief 2: Will be released late August

Brief 3/Final Report: Slated for release in December

Did you know?

- Families in each of Colorado's 64 counties pay more for child care for two young children than they pay for housing
- The average price for licensed, center-based child care for an infant is nearly half the median annual income for single mothers
- The early childhood workforce is not well-paid; many teachers are low-income working mothers
- Most child care programs are small businesses and many struggle to stay afloat

Child care prices

Prices vary according to age, type of care setting and location

Average Annual Price for Full-time Licensed Care in Colorado

	Infant		Toddler		Preschooler	
	child care center	family child care home	child care center	family child care home	child care center	family child care home
Rural	\$8,808	\$7,149	\$8,307	\$7,081	\$7,337	\$6,532
Urban	\$13,674	\$8,993	\$12,450	\$8,841	\$10,810	\$8,327
Resort	\$14,111	\$10,713	\$13,472	\$10,463	\$12,209	\$10,372

Family income

Median incomes vary greatly by location and family structure

	Median Income for Married Couples with Children	Median Income for Single Mother Families
Colorado	\$85,137	\$26,089
United States (range of state medians)	\$62,819 - \$111,875	\$16,752 - \$35,921

Child care affordability

price ÷ income

	Colorado (statewide average)		United States (range of state averages)	
	Infant	Preschool	Infant	Preschool
Married Couples with Children	15.0%	11.3%	7.0% - 18.6%	6.0% - 14.1%
Single Mother Families	48.8%	36.9%	25.6% - 61.6%	22.6% - 47.7%

Affordability in Colorado

Range of Child Care Affordability by County

	Infant		Preschool	
	Most affordable	Least affordable	Most affordable	Least affordable
Married couples with children	7.56% (San Juan)	20.36% (Saguache)	5.50% (San Juan)	16.79% (Routt)
Single mother families	19.98% (Teller)	94.55% (Gunnison)	11.97% (Ouray)	85.65% (Gunnison)

Why is child care expensive?

- **Personnel costs** are high because child care is a labor-intensive industry, even though the workforce is not well-paid
- The balance of **supply and demand** impacts costs and prices
- Meeting basic **health, safety and quality standards** incurs costs; research indicates the return on investment is high

How can affordability be improved?

Possible strategies include:

- Expanding, targeting and sustaining **public investments** in early care, preschool and full-day kindergarten
- Implementing creative **financing mechanisms** to expand access to subsidized care
- Improving the balance of **supply and demand**
- Incentivizing and encouraging **businesses** to adopt family-friendly policies that help families afford the high cost of care

Questions



Contact

Stacy Buchanan

Qualistar Colorado

Vice President of Information Strategy

303.339.6839

sbuchanan@qualistar.org

www.qualistar.org



Colorado Parent & Child Foundation

State Office for HIPPIY & PAT

EARLY CHILDHOOD AND SCHOOL READINESS LEGISLATIVE COMMISSION

JULY 28, 2014

CPCF's Role as State Office for PAT & HIPPY Programs



The Colorado Parent & Child Foundation promotes and supports early childhood programs and initiatives which

**inspire parent involvement &
facilitate school readiness.**

...because home is where the start is.



Parents as Teachers
State Office



COLORADO HIPPY
Home Instruction for Parents of Preschool Youngsters

Parents as Teachers (PAT)



- ▶ Evidence-based, home visitation program
- ▶ Families with children prenatal through kindergarten
- ▶ Universal model design
- ▶ Model Components:
 - ▶ Once or twice monthly home visits (~60 min) by certified Parent Educator
 - ▶ Monthly group connections
 - ▶ Basic health screenings (hearing, vision, developmental, social-emotional)
 - ▶ Resource network



Parents as Teachers (PAT)



- ▶ Evidence base includes randomized controlled trials, quasi-experimental methods, & published findings in peer-reviewed journals
- ▶ Statistically significant impacts & sustained effects in:
 - ▶ Increasing parent knowledge of early childhood development
 - ▶ Prevention of child abuse & neglect
 - ▶ Early detection of developmental delays
 - ▶ Increased school readiness & success



Parents as Teachers (PAT)



PAT has been found to **measurably improve school readiness, virtually eliminating the achievement gap** normally observed between poor children and their more affluent peers at the point of kindergarten entry, and that gap continued to be narrowed in the third grade.

-Zigler, Pfannenstiel, Seitz (2008). The Parents as Teachers program and school success: A Replication and extension. Journal of Primary Prevention, 29, 103-120.



Parents as Teachers
State Office

Parents as Teachers (PAT)



- ▶ 30 PAT programs throughout state
- ▶ Housed in community agencies, Head Start & Early Head Start programs, school districts
- ▶ Model Fidelity consists of meeting 17 Essential Requirements set by PAT National Center
- ▶ Cost per child: ~\$2,500



Home Instruction for Parents of Preschool Youngsters (HIPPY)



- ▶ Evidence-based, home visitation program
- ▶ Families with children ages 3-5
- ▶ Targeted toward families with low income and low educational attainment
- ▶ Model Components:
 - ▶ Weekly home visits (45-60 min) during a 30-week curriculum
 - ▶ Monthly group meetings
 - ▶ Peer-delivered
 - ▶ Resource network





Home Instruction for Parents of Preschool Youngsters (HIPPY)

- ▶ Evidence base includes 40+ years of research
- ▶ National and International studies reveal improved:
 - ▶ School readiness & continued K-12 success
 - ▶ Parent involvement
 - ▶ School attendance, behavior, and standardized test scores
- ▶ Colorado evaluation results:
 - ▶ Statistically significant gains in all areas measured for both children & parents
 - ▶ Kindergarten teacher study showed HIPPY children are better prepared for learning, better behaved than non-HIPPY children & their parents are more engaged in their learning



Home Instruction for Parents of Preschool Youngsters (HIPPY)



- ▶ 7 HIPPY programs in Colorado
- ▶ Housed in community agencies, school district, Head Start programs
- ▶ Model fidelity consists of meeting 100% of Model Excellence guidelines set by HIPPY USA
- ▶ Cost per child: ~\$1,800



Home Instruction for Parents of Preschool Youngsters (HIPPY)



- ▶ Peer-delivered
- ▶ HIPPY home visitors representative of community served
- ▶ Most home visitors are/were parents served by the program
- ▶ HIPPY + AmeriCorps = HIPPYCorps
 - ▶ Home visitors are AmeriCorps members (i.e., national service participants)
 - ▶ Professional development opportunity
 - ▶ AmeriCorps education award for higher education opportunities
 - ▶ HIPPYCorps members go on to earn Early childhood degrees, become agency employees, etc.



HIPPY & PAT



- ▶ Both models employ 2-generation approach
 - ▶ **PAT**: Family-centered visit; works directly with parent(s) and child
 - ▶ **HIPPY**: Home visitor role plays curriculum packet with parent, who then completes packet with child throughout the week
- ▶ Both models provide resources & referrals
- ▶ Both models support the Protective Factors Framework through parent education of child development, concrete support, & social connections



HIPPY & PAT



- ▶ Both were among the original 7 evidence-based models selected for funding under the Maternal, Infant, and Early Childhood Home Visitation Program (MIECHV) under the PPACA
- ▶ Collectively reach 35 counties (urban, rural, & frontier) in Colorado
- ▶ 2013-14 Numbers Served
 - ▶ PAT: 2,845 children & their families
 - ▶ HIPPY: 793 children & their families
 - ▶ >40,000 home visits conducted



Parents as Teachers
State Office



COLORADO HIPPY
Home Instruction for Parents of Preschool Youngsters

CPCF's Role as State Office



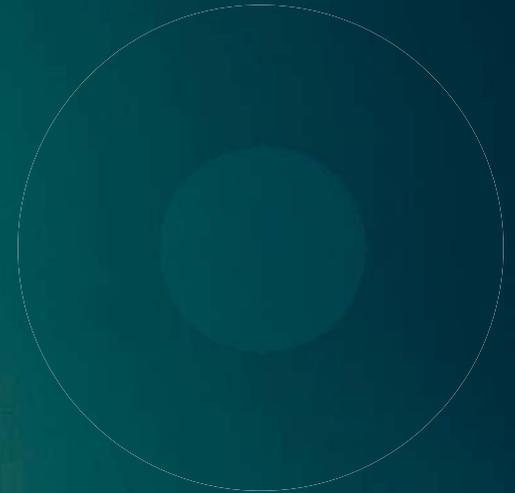
- ▶ Training & Technical Assistance
 - ▶ Existing programs
 - ▶ Start-up programs / interest
- ▶ Model Fidelity Monitoring & Quality Improvement Efforts
- ▶ Research & Evaluation
- ▶ Resource Development & Funding Intermediary
- ▶ Strategic Positioning & Community Collaboration



Parents as Teachers
State Office



COLORADO HIPPY
Home Instruction for Parents of Preschool Youngsters



Colorado's Early Childhood Professional Development Landscape

Presentation to the Early Childhood and School Readiness Commission

**Sharon Triolo-Moloney, Director, Office of Early Learning
and School Readiness**

**Kathleen DeVries, Professional Development Information
System Manager, Office of Early Learning and School
Readiness**

**Dr. Karen Lowenstein Martinez, Senior Consultant, Professional Services and
Educator Licensure**

July 28, 2014

Overview of the Early Childhood Professional Landscape

- **Who are Colorado's Early Childhood Professionals?**
- **How are they currently credentialed?**
- **What efforts are underway to enhance and support the Early Childhood Workforce?**
- **How does Early Childhood Professional Development System align with the P – 12 Educator System?**

Goal: Align the Educator Systems

Early Childhood Educators

What educators need to know, understand, and be able to do

Colorado's Competencies for Early Childhood Educators and Administrators

How educators are qualified

Early Childhood Professional Credentials (Voluntary)

P – 12 Educators

Colorado's Teacher and Principal Quality Standards

Teacher License (Required)

Colorado's Early Childhood Professionals

Early childhood professionals are teachers, assistant teachers, family child care providers, infant toddler specialists, early interventionists, coaches, mentor teachers, special education professionals and family, friend and neighbor providers.

Early childhood administrators are center director, principals, special education directors, instructional leaders and school and program administrators.

Others include technical assistance professionals (coaches, trainers, etc.), higher education professionals, policy and advocacy leaders.

Early Childhood Professionals in Colorado: Credentialing and Evaluation Systems

Colorado's Professional Development System

- Provides an optional credential for Early Childhood Professionals
- Administered by the Colorado Department of Education through an interagency agreement with the Colorado Department of Human Services
- Currently undergoing revision informed by Colorado's Early Learning Professional Development System Plan, guided by the Professional Development Advisory, and funded by the Race to the Top Early Learning Challenge grant

Colorado's Educator Licensing System

- Provides credentials and licenses for Colorado's P – 12

Colorado's Educator Effectiveness Initiative

- Originated through SB 10-191
- Provides teacher and principal quality standards for Colorado educators
- Initiated an evaluation system for Colorado teachers and principals

Early Childhood Professional Credentials

- Colorado's Early Childhood Workforce is estimated at 32,500
- Credentials, education and experience levels vary by setting – as does compensation

Setting and Professional	Required Credentials	Average Annual Salary
Family Child Care Provider	CDHS Licensing Requirements (minimum of 90 clock hours including infant/toddler content and experience)	\$14,000
Community Based EC Teacher	CDHS EC Teacher Requirements (minimum of 6 credit hours & experience)	Asst. Teacher: \$10 an hour; Annual: \$18,000 Teacher: \$13.20 an hour; Annual \$21,000
School District PreK Teacher	Varies Includes CDHS EC Teacher Requirements Can include CDE Educator License	Varies Annual: \$22,000 - \$30,000 District Salary Schedule: \$43,000 Annual
Center Director	CDHS Director Qualifications; generally 10 college courses	\$19.20 an hour Annual: \$40,000
Kindergarten – 3 rd Grade Teachers	CDE Educator License	District Salary Schedule: \$43,000 Annual

Source: Whitebook; 2011; Based on U.S. Dept. of Labor; Bureau of Labor Stat.; 2009

Education Levels of Early Childhood Professionals

■ National Data on Early Childhood (EC) Workforce

- Staff in centers: 39% hold a BA degree (not always EC), 19% have a high school diploma or less, 28% have some college credit (no degree) and 17% have an AA degree.
- Staff serving children ages 3 to 5: 45% hold a BA degree (not always in EC)
- Staff working with infant & toddlers: 28% have a high school diploma or less
- Home-based teachers less likely to have completed any college degree (32%); 34% have a high school diploma or some college
- Nearly half (47%) of FFN providers have completed high school or less

(Snow, Kyle (11.13.3013). "Who is the Early Child Care and Education Workforce?" Washington, DC: NAEYC)

The Roadmap: Colorado's Early Learning Professional Development System Plan



Ensuring positive outcomes for young children and their families by recruiting, preparing and supporting highly effective, caring and diverse early learning professionals



Accountable, innovative, accessible, inclusive, aligned, well-financed and collaborative.

The Stakeholders: Colorado's Early Childhood Professional Development Advisory

- **High level advisory to implementation of Colorado's Professional Development Plan**
- **Appointed by Colorado's Early Childhood Leadership Commission (ECLC), Program Quality and Alignment Committee**
- **Embedded within the infrastructure of the ECLC to ensure coordination with the quality rating and improvement system (QRIS), other statewide quality improvement efforts and increase collaboration among early learning settings in Colorado.**

Driving Implementation: Race to the Top Early Learning Challenge Fund

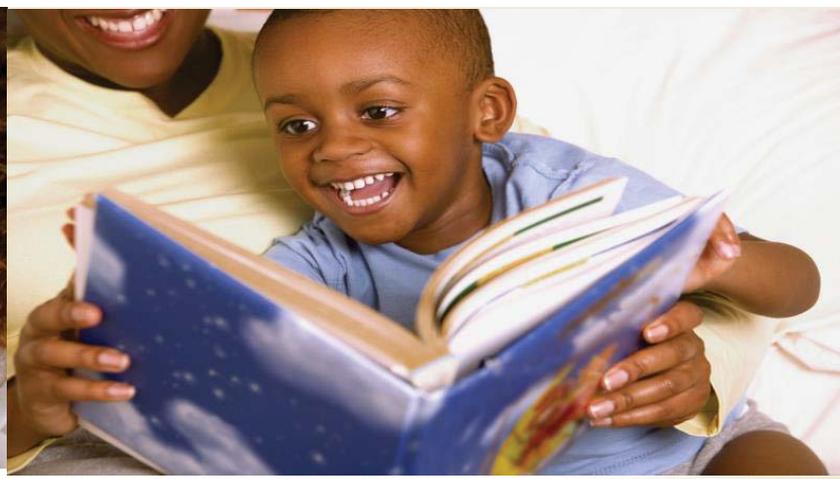
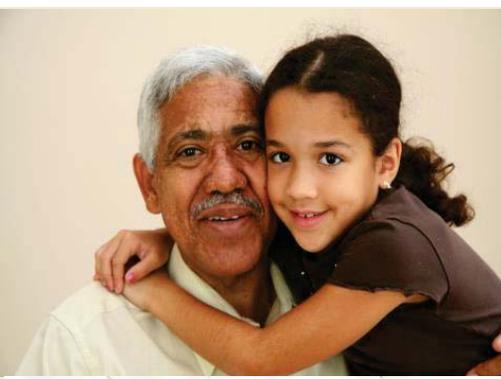
Early Childhood Competencies Framework

