



# *Moving On to Kindergarten*

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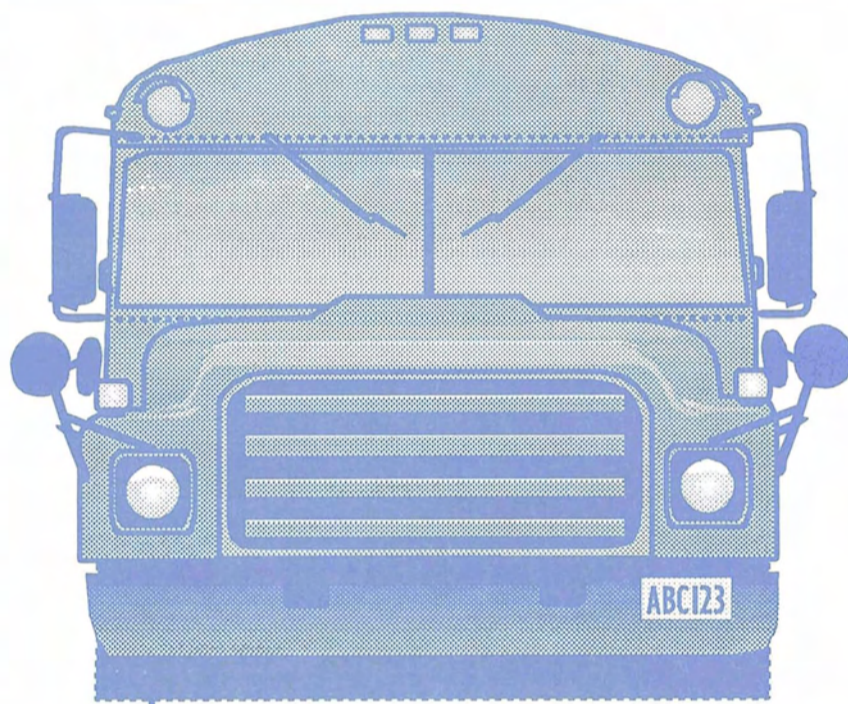
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## **Purpose**

This publication, one of four on early childhood transitions, is intended to help communities take steps to improve the transition to kindergarten for children and their families. It provides a rationale, relevant research and practical strategies to help all young children and their families move successfully into kindergarten.



## *A Guide for Transition to Kindergarten*

**Developed by:** Indiana Department of Education, Division of Special Education;  
Family & Social Services Administration, Bureau of Child Development; and  
Riley Child Development Center, Indiana University School of Medicine; 1997.

**Adapted from:** Bridging Early Services Transition Taskforce, Kansas; 1995.

## **Transition to Kindergarten in Indiana Schools**

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Young children must adjust to many changes. Among them, the transition into kindergarten from home or preschool programs stands as a major milestone for both children and their families.

Some changes that may accompany transition to kindergarten--such as an earlier meal time or elimination of a nap--have little long-term significance for a child or family. But others, such as instability in child care arrangements or marked shifts in adult expectations at home or at school, may influence a young child's sense of security and long-term attitudes toward learning.

As with many other changes, transition to kindergarten creates both challenges and new opportunities for growth. Conquering the challenges can give a child and family additional confidence to meet future transitions. Too much change, however, can create stress, anxiety, fear or confusion, and it can hinder young children's ability to learn.

The goal is to create as much continuity as possible for 5 year olds entering kindergarten. Research (see References, page 17) has shown:

- ◆ Whenever young children can experience success during this significant transition, they grow in confidence and competence to manage later changes.
- ◆ Gaps in education and care disrupt children's learning and development.
- ◆ Local planning by responsible preschool and kindergarten teachers, families and representatives from other community agencies can minimize discontinuities and enhance children's opportunities for success.
- ◆ Developmentally appropriate preschool and kindergarten curricula provide continuity for children and promote early success for students with diverse abilities and previous experiences.
- ◆ Family members often contribute significantly to young children's adjustments to a new environment; but to participate comfortably, parents need information and encouragement to be involved. Their culture and goals for their child and family must be valued.
- ◆ Families who feel welcome at their school are likely to continue active involvement in their children's education.
- ◆ Planned activities can help children and families cope with necessary changes and negotiate transitions successfully.
- ◆ Written procedures and timelines help communities to ensure that transition activities occur on schedule.
- ◆ Transition planning helps to assure that the special needs of children and families are met, necessary information about children's special learning characteristics is shared, and special equipment along with training in its use, are provided in a timely manner.
- ◆ Good beginnings help to minimize or avert later problems, such as academic failure, school drop-out and anti-social actions.
- ◆ When preschool and kindergarten teachers, families and representatives of other community agencies plan together, the transition process works better than when the responsible parties do not cooperate.

