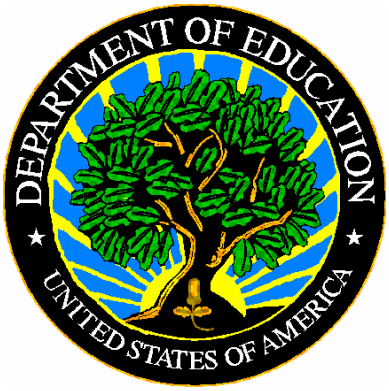
Serving Preschool Children Under Title I

Non-Regulatory Guidance



March 4, 2004

Introduction

"The years between birth and age five are the foundation upon which successful lives are built."
-Laura Bush

President George W. Bush and First Lady Laura Bush believe that all children must begin school with an equal chance to achieve so that no child is left behind. Recognizing the importance of preparing children to enter school with the language, cognitive, and early reading skills that will help them meet challenging State academic achievement standards in elementary school and beyond, President Bush unveiled his early childhood education initiative: *Good Start, Grow Smart*. This initiative is intended to help States and local communities strengthen early learning for young children. Title I, Part A (hereinafter referred to as only Title I)- supported preschool education is an important part of this initiative.

Since the enactment of the Elementary and Secondary Education Act (ESEA) in 1965, preschool services to eligible children have been an allowable use of Title I funds. Performance reports from State educational agencies (SEAs) for school year 2001-02 indicate that approximately two percent of children benefiting from Title I services are in preschool. This percentage may seem small, but it represents more than 300,000 children, and we anticipate that the number will grow as schools and local educational agencies (LEAs) recognize the importance of a high-quality early childhood education.

Providing high-quality early childhood experiences can help ensure that children in Title I schools and programs have the foundation to meet academic standards and experience success throughout elementary and secondary school. Several studies demonstrate the powerful effects of high-quality early childhood programs on children's later academic success. A longitudinal study of over 800 children (Cost, Quality, and Outcomes, 1999) found that children in high-quality early childhood programs displayed better language and mathematics skills, acquired more cognitive and social skills, and engaged in better relationships with classmates than did children who attended low-quality preschool programs. An evaluation of the Chicago Child-Parent Centers found that children who participated in their Title I preschool programs were less likely to repeat a grade and be referred for special education compared to children in the control group who were from similar socioeconomic backgrounds (Reynolds, 2000).

Educators, especially those in schools that predominantly serve students with economic need or with limited English proficiency, often find that a significant percentage of scarce resources are spent helping students with skill deficiencies in reading relative to their grade level. If a Title I preschool is of high-quality, it may prevent the need for remediation by addressing children's educational needs early. Ensuring that kindergartners arrive at school with the language, cognitive and early reading foundation needed to begin formal reading instruction has a positive impact on future performance, thereby reducing the need for remediation later.

Purpose of the Guidance

This guidance provides the rationale for using Title I dollars for preschool services, identifies the components of a quality preschool program, and addresses many of the administrative issues that often arise when implementing a Title I preschool program. In addition, the reader will find examples that illustrate what instruction and learning look like in a high-quality Title I preschool program that ensures that children enter kindergarten with the necessary skills for later school success. Although support services, including the provision of nutritious meals are very important, especially in programs serving disadvantaged children, this issue is not discussed in this guidance. Guidance in this document is not intended for use by programs serving kindergarten-age children. This guidance is primarily geared toward programs serving children between three to five years of age, although serving younger children is an allowable use of funds.

Guidance in this document replaces all previous non-regulatory Title I guidance on serving preschool children. The guidance reflects changes in program implementation as a result of amendments made by the No Child Left Behind (NCLB) Act, and also addresses questions raised by SEAs, LEAs, and other officials regarding this law that so profoundly affects American public education. Recipients of Title I funds may refer to this guidance when administering or operating projects supported by Title I funds.

This Serving Preschool Children Under Title I, Part A Guidance is written to assist SEAs, LEAs and schools in understanding and implementing preschool programs supported with Title I funding. While SEAs may consider this guidance in the development of their own guidelines and standards, they are free to identify alternative approaches that are consistent with applicable Federal statutes and regulations.

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A. General Information

A-1. What does "preschool program" mean for the purposes of Title I?