Professional Development Information System

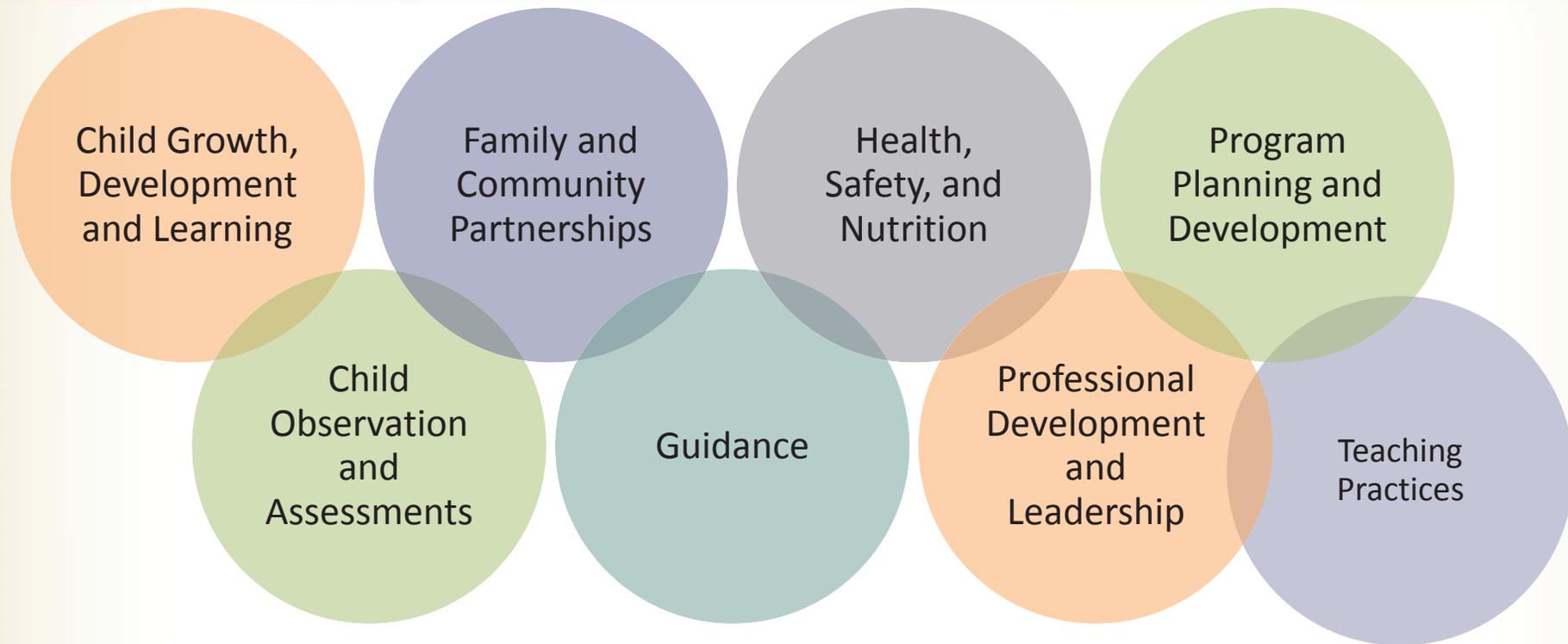
Level II QRIS Modules

Incentives and Scholarships

Statewide Coaching and Technical Assistance Network



The Domains of the Early Childhood Competencies Framework

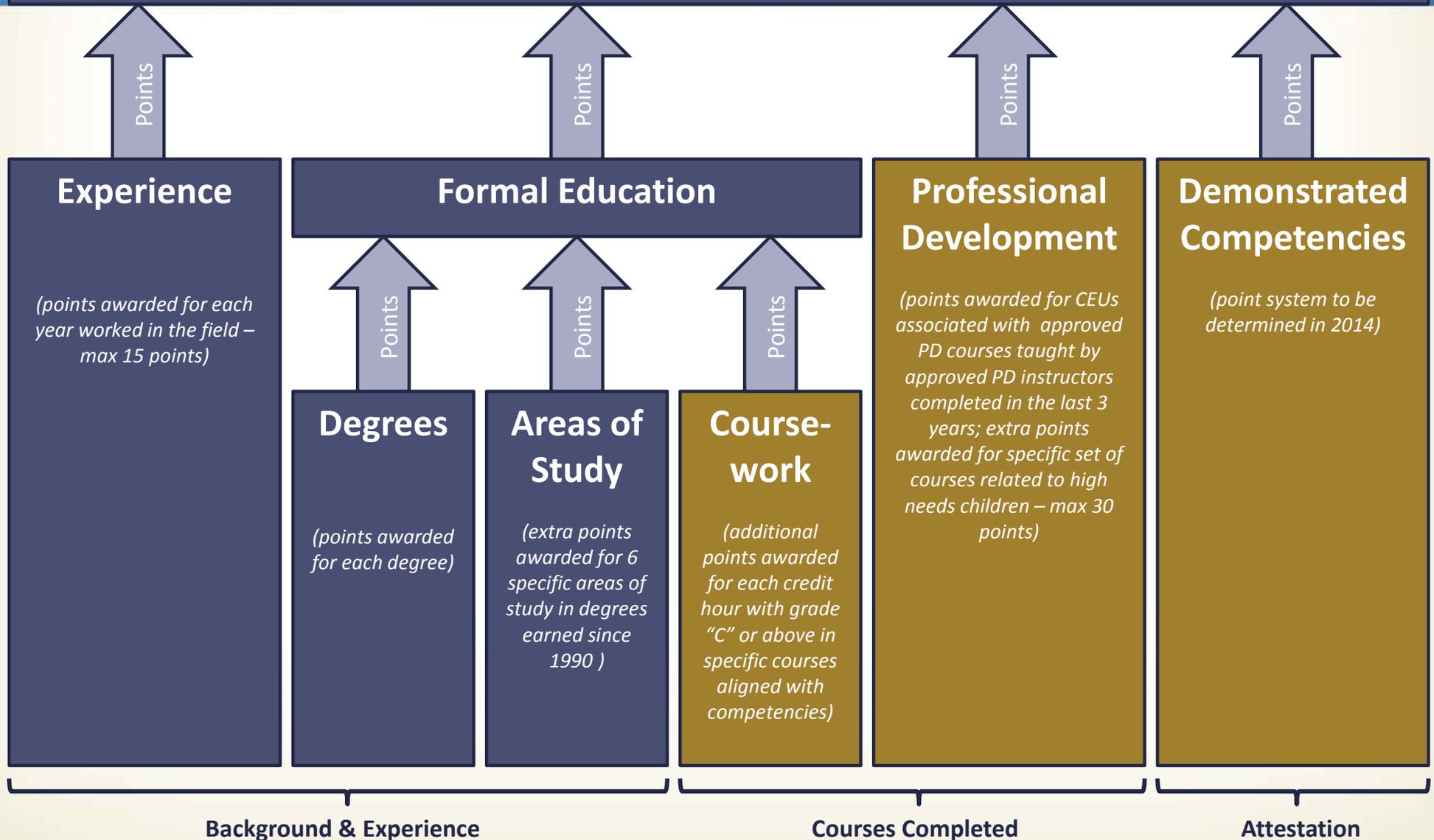


Based on 8 domains with competencies related to social/emotional development, cultural competence and children with special needs are included in all domain areas. Approved by the Early Childhood Leadership Commission in May, 2013.

Credentialing Method & Competencies

Professional Credential

(credential levels 1=lowest through 6=highest – person's level is based on a point system)



Colorado's Professional Development Information System (PDIS)



Web-based system for supporting the professional development of Colorado EC Workforce



Competencies are at the core of the system



Track and deliver professional development (including QRIS Level 2 Trainings)



Obtain and deliver critical data elements to QRIS



Calculate Credential level



Gain high quality data to answer key data questions

Scholarships for Colorado's Early Childhood Professionals

- \$2 Million from RTT/ELCF for Scholarships and Incentives
 - \$600K in 2014
 - \$700K in 2015
 - \$700K in 2016
- Targeted investment strategies included in Colorado's application:
 - EC Certificate and Degree Completion at Associate and Bachelor levels
 - Priority supports for EC Professionals serving highest needs children
 - Support for EC professionals who are English Language Learners

Race to the Top Early Childhood Professional Development Project Timeline

2014

- Build and Pilot PDIS (\$600,000)
- Distribute Scholarships and Incentives (\$600,000)
- Incentives for Competencies Framework Rollout and Alignment (\$350,000)
- Deliver QRIS Level II Courses
- Evaluation RFP for Measures of Competencies (\$450,000)
- Expand Coaching Network and Coaching Credential (\$175,000)
- Credential and Licensing Alignment: CDHS, CDE, CDHE, Head Start

2015

- Distribute Scholarships and Incentives (\$700,000)
- Full rollout of PDIS (\$300,000)
- Incentives for Competencies Framework Rollout and Alignment (\$250,000)
- Credential and Licensing Alignment: CDHS, CDE, CDHE, Head Start
- Develop Professional Development Modules (\$150,000)
- Produce Workforce Data Reports
- Expand Coaching Network and Coaching Credential (\$300,000)

2016

- Distribute Scholarships and Incentives (\$700,000)
- Full rollout of PDIS (\$300,000)
- Incentives for Competencies Framework Rollout and Alignment (\$150,000)
- Expand Coaching Network and Coaching Credential (\$300,000)
- Implementation of Competencies Framework in 2 and 4 Year Colleges and Universities
- Credential and Licensing Alignment: CDHS, CDE, CDHE, Head Start
- Produce Workforce Data Reports

Educator Licensure and Teacher Preparation

- **Educator Licensure: Current State**
- **Teacher Preparation: Current State**
- **Opportunities for Alignment: Teacher and Principal Quality Standards, Early Childhood Teacher Preparation Programs and Educator Licensure**

Early Childhood Educators and Educator Effectiveness

- **Do the evaluation requirements of SB 10-191 apply to our early childhood educators?**
 - Kindergarten through 3rd grade educators - Yes
 - Colorado Preschool Program educators - Depends on local licensing requirements
 - Head Start educators - Depends on local licensing requirements

Early Childhood Educators: Educator Licensure

■ **Early Childhood Education Endorsement**

- Ages 0 – 8 (birth to 3rd grade)
- BA degree from a 4 year approved institute of higher education
- Completion of an approved teacher preparation program
- Completion of an approved early childhood education program

Opportunities for Alignment: Licensing and Educator Effectiveness

■ **Licensing**

- Pre-Kindergarten EC Educators
 - Includes CDHS Early Childhood Teacher Requirements
 - Can include CDE Educator License

■ **Educator Effectiveness**

- Coordination is essential and occurring among:
 - CDE's Educator Effectiveness
 - CDE's Office of Professional Services and Educator Licensing
 - Colorado Department of Human Services' Office of Early Childhood

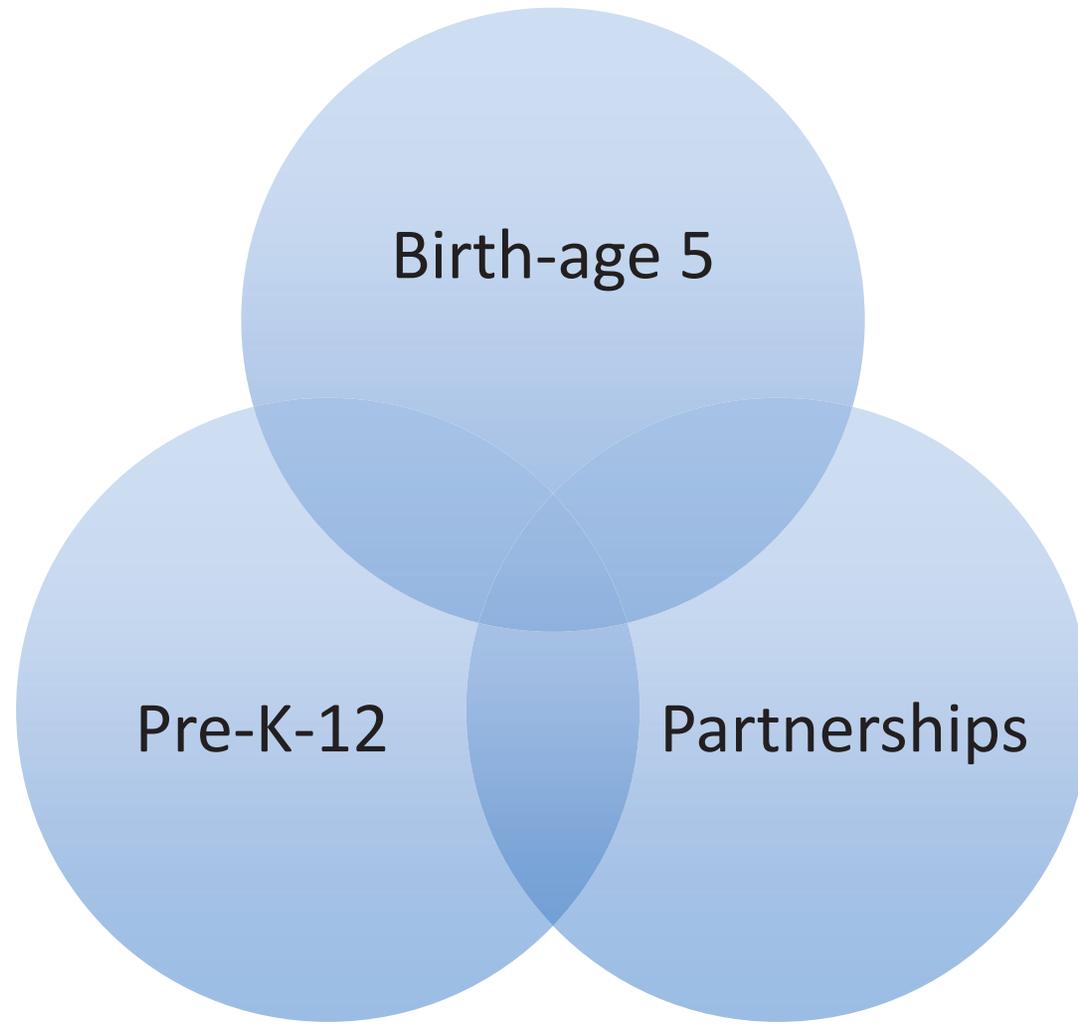
Early Childhood Educators: Educator Preparation

- **Entry points include our community colleges and our four-year institutions**
 - Four year institutions offering ECE programs: 7
 - Community Colleges offering ECE programs: 16
- **Alignment is happening in these programs, including**
 - Coursework and certificate programs meet state expectations
 - Course numbers and course descriptions are the same
 - A statewide Associate-to-Bachelor articulation agreement exists
 - Field experience is required for our Early Childhood educators

Opportunities for Alignment: ECE Educator Preparation

- **Opportunities include:**
 - Implementation of the Competencies and the Teacher Quality Standards at all levels of professional development
 - More opportunities for in-field experiences for early childhood educators
 - Integration of Teacher and Principal Quality Standards in all educator preparation programs
 - Alignment of educator preparation standards with Colorado Early Learning Guidelines for Birth through 8

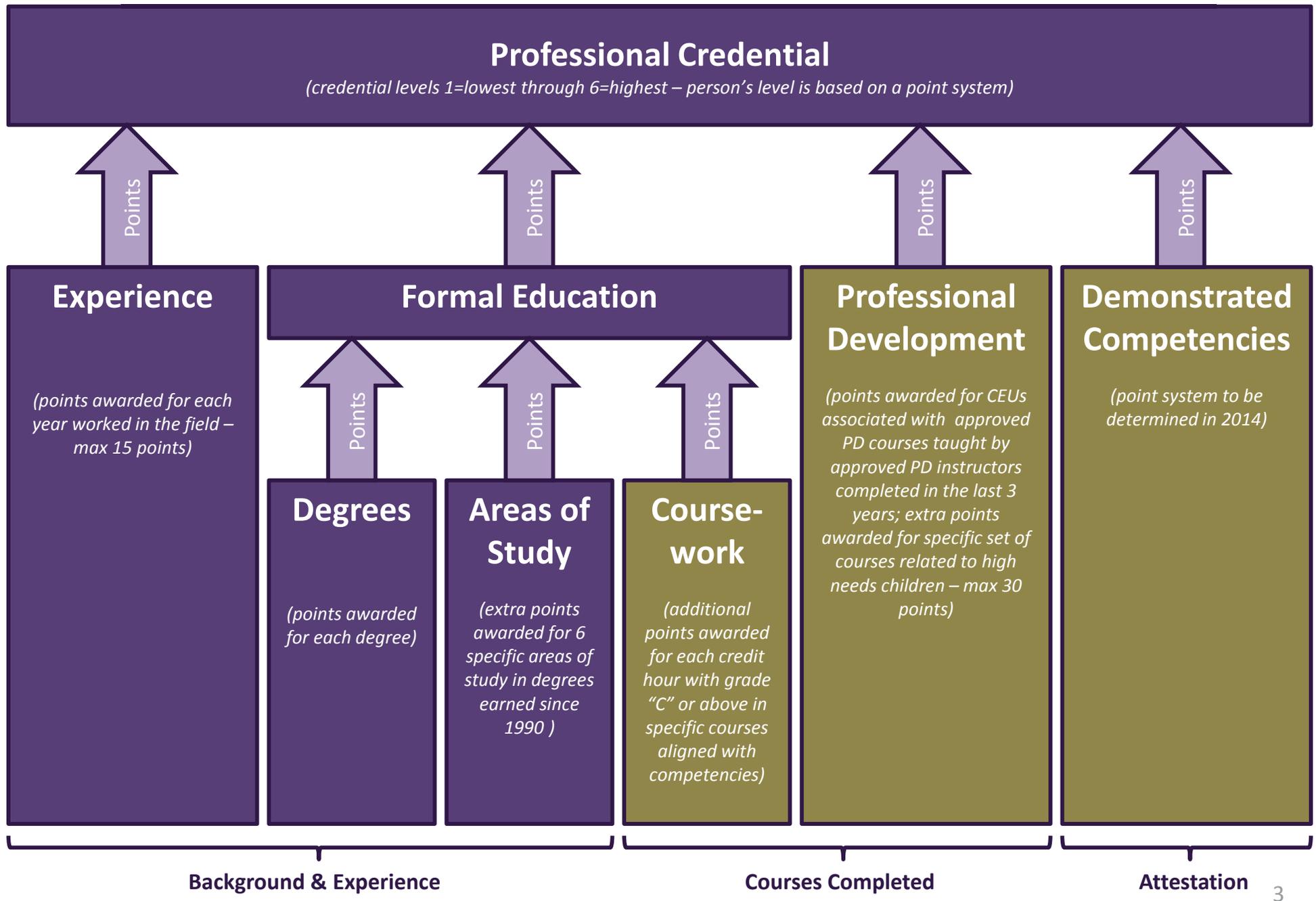
Two worlds-Two systems-Same Concerns



Early Learning Professional Development System Plan

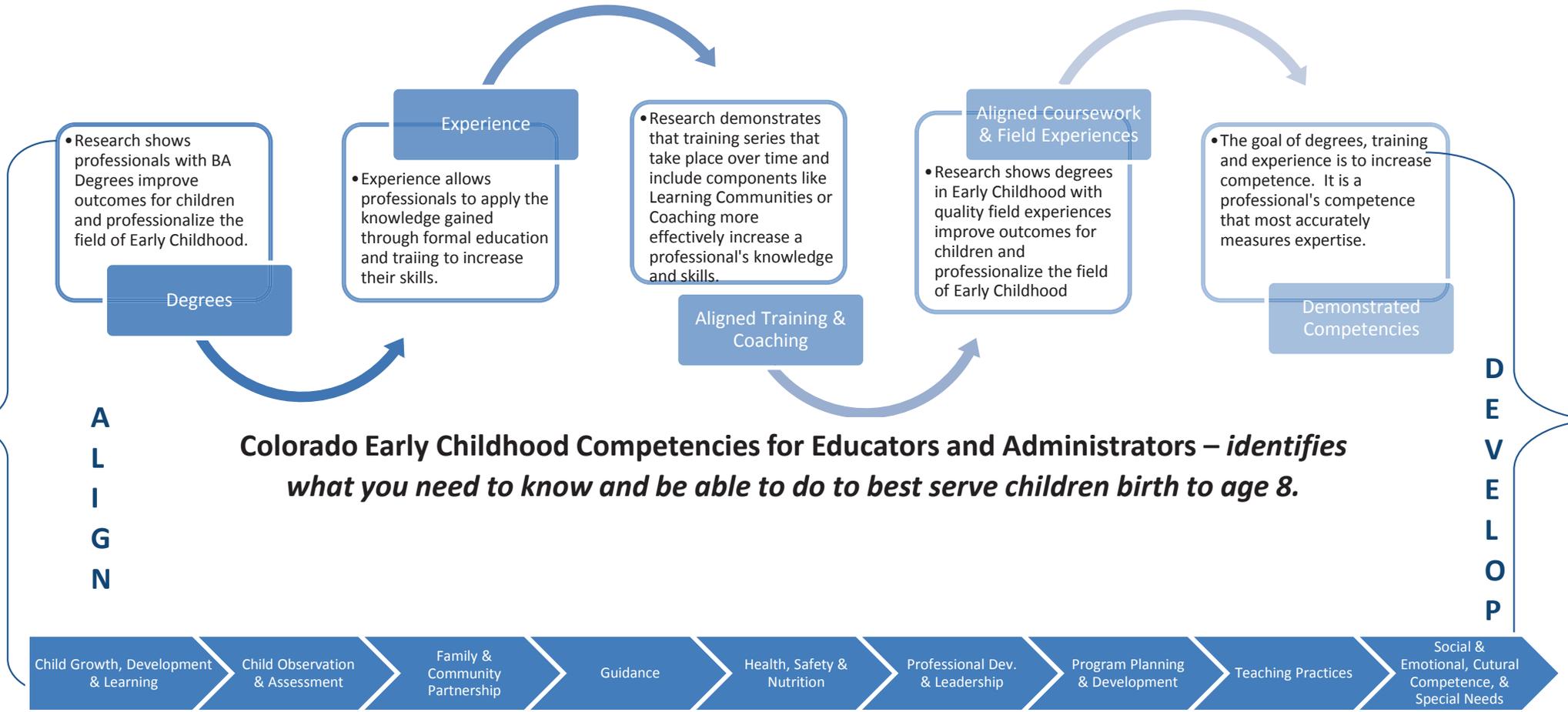
Goal 1	Adopt performance-based competencies <i>(CO Teacher quality standards)</i>	Goal 5	Data collection and analysis of early learning professionals <i>(Educator ID initiative)</i>
Goal 2	Enhance recruitment And retention	Goal 6	Create accountability
	<i>(TFA, diversity pipelines, ALT licensure)</i>		accountability mechanisms <i>(SB 191)</i>
Goal 3	Ongoing career and skill development	Goal 7	ECLC oversight
Goal 4	<i>(Career lattices)</i>		
	Finance through public and existing funds		