**Community-wide planning for transition to kindergarten has been encouraged by the federal government under the National Education Goals and by myriad position statements from professional organizations (page 9, 16, 17).**

# Recognizing the Partners

## Who's Involved in Transition?

**Transition is about children and their families** moving between programs. Any child or parent may appear confident about moving on or concerned about real or imagined risks. Many parents have questions about what will be expected of their child in kindergarten. In addition to the normal upheaval of beginning at a new school, many children have special needs to be met in transition. Planning can help children and their families reduce anxiety about transition and, instead, anticipate the exciting opportunities of the school years.

**Transition is about teachers and care providers** supporting children and their families during the move between programs. The annual process of sending one class of children on and then receiving a new group of students challenges adults who work with them. Transition planning helps adults to share questions and information with each other to ease each child's entry into kindergarten. Cooperative transition planning among responsible teachers and care providers also helps them build programs that support each other and create continuity for children and their families.

**Transition is about administrators** of preschool and kindergarten programs and community service agencies--those most responsible for initiating the community's plan for transition. Administrators can set policies and practices to improve transitions. When they work together, agency administrators can provide information and services that families need to support their children. Joint efforts can reduce unnecessary miscommunication when school doors open in fall.



## Who Are the Partners in Transition?

### **Families**

- Parents
- Guardians
- Grandparents
- Other family members

### **Preschool programs, staff and administrators**

- Home
- Head Start
- Chapter 1/ Title 1
- Even Start
- Child care center
- Family child care home
- Early childhood special education services
- Community recreation or library program

### **Kindergarten programs, staff and administrators**

- Neighborhood public school
- Public magnet school
- Private school
- Parochial school
- Developmental or transitional kindergarten
- Chapter 1/ Title 1
- Special education services
- School-based child care
- Child care center
- Family child care home

### **Other community agencies**

- Public health department
- Community recreation programs
- Mental health services
- Social and rehabilitation services
- Church/ Synagogue programs

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## Ways That Preschool and Kindergarten May Differ

- ▶ Adult/ child ratio
- ▶ Number of children in school, class and groups
- ▶ Length of class periods
- ▶ Transportation arrangements
- ▶ Nature and degree of family involvement
- ▶ Expectations for independent play and work
- ▶ Expectations for managing materials and clothing
- ▶ Expected skills with equipment
- ▶ Amount of teacher attention and individual assistance
- ▶ Philosophies of instruction and behavioral guidance
- ▶ Curriculum content
- ▶ Amount of waiting required
- ▶ Nature of teacher's guidance or directions
- ▶ Expected knowledge of health and safety rules
- ▶ Daily routines
- ▶ Playground activities

## Elements of Effective Transitions

1. All adults who are responsible for children's care and education share in developing a written transition plan for the community.
2. A series of transition activities is planned to prepare young children and their parents.
3. Transition plans seek to involve families in decision-making and support them in active participation in their children's care and education.
4. Transition policies, programs and practices demonstrate sensitivity to the culture, language and previous experiences of individual children and their families.
5. Information to support a child's development is shared (with parent permission) across home, child care, preschool programs, kindergarten and health care setting.
6. Receiving programs welcome all children and families and locate information and other resources to help them.
7. Efforts to help children feel secure across settings are bolstered by continuity in assessment, curriculum and instruction--all sensitive to individual, developmental and cultural differences.
8. The community has developed a coordinated approach to staff development that brings preschool and kindergarten teachers and child care providers together to discuss, learn and plan.
9. Transition procedures are written and then followed; transition outcomes are noted and used to improve future efforts.

### **At the Heart of Transition Planning**

*Developmentally appropriate practice has two key principles: age appropriateness and individual appropriateness. All programs of care and education for young children from birth to age 8 should be developmentally appropriate. Additional information about this concept may be found in Bredekamp, S. & Copple, C. (Eds) (1997) Developmentally Appropriate Practice in Early Childhood Programs: Revised Edition. NAEYC, Washington D.C.*

# One Step at a Time

## Community Planning to Improve Transitions

It is recommended that each community develop a process to smooth the months of transition to kindergarten for young children and their families. The accompanying nine-step diagram will help readers understand this process. All the transition's key partners should be involved in the planning process. Broad participation in planning will result in transition practices that are consistent with each community's values, resources and limitations.

Page 15 of this guide offers a self-assessment form that can be used to start a community's transition planning. Some communities need to start at step one and build the relationships that allow effective transitions to occur. Other communities already have the relationships and much of the process in place. They are ready to write their activities into a transition timeline and a written interagency agreement.

An important product of local planning is a written timeline for transition. When will parents be invited to visit the kindergarten? How and when will pupil information be shared between the preschool programs and the school system? When will comprehensive evaluations be performed for those children with disabilities? When will planning begin for children who need special equipment or individual health care plans? A written timeline will help teachers and administrators as well as parents know what to expect.

A valuable tool to ensure that transition will unfold smoothly is a written community transition agreement. Creating such a plan is not the first transition task for a community to undertake, but it is a worthy goal to aim toward.