For the purpose of Title I, a preschool program is a program of educational services for eligible children below the age at which the LEA provides elementary education and is focused on raising the academic achievement of children once they reach school age. *[Section 1115(b)(1)(A)(ii), ESEA.]* [See D-5 through D-7 for further information on eligible children.] In some States, elementary education begins at first grade; in others it begins at kindergarten or before.

A-2. Who is considered a preschool-age child?

A preschool-age child is one who is below the grade level and age at which the LEA provides elementary education. *[34 CFR Section 77.1(c).]* For the purposes of Title I, children from birth to the age that the LEA provides a free public elementary education may receive preschool services. *[Section 1115(b)(1)(A)(ii), ESEA.]*

A-3. What is the purpose of a Title I preschool program?

Title I preschool programs provide young children with the early learning experiences that will enable them to meet academic standards throughout elementary and secondary school. Research has consistently shown that children in poverty lag behind their more affluent counterparts in academic achievement. The 1998 report, *School Poverty and Academic Performance: NAEP Achievement in High-Poverty Schools -- A Special Evaluation Report for the National Assessment of Title I*, reported that the average math score for a nine year old enrolled in a high-poverty school was more than two grade levels behind those of an average nine year old enrolled in low-poverty schools. More critically, reading scores showed an astounding three-to-four year gap in achievement between the same groups. Gaps in academic achievement between poor and disadvantaged elementary school children and their more well-to-do counterparts can often be traced back to their earliest encounters with formal instruction. Many simply start out so far behind that they never catch up with the expectations of the school (Entwisle, Alexander, & Olson, 2000). One of the purposes of Title I is to narrow and eventually eliminate this gap.

Preschool can play a major role in this effort. Research has found that intensive, high-quality preschool programs can close much of the early achievement gap for lower-income children (Barnett, 1998). Title I recognizes the value of early intervention through proven approaches. Section 1112(c)(1)(F) of the ESEA requires LEAs, when developing their

plans, to provide an assurance that they will take into account the experience of model programs for the educationally disadvantaged, and the findings of relevant scientifically-based research indicating that services may be most effective if focused on students in the earliest grades at Title I schools. Supporting children's growth, development, and learning in the early years, particularly for children who face significant challenges to successful learning, is an important strategy for preventing school failure and preparing children to demonstrate reading proficiency by the end of third grade.

A-4. What are the benefits of a high-quality preschool experience?

All children can benefit from high-quality early education programs, but the benefits are especially strong for children from low-income families. Research over the last 20 years has provided convincing evidence that children who have attended high-quality pre-kindergarten programs (Reynolds, 2000) —

- perform better in reading and math throughout the elementary grades;
- are less likely to be held back a grade;
- are less likely to require special education;
- are less likely to present discipline problems; and
- are more likely to be enthusiastic about school and have good school attendance.

B. Components of High-Quality Preschool Programs

B-1. What are the characteristics of a high-quality preschool program?

High-quality early learning programs may look different depending on the communities and families they serve. While there is no precise "cookie-cutter" model, and parents should have a role in deciding what their child's early education program looks like, there are some things that all high-quality programs will include if they are to prepare young children for later academic success.

In school, just like at home, young children need safe, nurturing, and stimulating environments as well as the supervision and guidance of caring, competent adults. In a high-quality early education program, teachers maintain a safe, healthy environment and carefully supervise the children. Teachers plan a balanced schedule in which the children don't feel rushed or fatigued. They also provide nutritious meals and snacks. Yet, while these things are necessary, high-quality preschool programs that will give children the prerequisite skills for school success need to provide more.

In the pre-kindergarten years, research describes three key components of a high quality program for reading and academic success. These include a strong foundation in: (1) language development; (2) early literacy (phonological awareness, letter knowledge, written expression, book and print awareness, motivation to read); and early math (number and operations) (Lyon, 2003). There are several other characteristics consistent among high-quality educational programs that have demonstrated significant positive outcomes on measures of children's academic and social-emotional development. These are—