Credentialing Method & Competencies

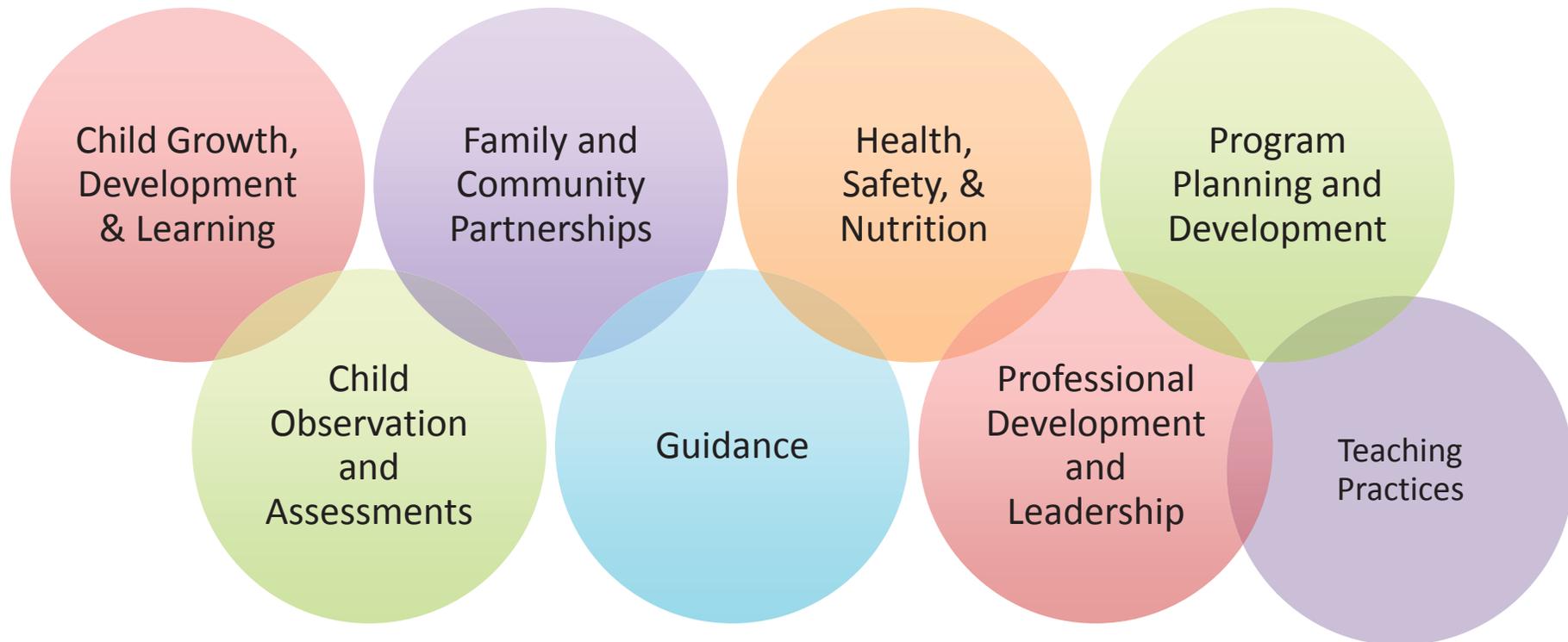




Colorado Early Childhood Professional Credential:
Professionals advancing levels (I-VI)
through increased education, training, experience and competence.



EC Competencies Framework: Domains



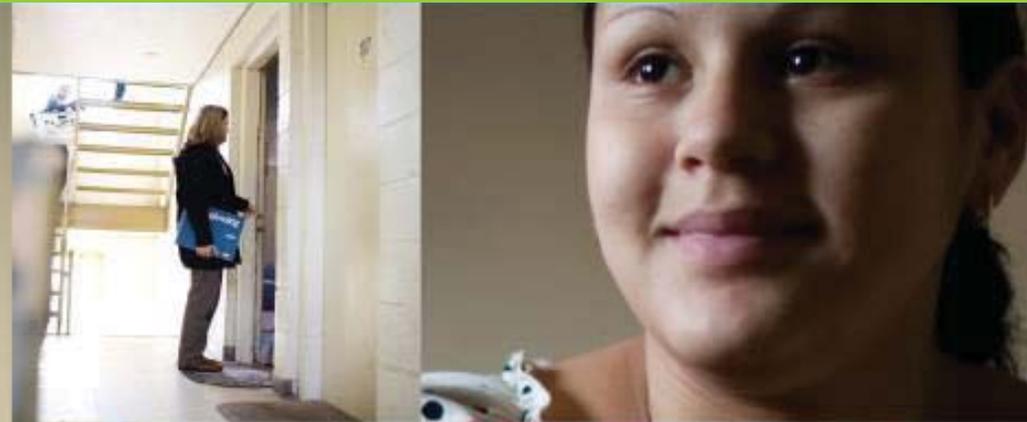
Based on 8 domains with competencies related to social/emotional development, cultural competence and children with special needs are included in all domain areas. Approved by the Early Childhood Leadership Commission in May, 2013.

Purpose of EC PD Advisory and Role of Members

- High level advisory seated by Colorado's Early Childhood Leadership Commission, Program Quality & Alignment Committee
- GOAL 7: Embed oversight of the P-3 Professional Development System in the infrastructure of the ECLC to ensure coordination with the quality rating and improvement system (QRIS), other statewide quality improvement efforts and increase collaboration among early learning settings in Colorado.
- Expectations as community ambassadors

Colorado to offer scholarships for aspiring early childhood teachers

- Need AA to BA pathways encouraged through partnerships/articulation agreements
- Bar set by Head Start (over 50% teachers with BAs)
- In 2013 NIEER findings, 57% of state pre-k programs require a BA and 85% of those are in ECE. It is the one (of 6) quality benchmarks where we really lag behind.
- AA a good place to start but messages should encourage continuation to a BA



Working Together to Ensure Healthier Families

Nurse-Family Partnership Overview

Nurse-Family Partnership is...

- An evidence-based, community health nursing program
- Transforms lives of vulnerable first-time mothers living in poverty





Program Goals

- Improve pregnancy outcomes
- Improve child health and development
- Improve parents' economic self-sufficiency

Key Program Components

- First-time, at-risk mothers
- Registered nurses
- Intensive services (intensity, duration)
- Focus on behavior
- Program fidelity (performance management system)

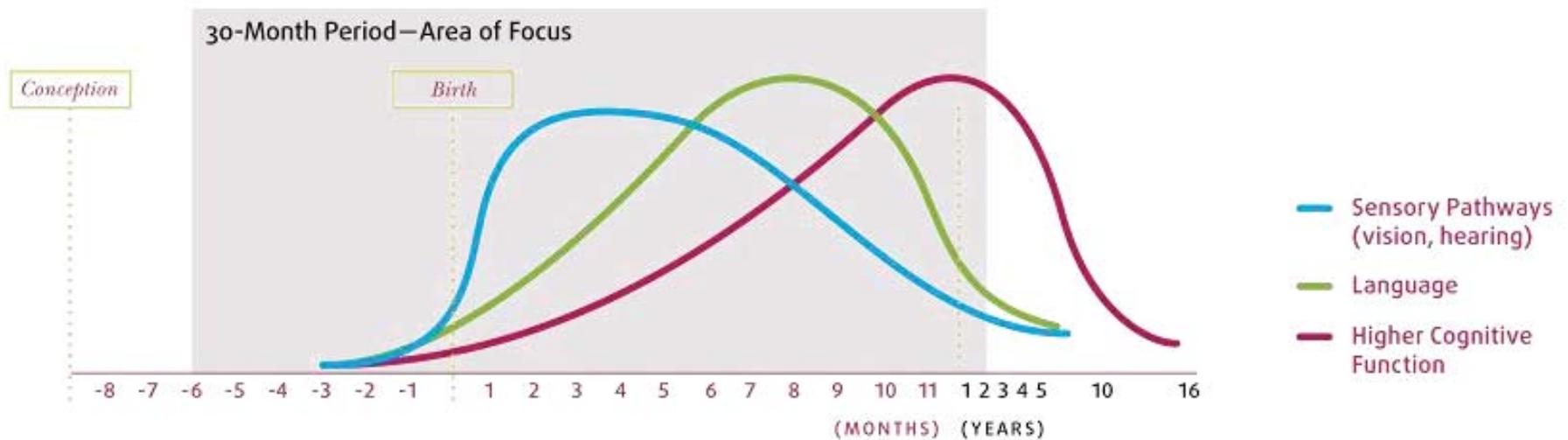
Why Nurses?

- Knowledge, judgment and skills
- High level of trust, low stigma
- Credibility and perceived authority
- Nursing theory and practice at core of original model



Human Brain Development

Synapse formation dependent on early experiences



Source: Nelson, C.A., *From Neurons to Neighborhoods* (2000).
Shonkoff, J. & Phillips, D. (Eds.)

Home Visit Overview

Personal Health

Health Maintenance Practices
Nutrition and Exercise
Substance Use
Mental Health Functioning

Environmental Health

Home
Work, School, and
Neighborhood

Life Course Development

Family Planning
Education and Livelihood

Maternal Role

Mothering Role
Physical Care
Behavioral and Emotional
Care

Family and Friends

Personal network
Relationships
Assistance with Childcare

Health and Human Services

Service Utilization

Trials of the Program

Dr. Olds' research & development of NFP continues today...



1977

Elmira, NY

Participants: **400**

Population: **Low-income whites**

Studied: **Semi-rural area**



1988

Memphis, TN

Participants: **1,139**

Population: **Low-income blacks**

Studied: **Urban area**



1994

Denver, CO

Participants: **735**

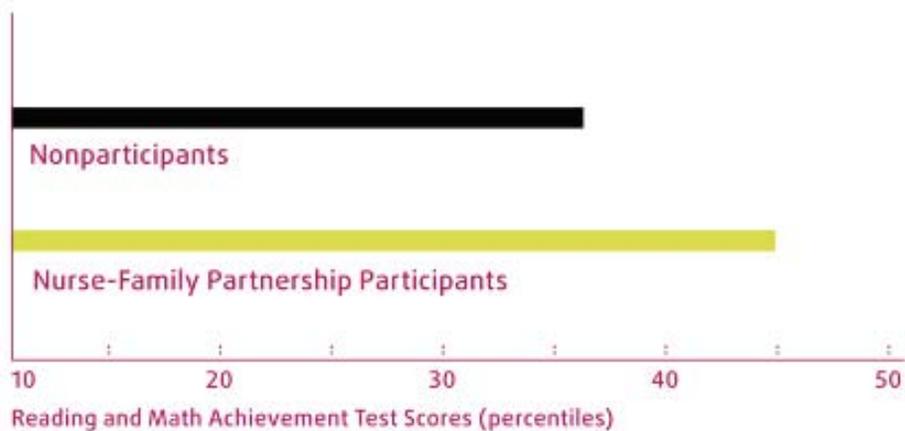
Population: **Large portion of Hispanics**

Studied: **Nurse and paraprofessionals**



Academic Achievement

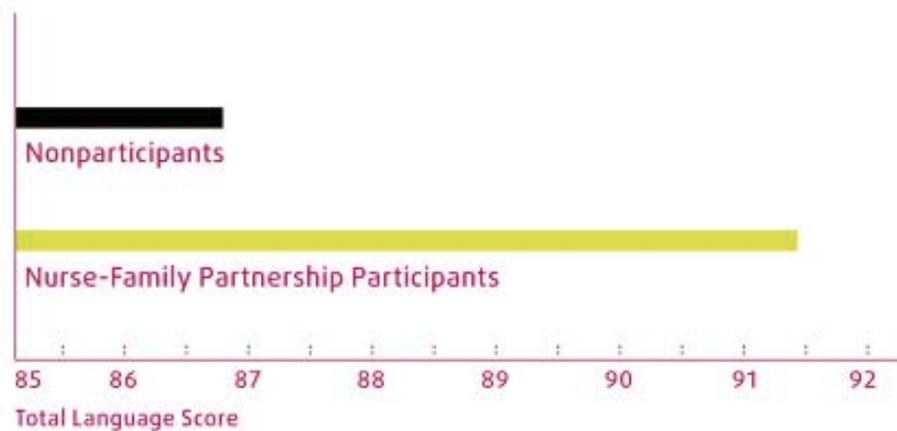
Grades 1-3, Age 9—Memphis
(Born to low-resource mothers)



Source: Reproduced with permission from *Pediatrics*, Vol. 120, e838, Copyright © 2007 by the AAP.

Preschool Language Scale

Age 4—Denver
(Born to low-resource mothers)



Source: Reproduced with permission from *Pediatrics*, Vol. 114, 1565, Copyright © 2004 by the AAP.



Nurse-Family Partnership Trial Outcomes

- 48% reduction in Child Abuse and Neglect
- 56% reduction in ER visits for accidents and poisonings
- 59% reduction in arrest of children age 15
- 67% reduction in behavioral and intellectual problems in children age 6
- 72% fewer conviction of mothers when children are age 15



Colorado Implementation: Public/Private Partnership

- **Colorado Department of Human Services, Office of Early Childhood:**
Fiscal Agent
- **Invest in Kids**
- **NFP National Service Office**
- **University of Colorado Health Sciences Center:** Contract Manager

Colorado NFP Results

- **18,585** families served in Colorado since the program began
- **49%** reduction in domestic violence during pregnancy
- **90%** of babies were born full term and 90% were born at a healthy weight- at or above (5.5 lbs.)
- **91%** breast feeding rate at birth
- **90%** of children received all recommended immunizations by 24 months (vs. 78% CO average)
- **21%** reduction in smoking during pregnancy
- **32%** reduction in alcohol use during pregnancy

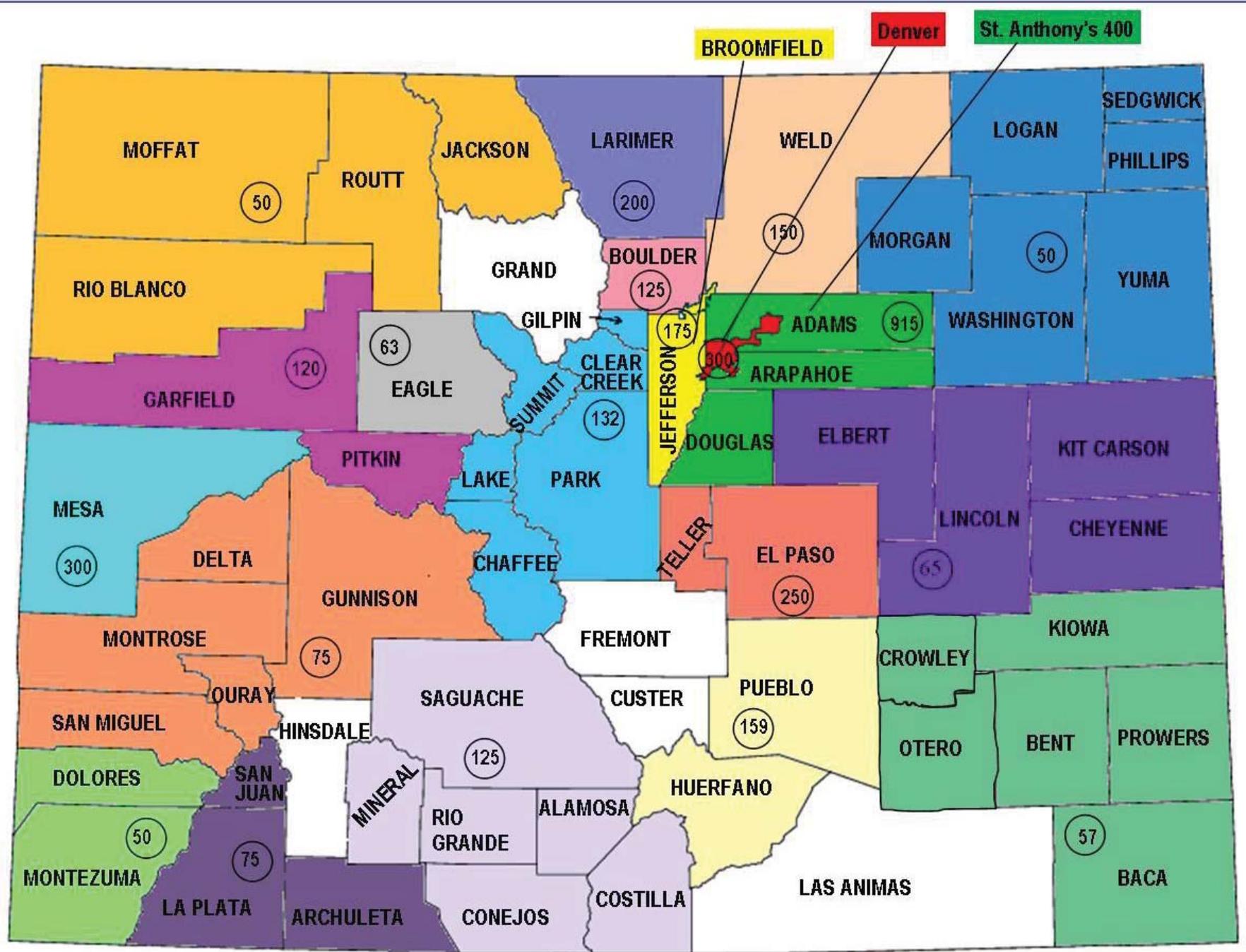




Funding

- **Master Tobacco Settlement** \$14.3 Million for 2,766 clients
 - **Medicaid** accounts for roughly 8%
- **MIECHV: Maternal Infant Early Childhood Home Visitation** through the Affordable Care Act \$3.6 Million for 670 clients