**The critical components of an interagency agreement are found in the box on page 7.**

It is useful to develop interagency transition agreements and timelines to ensure continuity of services, help a community prepare all of its new kindergartners adequately, welcome new families to the school community and assure that school personnel--including recently hired teachers-- have current information that can help them teach each child effectively.

## Community Transition Planning

1. State purpose of plan: Transition between preschool and kindergarten.

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2. Identify planners: Families, preschool and kindergarten personnel, community representatives.

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3. Define current transition procedures, activities and timelines of each participating program.

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4. Compare present transition procedures with desired process to identify gaps and overlaps. Identify roles for families and programs.

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5. Identify practices to modify or initiate to create smoother transitions for children, families, programs and schools.

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6. Combine current practices and modifications into a written interagency transition agreement. Develop guidelines and materials for families.

/

7. Implement the plan to meet needs of individual children and families.

\

8. Evaluate transitions, consider multiple views.

/

9. Review and revise plan, expand transition efforts.

### Elements of a Written Interagency Transition Agreement

- ◆ Time period covered by the agreement
- ◆ List of agencies involved
- ◆ Statement of purpose for the agreement
- ◆ Designation of roles and responsibilities, including relationships among agencies that sign the agreement and assignments for planning and implementing transition activities
- ◆ Definition of fiscal responsibility, specifying who will pay for each service--preschool program, school system, other community agency or the family (special education services must be free to the family)
- ◆ Description of procedures for:
  - Informing and supporting families through the transition*
  - Gathering and sharing information across programs*
  - Transferring of records*
  - Obtaining family consent for release of information to other agencies*
  - Developing timelines and designating responsibilities for children who need special education services, including:*
    - Comprehensive evaluation, if warranted
    - Determination of eligibility for services
    - Assessments for instructional planning
  - Convening the Case Conference Committee*
  - Writing the IEP*
    - Decision-making regarding placement and services
    - Special training of staff
    - Acquiring needed adaptive equipment or assistive technology
    - Ongoing communication
- ◆ Plans for evaluating transition activities

### Requirements for Kindergarten

- ◆ Age 5 on or before June 1 (Early entrance procedures vary from district to district)
- ◆ An official birth certificate or record from the state or country in which the child was born
- ◆ Age-appropriate immunizations as evidenced by an official record from a physician's office, county health department, or a physical examination/ health assessment by a certified health professional (no later than 90 days after kindergarten entry).
- ◆ A Social Security Number may be requested, but is not required for enrollment.

### Information Sharing

Specific strategies for sharing information about children among sending and receiving teachers and family members are defined within the community's transition plan. One adult's parental or professional observations about a child can be very useful to other adults in understanding the child's interests and learning style.

- ◆ Parents must give written consent for information to be shared across agencies.
- ◆ Communication can be oral, written and via videotapes.
- ◆ Forward records prior to the beginning of school.
- ◆ Records should be sent, not only to the school office, but also to the teacher who will be working with the child.
- ◆ Consider telephone calls, brief written reports, or other informal contacts between preschool and kindergarten teachers to facilitate transition.

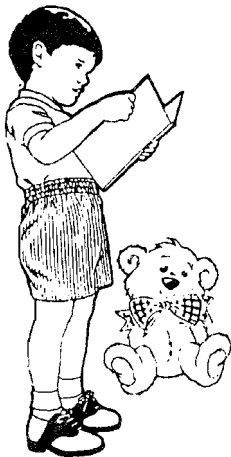
# Ready, Set, Go

## Providing Continuity for Children and Families

In effective transitions, preschool and kindergarten teachers and families work together to plan and carry out activities to support children during movement from one location to another. A variety of transition activities have been found useful.

Preschool and kindergarten teachers who have visited each other's classrooms know how to incorporate symbols of continuity for children. For example, rereading a favorite preschool book during the first week of kindergarten or teaching a special kindergarten song to Head Start children helps 5 year olds to feel secure during transition.

One kindergarten teacher observed a reading corner where children at the child care center were "reading" to teddy bears. When she instituted such a center in her room, it was a great hit with entering kindergartners. This was one learning center they did not have to discover how to use!



### Suggested Activities to Create Continuity

- ◆ Preschool parent meeting to explain transition activities and kindergarten enrollment procedures
- ◆ Preschool visit of children to kindergarten
- ◆ Breakfast of small groups of children with the principal, whether at the elementary school or at the child care center/ Head Start
- ◆ Personal note from the kindergarten teacher and/or principal, or by preschool and kindergarten teacher together
- ◆ Visit to the preschool or Head Start by kindergartners who are "alumni"
- ◆ Preschool visit to the playground of the primary school, guided either by the preschool program or by children's families
- ◆ IEP objectives designed to help children feel confident and competent in their new surroundings
- ◆ Sharing by kindergarten teachers of their goals and expectations for their students
- ◆ "Parent mentors" --experienced parents to help welcome new families to the school
- ◆ Trial bus rides where parents may accompany their new kindergartners
- ◆ Parent orientation booklet for schools to send to families
- ◆ School orientation booklet for families to send to teachers (see sample topics, page 11)
- ◆ A preschool/ kindergarten curriculum study group open to interested teachers and parents to explore ways to promote continuity in teaching approaches and materials
- ◆ Identifying special songs, games, books or class activities to be used in both preschool and kindergarten
- ◆ Sharing roleplays and books that help children anticipate kindergarten (see list, page 14)
- ◆ Providing tips for families on supporting their children's early learning and subsequent entrance to school
- ◆ Collaboration with the local health department to ensure that entering children have necessary health checks and immunizations
- ◆ Repeated demonstration and explanation by both preschool and kindergarten teachers of prepositions and other direction words that young children will encounter
- ◆ "Partnering" more knowledgeable kindergartners with peers who understand the routines.

