Early learning and beyond: Connecting early childhood with K–12 so every student succeeds

Webinar
May 12, 2021

Welcome! We will begin shortly.

If you can see the slide and hear the music, you are all set.

All attendees are muted upon entry. Please use the chat feature for comments and questions during the webinar.
Thank you for joining us

The webinar will be recorded and available.

All webinar registrants will receive a follow-up email that will include the webinar slide deck, recording, and other resources mentioned during the presentation.

Please introduce yourselves in the chat box

• Your name
• Your location
• Your role in the educational sector

@learningforward
Thank you for joining us

Suzanne Bouffard
Moderator
Vice President
Publications
Learning Forward
Shifting mindsets about educating young children

1. Viewing children as capable, competent, and curious
2. Recognizing the environment as third teacher
3. Valuing the power of documentation
4. Embracing the challenge of inquiry

(Scheffel & Hives, 2021)
Why early childhood is important for all educators

**THE SCOPE**
U.S. schools serve more young children than ever before.

- **75,000**
  - Elementary school principals oversee pre-K classrooms.

- **1.6 million**
  - Children in the U.S. attend publicly funded pre-K programs.

**YOUNG CHILDREN PROJECTED TO ATTEND U.S. PUBLIC ELEMENTARY SCHOOLS IN 2021:**

- **1.18 million** in pre-K
- **3.71 million** in K
- **10.94 million** in 1st-3rd grade

**THE NEED**
Many elementary principals do not have background in early childhood.

- **76%**
  - Do not have early childhood certification.

- **40%**
  - Have no teacher or principal preparation in early childhood.

- **42%**
  - Have not participated in district professional learning on early childhood.

- **20%**
  - Of early-career principals do not feel well versed in early childhood.

**THE SOLUTION**
Professional learning can close the gaps.

- **Dozens of model pre-K programs**
  - Include intensive professional learning.

- **1,700+**
  - Head Start programs require coaching.

- **25 states**
  - Require coaching in public early childhood programs.

- **16 states**
  - Require coaching plus 15 hours of other professional learning.

Your learning helps children learn.
What will you learn next?

Sources for research cited here can be found at learningforward.org/why-learning-professional/ ©Learning Forward 2021
Poll: Getting to know you

1. What is your role?
   - Early childhood teacher (preschool, Pre-K, etc.)
   - K–12 teacher
   - Early childhood director
   - School principal or other school-based
   - Professional learning leader (e.g. coach, PD director)
   - School district/central office staff
   - Nonprofit organization, community coalition, etc.
   - Researcher
   - Other

2. How much experience do you have in early childhood education?
   - A lot of hands-on experience
   - Some hands-on experience
   - Coursework or reading but no hands-on experience
   - No background or experience in early childhood
Why we need a shared vision across grades

BY BRIDGET HAMRE

Young children’s daily interactions with teachers are critical to the development of their social, emotional, and self-regulatory skills (Hamre, 2016). But not all young children have access to the types of interactions that nurture—interactions that are warm, supportive, cognitively engaging, and rich in core academic areas such as literacy, math, and science.

One barrier to ensuring all children have access to great teaching is the lack of a clear and shared vision of good instruction across the early grades from pre-K to 3rd grade. There is much that works best practice across these grades, but too often, educators and parents assume that preschool is a time to focus on social and emotional skills while school really starts when children enter kindergarten and the focus turns to academics.

Research paints a different picture, showing that social, emotional, and academic skills are intertwined and we should nurture all of them over time (Jones & Kohn, 2017). To the annotated cry, a preschool classroom, with 4- and 5-year-olds spending the

PERCENT TIME SPENT IN CORE ACADEMIC CONTENT FROM PRE-K TO KINDERGARTEN

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Literacy</th>
<th>Math</th>
<th>Science</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>PRE-K</td>
<td>11%</td>
<td>3%</td>
<td>3%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>KINDERGARTEN</td>
<td>29%</td>
<td>6%</td>
<td>40%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

PERCENT TIME SPENT IN VARIOUS LEARNING FORMATS FROM PRE-K TO KINDERGARTEN

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Whole group</th>
<th>Small group</th>
<th>Individual work</th>
<th>Free play</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>PRE-K</td>
<td>5%</td>
<td>25%</td>
<td>33%</td>
<td>12%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>KINDERGARTEN</td>
<td>5%</td>
<td>6%</td>
<td>40%</td>
<td>29%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

(Hamre, 2021)
Questions to guide our discussion

- What does a systemic approach to early childhood look like?
- How does it build educator capacity?
- What role does professional learning play?
Panel discussion

Larrisa Wilkinson
Director of Professional Development and Program Innovation
Pre-K 4 San Antonio West Education Center

Josephine Appleby
Pre-K Professional Learning Program Director
Ayers Institute of Lipscomb University College of Education, Nashville