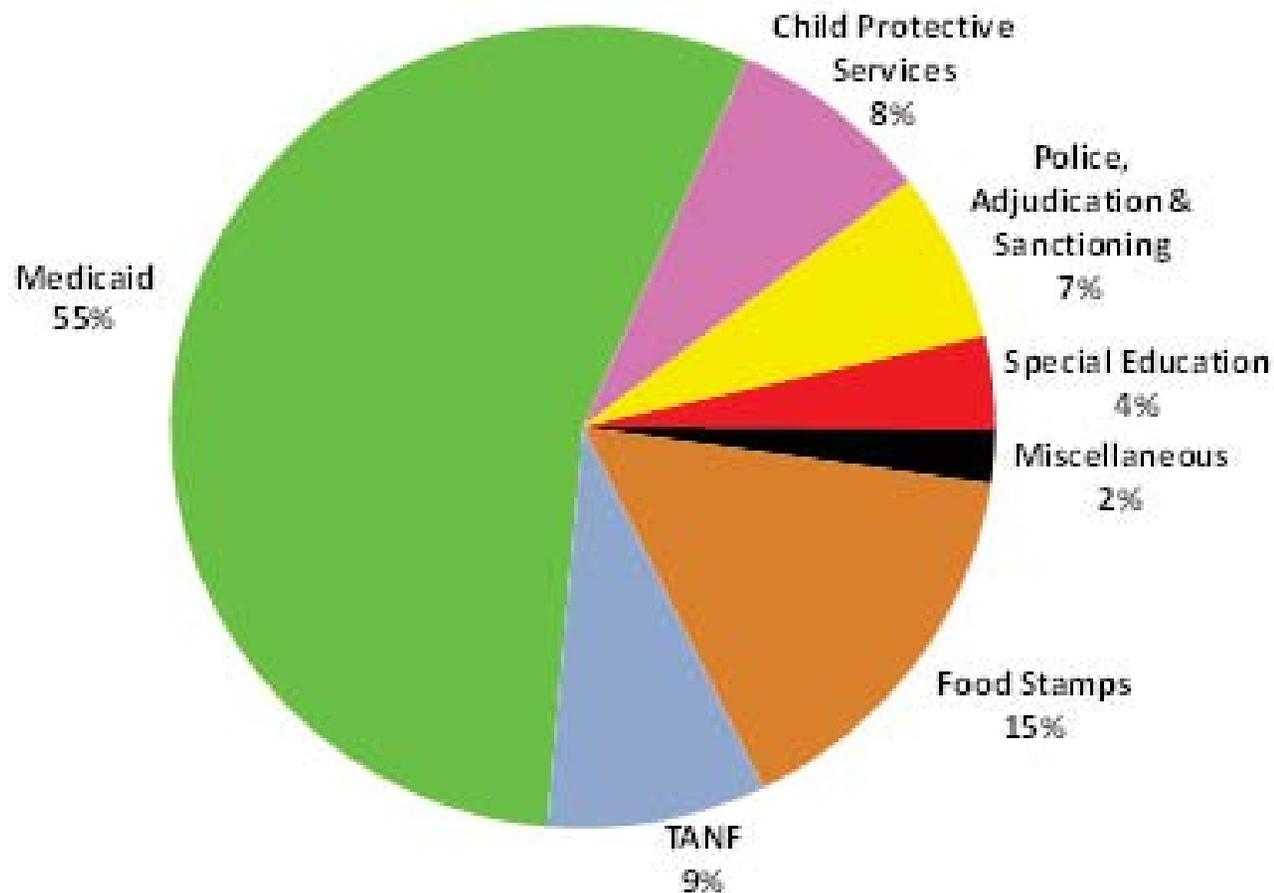
Colorado Nurse-Family Partnership Sites FY 14-15



○ Numbers of NFP families served at each site

3,436 Total Capacity

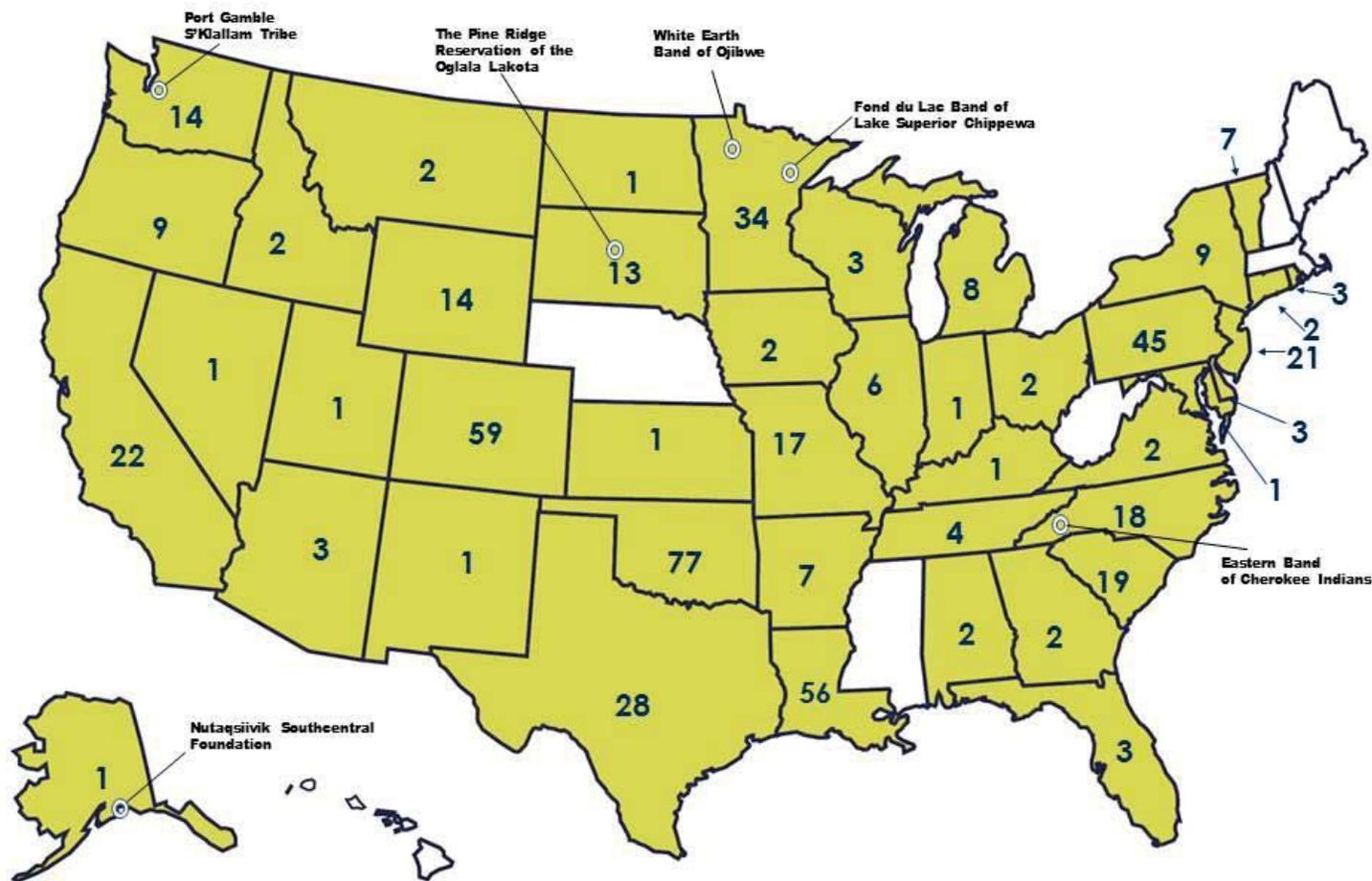
**Government Cost Savings per Family Served by NFP in Colorado
Total \$22,516 (Present Value at a 3% Discount Rate)**



When Nurse-Family Partnership (NFP) serves a family in Colorado, state, local, and Federal governments all benefit.



Nurse-Family Partnership is a growing, national program



43

States that NFP serves

536

Number of counties NFP is serving

Tribal agencies are denoted by Band

Map does not include program in U.S. Virgin Islands



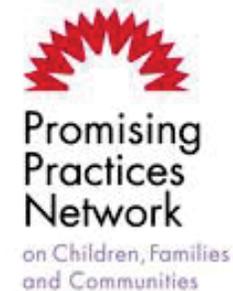
Nurse-Family Partnership is Endorsed as a Model Program by

Coalition for Evidence-Based Policy
A Project Sponsored by



Washington State
Institute for
Public Policy

World Health
Organization



Office of Juvenile
Justice & Delinquency
Prevention



PARTNERSHIP FOR AMERICA'S
ECONOMIC SUCCESS



National Institute on
Early Education
Research



For More Information

Lisa Hill

Executive Director, Invest in Kids

303.839.1808 x 103

lhill@iik.org

Invest in Kids

<http://www.iik.org>

1775 Sherman Street, Suite 2075

Denver, CO 80203

F. 303.839.1695

Colorado State Advisory Council for Parent Involvement in Education (SACPIE)

Presentation to the Early Childhood and School
Readiness Legislative Commission

Cathy Lines, Ph.D., SACPIE Chair

July 28, 2014



Families, Schools, and Communities Fostering Student Success



SACPIE is A Legislated Council

- ◆ In 2009, the Colorado General Assembly found that it was in the *best interests of the state to create a **state advisory council for parent involvement in education** that will review best practices and recommend to policy makers and educators strategies to increase parent involvement...thus helping...raise the level of **student achievement throughout the state.*** (SB 09-90)
- ◆ In 2013, the Colorado General Assembly expanded the council's responsibilities and implemented funding and accountability. (SB 13-193)



Families, Schools, and Communities Fostering Student Success

SACPIE Includes Members Who Represent...

- ◆ Parents and School or District Accountability Committees
- ◆ Non-Profit Organizations That Promote Families Who:
 - ◆ Have Students with Disabilities
 - ◆ Are Underserved
 - ◆ Need Support
- ◆ Early Childhood
- ◆ Statewide Organizations For:
 - ◆ Counselors
 - ◆ Teachers
 - ◆ School Executives
 - ◆ School Boards
 - ◆ Charter Schools
 - ◆ Parents and Teachers
- ◆ CDE
- ◆ Higher Education
- ◆ Human Services (SB 09-90)



Families, Schools, and Communities Fostering Student Success

SACPIE Informs About Best Practices and Strategies For...

- ◆ Involving families in the following:
 - ◆ Improving levels of academic achievement
 - ◆ Closing the achievement and growth gap
 - ◆ Implementing Response to Intervention (RtI, MTSS)
 - ◆ Increasing the high school graduation rate
 - ◆ Increasing persistence and on-time graduation rates in higher education
 - ◆ Increasing family participation on education committees
 - ◆ Designing parent education, leadership, and liaison programs
 - ◆ Establishing school-based parent information centers

(SB 09-90)



Families, Schools, and Communities Fostering Student Success

SACPIE Reviews and Shares Relevant Research (Doing What Works!)

- ◆ Examples relevant to early learning and legislation:
 - ◆ Provide continuity, coordination, and congruence between the early childhood and K-12 systems in multiple settings – home, school, community; transitions are crucial (Harvard Family Research Project, 2012)
 - ◆ Support both families and educators (adult learning) in enacting specific partnering roles and responsibilities for the school success of the children they share (Hoover-Dempsey, Whitaker, & Ice, 2010)
 - ◆ Implement school-initiated, specific family partnership programs related to learning; these can significantly and positively improve student achievement. (Jeynes, 2012)



Families, Schools, and Communities Fostering Student Success

SACPIE Aligns with the National Standards for Family-School Partnerships (PTA, 2008)

1. Welcoming All Families
2. **Communicating Effectively**
 - Families and school staff engage in **regular, two-way, meaningful** communication about student learning.
3. **Supporting Student Success**
 - Families and school staff **continuously collaborate to support students' learning** and healthy development **both at home and at school**, and have regular opportunities to **strengthen their knowledge and skills to do so effectively**.
4. Speaking Up for Every Child
5. Sharing Power
6. Collaborating with the Community

(SB 09-90)

SACPIE Adds a Seventh Standard

- ◆ **Providing Professional Development and Pre-Service Training for Administrators and Teachers**
- ◆ Educators have knowledge and skills in reaching out to every family, creating meaningful partnerships focused on student success. (Casper et al., 2011)

SACPIE Includes Four Working Committees

- ◆ **Early Childhood:** To identify and communicate with Colorado early childhood councils and networks regarding partnerships and resources
- ◆ **K-12:** To work with CDE in supporting districts to enact accountability requirements, regional trainings, indicators, and policies
- ◆ **Higher Education:** To communicate with the Colorado higher education community regarding partnerships, resources, and measures; to support the implementation of SACPIE's Additional 7th Standard – *Providing professional development and pre-service training for teachers and administrators*
- ◆ **Partnerships:** To understand, review, update, and publicize relevant programs, trainings, resources and events; investigate grant funding



Families, Schools, and Communities Fostering Student Success

SACPIE Supports the Early Childhood Committee

- ◆ SACPIE's Early Childhood Education Advisory Duties:
 - ◆ The council shall inform, at a minimum, the early childhood councils and early childhood care and education councils....concerning best practices and strategies, aligned with the national standards for family-school partnerships, for increasing parent involvement in public education and promoting family-school partnerships. (SB 09-90)



SACPIE Supports the Early Childhood Committee

◆ SACPIE Committee Members:

- ◆ **Tomas Mejia**, Co-Chair, CDE Representative
- ◆ **Jennifer Garcia-Rosendo**, Co-Chair, Early Childhood Representative
- ◆ **Nikiyah Gill**, Colorado Department of Human Services Representative
- ◆ **Mark Kling**, Non-Profit Organization Representative
- ◆ **Sandy Ripplinger**, Administrator (CASE) Representative

◆ SACPIE Advisory Members:

- ◆ Senator Evie Hudak
- ◆ Diana Huffman, US Department of Education

◆ Interested Parties



Families, Schools, and Communities Fostering Student Success

SACPIE Supports the Early Childhood Committee

- 2014 Early Childhood Committee Annual Goals:
 - Develop a current contact list of Colorado early childhood groups
 - Identify needs of families and caregivers of ECE-aged children to help focus committee work
 - Explore conferences to present about SACPIE's work and resources

Thank You!

<http://www.cde.state.co.us/sacpie>

Cathy Lines, Ph.D., SACPIE Chair
clines1@comcast.net

Darcy Hutchins, Ph.D., Family Partnership Director
Colorado Department of Education
Hutchins_D@cde.state.co.us



Families, Schools, and Communities Fostering Student Success





COLORADO

Department of Education

Senate Bill 08-212 Implementation Update

Presentation to the Early Childhood and School Readiness
Commission

Melissa Colzman, Ph.D.

Executive Director, Teaching and Learning Unit

July 28, 2014

Senate Bill 08-212

- **Preschool to Postsecondary Education Alignment Act**
- **Also known as Colorado's Achievement Plan for Kids (CAP4K)**
- **Components:**
 - School readiness
 - Standards revision
 - Assessment revision
 - Postsecondary and workforce readiness

What does it take for children to be ready for success in school?

**LANGUAGE
AND LITERACY**

MATH

SCIENCE

SOCIAL STUDIES

THE ARTS



**APPROACHES TO
LEARNING**

**PHYSICAL
DEVELOPMENT**

**ENGLISH
LANGUAGE
ACQUISITION**

**COGNITIVE
DEVELOPMENT**

**SOCIAL-
EMOTIONAL**

What is meant by “school readiness”?

State Board Adopted Definition:

- School Readiness describes both the preparedness of a child to engage in and benefit from learning experiences, and the ability of a school to meet the needs of all students enrolled in publicly funded preschool or kindergarten.
- School Readiness is enhanced when schools, families, and community service providers work collaboratively to ensure that every child is ready for higher levels of learning in academic content.



Overview of School Readiness within CAP4K

- **Requirements of State Board of Education**
 - Define school readiness
 - Adopt one or more assessments aligned with definition of school readiness
- **Requirements of local education providers**
 - Beginning in the fall of 2013, ensure all children in publicly funded preschool or kindergarten receive an Individual School Readiness Plan (**CDE is advising districts to phase in school readiness plans and assessments during the 2013-14 or 2014-15 school year with full implementation by 2015-16**)
 - Administer the school readiness assessment to each student in kindergarten



Parameters for School Readiness Assessment Within CAP4K

Adopted School Readiness Assessments must be:

- Research-based
- Recognized nationwide as reliable for measuring school readiness
- Suitable for determining instruction and interventions to improve student readiness
- Inclusive of physical well-being and motor development, social and emotional development, language and comprehension development, and cognition and general knowledge

School readiness assessments shall not be:

- Used to deny admission or progression
- Reported at the individual student-level

Following adoption of the school readiness assessment, the state board is required to adopt a system for reporting population-level results that provide baseline data for measuring overall change and improvement in students' skills and knowledge over time.



Implementation Benchmarks for Colorado's School Readiness Initiative

- **2008:** Colorado State Board of Education defines school readiness
- **2009:** Colorado Academic Standards preschool through 12th grade developed and adopted
- **2010:** Assessment system attributes defined including school readiness
- **2012**
 - School Readiness Assessment subcommittee reviews assessment systems
 - CDE conducts statewide regional school readiness informational meeting
 - December 2012: State Board of Education votes to offer districts a menu of school readiness assessments and approved Teaching Strategies GOLD as the first assessment
- **2013**
 - Spring: CDE initiates application for school readiness assessment funding
 - Fall : School Readiness Committee conducted an second review process for assessment; no additional assessments found to meet criteria
 - December: State Board agrees to department recommendation to extend phase-in period to 2015-16
- **2014**
 - Technical assistance provided to districts through Race to the Top Early Learning Challenge grant
 - Spring: CDE initiates application for school readiness assessment funding
 - Another assessment review to be conducted and final recommendations for the menu will be made to the State Board



Status of School Readiness Assessment Implementation

2013 – 14 School Year

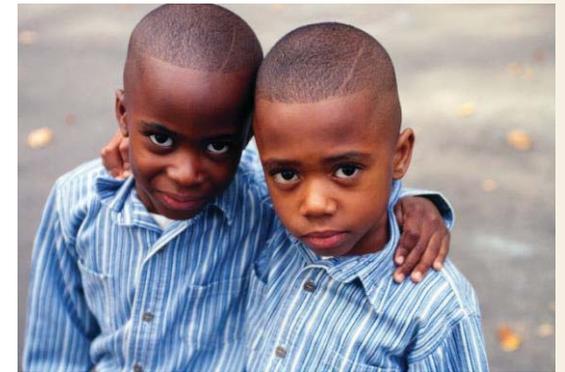
- 88 of 178 School Districts
- 424 Schools
- Approximately 1100 Teachers
- 11,626 Children

2014 – 15 School Year

- 102 of 178 School Districts
- 529 Schools
- Approximately 1200 Teachers
- 16,151 Children

Support for Implementation

- Support with assessment subscription cost through Race to the Top Early Learning Challenge Fund through 2016
- Technical assistance for implementation of school readiness in tandem with the READ Act
- Sample plan templates
 - School readiness plan template
 - READ plan template
 - School readiness plan template with an embedded READ plan
- School readiness guidance document





COLORADO COMMUNITY
COLLEGE SYSTEM

Serving Our Communities. Strengthening Colorado.