# Right from the Start

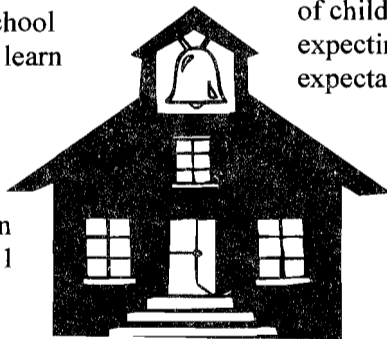
## Developmentally Appropriate Curriculum in Preschool and Kindergarten

To help every child get a good start in school, it's important for preschool and kindergarten teachers and administrators to communicate about curriculum. The goal of this communication is to continue individual children's growth, begun prior to kindergarten, by first maintaining and then gradually enriching preschool skills, experiences, activities and expectations. Ongoing communication between preschool and kindergarten teachers also helps to develop appropriate adaptations for individual children who need modifications to continue learning.

Within any age group of children, there exists a broad range in maturity levels, interests, abilities and special needs. It's essential that both preschool and kindergarten activities be formulated for young children, and encourage learning through manipulation of materials and frequent exchange of ideas with adults and other children. Learning materials for use both indoors and on the playground must be accessible to all.

Transition policies consistent with current research discourage "waiting a year" or retention or special "readiness" placement of children at the kindergarten level. A growing body of research shows that such practices are not effective over the long term (Bredenkamp & Shepard, 1988; May & Welch, 1985, 1986; Shepard & Smith, 1986).

Proven transition practices ensure that children progress in multi-ability groups and receive instruction appropriate for individual levels of development. In early care and education as well as in kindergarten, curricula related to children's daily experiences help children learn and enjoy learning. Cooperative groups encourage children in both preschool and kindergarten to solve problems and learn to work together. Use of a variety of activity structures within a class can help teachers meet the diverse needs of their students. Support for developmentally appropriate curricula in kindergarten is found in 511 IAC 6.1-5-1 adopted by the Indiana State Board of Education in July 1993.



**U.S. Department of Education (1991).  
Preparing young children for success:  
Guideposts for achieving our first  
national education goal.  
Washington, DC: Author.**

"Build connections among parents, preschools and elementary schools to ensure smooth and coherent transitions. Systematic transition activities will promote instruction that is appropriate for the ages and personal characteristics of entering students, help parents and children understand and shape school expectations and inform teachers about each child. Home visits and other contacts between school staff and families, transfer of records, joint training and curriculum development by preschool and primary school staff, and the coordinated delivery of support services are examples of transition activities."

### National Association for Education of Young Children Position Statement on School Readiness

- ◆ Current view of readiness may not address variation in experiences that children bring with them before entering school.
- ◆ Many criteria used to determine readiness are based on inappropriate expectations of child's abilities and fail to recognize normal individual variation.
- ◆ Schools need to be ready to meet needs of children as they enter rather than expecting children to meet school expectations.

# Working Together

## Ideas for Involving Families

Early in the year prior to the child's kindergarten entry, preschool programs should explain the transition process to family members and welcome their participation in transition activities. Later, families should be invited to visit kindergarten classrooms and learn about routine procedures of the elementary school. Customs such as checking in at the school office and preferred ways and times to communicate with kindergarten teachers need to be explained.



Opportunities for parents to assist with school activities can be shared, and volunteers for specific projects enlisted. Through a "Transition Activities" booklet, parents can be encouraged to enjoy books with their children, to expand the ways they stimulate vocabulary development, and to support independence in self-care skills, like zipping and putting on boots.

*"It was good when they agreed to try my suggestion."*

**Indiana parent**

Kindergarten teachers are wise to seek guidance from sending teachers when questions with cultural implications arise. Communications about transition may need to be translated into languages other than English. A community liaison from a family's linguistic or cultural group may aid in interpreting the ways of the school to family members uncertain how to proceed in transition.