- The program contains a clear statement of goals and philosophy that is comprehensive and addresses all areas of child development, including how the program will develop children's cognitive, language, and early reading skills, the cornerstones of later school success.
- Children are engaged in purposeful learning activities and play, and are taught by teachers who work from lesson and activity plans.
- Instruction is guided by a coherent curriculum that includes meaningful content (such as science) and has a strong and systematic focus on cognitive skills, including the language, early reading, writing skills and math skills children need to develop before they enter kindergarten.
- Instruction is always intentional, and frequently is direct and explicit. There is a balance between individual, small-group, and large-group activities.
- The classroom environment is one where children feel well cared for and safe. It also stimulates children's cognitive growth and provides multiple and varied opportunities for language and literacy experiences.
- Teachers frequently check children's progress. Ongoing assessment allows teachers to tailor their instruction to the needs of individual children as well as identify children who may need special help.
- The preschool staff regularly communicate with parents and caregivers so that caregivers are active participants in their children's education. [See Section F]
- Services are sufficiently intensive to allow more time for children to benefit from cognitive experiences. Preschools that operate for a full day, on a year-round basis, or have provided children with two years of preschool, show better results than those that offer less intense services (Reynolds, 2000).

B-2. What types of activities occur throughout the day in a high-quality preschool?

The schedule of a high-quality preschool classroom is often broken into blocks of time for different types of learning and instruction. Good teachers know when to teach directly, when to provide time for exploration and discovery, when to provide opportunities for children to practice skills, and when to encourage creativity. However, teachers should use the entire time during the preschool day in meaningful ways, regardless of whether the teacher is engaging in direct instruction. For example, teachers may point out new words or concepts during the daily book read-aloud, or provide opportunities for children to develop their language skills while transitioning to snack or outdoor time.

B-3. Don't young children naturally develop the skills they need for school success?

Children are able to learn a great deal by simply exploring their environment independently and by interacting with people, given that some knowledge is naturally discoverable. Some knowledge, as well as many skills, however, are not naturally discoverable through independent exploration or through typical interactions with others, and these skills must be explicitly taught. Scientifically-based reading research has identified specific skills that young children need to acquire a foundation for reading success. (Adams, 1997; Bryant, 1990; Dickinson & Smith, 1994; Dickinson & Tabors, 2001; Karweit & Wasik, 1996; Snow, et al., 1998; Sulzby, 1985)

B-4. What does the instruction *look like* throughout the day's activities in a high-quality preschool?

It is vital that early education programs pay strong and consistent attention to all of the developmental domains of early childhood. Those domains (social, emotional, cognitive, linguistic, and physical) are closely related, and growth in language and cognition will optimally occur in the context of the other areas of development. For example, language development emerges from social interactions and rich experiences; good health and nutrition are foundational for all types of learning, and self-assurance in a group setting helps children profit from school experiences.

Early care and early education programs go a long way to address the social, emotional and health needs of children and families. However, new research points to the importance of the language and cognitive domains as well. That research (Dickinson & Tabors, 2001; Snow, et al., 1998) illustrates the importance of developing the intellectual competencies of young children and suggests specific ways to support learning through the use of strategies such as explicit and "scaffolded"

instruction (instruction in which adults build upon what children already know to help them accomplish a complex task by breaking it down into simpler components). An extensive body of evidence, much of which is summarized in the National Research Council report *Preventing Reading Difficulties in Young Children* (Snow, et. al, 1998), is also available that stresses the importance of early reading skills, including phonological awareness and vocabulary development.

In high-quality preschool programs, you should see children doing the following—

- learning the letters of the alphabet;
- learning to hear the individual sounds in words. Children need to rhyme, to break words apart into their separate sounds (segmenting), and put sounds together to make words (blending);
- learning new words and how to use them;
- learning early writing skills;
- learning to use language by asking and answering questions, and by participating in discussions and engaging in conversations;
- learning about written language by looking at books and by listening to stories and other books that are read to them every day; and
- becoming familiar with math and science.

As indicated in *Teaching Our Youngest*, an ED guide for preschool teachers and child-care and family providers [available free of charge by calling 1-877-EDPUBS, 1-800-USA LEARN or ordering on-line at: http://www.ed.gov/pubs/edpubs.html] some of the components of a high-quality preschool are—

➢ **Teachers enabling children to develop listening and speaking skills**

Children should be able to listen carefully and speak for a variety of purposes, such as following and giving simple instructions, asking questions, and expressing their ideas and feelings. Teachers in Title I preschools can help children develop these skills by—

- asking open-ended questions that invite children to expand upon their answers;
- using a diversity of words to expand children's vocabularies;
- letting children take the conversational lead; and
- responding to children with a positive and encouraging tone and guidance style.

Examples of how teachers can…

…engage children in conversation throughout the day: **"**Why did you color the house orange, Rana?"

…gently reinforce the rules of good listening and speaking: **"**Connor, please don't talk while Yi is asking a question – you'll get your turn."