CCCS Representative

Linda F. Comeaux, MPA
Vice President of Instruction
Red Rocks Community College

Linda.comeaux@rrcc.edu

303-914-6403

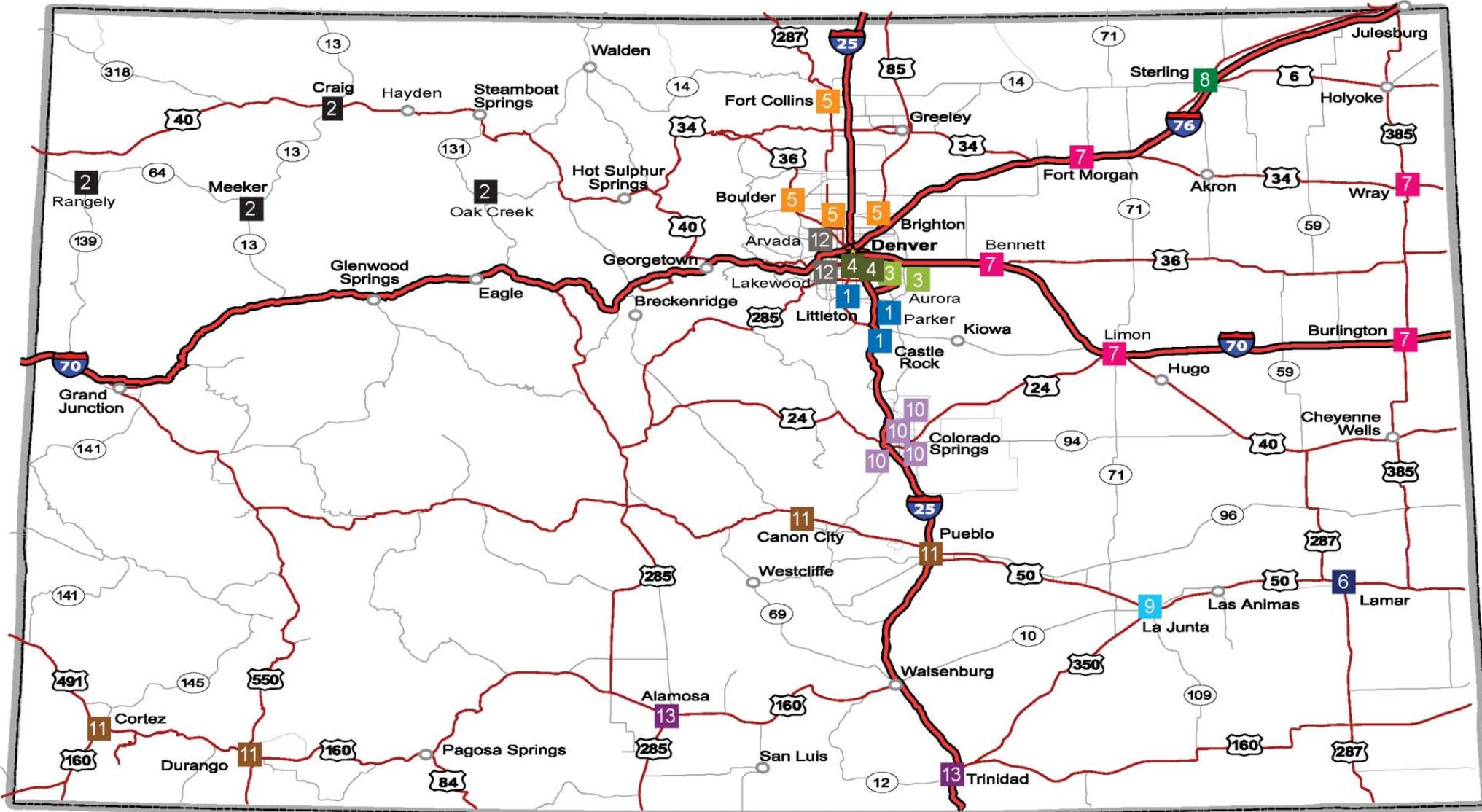
About CCCS

VISION STATEMENT

Colorado community colleges are unsurpassed at providing quality educational opportunities for all who aspire to enrich their lives.

MISSION STATEMENT

To provide an accessible, responsive learning environment that facilitates the achievement of educational, professional and personal goals by our students and other members of our communities in an atmosphere that embraces academic excellence, diversity and innovation.



- 1 Arapahoe Community College**
Littleton, Parker, Castle Rock
- 2 Colorado Northwestern Community College**
Craig, Meeker, Oak Creek, Rangely
- 3 Community College of Aurora**
Aurora, Lowry
- 4 Community College of Denver**
Auraria, Lowry

- 5 Front Range Community College**
Westminster, Brighton, Longmont, Fort Collins
- 6 Lamar Community College**
- 7 Morgan Community College**
Fort Morgan, Bennett, Burlington, Limon, Wray
- 8 Northeastern Junior College**
Sterling

- 9 Otero Junior College**
La Junta
- 10 Pikes Peak Community College**
Centennial, Downtown, Falcon, Rampart Range
- 11 Pueblo Community College**
Pueblo, Cañon City
Southwest Community College Division:
Durango, Cortez

- 12 Red Rocks Community College**
Lakewood, Arvada
- 13 Trinidad State Junior College**
Trinidad, Alamosa

THE QUESTION

“What is the role that CCCS plays in offering professional development and training opportunities for early childhood educators or those seeking to enter the profession”?

CCCS

Professional Development Providers

- Flexibility to offer credit and non-credit educational options.
 - All CCCS Colleges have an Early Childhood Education program.
 - Many have Community Education or Workforce Training opportunities.
- Educational infrastructure to support high quality student learning.
 - Classrooms, software, equipment, materials, supplies

CCCS

Professional Development Providers

- Appropriate Student Support Services for learning success.
 - Library, Tutoring, Disability Services etc.
- Expert ECE Educators.
 - All educators hold a Colorado Vocational Teaching credential and most have Master's degree in Early Childhood Education.
- Expertise in effective instructional delivery.
- Ability to offer rigorous, high quality hands-on learning experiences.

CCCS

Professional Development Providers

- Resources to request and implement state/federal grants.
- Ability to offer scholarship programs.
- Community partnerships to offer students internship / practicum opportunities.

CCCS

Professional Development Providers

- Majority of CCCS colleges hold NAEYC accreditation.
 - National Association for the Education of Young Children
- State provider for ECE teacher and director certificates and classes.
- Well established partnerships with Directors, Teachers & Community.

For more information about CCCS:

- **Dr. Nancy McCallin**
President
PH: 303.595.1552
nancy.mccallin@cccs.edu

- **Rhonda Bentz**
Public Information Officer
PH: 303.595.1641
rhonda.bentz@cccs.edu





THANK YOU !



Harvard Family
Research Project



Family Engagement as a Systemic, Sustained, and Integrated Strategy to Promote Student Achievement

Harvard Family Research Project

April 2010

For questions or comments about this paper,
email hfrp_pubs@gse.harvard.edu

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Harvard Family Research Project • Harvard Graduate School of Education • 3 Garden Street • Cambridge, MA • 02138
www.hfrp.org • Email: hfrp_pubs@gse.harvard.edu • Tel: 617-495-9108 • Fax: 617-495-8594

Family engagement in education is related to a range of benefits for students, including improved school readiness, higher student achievement, better social skills and behavior, and increased likelihood of high school graduation. The strongest research evidence indicates that parental beliefs, attitudes, values, and childrearing practices, as well as home–school communication, are linked to student success.ⁱ Furthermore, investing in family engagement can be cost effective. For example, schools would have to spend \$1000 more per pupil to reap the same gains in student achievement that an involved parent brings.ⁱⁱ

These research-based findings align with a key principle of Harvard Family Research Project—namely that schools alone cannot meet students’ needs, especially the needs of those students who are the most disadvantaged. These students in particular need the benefits of a **complementary learning** approach, in which an array of school and nonschool supports complement one another to create an integrated set of community-wide resources that support learning and development from birth to young adulthood. We offer an expanded definition of family engagement that is based on research about children’s learning and the relationships among families, schools, and communities in support of such learning.ⁱⁱⁱ A clear and commonly shared definition of family engagement can—and, we believe, will—inspire policy and programmatic investments in family engagement, which will in turn contribute to school improvement and student success.

This expanded definition of family engagement rests on research showing that families play significant roles in supporting their children’s learning not only in the home, but also by guiding their children successfully through a complex school system, and strongly advocating for their children and for effective public schools. Reflecting a systemic approach to education from birth to young adulthood, this definition consists of the following principles:

- First, family engagement is a **shared responsibility** in which schools and other community agencies and organizations are committed to reaching out to engage families in meaningful ways and in which families are committed to actively supporting their children’s learning and development.
- Second, family engagement is **continuous across a child’s life** and entails enduring commitment but changing parent roles as children mature into young adulthood.
- Third, effective family engagement cuts across and reinforces learning in the **multiple settings where children learn**—at home, in prekindergarten programs, in school, in afterschool and summer programs, in faith-based institutions, and in the community.

This definition of family engagement focuses on children’s learning in a variety of settings—not just in school—and reflects the many different ways in which families and schools engage with and support one another. Taken together, these three principles support the creation of new pathways for family engagement that honor the dynamic, multiple, and complementary ways in which children learn and grow.

1. Shared Responsibility

Education policymakers and other stakeholders are raising expectations that all students should be prepared for careers, college, and lifelong learning. Meeting such expectations is a collective effort and, at the local level, a shared responsibility in which schools and other community organizations are committed to engaging families in meaningful ways, and families are committed to actively supporting their children's learning and development.

Unfortunately, many educators and parents still hold the view that learning happens only in schools, and thus is solely the school's responsibility. Many schools, for example, make little effort to reach out to parents and, when they do, often define "engagement" as the need to support school goals and priorities rather than to create a mutual responsibility for supporting students' academic success. Given that learning takes place even before children enter school, and also beyond the school walls, **a shared responsibility for children's learning is foundational.** Schools and families together communicate high educational expectations that reinforce students' own academic expectations and influence their college and career readiness. High academic expectations predict performance, courses taken, college attendance, and career aspirations among youth. When school staff and parents together share high expectations for high school students, students are more likely to attend college.^{iv}

Family engagement consists of the opportunities that schools and communities offer parents and other family members to support and enrich their children's learning. When teachers invite family engagement and communicate specific actions that family members can take, family members are more likely to respond positively, and their engagement is associated with students' homework completion and academic improvements.^v

Co-Constructed Roles for Educators, Parents, and Students

Family engagement as a shared responsibility also consists of mutually agreed upon, or co-constructed, roles. Families and schools should actively engage in dialogue about their complementary responsibilities and strive to reach agreement on family roles as consumers of education, partners in student learning, and advocates for high performance. Parent-teacher conferences illustrate one arena of co-construction and partnership for student learning: School leaders communicate their goals and mechanisms to teachers and parents; teachers review student work and prepare an agenda; and parents learn about their child's school performance, share their own thoughts, and ask how best to support their child's academic progress.

Family engagement roles vary across the school system. Superintendents and principals set the district-wide and school-wide tone and expectations for partnerships with families. To demonstrate the value and importance of building family engagement, administrators must establish clear expectations, policies, accountability standards, and processes for staff.^{vi} Such activities include writing and regularly updating family engagement policies, tying family engagement efforts to school improvement plans, hiring administrators and school-level staff

focused on family engagement, and including family outreach and engagement opportunities in assessment rubrics for principals. Among teachers and other educators—including early childhood educators, afterschool staff, and coaches—regular and responsive communication is particularly important because it lays the foundation for strong partnerships.

Finally, all families can support their children’s learning in some way, even if it is as simple as asking their child, “What did you learn in school today?” Family activities that support children’s success can include establishing a stable daily routine for homework, household chores, meals, reading, and bedtime; monitoring out-of-school activities by checking children’s whereabouts and enrolling them in afterschool programs; setting clear and age-appropriate expectations about school performance, behaviors, and manners; and motivating lifelong learning by supporting their children’s interests and talents and showing interest in school and educational activities.²

2. Continuous Across a Child’s Life

From the time children are born, parents influence their cognitive, social, and emotional development. Nurturing, warm, and responsive parent–child relationships, participation in children’s play, and reading to children are just some of the behaviors that are more likely to contribute to young children’s cognitive and social-emotional development.^{vii} Even in the earliest years of childhood, parents’ interactions and activities help shape children’s readiness for school. Consistent family engagement in education during children’s elementary school years is also related to positive academic and behavioral outcomes.

Family engagement remains important in adolescence and predicts healthy youth behaviors and higher rates of college enrollment. Families that maintain continually high rates of parent engagement in elementary school are more likely to have children who complete high school than less-engaged parents,^{viii} and families that link schoolwork to career aspirations and communicate expectations for graduation positively influence student achievement. Youth who report supportive and trusting relations with parents are more likely to make academic progress, exhibit self-reliance and healthy social behaviors, and avoid delinquency.^{ix} Understanding how family engagement supports student growth at different stages of child and youth development can help families and educators tailor their engagement strategies to ensure that they are developmentally appropriate and effective.

Early Childhood

Children’s educational trajectories are significantly influenced by their early learning experiences at home and in the community. Long before children enter formal schooling, parents help shape their language and literacy development, as well as their general curiosity for exploring and learning new concepts. Families can help facilitate young children’s growth by creating literacy-rich home environments, taking children to visit libraries and other places that stimulate their interest in learning about their surroundings, and constantly talking to them about what they see, do, hear, and feel.

Elementary Years

In the elementary grades, parents' efforts to foster literacy; help and supervise homework; and manage children's activities in the home, school, and community have all been linked to student achievement.^x The start of formal schooling brings children into contact with many new classmates and adults who help shape their understanding of their environments, their interests, and their growing sense of competency. Positive home-school relationships—in which parents communicate with teachers, help out in the child's classroom, and participate in school activities—promote children's educational engagement. Parents' presence at the school, whether in classrooms or at other activities, reinforces children's sense of school as a welcoming environment and facilitates their ability to see learning as a continuous process, not just something that takes place within the school walls away from their homes.

Middle/High School Years

Effective family engagement during adolescence differs from the types of involvement parents find successful during earlier years, and these changes reflect adolescents' changing developmental needs. Effective family engagement during this developmental period involves academic socialization, including communicating parental expectations about education and its value, linking schoolwork to current events, fostering educational and occupational aspirations, discussing learning strategies, and making preparations and plans for the future.^{xi} This type of involvement—in which families openly talk about their expectations for their children, and promote opportunities for their children to take independent responsibility for their schoolwork and develop concrete plans for the future—is far more effective with adolescents than standard homework assistance or more traditional school-based parent involvement.

3. Carried Out in the Multiple Settings Where Children Learn

Effective family engagement is carried out in the multiple settings where children learn—at home, in pre-kindergarten programs, in school, in afterschool programs, in faith-based institutions, and in community programs. Parents who connect and guide their children to community resources support achievement. For example, enrolling children in afterschool and summer programs enhances children's social, civic, and leadership skills as well as improves their academic performance. When afterschool programs, in turn, collaborate with families, they ensure that programming meets the needs of youth and families.^{xii} This is essential to sustain youth participation and engagement so that they can reap the benefits these programs have to offer.

Parents make important decisions about whether or not their children will take advantage of learning opportunities outside of school. Parent behaviors around learning activities such as reading, conversations about school-related matters, and visiting the public library are linked to improved reading comprehension in children.^{xiii} In addition to being smart consumers, families can reinforce the skills, lessons, and values that children acquire in these nonschool learning settings by being involved with the programs and by parenting their children at home. For example, when parents provide direction in choosing library books and internet-based learning

resources, their children spend more time reading and acquire more knowledge compared to children who are left to navigate library resources on their own.^{xiv}

While parents undoubtedly play an important role, they share responsibility with the staff of agencies and organizations providing learning opportunities outside of school. Staff set the tone for communicating with families when recruiting and enrolling students and provide families with opportunities to be involved—whether by volunteering, participating in decision making, or visiting the program to understand what their children are learning there. Because staff in community-based learning settings are often members of the community and have preexisting relationships with the families who live there, staff are well-positioned to share ideas for supporting learning at home and for facilitating family connections to schools.

Promoting family engagement across learning settings is supported at multiple levels of government, from federal policy to city systems. At the federal level, several early childhood programs, including Head Start, Early Head Start, and Even Start, include mandates for family involvement. Additionally, 21st Century Community Learning Center (21st CCLC) afterschool programs can use funds to support parental involvement. Increasingly, cities are looking at how they can develop systems that leverage family engagement to increase participation in afterschool programs. This effort includes building program capacity to engage families through professional development and other structures and ensuring that families have equitable access to and information about afterschool opportunities.

Schools, families, and other learning institutions need consistent and aligned support to help children achieve their academic potential. Providing that support by recognizing and investing in family engagement policies and practices in nonschool learning settings is key to closing the achievement gap and supporting success for all students.

ⁱ Desforges, C. & Abouchar, A. (2003). *The impact of parental involvement, parental support and family education on pupil achievements and adjustments: A literature review*. London: Department for Education and Skills; Fan, X., & Chen, M. (2001). Parental involvement and students' academic achievement: A meta-analysis. *Educational Psychology Review*, 13(1), 1–22.

ⁱⁱ Houtenville, A.J. & Conway, K.S. (2008). Parental effort, school resources, and student achievement. *Journal of Human Resources*, 43 (2), 437-453.

ⁱⁱⁱ Weiss, H.B., Bouffard, S.M., Bridglall, B.L., Gordon, E.W. (2009). *Reframing family involvement in education: Supporting families to support educational equity*. (Equity Matters: research review No. 5) New York: The Campaign for Educational Equity, Teachers College.

^{iv} Lippman, L. Atienza, A., Rivers, A., & Keith, J. (2008). *A developmental perspective on college and workplace readiness*. Washington D.C.: Child Trends

^v Hoover-Dempsey, K.V., Walker, J.M.T., Sandler, H.M., Whetsel, D., Green, C.L., Wilkins, A.S., & Closson, K. (2005). Why do parents become involved? Research findings and implications. *The Elementary School Journal*, 106(2), 105-130.