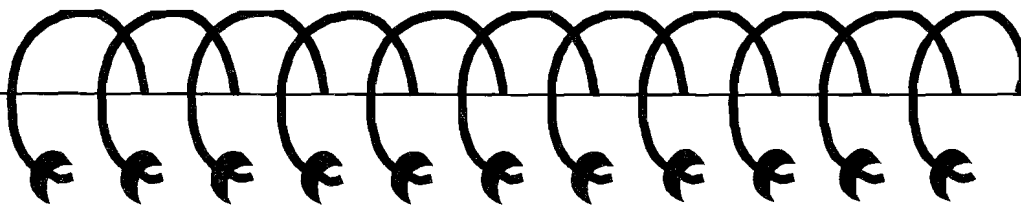
*"I think the big thing is right off the bat to get somebody that knows and shares information with you."*

**Indiana Parent**

The transition process aims, among other purposes, to help families accomplish their goals for their children's learning. Many parents appreciate the opportunity to talk with other families who experienced transition with their children during the previous year. Preschool programs can arrange such conversations during kindergarten orientation meetings for family members or on a more one-on-one basis for families who prefer personal contact.

Throughout the transition process, it's important for both preschool and kindergarten programs to show family members that they are valued, respected, and included and supported as partners in child development. Cultural groups regard formal education and professional educators in different ways, a fact to be considered carefully during the community's transition planning process. Preschool teachers contribute significantly to smooth transition when they communicate parental preferences and interpret family actions. As a result, they promote positive communication between the family and the new teacher. A brief form with open-ended questions, such as the one on page 11, gives schools the benefit of family perspectives on their children's talents, interests and needs.





### **Helpful Information From Families**

1. I would describe our child in this way:
2. I would describe our family in this way:
3. A typical day with our child includes:
4. Our child really likes to do (or is good at) these things:
5. Our child needs help with (avoids):
6. Our family likes to do these things together:
7. Recent changes seen in our child at home:
8. Questions we have about our child:
9. Our child does best when:
10. Our child indicates wants and desires by:
11. Our child is really interested in:
12. We would like our child to learn or get better at:
13. To help our child, we would like help with:

*adapted from Project Dakota*

## Teachers Together Communication Improves Transition Steps

Professional development on most topics is relevant to both preschool and kindergarten personnel across classrooms, disciplines and programs. Joint training (Head Start, child care, preschool and kindergarten teachers) promotes continuity in services, builds relationships to aid problem-solving, increases respect for one another's roles in transition and helps to define the transition activities that will aid children's entry into elementary school. A 1994 study of providers showed that training and technical assistance for staff were rated highest of 13 priorities related to improving transitions (Shotts, Rosenkoetter, Streufert & Rosenkoetter).

Some recommendations for Indiana communities to increase communication between preschool and kindergarten teachers include:

- ◆ Schedule regular meetings and sharing sessions
- ◆ Plan cross-classroom visits
- ◆ Learn new skills together
- ◆ Study and discuss policy statements and new publications
- ◆ Attend early childhood conferences and in-services together
- ◆ Urge the education service center to sponsor training that brings together preschool and kindergarten, "general" education and special education
- ◆ Visit classrooms in nearby areas that are working toward being developmentally appropriate and inclusive
- ◆ Find the rules on confidentiality between agencies, and develop a locally appropriate way to satisfy them
- ◆ Work together with a consultant to develop a local philosophy and curriculum that provides continuity for young children and success for all
- ◆ Use peer coaching to support and assist each other
- ◆ Celebrate accomplishments together
- ◆ Evaluate and share information with parents, colleagues and the public

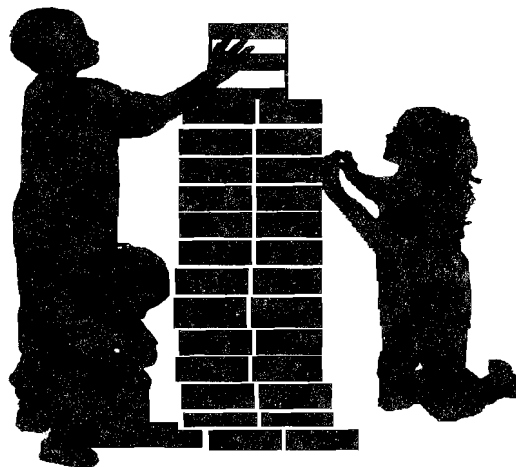
## Parents View Transition Differently

*"Yeah, and that's why ever since since she has been born, that our dream is that she can sit in a regular classroom and that the kids can grow up with her and learn just as much about her as she can about them."*

*"This change is scary for me too, not just my child."*

*"Even though there are differences in the programs, it doesn't matter as much when you get what you need to decide."*

*"We have been fortunate from day one as far as being advised about what was out there for her."*



# Special Issues with Children with Special Needs

Some additional planning may be needed for children with special needs. Consider these questions:

- ◆ What IEP goals and objectives should be written during preschool to help prepare the child for kindergarten?  
(see Non-academic Skills, page 16)
- ◆ What additional evaluation, if any, is needed?
- ◆ What assessment data from the preschool program can be used to determine eligibility for special education or program planning in the IEP?
- ◆ How will eligibility and placement decisions be made and when?
- ◆ What equipment needs to be obtained for use at the new school?
- ◆ What training do new staff need to accommodate the child's special needs?