Iheoma Iruka
Founding Director of the Equity Research Action Coalition
Public Policy & Frank Porter Graham Child Development Institute, UNC-Chapel Hill
Larrisa Wilkinson
Pre-K 4 San Antonio West Education Center

FOCUS EARLY LEARNING

Texas district learns the building blocks of pre-K

BY BETSY FOX, IRMA GAONA, AND LARRISA WILKINSON

Picture a noisy room full of elementary principals building towers with play dough, stones, and toothpicks while laughing, talking, and sharing ideas—and competitively checking the progress of other table groups. In a yearlong program with school and district leaders from East Central ISD in San Antonio, Texas, we begin with this activity to engage principals in understanding how playing to learn supports social and academic development of young children.

This is just one of the components of our district’s early childhood professional learning system, which is part of our overall early learning quality improvement process. We support elementary principals in early learning pedagogy so they can better support quality instruction in district programs serving 4- to 5-year-olds. We believe the impact on teacher practice is much deeper with the knowledgeable support of school leaders.
What is PreK-4 SA and why is professional learning a major focus?

Our Philosophy and Approach
Which groups of educators do you focus on and why?
What is the role of Pre-K PLCs?
What is your advice about creating a professional learning system?
Young students at the Ascend School at Vanderbilt University explore math and science concepts with Samantha Bailey, preschool teacher and teacher coach mentor.

Nashville has a blueprint to address early literacy

BY JOSEPHINE APPLEBY AND RENE DILLARD

Developing early reading skills is important for long-term academic success. Too often, however, young children do not have the foundations of literacy they need.

One-third of Tennessee students read on grade level (Tennessee Department of Education, 2021), and in the state’s capital city of Nashville, three out of four 3rd graders are not reading on grade level. These students represent some of the most vulnerable populations — students of color and English learners.

In response to the critical need to improve early literacy, a coalition of community partners developed Nashville’s Blueprint for Early Childhood Success to identify key levers and align city resources to achieve strong results. Over 200 community leaders, national experts, and researchers spent more than six months developing the six pillars of the blueprint. They are:

1. Streamline birth to age 3 supports.
2. Improve quality and access to prekindergarten.
3. Strengthen the district’s literacy initiative.
4. Reduce chronic absenteeism.
5. Address summer reading loss and maximize out-of-school time.
6. Rally the community to support all children.

The blueprint launched in 2018.
What is Nashville’s Blueprint for Early Childhood Success?

**Blueprint as the solution:**
Our key focus areas or "Pillars"

- **Pillar 1:** Strengthen birth – age 3 supports
- **Pillar 2:** Improve quality & access to pre-K
- **Pillar 3:** Strengthen District’s literacy tactics
- **Pillar 4:** Reduce chronic absenteeism
- **Pillar 5:** Address summer reading loss & maximize out-of-school time
- **Pillar 6:** Rally the community

[www.blueprintnashville.org](http://www.blueprintnashville.org)
Why is it a priority to engage early educators from a variety of settings?
How did you and your partners build the professional learning infrastructure?
Why is teacher voice a priority?
Early learning and K-12 go hand in hand
A conversation with Iheoma Iruka

Q: You advocate for early childhood and K-12 systems to work together and learn from one another. Why is that important?

A: There’s a lot we can and should do to align the early childhood and K-12 spaces. It’s not just about aligning curricula or assessments but also about teachers coming together and sharing approaches. Early childhood educators need to know what happens once their kids move on to K-12. And K-12 educators should really understand what’s happening in the early childhood space.

A lot happens before children enter your school. If you’re not supporting those children, families, and communities, you’re going to pay the price somewhere, whether in suspension data, remediation data, or somewhere else. All the data will show you that you’re spending a lot of money to deal with the things that you
What can ECE and K–12 educators learn from one another?


https://nationalp-3center.org/resources/
What can professional learning leaders discover from the Early Learning Network?

Welcome to the Early Learning Network

The Early Learning Network seeks to advance the understanding of policies and practices that narrow the achievement gap and maintain early learning success as children transition from preschool to elementary school and beyond.

https://earlylearningnetwork.unl.edu
How are early childhood educators recentering around the assets of Black children and families?

Culturally-Responsive, Anti-bias Framework of Expectation, Education, Exploration, and Equipment for Family Engagement

Discussion and Questions
Online resources

Look for follow-up resources, including a recording of this webinar and slides

• Read latest issue of *The Learning Professional*

• Check out the Learning Forward blog

• Sign up for our online coaching course

Learn more at [learningforward.org](http://learningforward.org)
Mark your calendars

Virtual Teaching, Leading, and Learning (ViTLL) webinar

Thursday, May 20, 3pm ET:
Strategies for summer:
How to support students & families

Coming soon! Watch for the fall schedule
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