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- ^{vii} Weiss, H., Caspe, M., & Lopez, M.E. (2006). *Family involvement makes a difference: Family involvement in early childhood education*. Cambridge, MA: Harvard Family Research Project.
- ^{viii} Barnard, W.M. (2004). Parent involvement in elementary school and educational attainment. *Children & Youth Services Review*, 26(1), 39-62.
- ^{ix} Kreider, H., Caspe, M., Kennedy, S. & Weiss, H. (2007). *Family involvement makes a difference: Family involvement in middle and high school students' education*. Cambridge, MA: Harvard Family Research Project.
- ^x Caspe, M., Lopez, M.E., & Wolos, C. (2007). *Family involvement makes a difference: Family involvement in elementary school children's education*. Cambridge, MA: Harvard Family Research Project.
- ^{xi} Hill, N. E & Tyson, D. (2009). Parental involvement in middle school: A meta-analytic assessment of the strategies that promote achievement. *Developmental Psychology*, 45(3), 740-763.
- ^{xii} Hammond, C. & Reimer, M. (2006). *Essential elements of quality after-school programs*. Clemson, S. C.: National Dropout Prevention Center/Network.
- ^{xiii} Anderson, S. A. (2000). How parental involvement makes a difference in reading achievement. *Reading Improvement*, 37(2), 61-86.
- ^{xiv} Celano, D. & Neuman, S. (2008). When schools close, the knowledge gap grows. *Phi Delta Kappan*, 90(4), 256-262.

National Standards, Goals, and Indicators for Family-School Partnerships

Standard 1—Welcoming All Families into the School Community

Families are active participants in the life of the school, and feel welcomed, valued, and connected to each other, to school staff, and to what students are learning and doing in class.

Goal 1: Creating a Welcoming Climate: When families walk into the building, do they feel the school is inviting and is a place where they “belong”?

- ❖ Developing personal relationships
- ❖ Creating a family-friendly atmosphere
- ❖ Providing opportunities for volunteering

Goal 2: Building a Respectful, Inclusive School Community: Do the school's policies and programs reflect, respect, and value the diversity of the families in the community?

- ❖ Respecting all families
- ❖ Removing economic obstacles to participation
- ❖ Ensuring accessible programming

Standard 2—Communicating Effectively

Families and school staff engage in regular, two-way, meaningful communication about student learning.

Goal 1: Sharing Information Between School and Families: Does the school keep all families informed about important issues and events and make it easy for families to communicate with teachers?

- ❖ Using multiple communication paths
- ❖ Surveying families to identify issues and concerns
- ❖ Having access to the principal
- ❖ Providing information on current issues
- ❖ Facilitating connections among families

National Standards, Goals, and Indicators for Family-School Partnerships, continued

Standard 3—Supporting Student Success

Families and school staff continuously collaborate to support students' learning and healthy development both at home and at school, and have regular opportunities to strengthen their knowledge and skills to do so effectively.

Goal 1: Sharing Information About Student Progress: Do families know and understand how well their children are succeeding in school and how well the entire school is progressing?

- ❖ Ensuring parent-teacher communication about student progress
- ❖ Linking student work to academic standards
- ❖ Using standardized test results to increase achievement
- ❖ Sharing school progress

Goal 2: Supporting Learning by Engaging Families: Are families active participants in their children's learning at home and at school?

- ❖ Engaging families in classroom learning
- ❖ Developing family ability to strengthen learning at home
- ❖ Promoting after-school learning

Standard 4—Speaking Up for Every Child

Families are empowered to be advocates for their own and other children, to ensure that students are treated fairly and have access to learning opportunities that will support their success.

Goal 1: Understanding How the School System Works: Do parents know how the local school and district operate and how to raise questions or concerns about school and district programs, policies, and activities? Do they understand their rights and responsibilities under federal and state law as well as local ordinances and policies?

- ❖ Understanding how the school and district operate
- ❖ Understanding rights and responsibilities under federal and state laws
- ❖ Learning about resources
- ❖ Resolving problems and conflicts

Goal 2: Empowering Families to Support Their Own and Other Children's Success in School:

Are parents prepared to monitor students' progress and guide them toward their goals through high school graduation, postsecondary education, and a career?

- ❖ Developing families' capacity to be effective advocates
- ❖ Planning for the future
- ❖ Smoothing transitions
- ❖ Engaging in civic advocacy for student achievement

National Standards, Goals, and Indicators for Family-School Partnerships, continued

Standard 5—Sharing Power

Families and school staff are equal partners in decisions that affect children and families and together inform, influence, and create policies, practices, and programs.

Goal 1: Strengthening the Family's Voice in Shared Decision Making: Are all families full partners in making decisions that affect their children at school and in the community?

- ❖ Having a voice in all decisions that affect children
- ❖ Addressing equity issues
- ❖ Developing parent leadership

Goal 2: Building Families' Social and Political Connections: Do families have a strong, broad-based organization that offers regular opportunities to develop relationships and raise concerns with school leaders, public officials, and business and community leaders?

- ❖ Connecting families to local officials
- ❖ Developing an effective parent involvement organization that represents all families

Standard 6—Collaborating with Community

Families and school staff collaborate with community members to connect students, families, and staff to expanded learning opportunities, community services, and civic participation.

Goal 1: Connecting the School with Community Resources: Do parent and school leaders work closely with community organizations, businesses, and institutions of higher education to strengthen the school, make resources available to students, school staff, and families, and build a family-friendly community?

- ❖ Linking to community resources
- ❖ Organizing support from community partners
- ❖ Turning the school into a hub of community life
- ❖ Partnering with community groups to strengthen families and support student success



National Standards for Family-School Partnerships (National PTA, 2008)

Standard 1 – Welcoming All Families into the School Community

Families are active participants in the life of the school, and feel welcomed, valued, and connected to each other, to school staff, and to what students are learning and doing in class.

Standard 2 – Communicating Effectively

Families and school staff engage in regular, two-way, meaningful communication about student learning.

Standard 3 – Supporting Student Success

Families and school staff continuously collaborate to support students' learning and healthy development both at home and at school, and have regular opportunities to strengthen their knowledge and skills to do so effectively.

Standard 4 – Speaking Up for Every Child

Families are empowered to be advocates for their own and other children, to ensure that students are treated fairly and have access to learning opportunities that will support their success.

Standard 5 – Sharing Power

Families and school staff are equal partners in decisions that affect children and families and together inform, influence, and create policies, practices, and programs.

Standard 6 – Collaborating with the Community

Families and school staff collaborate with community members to connect students, families, and staff to expanded learning opportunities, community services, and civic participation.

Additional SACPIE 7th Standard

Providing Professional Development and Pre-Service Training in Partnering with Families for Administrators and Teachers

Educators have knowledge and skills in reaching out to every family, creating meaningful partnerships focused on student success.

The State Advisory Council on Parent Involvement in Education (SACPIE) was created in 2009. According to legislation, SACPIE's work aligns with National Standards for Family-School Partnerships.

Disclaimer: The views and opinions expressed in this document are those of the State Advisory Council for Parent Involvement in Education (SACPIE) and do not necessarily reflect the official position or policy of the Colorado Department of Education or the Colorado State Board of Education.



Best Practices Framework for Effective Family, School, and Community Partnering

The State Advisory Council for Parent Involvement in Education (SACPIE) is to *review best practices and recommend to policy makers and educators strategies to increase parent involvement in public education, thereby helping to improve the quality of public education and raise the level of students' academic achievement throughout the state* (C.R.S 22-7-301, 2012). A component of that responsibility is to suggest an overall framework built on the research findings and knowledge of effective educational practices. A **classroom, school, district, state agency or community organization** can use this framework in strategically planning for a site or situation's partnering needs while focusing on student achievement. The framework can guide choosing the most relevant programs, actions, and resources in reaching identified goals and evaluating results.

- 1. Align strategies and practices with the *National Standards for Family-School Partnerships* (PTA, 2008) for every student and family.**
 - Ensure inclusion of those with cultural, linguistic, socioeconomic, and learning differences.
- 2. Apply research and laws to practice, focusing on student success.**
 - Do what works, consistently.
- 3. Share knowledge and responsibility.**
 - Use two-way communication.
 - Partner actively and equitably.
- 4. Use data to make decisions.**
 - Be strategic and intentional.
 - Action plan, based on what exists and what is needed.
 - Continuously improve.

Please Note: This draft framework was developed from the following: 2013 SACPIE Executive Committee discussions, review of Colorado legislation, and research findings.

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Family, School, and Community Partnering Research to Practice: Doing What Works!

Coordinating Student Learning, In and Out of School

- Students spend more than 70% of their waking hours outside of school. (Callendar & Hansen, 2004)

Supporting Student Achievement at Home and in the Community

- Specific home, community, and “out-of-school, coordinated” actions which improve student achievement are as follows: (1) frequent family discussions about school; (2) families encouraging their children regarding schoolwork; (3) providing resources to help with schoolwork; (4) supervision of homework, TV viewing, after-school activities. (Marzano, 2003)

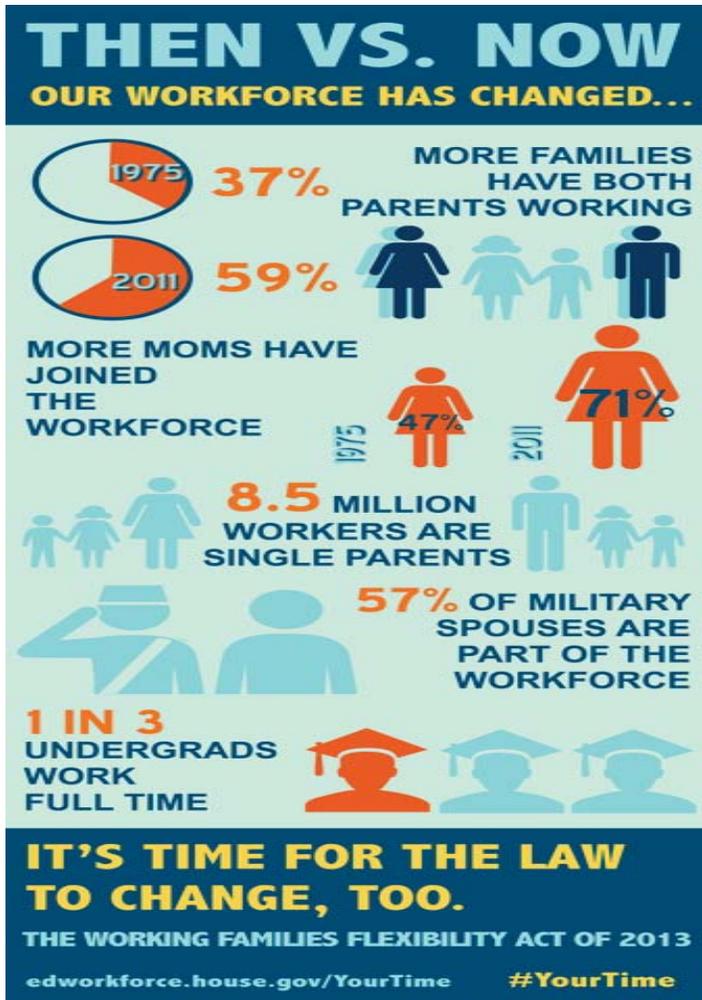
Reaching Out to Every Family for Every Student

- The more parents perceive teachers as valuing their contributions, keeping them informed, and providing them with suggestions, the higher parental engagement in their children’s learning. (Patrikakou & Weissberg, 2000)
- School-initiated, specific parental involvement programs - such as shared reading, homework checking, and teamed two-way communication - are significantly and positively related to academic achievement for students at all levels. (Jeynes, 2012)

Finding Solutions

- Educator and family challenges in partnering together for student success are similar; they need explicit role expectations for sharing responsibility, self-confidence, skills, workable logistics, authentic invitations, and mutually respectful relationships. (Hoover-Dempsey, Whitaker & Ice, 2010)
- When students struggle in school, the most effective interventions are those where families and school personnel work together to implement plans and strategies, utilizing ongoing two-way information exchanges. (Cox, 2005)

A WORKFORCE *IN TRANSITION..*



Workplace Survey

39% of employees are not fully engaged in their jobs

38% of employees are somewhat or very likely to make a concerted effort to find a new job in the coming year

Working Families

Dual-income couples in the workplace have increased to 78%

67% of employees don't feel they have enough time for their children

NATIONAL STUDY OF THE CHANGING WORKFORCE Families & Work Institute, 2013

WHAT THIS MEANS *FOR CHILDREN*

Parents (caregivers) are not aware of the importance and long-term impact of daily interaction

on children's early learning, brain development and future success STRONG FAMILIES: A Key to School Readiness & Success
First Things First, 2010

10% of children (ages, 5 – 11) are in "self care" arrangements

75% of caregivers cannot rely on flexibility at work to meet with teachers and learning specialists

89% of caregivers would increase the time spent volunteering in children's school or organized activities if they had more flexibility at work

WORKPLACE FLEXIBILITY STUDY
Georgetown University, 2011

TOMORROW'S WORKFORCE ENTERS PRESCHOOL TODAY

www.ColoradoEPIC.org



MAKING WORK, "WORK" ...

4 out of 5 working Americans **want more flexibility at work** (time off to address family matters; regular hours working from home; flexible start and end times; move between part-time and full-time; allow overtime pay in the form of time off)

WORKPLACE FLEXIBILITY STUDY
Georgetown University, 2011

The Fair Labor Standards Act (1938) prevents private-sector workers from choosing paid time off as compensation for overtime hours worked, a benefit that public-sector employees have enjoyed for decades

To help workers **better balance family and career**, the **Working Families Flexibility Act of 2013** (H.R. 1406) provides more choice and flexibility in the workplace

Other Considerations

The **tax consequences** of allowing an employee to telecommute as it relates to working in more than one state

Federal Regulations make it **more costly** to allow a non-exempt employee to work a **bi-weekly compressed work week**

PUBLIC POLICY PANEL ON FLEXIBLE WORK ARRANGEMENTS
Georgetown University Law Center, 2011

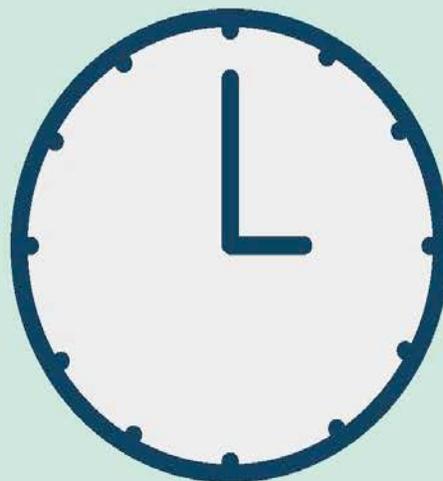
What Would You Do With #YourTime?

The Working Families Flexibility Act of 2013 will allow employers to offer private-sector employees the choice of paid time off in lieu of cash wages for overtime hours worked, helping more Americans find better work-life balance.

Spend more time with your kids?



More than half of working parents find it difficult to balance work and family, and **33 percent of parents** say they are not spending enough time with their children.



Meet the needs of your military family?



55 percent of military personnel are married and 40 percent have two or more children. While service members are deployed, military spouses must singlehandedly manage work and household responsibilities.

Earn your degree?



1 in 3 students work full time while pursuing an undergraduate degree, juggling studying, papers, and exams as they earn a paycheck.

More than 50 million working Americans spend roughly **8 hours a week** providing care for aging relatives, a challenge when balancing the demands of a job.



Enjoy your favorite hobby?

Just **44 percent of working parents** feel they have enough time for personal activities, such as exercising and reading.



Care for a loved one?

Learn more at edworkforce.house.gov/YourTime.

Parent Engagement from Preschool through Grade 3

A Guide for Policymakers

Sheila Smith | Taylor Robbins | Shannon Stagman | Disha Mathur

September 2013



The National Center for Children in Poverty (NCCP) is dedicated to promoting the economic security, health, and well-being of America’s low-income families and children. Using research to inform policy and practice, NCCP seeks to advance family-oriented solutions and the strategic use of public resources at the state and national levels to ensure positive outcomes for the next generation. Founded in 1989 as a division of the Mailman School of Public Health at Columbia University, NCCP is a nonpartisan, public interest research organization.

PARENT ENGAGEMENT FROM PRESCHOOL THROUGH GRADE 3 A Guide for Policymakers

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Parent Engagement from Preschool through Grade 3

A Guide for Policymakers

Sheila Smith | Taylor Robbins | Shannon Stagman | Disha Mathur

September 2013

What's inside?

- Highlights of research on preschool through grade 3 parent engagement
- Promising models
- Opportunities for states to strengthen parent engagement
- Recommendations for policymakers

Introduction

Parent engagement in children's education is increasingly viewed as an essential support to children's learning in early care and education programs and throughout the school years. While there are many definitions of "parent engagement," the term is used here to describe parents' efforts to promote their children's healthy development and learning through activities that can be encouraged by educators in child care, preschool and school settings. (We also use the term "parent involvement" in the same way.) This report makes the case that effective parent engagement during the span from preschool through the early grades is a key contributor to children's positive academic outcomes. During this period, young children acquire foundational competencies – including language, literacy, early math, and social-emotional skills – that strongly affect their capacity for grade-level learning.¹ When young children fall behind in developing these skills, they often face an uphill path for the rest of their school years. For example, children who have weak language skills upon school entry are more likely to struggle while learning to read, and weak reading skills in third grade greatly hamper

children's learning across the curriculum in later grades.² While high-quality teaching in preschool and the early grades is essential, parents can also play a vital role in helping children acquire foundational competencies that fuel school success.

The following sections of this report present research, program, and policy information that can inform state initiatives to strengthen parent engagement during preschool through grade 3.

- ◆ Key findings from research: Studies relating parenting behavior to child's learning and achievement; studies that evaluate interventions; and research on factors affecting parent involvement
- ◆ Promising models designed for culturally diverse, low-income families
- ◆ Exemplary state parent engagement initiatives
- ◆ Opportunities for states to advance parent engagement policies and practices
- ◆ Summary of research
- ◆ Recommendations

Key Findings from Research on Preschool through Grade 3 Parent Engagement

Relationships between parenting during the preschool years and children's learning

Our knowledge about what types of parent involvement are likely to promote children's learning comes in part from studies that show relationships between children's learning and certain types of parent behaviors and parent-child activities that vary across families. These studies focus on one or more types of parent engagement that can be broadly classified as: *home-based parent involvement*, such as playing games with children that offer learning enrichment; *community activities*, such as taking children to the library; and *school-based parent involvement*, such as volunteering in a child care or early grades classroom or attending a parent-teacher conference.