Although a comprehensive evaluation is required every three years, many school districts choose to re-evaluate children from early childhood special education prior to their kindergarten entry. It is important that this assessment include data from the preschool program to show how the child performs in a familiar setting. With parental permission, information from Head Start or other preschool programs can be shared with the schools. The procedures for procuring permission to share information and actually sending reports on to the kindergarten teacher should be included in the written interagency transition agreement.

The transition process should be explained to families both verbally and in writing early in the year before the child's eligibility for kindergarten. Parents of children receiving special education need to know that their child definitely will be moving on from preschool. Families deserve opportunities to clarify the process, visit potential locations for services and offer information from home that may assist in decision making. Families should be encouraged to bring a relative or friend with them to transition meetings, if they wish.

It's important that all transition actions occur in a timely manner. Decisions regarding placement should routinely be made in time for children with special needs to participate in "Kindergarten Roundup" or other kindergarten orientations along with their neighborhood friends. Some children, including many with visual impairments, may benefit from an individualized tour of the new classroom prior to the beginning of school.



## BOOKS TO PREPARE CHILDREN FOR TRANSITION

<u>Author</u>	<u>Title</u>	<u>Author</u>	<u>Title</u>
Alexander	Sabrina	Lystad	Jennifer Takes Over P.S. 94
Allard	Miss Nelson Is Missing!	Mann	The 25 Cent Friend
Anderson	Carlos Goes to School	Marino	Where Are the Mothers?
Arnold	Where Do You Go to School?	Marshall	Fox at School
		Marshall	Miss Nelson Is Back
Barkin	I'd Rather Stay Home	Mason	I Go to School
Barkin	Sometimes I Hate School	Matthias	Out the Door
Behrens	What I Hear in My School	McInnes	Goodnight Painted Pony
Berenstain	The Berenstain Bears Go to School	Meshover	The Monkey that Went to School
Boyd	I Met a Polar Bear	Nichols	Big Paul's School Bus
Bram	I Don't Want to Go to School	Oppenheim	Mrs. Peloski's Snake
		Ormsby	Twenty One Children
Breinburg	Shawn Goes to School	Oxenbury	First Day of School
Buchmeier	I Know a Teacher	Parish	Jumper Goes to School
Burningham	The School	Quackenbush	First Grade Jitters
Calmenson	The Kindergarten Book	Relf	The First Day of School
Cassidy	We Like Kindergarten	Relf	Show and Tell
Caudill	A Pocketful of Cricket	Rockwell	My Nursery School
Charles	Calico Cat at School	Rogers	Mr. Rogers Talks About...
Cohen	The New Teacher	Schick	The Little School at Cottonwood Corners
Cohen	No Good in Art	Schwartz	Bea and Mr. Jones
Cohen	When Will I Read	Simon	I'm Busy Too
Cohen	See You Tomorrow, Charles	Stein	A Child Goes to School
		Steiner	I'd Rather Stay With You
Cohen	Will I have a Friend?	Stephoe	Jeffrey Bear Cleans Up His Act
Cohen	First Grade Takes a Test		
Cole	What's Good for a Five-Year-Old?	Thwaite	The Chatterbox
		Tobias	The Dawdlewalk
Delton	The New Girl at School	Udry	What Mary Jo Shared
Elliott	Grover Goes to School	Welbar	Goodbye, Hello
Frandsen	I Started School Today	Wells	Timothy Goes
Gordon	Crystal is the New Girl	Wisema	Morris Goes to School
Hassa	A Special Place for Johnny	Wittman	The Wonderful Mrs. Trumbly
Hamilton-Merritt	My First Days of School		
Harris	The School Mouse	Wolde	Betsy's First Day at Nursery School
Hillert	Who Goes to School?	Wolf	Adam Smith Goes to School
Hoffman	Steffie and Me		
Hollard	First Day of School	Wooley	Gus Was a Real Dumb Ghost
Horvath	Will the Real Tommy Wilson Please Stand Up		
Hurd	Come with Me to Nursery School		
Isadora	Willaby		
Jones	Going to Kindergarten		
Lenski	Debbie Goes to Nursery School		
Lexau	I Hate Red Rover		

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# Community Guide to Transition Planning