➢ Teachers reading aloud with children

Reading aloud with young children is important because it helps them acquire the information and skills they need to succeed in school and life, such as: printed letters and words and the relationship between sound and print; the meanings of many words; an understanding of the world in which they live; and the development of enjoyment in reading.

Teachers should—

- read aloud with children several times a day, establishing regular times for reading and finding other opportunities; and
- make reading books an enjoyable experience for children by choosing a comfortable place for reading and showing enthusiasm for reading.

Reading aloud with children ("book sharing") is different from traditional reading to children ("book reading") that does not involve children's active participation. In *book sharing* teachers—

- help children to learn through reading, by helping them notice new information, offering explanations, and explaining unfamiliar words; and
- ask children meaningful questions while reading and encourage discussion about the book.

Examples of how teachers can…

…ask children questions that help them make connections between the book and their own experiences:

Adult: "What does it feel like to play in the snow?"
Child: "It's cold."

…evaluate the child's response, and expand if necessary by adding new information.

Adult: "Yes, it's cold when your feet get wet or when someone hits you with a snowball."

…. wait until the end of the book and ask the child to recall some of the new information

Adult: "Can you remember some of the things we talked about that make people cold when they play in the snow?"

- **Teaching about the sounds of spoken language (phonological awareness)**

Learning to hear the individual sounds in words is essential for children's reading readiness. Children need to learn to break words apart into their separate sounds (segmenting) and put sounds together to make words (blending). Teachers can help children develop their phonological awareness by—

- reading books aloud that focus on sounds, rhyming and alliteration;
- playing games that isolate the beginning sounds in familiar words; and
- recognizing the common sounds at the beginning of a series of words (alliteration).

Examples of how teachers can…

…invite children to identify and manipulate the beginning sounds of words: "Let's say 'Humpty Dumpty' again, but this time make it 'Lumpty Gumpty'."

…play word games that help children identify and generate rhyming words: "Which of these words rhyme: *snow, lamb*, and *go*?"… or "How many words can you think of that rhyme with *clock*?"

- **Teaching about print**

It is important for children to recognize print in their surroundings, understand that it carries meaning, know that it is used for many purposes, and to experience print through writing. Teachers should—

- create print rich-environments that include books, photographs and pictures with captions and labels, calendar and bulletin board displays, and labels and signs for special areas of the classroom, and
- make a variety of props that use printed letters and words available for use in dramatic play, such as menus, play money, recipes, empty food cartons, and telephone books.

Examples of how teachers can…

…draw children's attention to print everyday life: "I'm going grocery shopping later, so I wrote this list of the things I need to buy. Can you tell me how many things are on the list?"
…distinguish between children's beginning writing and drawing: "I like the cat you drew. She is a pretty orange cat. Oh, I see over here you wrote your cat's name. Can you tell me your cat's name?"

- **Teaching about books**

It is important for young children to know how to handle books appropriately, recognize books' features such as the cover and title, and recognize it was written by an author and has drawings by an illustrator. Children should also recognize that printed letters and words run from left to right across the page and from top to bottom.

Examples of how teachers can…

…draw children's attention to how print functions in books: Teachers can emphasize the direction in which we read by pointing to the first word on a line and running a finger beneath the words while reading from left to right and top to bottom.

- **Teaching about letters**

In order for children to enter kindergarten ready to learn to read, it is essential that they leave preschool with the ability to: recognize and name letters; recognize beginning letters in familiar words (e.g., their own name); recognize both capital and lowercase letters; and relate some letters to the specific sounds they represent. Teachers should—

- create a classroom environment that provides a variety of opportunities to learn about letters through manipulatives, environmental print including an alphabet posted at eye-level, alphabet books, and at a writing center; and
- play games that use letters, provide children with letter manipulatives, and encourage children to write letters using various materials.

Examples of how teachers can…

…help children write letters: "Look, I made the letter "C" out of play dough. Now can you make a letter "C"? Good! What other letter should we make together?"
…help children hear the sounds that letters can make: "Linn, your name begins with an "L" (emphasizing the beginning sound). Who else has a name that begins with the same sound? Yes, Larry! Your name also begins with an "L" sound, made by the letter "L" (saying the letter name)."