One of the most frequently examined home-based parent engagement activities in the preschool years is parent-child reading. Many studies have shown that the frequency of parents reading to preschool-age children is related to children's language and literacy development, including growth in vocabulary knowledge, comprehension, letter knowledge, and awareness of sounds in words.³ Since these skills are key predictors of children's success in learning to read, parent-child reading can play an important role in promoting children's school success.⁴ In addition to the frequency of parent-child reading, parents' style of reading makes a difference; children benefit most when parents show warmth, use open-ended questions and explanations, and link the book to the child's experience.⁵

Several features of parent conversation with children during everyday routines and activities have also been linked to children's development. The amount of conversation young children experience from the toddler through preschool years predicts their language development.⁶ Parents' conversational style, particularly the use of open-ended questions and elaborations on what the child says during conversation, is related to preschoolers' language and literacy skills.⁷ In addition, the amount of parent talk about numbers, beginning when children are toddlers, predicts preschoolers' number knowledge.⁸

Parents' engagement in a variety of other home and community activities has also been linked to young children's learning. Growth in children's language and literacy skills is related to broad measures of community-based parent involvement that include visits to the library or bookstore and measures of home-based parent involvement that include playing alphabet games, telling stories, and helping children with art activities.⁹ In one study, a broad measure of home-based parent involvement that included reading to children, asking about preschool, and providing space for educational activities, predicted Head Start children's learning behaviors (attention, persistence, and motivation), vocabulary skills, and positive behavior.¹⁰

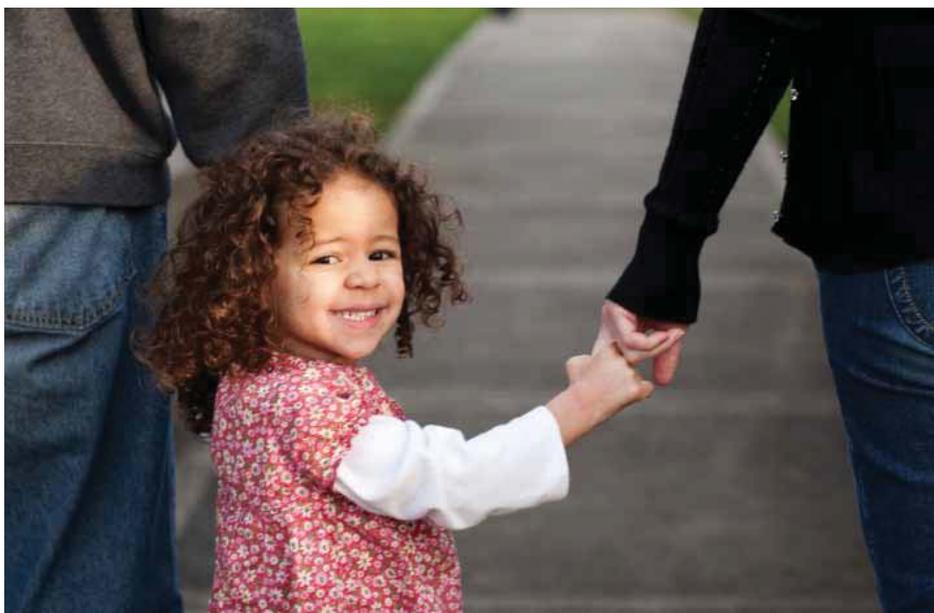
The frequency of parent-child activities that provide experience with math predicts children's math knowledge and skills.¹¹ Examples of these activities are board games, mazes, and connect the dots. Evidence about the value of parent-child play with board games is reinforced by experimental studies in which children's experience playing board games with researchers led to large gains in math skills.¹² Children's acquisition of more advanced math knowledge is related to parent-child activities that go beyond counting, such as comparing amounts of items and adding or subtracting objects.¹³

Research shows that parent warmth and responsiveness to children's interests and needs are key dimensions of parent involvement that promote children's learning. Parent praise, encouragement, and responsiveness observed in parent-child book reading have been linked to children's engagement in reading and their efforts to independently read a book.¹⁴ Other researchers have found that parent nurturance towards preschoolers across a variety of activities makes a unique contribution to children's growth in reading skills in the early grades, over and above the learning stimulation found in the home.¹⁵ One way that parent nurturance may promote learning is by helping children acquire self-regulation skills that enable children to manage their emotions and behavior. In one study, children whose mothers

showed greater warmth in the preschool years were found to have stronger self-regulation skills at ages eight and nine.¹⁶ Numerous studies show that self-regulation skills help children learn in school.¹⁷

Relationships between parenting during the early grades and children's learning

Results of research on variation in parent involvement in kindergarten through third grade show some similarity to patterns found in studies focused on the preschool years. During the early grades there is evidence that broad measures of parent-child literacy activities that include the frequency of parent-child reading as well as visits to the library and number of books in the home, are related to children's literacy and oral language skills.¹⁸ Parents' nurturing behavior in parent-child reading during kindergarten and parents' use of talk relating a book to topics beyond the immediate story were related in one study to children's more frequent independent reading of challenging books in second grade; in turn, children who engaged in higher-level reading had stronger reading achievement in third grade.¹⁹ A supportive home learning environment where parents help children practice what they learn at school, talk about the importance of school, and provide educational materials and learning opportunities has been linked to both academic and social competencies among kindergarten children.²⁰



There is also evidence that children of parents who increase their home-based and out-of-home activities between prekindergarten and first grade show stronger math skills in first grade.²¹ Home-based parent involvement linked to math achievement includes teaching children about numbers, playing with blocks and puzzles, and counting. Examples of out-of-home activities are visits to the library, park, and sports events.

During the early elementary grades, parents' involvement in activities at school has also been found to predict literacy and math skills as well as teachers' report of children's academic progress.²² Broad measures of school-based parent involvement that predict children's school achievement include participation in parent-teacher conferences, classroom visits, and school social events.

Parental warmth and responsiveness is also important for children's learning in the early grades. As noted earlier, warmth during parent-child reading in kindergarten is associated with children's later engagement with challenging books, a finding similar to one linking parent warmth to preschoolers' efforts to read independently.²³ There is also evidence that parents' warmth helps early elementary children manage positive emotions, and for boys, leads to more peer acceptance, while parents' responsiveness to distress is associated with children's empathy and positive social behavior.²⁴ These child outcomes are likely to promote children's positive relationships with teachers and peers, which, in turn, are associated with higher school achievement.²⁵ Also, parents' lack of warmth and responsiveness is associated with children's behavior problems, which increase children's risk of academic difficulties.²⁶

What types of parent involvement show the strongest relationship to child outcomes?

While research has identified relationships between children's learning and parent involvement based in the home, community, and preschool or school setting, there are inconsistencies across studies. For example, two studies found associations between home-based but not school-based parent involvement and positive child outcomes,²⁷ while another finds a link between school-based involvement and children's achievement but no relationships to home-based activities.²⁸ The use of different and typically broad measures of parent involvement across studies may contribute to inconsistent findings. Some researchers point to the unique value of home-based parent involvement that provides direct learning experiences in key domains, such as language, reading, and math, and suggest that the most beneficial school-based activities are ones that help parents learn about ways to promote children's learning in these areas.²⁹ In the intervention studies discussed next, and also in "Promising Models," parents typically receive training to increase both the frequency and quality of home learning experiences.

One strength of correlational studies of parent involvement is that they investigate links between positive child outcomes and different types of parent involvement that naturally occur in some families. The occurrence of certain types of parent involvement linked to benefits for children suggests potentially achievable goals for interventions that target families where parent involvement is weak. A limitation of these studies is that they produce evidence of associations between parent involvement and child outcomes, but cannot confirm cause and effect relationships.³⁰ Findings from intervention studies discussed in this report provide stronger evidence of causal relationships, and can help reinforce evidence from correlational studies. Together, the two bodies of research provide a clearer picture of how different types of parent involvement contribute to children's learning and development.

Research on parent engagement interventions

Studies of preschool parent-child reading interventions show positive effects on children's oral language skills, especially when parents are trained to encourage their child's conversation about the book during reading. In a review of shared book-reading interventions, researchers found that parents could be trained to use effective book-reading strategies, such as open-ended questions, relating the book to the child's experiences, and expanding on the child's comments.³¹ Parents were trained through brief in-person or video training sessions. Another review that focused on book-reading interventions in which parents were instructed to read the same book several times over a few days found that similar features of book reading played a role in children's improved vocabulary and comprehension skills.³²

One analysis of parent-child reading interventions shows weaker effects for children age four and five compared with children age two and three, and for children from low-income families.³³ A recent study of a bilingual family literacy intervention also shows weaker effects for low-income children.³⁴ These findings suggest that low-income parents may need more extensive training to effectively use interactive reading methods that are tailored to their children's language skills.³⁵ The potential benefits of more intensive training for parents of low-income children is suggested by the gains in language skills made by low-income children who participated in read-aloud interventions conducted by trained child care providers and teachers.³⁶

A few studies have looked at interventions that encourage parents to engage in extended, language-rich conversations with their young children. In these interventions, parents are trained to talk with children about past experiences and provide children with explanations, narratives about events, and questions that encourage children's use of language. A recent review of these studies found that these interventions promote the language skills of preschoolers and kindergarteners, even among children whose mothers have limited education.³⁷ In one study that trained parents of preschoolers in Head Start to use these methods, children showed stronger story

comprehension skills than children of parents trained in interactive reading; benefits were found for white, black, and Hispanic children as well as for children whose families used a language other than English at home. The researchers conclude that training parents to engage in rich conversation with children may be an effective alternative to interactive book reading, especially for parents who are more accustomed to storytelling and conversation with their young children.³⁸

Parent-child literacy interventions for children in kindergarten through third grade include studies that investigate the effects of training parents to read to children, listen to children read, and tutor children in specific skills. A recent review of these studies found that parent reading to children did not lead to gains in children's reading skills.³⁹ However, interventions in which parents were trained to tutor children in literacy skills or to listen and provide feedback when children read to them did promote early reading skills. The researchers note that parent-child reading in the early grades should still be considered a valuable activity in light of its potential to indirectly support reading achievement by building oral language skills, a predictor for reading comprehension, and encouraging children's interest in reading.

Research on parent engagement has also examined parents' involvement in elementary school children's homework. A recent analysis of this research, which includes intervention studies, suggests that elementary school children's achievement in math and reading is related to parent homework assistance when this help consists of setting guidelines about homework, such as when and where it should be completed, and providing instruction. The authors suggest that children in elementary school, who are new to the demands of homework, may benefit from learning work habits and self-management through this type of parent involvement.⁴⁰

Factors influencing parent engagement

While research suggests that disadvantaged children benefit the most from efforts to increase parent involvement in their education, overall levels of home-based and school-based parent involvement are lower among parents with less education and lower incomes.⁴¹ Parent involvement tends to decrease during the transition to kindergarten, and over the early grades period.⁴² However, a substantial number of families show increases in parent involvement during this period.⁴³ One trigger to increased parent involvement appears to be learning difficulties experienced by a child. In a study of Mexican-American families, most parents of kindergarten children with weak skills responded with increased involvement in the school (e.g., participation in parent-child conferences, volunteering in the classroom).⁴⁴ However, parents whose children had bilingual teachers between kindergarten and third grade showed greater increases than those whose children had teachers who were not fluent in Spanish, suggesting the benefits of reducing language barriers experienced by parents.⁴⁵

Research is beginning to identify other school-related factors that may affect parent involvement. Practices supporting children and parents during the transition from preschool to kindergarten promote both increased learning in kindergarten and higher levels of parent involvement.⁴⁶ In one study, children in preschool through first grade whose teachers engaged in more outreach to parents, through invitations to workshops and classroom volunteering, showed greater learning gains, suggesting that outreach may have encouraged greater parent involvement in children's learning.⁴⁷ However, there is also evidence that the typical types of outreach used by teachers are less helpful to minority children, most likely due to language barriers and less comfort in interacting with teachers whose backgrounds may be different from parents.⁴⁸ Higher-quality teacher-parent relationships are also linked to higher levels of parent involvement in the early grades.⁴⁹ This finding suggests the importance of helping teachers engage in positive, supportive interactions with parents. Several promising models, discussed next, demonstrate strategies for engaging families that need extra support.

Promising Models that Target Culturally Diverse, Low-income Families

Several parent-involvement interventions have been designed to serve diverse groups of low-income children from preschool through grade three. Most of these interventions have employed special strategies to engage parents. The results from evaluations of these interventions and features of their implementation suggest lessons for the design of effective parent involvement programs.

The Companion Curriculum

One such study found positive results for an intervention that served African-American parents and their children in Head Start programs.⁵⁰ The intervention, **The Companion Curriculum** (TCC), provided monthly teacher-led workshops in which parents observed a teacher demonstration of early learning activities and then practiced the activities with their children. Activities included play and conversation to promote children's social-competence; story-telling and reading to promote language skills; and math experiences such as counting, sorting, and adding. Parents were encouraged to bring other children and family members to the workshops, and participants received dinner and transportation assistance. Even with these supports and parent ratings showing high satisfaction with the workshops, only 40 percent of parents attended two or more meetings. The project did, however, distribute curriculum resources to parents who did not attend the workshops in order to encourage home-based parent-child activities in all families. Parents in the intervention group reported increases in their reading to children while parents in the comparison group reported declines in parent-child reading over the year. Children of parents in the intervention group were found to have stronger vocabulary knowledge and social-emotional skills compared to non-intervention children.⁵¹

Family Mathematics Curriculum

In another study, the **Family Mathematics Curriculum** was implemented first with a group of African-American Head Start families and again with a group of primarily Latino Head Start families, including about 40 percent who spoke Spanish at home.⁵² Intervention parents were invited to attend eight Saturday classes with their child over a four-month period. The parent-child pairs sat at tables and were given materials for a math activity. After teachers demonstrated teaching the child the activity, the parents tried out the activity with their child as teachers provided guidance. For example, the teachers helped parents learn to support their child's completion of tasks at a lower level before moving to more advanced activities. In both groups, teachers had the same ethnic/racial background as parents. At the end of class, parents were encouraged to take out math materials kits from the lending library to use at home; parents borrowed an average of 11 math kits and reported regular use of them between classes.

Attendance at the classes was high, with absences averaging fewer than 1.5 sessions. The researchers cite several features of the intervention that may have contributed to high attendance and engagement in math activities at home. A teacher liaison was assigned to contact participating parents before each class to identify barriers to their attendance. The program addressed barriers by providing child care at the class, arranging carpools to help with transportation, and encouraging mothers to send another family member to the class if she could not attend. The provision of math kits also encouraged home-based parent-child activities; parents reported that many of these activities were initiated by children who enjoyed them and asked to play "math games." Among both African-American and Latino families, children in the intervention group made greater gains across all targeted mathematics skills, including counting, number reasoning, and geometric knowledge. Little growth in these areas was seen among children who were not part of the intervention.

Getting Ready Intervention

The **Getting Ready Intervention** was tested with Head Start parents and children, including about 20 percent who were not English speakers.⁵³ This model aimed to help parents increase their warm, sensitive engagement with children; become aware of their child's strengths; identify natural learning opportunities in the home; understand early development; and gain skills in using positive, responsive strategies for supporting children's learning. Teachers conducted five home visits annually over two years and used supportive discussion, child observation, and modeling to promote parents' engagement with children. Teachers were also trained to use these strategies in interactions with parents at school. Parents in a control group also received home visits, but were not trained in these strategies. Results of the evaluation showed that after two years, children in the intervention group were rated by teachers as showing stronger attachment to adults and more assertiveness and self-direction. Intervention children were also rated as showing less anxiety and withdrawal compared to children in the non-intervention group. A second study of the **Getting Ready Intervention** also found that intervention children had stronger language skills compared to non-participating children.⁵⁴



Abriendo Puertos/Opening Doors

Abriendo Puertos/Opening Doors is a program designed for Latino parents of children birth to age 5 and delivered in 10 sessions by trained community educators in school and community settings.⁵⁵ The curriculum, which is available in English and Spanish, covers a range of topics that includes not only strategies parents can use to promote their children's language, social-emotional, and literacy skills, but also parents' wellness, and parent problem-solving and advocacy skills that can help them obtain important supports for their children and family. Since its development in 2007, **Abriendo Puertos/Opening Doors** has been implemented in 31 states. Sessions provide a welcoming environment with opportunities for parents to relate information about effective parenting to their own lives and enjoy discussion with other parents and the facilitator.

A survey study of 623 participants reported large gains in parent knowledge and practices across areas addressed by the model.⁵⁶ For example, parents showed significant gains in their understanding of ways they could promote their children's ability to express and regulate their feelings and support their language and literacy skills. The results also showed a marked increase in the percentage of parents who reported taking their children to the library once a week, parents' knowledge about their rights regarding involvement in their child's education, and parents' confidence about their ability to support their child's positive behavior and learning. A rigorous evaluation that includes child outcome measures is currently in progress and will provide more information about this promising model in 2014.

Incredible Years Parent Program

The **Incredible Years Parent Program (IYPP)**, designed to promote children's social-emotional competencies and reduce challenging behaviors that interfere with learning, is one of the few parent programs that has been evaluated as a prevention model in elementary school settings.⁵⁷ The IYPP has been tested with kindergarten and first-grade students in elementary school classrooms using the Incredible Years Dinosaur Classroom intervention, also designed to promote children's social-emotional skills. In this demonstration, parents of children identified as being at mild to moderate risk for behavior problems attended parent sessions focused on parenting skills to help manage children's challenging behavior and foster their social-emotional, communication, and problem-solving skills. The program also provided guidance to parents on strategies for promoting children's language and reading skills and collaborating with teachers to support children's success in school.

During the interactive sessions, trained facilitators led discussion and role-plays. Parents also watched videos showing culturally diverse parents engaging in activities that promote children's social and academic competence. Home assignments encouraged practice of new activities and parenting strategies. Twenty-six percent of the families did not speak English as their first language and interpreters helped these families fully participate in the training sessions. Over the two-year period from kindergarten through first grade, 12 to 14 weekly sessions were held in the schools. Transportation, meals, and child care were provided to help encourage parent attendance.



Over the two years, 24 percent of intervention group parents attended no sessions and 43 percent attended more than half the sessions. Compared to non-intervention and classroom intervention-only families, parents in the combined (parenting plus classroom) intervention were more emotionally supportive of their children; these parents also reported that children had fewer behavior problems and were better able to manage their emotions and behavior. Teachers also reported that parents in the combined intervention group, compared to the other groups, were more involved in their children's education. While the study did not directly test the benefits of this program in the absence of a simultaneous classroom intervention, the positive effects found for the combined intervention that included parent sessions suggest the value of the parenting program as a preventive intervention for the early grades.

Exemplary State Initiatives

Many states are beginning to develop strong parent engagement policies that target early care and education settings and the early grades. The following examples suggest a range of promising strategies that can benefit large numbers of children and their families.

Kansas Parent Information Resource Center and Prekindergarten Program

Within the state's Department of Education (DOE), Kansas' Parent Information Resource Center (KPIRC) works in a variety of ways to promote parent engagement in Kansas schools and early care and education programs.⁵⁸ Formerly funded by the U.S. Department of Education, KPIRC continues to operate with funding from the Kansas DOE. In addition to an annual parent engagement conference for parents and professionals, KPIRC provides technical assistance to schools on effective parent engagement and resources to higher education programs to help them prepare future teachers to use effective parent engagement methods. Currently, KPIRC is providing training to educators and leadership teams in the state's lowest-performing schools. KPIRC helps these schools develop family engagement action plans based on state performance indicators which include professional development for teachers and regular communication with parents about what they can do at home to support their children's learning.