Occurs

Priority

Indicators		No / Yes	When	High Med Low
1.	Teachers and administrators from preschool and kindergarten programs are acquainted with one another.	N / Y		H M L
2.	The community has a designated interagency/ family group to work on transition planning.	N / Y		H M L
3.	The community has an action plan to improve transition to kindergarten for children and their families.	N / Y		H M L
4.	Preschool and kindergarten teachers and other staff use written transition procedures to plan activities to send children and their families on to kindergarten as well as to welcome newcomers into the school setting.	N / Y		H M L
5.	Preschool and kindergarten programs have developed a timeline for transition activities that is then adapted to meet individual child and family needs.	N / Y		H M L
6.	The community has developed and periodically revised a written interagency agreement on transition.	N / Y		H M L
7.	Families are assisted in obtaining desired information and support, and they have opportunities to participate in planning their child's transition.	N / Y		H M L
8.	Parents receive an information guide to help them be actively involved in the transition process; parents know whom to call with questions.	N / Y		H M L
9.	Preschool and kindergarten programs have identified staff to coordinate transition planning and activities.	N / Y		H M L
10.	Preschool and kindergarten programs have a system for exchanging information (exchange visits, curriculum materials, student records).	N / Y		H M L
11.	Preschool teachers or transition coordinators review the steps of the transition process with families early in the year prior to transition.	N / Y		H M L
12.	For children receiving special education services, special transition issues are considered, transition-related goals and objectives are included in the child's IEP, and timelines are developed that allow children with disabilities to participate in transition activities with their nondisabled peers.	N / Y		H M L
13.	Preschool programs obtain written permission from parents to share information about their child with the kindergarten teacher.	N / Y		H M L
14.	Preschool programs share information about children's experiences and accomplishments with kindergarten teachers (parent permission required).	N / Y		H M L
15.	Preschool and kindergarten programs develop and implement a systematic plan of activities to prepare children and their families for transition to kindergarten and to welcome them into the elementary school.	N / Y		H M L
16.	For children with IEPs, the family and representatives from the preschool and kindergarten programs meet early in the spring to discuss future service options to accomplish the child's IEP goals, plan visits to potential classrooms, schedule needed evaluation activities and review the transition timeline; the family visits potential placements for the child; and the family and sending and receiving program staff participate in the placement conference to decide new IEP goals and location and type of services.	N / Y		H M L
17.	Preschool and kindergarten teachers visit one another's classrooms and plan together for continuity for children and families.	N / Y		H M L
18.	Preschool children and their families visit the kindergarten.	N / Y		H M L
19.	Families share information with the kindergarten teacher about their children (interests and preferences, fears, medical information) their aims for the school experience and favorable times for communication between school and home.	N / Y		H M L
20.	Both preschool and kindergarten teachers receive ongoing training to teach all children in developmentally appropriate, culturally sensitive ways.	N / Y		H M L
21.	Prior to the kindergarten children's entry, the school obtains necessary resources to teach them, including trained personnel, individually appropriate instructional materials, adaptive equipment and building modifications necessary to assure access of all children to all activities.	N / Y		H M L
22.	Preschool and kindergarten curricula are linked to provide continuity for children's learning.	N / Y		H M L
23.	Families are encouraged to continue to participate actively in the events of the elementary school and in their children's learning.	N / Y		H M L
24.	The community's interagency transition planners have developed ways to continue needed services for families of children coming from Head Start.	N / Y		H M L
25.	The community's interagency transition planners conduct evaluations of the transition process and mutually consider changes to improve it for the next year.	N / Y		H M L

## Non-academic Skills Useful in Kindergarten

(This list should never be used as entrance criteria. It is intended to help preschool teachers and families plan activities or IEP goals to build children's readiness to participate in kindergarten-sized classes)

### Interacting with peers

- Initiates and maintains contact with peers
- Imitates peers when learning a new routine
- Responds to peers' initiations
- Learns and uses names of peers
- Shares objects and turns with peers
- Plans with peers

### Playing/working independently and with others

- Plays/works appropriately with peers and alone
- Completes activities approximately on time
- Stays with an activity for an appropriate amount of time
- Plays/works with few individual reminders from teacher

### Responding to routines

- Cares for personal belongings
- Learns new routines after practice opportunities
- Moves from one activity to another without individual reminders
- Reacts appropriately to changes in routines

### Following directions

- Watches others or seeks help if doesn't understand directions
- Answers adults' questions
- Modifies behavior when given verbal feedback
- Complies with group as well as individual instructions
- Responds appropriately to spoken multi-step directions
- Responds appropriately to directions, which include common school-related prepositions, nouns and verbs
- Recalls and follows directions discussed/demonstrated previously

### Following classroom rules

- Separates from parents and accepts teacher's authority
- Seeks teachers' attention in acceptable ways
- Expresses feelings in acceptable ways
- Focuses attention on speaker, shifts attention appropriately and participates in class activities
- Sits and listens for brief periods
- Waits for brief periods for peers to assemble

### Quotes from Position Papers

National Association of State Boards of Education (1988). *Right from the start: The report of the NASBE taskforce on early childhood education* (pp. 19,20,27). Alexandria, VA: Author.

Programs that serve children preschool-grade 3 should provide a gradual and supportive transition process from home to school for those young children entering school for the first time (p. 19). Develop both a school district and a local school action plan for parent involvement in the early childhood unit, and for parental outreach and family support efforts by public schools. The plan should include the provisions for young children to make an incremental transition from home to school when entering for the first time (p. 20). Transitions occur annually as children move between program types, and they occur daily as children move from school to child care. We believe there is greater continuity for children and parents when both types of programs are developmentally appropriate. Schools can facilitate this transition by helping to ensure such programs both in school and the community, by maintaining ongoing communication with community services, and by collaborative planning to prepare children and involve parents in these transitions. [They must] provide leadership in establishing procedures to ensure a smooth transition from community-based early childhood programs to public schools.