KPIRC also develops resources to help parents understand their role in promoting young children's learning and development. This work includes KPIRC's participation in a workgroup that developed the Social Emotional Character Development (SECD) Standards for Kansas, which have been endorsed by the Kansas DOE. KPIRC provided training on the SECD standards to educators, emphasizing the importance of engaging families in promoting children's social-emotional learning, and produced a booklet for parents, *Social-emotional and Character Development: What Families Need to Know*. Other KPIRC resources include booklets for families of young children in both Spanish and English on cognitive development

and literacy. The booklets, made available on the KPIRC website, are used as resources for parents in preschool and kindergarten classrooms.

Another KPIRC activity is aiding in the redesign of the Kansas DOE's accreditation system for school districts, which includes performance criteria related to family engagement. Under this system, school districts will be required to establish goals for implementing family engagement activities that promote students' learning, train educators on research-based family engagement strategies that help parents promote their children's learning at home, develop methods for monitoring parent-involvement policies of each school, and prepare an annual evaluation report on family engagement activities. The DOE has begun piloting the new accreditation standards, which will replace the current system in 2015-16.

Another way Kansas supports parent engagement is through its prekindergarten program. All Kansas prekindergarten programs must document practices they will use to engage parents in their children's learning. Programs must include a family service worker and make the Parents as Teachers home visitor program for children age three to five available for families served by the prekindergarten program. In addition, programs must administer a survey of home practices to families that includes questions about parent-child activities (e.g., conversation, shared reading, going to the library) and the parent-child relationship.⁵⁹

Iowa's Every Child Reads 3-5

Parent engagement is a critical component of Iowa's *Every Child Reads 3-5*, an initiative of the Iowa DOE that promotes young children's reading readiness.⁶⁰ This initiative is part of the state-wide *Every Child Reads*, which provides school and community-based supports for children birth to grade twelve and their families. In addition to a professional development curriculum to enhance the practices of early care and education providers, the initiative developed a set of seven training modules that early care and education



programs can use in sessions with parents to increase their involvement in activities that promote reading readiness.

The set of parent training modules in *Every Child Reads: Three to Five Years* provides six 90 minute to two hour sessions that can be delivered to parents by early childhood teachers and other early education professionals. Focusing on everyday family routines, the modules teach parents evidence-based strategies for supporting children’s language skills through conversation, storytelling, and book reading. For example, parents learn that they can teach children new words each day by offering child-friendly definitions or demonstrating the meaning of words. Module titles include “Talking with your child,” “Asking questions,” “Responding to words your child is saying: Teaching new words,” and “Retelling Personal Stories.” The modules are highly interactive, engaging parents

in role-play and practice using the strategies. Each module is fully scripted, a feature that allows individuals with limited experience in parent education to deliver high-quality content with engaging activities.

The parent involvement modules, available on the Iowa DOE website, are currently used by teachers and trainers in Head Start programs, Child Care Resource and Referral Agencies, and Area Education Agencies. In addition, the Iowa DOE hopes to incorporate use of the modules in its new *Collaboration for Iowa’s Kids* initiative, which will use *Response to Intervention* (RIT) practices, beginning in preschool, to ensure that all children are reading by third grade. In RIT, children showing delays in their pre-reading and reading skills will be provided with additional supports, which may include guidance to parents about engaging in home-based learning activities with their children.

Nevada's Office of Parent Involvement and Family Engagement

The Office of Parent Involvement and Family Engagement (OPIFE) in Nevada's Department of Education offers a wide range of supports and resources to promote parents' involvement in their children's education.⁶¹ Created in 2011 through state legislation (AB 224), the OPIFE and the Department's Advisory Council on Parental Involvement are working to create a database of parent engagement resources for schools that reflect current research on effective parent involvement.⁶² The OPIFE will also oversee expanded training for teachers to help them implement high quality parent involvement strategies. Currently, the OPIFE provides toolkits and tip sheets to parents of children in kindergarten and the early grades that promote parents' active support of their children's learning at home and at school. These resources are offered through the state's website and promoted in school districts by administrators and parent-teacher associations. The OPIFE also holds a statewide parent involvement summit every other year that is open to parents, teachers, school administrators, elected officials and community members. The last summit, *Connecting the Dots: Family Engagement and Student Achievement*, was held in May 2012 and featured workshops on preparing for the preschool to kindergarten transition and parent involvement to improve children's learning.

The same legislation that created OPIFE, also mandates that the state's Commission on Professional Standards in Education set requirements in teacher training programs for coursework on family engagement. The OPIEF has worked with the state's higher education system and regional professional development programs to develop this coursework. The state's regional professional development programs will also expand in-service teacher training on parent engagement in accordance with AB 224.

One of these programs, the Northwestern Regional Professional Development Program (RPDP), operates Nevada's Parent University, which offers free classes to parents, promoted through schools. Classes address

such topics as building preschoolers' language skills and promoting children's reading comprehension and early math skills through home-based learning activities. Parent classes attracted 2,100 parents in 2012.

Colorado's Parent Engagement Legislation

Through the passage of key legislation in recent years, Colorado has developed strong state leadership in support of parent engagement. In 2009, legislation established the State Advisory Council for Parent Involvement in Education (SACPIE).⁶³ This council reviews best practices and recommends strategies to educators and policymakers for incorporating parent involvement in public education. SACPIE's members include parents; school and district accountability committees; non-profit organizations that assist underserved families; statewide organizations serving parents, teachers, and school counselors; and representatives from the Colorado Department of Education. The role of the SACPIE was recently expanded with passage of "Increasing Parent Engagement In Public Schools," in May 2013.⁶⁴ This law calls for the council to work with the State Department of Education to develop new training for school accountability committees and school personnel on strategies for increasing parent engagement and using best practices. The law also requires the council to develop indicators of effective parent engagement for schools that will be used to monitor progress towards increased levels of engagement. The council will prepare an annual report on parent engagement data collected from school districts in Colorado.

In related legislation passed in 2012, the *Colorado READ Act*, each school must work closely with parents of children in kindergarten through third grade to provide needed supports for children's reading proficiency by the end of third grade.⁶⁵ For children identified as having delays in reading achievement, a plan of supports and interventions is developed with school personnel and parents. As part of each plan, parents will be encouraged to provide home-based supports for the child's learning that can supplement school interventions.

Opportunities for States to Advance Preschool through Grade 3 Parent Engagement Policies and Practices

A range of policies and programs, described next, provide states with opportunities to strengthen the quality of parent engagement focused on children's learning from preschool through grade three. Although opportunities to enhance parent engagement are not conveniently packaged in a single state or federal initiative, significant opportunities exist, and can be harnessed to advance the goals for children's school success sought by states' Early Childhood Advisory Councils, Race to the Top projects, and other state-level early care and education policy efforts.⁶⁶

Quality Rating Improvement Systems

Currently, 38 states have statewide Quality Rating Improvement Systems (QRISs) that have established standards for assigning quality ratings to early care and education programs.⁶⁷ Although many states' QRIS have standards concerning parent involvement, few states' QRIS include standards that describe explicit requirements for programs to help parents learn about ways they can promote their children's learning.⁶⁹ An exception is Rhode Island's BrightStars, which requires center-based programs to give parents guidance about home-based learning activities for children, beginning at the next-to-lowest quality level. Similarly, Colorado's Qualistar awards points to programs that provide parents with information about promoting their children's learning and development, and requires the use of a family questionnaire that asks parents about children's activities and behavior at home.

QRIS standards have the potential to influence both the practices programs establish to engage parents and the professional development teachers and directors receive to meet QRIS parent engagement standards. Moreover, while many QRIS include Head Start and prekindergarten programs, a primary target is states' child care programs, which often lack strong parent engagement practices. For these reasons, QRIS standards offer an important opportunity to define and encourage active efforts on the part of early care and education programs to help parents support their

children's learning in key areas such as language and social-emotional development.

State Head Start Collaboration Offices

State Head Start Collaboration offices are well positioned to develop agreements and policies that strengthen family engagement in Head Start and other early care and education programs, and during the transition to kindergarten.⁶⁸ Head Start performance standards concerning family engagement can be used as a model for other early care and education programs and for school districts. These standards include requirements that programs support parents' ability to promote their child's learning and development through home visits, family literacy initiatives, and other activities; address family needs through referrals and community partnerships; and promote parent involvement during the transition to school.⁶⁹ The Head Start Parent, Family and Community Engagement Framework describes outcomes for families, related to these standards, that can promote parents' capacity to support their child's learning.⁷⁰ These include family financial security, parent health and educational advancement, and connections to a supportive network of peers and mentors. Head Start Collaboration offices, charged with collaborative policy planning to strengthen supports for low-income young children and families through state and local partnerships, can promote this more expansive approach to family engagement.

Early Childhood State Advisory Councils

Several states have used their Early Childhood State Advisory Councils, authorized by the Improving Head Start Readiness Act of 2007, and funded between 2010 and 2013 by the American Recovery and Reinvestment Act (ARRA), to address parent engagement. A recent report on activities of the councils highlights states that have begun work on a parent education credential (New York), assessed the use of evidence-based parent engagement practices in the state (Maine); developed and disseminated parent education materials

to parents of preschool and kindergarten children (Pennsylvania and Nebraska), and identified effective parent engagement strategies (Kentucky).⁷¹ Although ARRA funding for the councils is ending, future state, federal or private support could help them build on their accomplishments. Given the membership of the councils, which includes representatives from the child care, Head Start, and education sectors, these entities provide unique opportunities for enhancing and aligning parent engagement across the preschool to early grades period.

State-funded Prekindergarten Programs

State-funded prekindergarten programs, now operating in 41 states, vary in their requirements concerning parent engagement. In its 2010 policy brief, the Pew Center on the States reported that only about half of state-funded prekindergarten programs require parent engagement activities.⁷² In examples from states that prioritize parent engagement in their prekindergarten programs, the report cites: 1) requirements that programs offer a range of parent engagement opportunities, including parent education that is regularly documented in reports to the state (Kentucky); 2) a state's provision of financial incentives for parent outreach and activities, such as parenting classes, lending libraries, and prekindergarten-to-school

transition plans (Wisconsin); and 3) the inclusion of competencies related to parent engagement in preschool teacher certification requirements (Kentucky and North Carolina).

Title I Parent Involvement provisions

Under the *No Child Left Behind Act*, school districts with a high percentage of low-income students receive Title I funds to improve education for economically disadvantaged children.⁷³ School districts receiving more than \$500,000 in Title I Funds must spend a minimum of one percent of funds for parent involvement activities and comply with several parent engagement provisions. These include requirements that schools offer assistance to parents to help them understand state learning standards and assessment practices, and provide materials and training to increase parent involvement focused on improving children's achievement. Districts must also provide training to teachers, principals, and other staff on parent outreach and engagement strategies. Another provision calls for states to align these parent involvement activities with those of other programs, including Head Start and family literacy programs. Funds may be used to provide child care and transportation that enable parents to participate in parent training or other parent involvement activities.



Recent guidance from the U.S. Department of Education encourages the use of Title I funds for preschool parent engagement activities. The activities cited in this guidance include linkages with community supports and family literacy services; training and supports that enable parents to reinforce children's cognitive and social-emotional skills during the summer to help prevent the loss of these skills; and transition to kindergarten supports for families in Head Start and child care settings.⁷⁴

Summary and Recommendations

Summary of key research findings

In the preschool period

- ◆ The frequency of parent-child reading and conversation are related to children's early literacy and language skills; benefits are greatest when parents use a warm style of interaction and use explanations and questions that encourage children to participate in conversation.
- ◆ Measures that reflect parents' engagement in several home- and community-based activities, such as playing alphabet games, telling stories, doing art projects, and visiting the library, are linked to preschoolers' language, literacy, social, and learning skills.
- ◆ Parent-child activities providing experience with math, such as board games, counting, and comparing amounts of items, are related to preschoolers' math skills; activities that go beyond counting, such as adding items, may help children acquire more advanced math skills.
- ◆ Parents' nurturing, responsive behavior across a variety of activities contributes to children's engagement in learning and school achievement.

In the early grades

- ◆ Home-based activities and a supportive home learning environment, including parent-child reading, talk about the importance of school, and the provision of learning materials, are related to children's literacy, oral language, and social skills.
- ◆ An increase in parents' home- and community-based activities with children, such as play with numbers and puzzles as well as visits to the library, park, and sports events, is related to children's math achievement.
- ◆ Parents' school-based involvement, including participation in parent-teacher conferences and school events, is linked to children's school performance.
- ◆ Parents' warmth and responsiveness predict children's motivation to read challenging books, social skills, and peer acceptance (for boys), as well as a lower incidence of behavior problems.

Evidence from studies of interventions

- ◆ Preschool parent-child reading interventions lead to parents' increased use of effective reading strategies, such as asking open-ended questions and expanding on children's comments, as well as benefits for children's oral language skills. Benefits may be weaker for older preschoolers' (age four and five), low-income children, and children of parents whose first language is not English, suggesting the need for more intensive parent training in these groups.
- ◆ Interventions during the preschool and kindergarten years that train culturally diverse parents to have rich conversations with children have been found to support children's language skills, even when parents have limited education or speak a language other than English at home.
- ◆ In the early grades, interventions that train parents to listen to children read and provide feedback, and to tutor children in literacy skills have been found to promote children's reading ability.
- ◆ Parent training on homework assistance that emphasizes setting guidelines about when and where to complete homework, and offering instruction, has been shown to promote reading and math achievement in elementary school.
- ◆ Several interventions designed for culturally diverse low-income families have shown promising results:
 - **The Companion Curriculum** led to increases in parent-child reading, and preschoolers' oral language and social skills in low-income African-American families.
 - **The Family Mathematics Curriculum** promoted low-income African-American and Latino Head Start families' use of math activities at home and stronger math skills among participating preschoolers. This program achieved unusually high parent attendance by assigning a teacher to contact parents before each session to inquire about any barriers to participation, and working to address these barriers.
 - **The Getting Ready Intervention**, which used home visits to support Head Start parents'

involvement in children's learning at home and warm, responsive parenting, led to higher quality parent-child relationships and stronger language skills in intervention children.

- **Abriendo Puertos/Opening Doors**, designed to meet the needs of Latino families, helped parents increase their knowledge about how to support preschoolers' language, literacy, and social-emotional skills.
- **The Incredible Years Parent Program**, led to increased parent involvement in children's education, more positive parenting, and stronger social-emotional skills among intervention preschoolers and kindergarten children in a diverse group of low-income families.

What we know about factors affecting parent engagement

- ◆ Although there is considerable variation within different groups of families, parents with less education, lower incomes, and difficulties communicating with teachers due to language barriers tend to show lower levels of parent engagement in children's education.
- ◆ The transition from preschool to the early grades is a time when levels of parent involvement tend to drop for many families, although a substantial number of parents increase their involvement during this period; strong outreach from teachers to parents during this period can promote higher levels of parent engagement.
- ◆ Parents' awareness that children are struggling in school is one trigger for increased involvement.
- ◆ Parents who experience positive relationships with their child's teachers, and parents who can communicate with teachers in the families' first language are likely to show more school-based parent involvement.

Recommendations

Use multiple, aligned state-level strategies to promote parent engagement in preschool through grade 3

- ◆ State policymakers should consider a range of opportunities for promoting parent engagement in preschool through grade three. Key opportunities include:
 - designing **QRIS and State Prekindergarten Program standards** that explicitly require early care and education programs to help parents become better equipped to promote their children's learning in key domains and social-emotional growth;
 - promoting the use of Head Start family engagement practices and policies in the state's child care and prekindergarten programs through activities of the **Head Start Collaboration Office**;
 - helping school districts develop strategies for effectively using **Title 1 funds** to promote parent engagement through training of preschool and early grades teachers and school staff and by offering supports, such as transportation and child care, to help parents participate in parent engagement activities;
 - creating a permanent **State Office of Parent Engagement** that develops and identifies research-based parent engagement resources, such as professional development and parent education models; supports the use of these resources in child care, Head Start, and prekindergarten programs and in school districts; provides guidance on professional development and training (both pre-service and in-service) for early care and education professionals; and helps establish policies, such as standards and incentives, for the use of effective parent engagement practices by early care and education programs and schools.
- ◆ State policymakers should use their **Early Childhood Advisory Council** or other cross-sector state policy entity, to align parent engagement strategies across programs and ages. Examples of alignment are:
 - setting uniformly strong standards for parent engagement across different early childhood programs, such as prekindergarten and child care;
 - providing guidance and resources to promote increased parent engagement outreach and support during the transition from preschool to kindergarten; and

- supporting the use of several consistent practices, such as parent education focused on building a strong parent-child relationship and lending libraries with send-home guidance about read-aloud strategies, across this transition to help parents experience continuity in parent engagement.

Promote the most effective types of parent engagement in preschool through grade 3

- ◆ States should promote parent engagement that helps parents provide *effective supports for children's learning at home and in the community*. These supports include:
 - Interactive parent-child reading and language-rich conversation (especially for preschool and kindergarten children)
 - Opportunities for children to read to parents and receive feedback (early grades)
 - Math experiences such as play with board games and puzzles (preschool and kindergarten)
 - Guidance about homework routines (early grades)
 - Visits to libraries, sports events, parks, and other community settings that provide learning experiences (preschoolers and early grades)
 - Warm, responsive parenting (preschool and early grades)
- ◆ States should promote parent engagement in program- and school-based activities that help parents learn about how to promote their child's school success. Examples of activities are:
 - Parent-child conferences that provide individualized guidance to parents about activities they can do at home with their child to promote learning in key areas such as language and social-emotional development, reading and math

- Program- and school-based parent sessions or home visits that provide modeling of effective-home-based activities and a chance for parents to practice activities

Promote the use of effective strategies for engaging families

- ◆ States should use incentives, standards, and guidance to encourage early care and education programs and schools to implement varied strategies to engage families, especially parents who face significant barriers. Examples include:
 - providing interpreters and parent involvement materials in parents' home language to reduce language barriers;
 - providing different forms of outreach and delivery of materials to parents who cannot attend program- and school-based sessions focused on effective ways parents can promote children's learning at home (e.g., phone-calls and home visits, sending home books or learning materials with notes about how to use them with children);
 - providing frequent opportunities for parents to experience positive, supportive interactions with teachers and other staff; and
 - establishing partnerships with community resources that can help meet important family needs, such as parent mental health or family financial security.
- ◆ States that require programs and schools to report on parent engagement activities should require information about participation by families who experience greater barriers, such as low-income and non-English speaking parents, along with information about efforts to reduce these barriers.

Conclusion

Effective parent engagement, combined with excellent learning supports in early care and education programs and school, offer young children the best chance of achieving their full potential. Children in families experiencing challenges associated with poverty or minority status can greatly benefit from policies that help parents support their children's

social-emotional growth and learning in key domains. Given the evidence that parent involvement holds significant benefits for children, efforts to promote effective parent engagement should be viewed as an indispensable part of state policies that promote children's school readiness and academic success.

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