National Association of Elementary School Principals. (1990). *Early childhood education and the elementary school principal: Standards for quality programs for young children* (p.25) Alexandria, VA: Author.

**Standard:** The principal works with the home and the community toward easing transitions and addressing special needs and situations. In early childhood programs children make many transitions, such as from a daycare setting to a half-day school program or from among programs in a school. Such changes can be made smoother for both the children and their families through effective communication and cooperation among programs and school and community agencies.

### Quality Indicators:

- Information sessions are held regularly to inform parents and other members of the community about the progress of the early childhood program and any special developments or planned changes.
- When an individual child would be affected by a planned change personal conversations are held with the child's parents to discuss reasons for the proposed change, and parents are involved in making any decisions regarding their child.
- The school is in close contact with other early childhood programs in the community (Head Start, nursery schools, day care operations, etc.) toward assuring a smooth transition into the school.
- The school screens children for physical, developmental or other factors to determine if special services are needed, works with the appropriate office or group to assure the provision of those services and arranges for their continuation in planning the child's placement
- Home visitations and special classes are made available for children who need help in making the transition from the home to the school setting.

## Recommended Readings

Barbour, N.H., & Seefeldt, C.A. (1993). *Developmental continuity across preschool and primary grades: Implications for teachers*. Wheaton, MD: Association for Childhood Education International.

Bredenkamp, S., & Rosegrant, T. (Eds.).(1992). *Reaching potentials Appropriate curriculum and assessment for young children (Vol. 1)*. Washington, DC: National Association for the Education of Young Children.

Carta, J., Elliott, M., Orth-Lopes, L., Scherer, H., Schwartz, I., & Atwater, J.B. (1992). *Project SLIDE: Skills for learning independence in diverse environments (teacher's manual)*. Kansas City: University of Kansas, Juniper Gardens Children's Project.

Dodge, D.T., Jablon, J.R., & Bickart, T.S. (1994). *Constructing curriculum for the primary grades*. Washington, DC: Teaching Strategies, Inc.

Goffin, S.G., & Stegelin, D.A (1992). *Changing kindergartens: Four success stories*. Washington, DC: National Association for the Education of Young Children.

Graue, M.E. (1993). *Ready for what? Constructing meanings of readiness for kindergarten*. Albany: State University of New York Press.

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High/Scope curriculum materials, Ypsilanti, MI.

Love, J.M., Logue, M.E., Trudeau, J.V., & Thayer, K. (1992). *Transition to kindergarten in America schools (final Report of the National Transition Study)*. Washington, DC: U.S. Department of Education, Office of Policy and Planning.

Maxwell, K.L., & Eller, S.K. (1994). Research in review: Children's transition to kindergarten. *Young Children*, 49 (6), 56-63.

Nebraska Department of Education & Iowa Department of Education. (1993). *The primary program: Growing and Learning in the Heartland*. Lincoln: Nebraska Department of Education.

Peck, J.T., McCaig, G., & Sapp, M.E. (1988) *Kindergarten policies: What is best for children?* Washington, DC: National Association for the Children.

Rosenkoetter, S.E., Hains, A.H. & Fowler S.A. (1994). *Bridging early services for children with special needs and their families: A practical guide for transition planning*. Baltimore: Paul H. Brookes Publishing Company.

Wassermann, S. (1990). *Serious players in the primary classroom*. New York: Teachers College Press.

## Additional Position Statements

Boyer, E.L. (1991). *Ready to learn: Mandate for the nation*. Princeton, NJ: Carnegie Foundation for the Advancement of Teaching.

Kansas State Board of Education. (1994). *Quality standards for early childhood education for children birth through eight*. Topeka: Kansas Stakeholders Advisory Committee on Early Childhood Education.

National Commission on Children. (1991). *Beyond rhetoric: A new American agenda for children and families*. Washington, DC: Author.

National Association for the Education of Young Children. (1988). NAEYC position statement on developmentally appropriate practice in the primary grades, serving 5 through 8 year olds. *Young Children*, 43(2), 64-84.

National Association for the Education of Young Children. (1988). Position statement on standardized testing of young children 3 through 8 years of age. *Young Children*, 43(3), 42-47.

National Association for the Education of Young Children. (1990). NAEYC position statement on school readiness. *Young Children*, 46(1), 21-23.

National Association for the Education of Young Children. (1991). Guidelines for appropriate curriculum content and assessment in programs serving children ages 3 through 8. *Young Children*, 46(3), 21-38.

National Association of State Boards of Education. (1992). *Winners all: A call for inclusive schools*. Alexandria, VA: Author.

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