- **Building children's background knowledge and thinking skills**

It is important for young children to learn information about the world around them, to discover what things are and how they work. Through

learning about the world, they extend their use of language, develop vocabulary, and develop their abilities to figure things out and to solve problems. Teachers should—

- provide children with opportunities to develop concepts by exploring and working with a variety of equipment and materials; and
- share informational books, especially those that use pictures and illustrations that children can understand easily.

Examples of how teachers can…

…teach children new words and concepts: "Look at the seeds we planted. They're *sprouting!* See how the seedling is pushing through the dirt? See the tiny green leaves? That means it is growing!"

➢ **Teaching about numbers and counting**

Teachers can help children learn about numbers and counting in numerous ways, such as through pointing to and counting objects as part of the classroom's daily routine and when passing out materials.

Teaching in more direct ways can involve—

- providing children opportunities to count using manipulatives;
- teaching counting songs and rhymes that use different actions;
- reading and discussing number-counting books; and
- including numbers in the pictures they draw and in the words and stories they write.

Examples of how teachers can…

…use manipulatives to teach numbers, counting and math concepts: Teachers can provide children with different types of macaroni and encourage the children to sort the different types and then count them aloud. With older children, teachers can teach the concepts of "*same, different, more than, less than, and one more"* while comparing the groups of objects.

B-5. Does ED encourage the formal teaching of reading in Title I preschools?

ED encourages Title I preschools to teach early reading and cognitive skills that provide the foundation for formal reading instruction. Early childhood education programs, including Title I preschools, should not be implementing an elementary school curriculum, either; they should be providing opportunities for children to develop early reading skills through activities that are appropriate and enjoyable for young children. Along that vein, early childhood education programs, including Title I

preschools, do not de-emphasize play—rather, they encourage teachers to use constructive and imaginative play as intentional opportunities for children to develop their vocabulary, understanding, and ability to think about the world around them.

B-6. What general strategies do high-quality preschools use in selecting, developing, or supplementing a curriculum?

Teachers should identify and provide activities and instructional materials, based on scientifically-based reading research, that develop children's language, cognitive, and early reading skills. If the State in which the preschool is located has high-quality preschool guidelines in cognitive and language domains, we encourage the preschool to align the curriculum with those standards. If a State does not have preschool guidelines in the language and cognitive domains, we recommend that the curriculum be aligned with the State K-12 standards so that children develop the prerequisite skills so they will succeed in reading when they start formal schooling.

The curriculum should be intellectually engaging, have meaningful content, and provide multiple opportunities for developing and practicing language and cognitive skills, including the use of explicit instruction.

B-7. What does the classroom environment look like in a high-quality preschool?

Preschool teachers should plan the classroom environment carefully so that literacy is an integral part of everything they do. In this way literacy learning, that is reading and writing, becomes a meaningful part of their everyday lives. For example, research shows (Neuman and Dickinson, 2001) that children's literacy development is supported in classrooms that—

- have a large number of high-quality, age-appropriate books in a variety of genres (e.g., story books, alphabet books, nonfiction books, and wordless picture books) that can be easily accessed by the children);
- are print-rich, with letters of the alphabet, labels, and printed directions clearly displayed at the children's eye level;
- have play and learning centers that include a large number and wide variety of books, writing tools, and other materials and props conducive to dramatic play;
- have a book-reading area with comfortable furniture, a carpet, or pillows; and
- display children's work throughout the room.

Many of the displays throughout the room, whether books, labels or other printed materials, will change throughout the year as children study different topics and the environment reflects their learning.

B-8. How can preschool teachers effectively monitor children's progress to ensure that children enter school ready for success?

Throughout the year, teachers should regularly monitor children's academic, social, and emotional development in a variety of ways. Through progress monitoring, teachers are better able to plan instruction and ensure that children's needs are being met. There should be formal and informal observations of children's progress in academic and social activities. Teachers can monitor children's progress by—

- observing children as they play with each other, respond to directions, participate in activities, and use language to communicate;
- collecting samples of children's drawings and writings;
- documenting progress;
- talking with children about their own progress; and
- talking with parents about what they have observed at home.

Teachers should think about how their instruction can be better tailored to the individual child's needs if the student is not progressing in a particular area. Through the use of screening and diagnostic tools, teachers can become aware if the child should be referred for any special services. It is important that teachers communicate with parents about the child's strengths and share any concerns about the child's development.

B-9. What type of professional development enables teachers to provide a high-quality early childhood education program?

Teacher knowledge is a crucial ingredient in a high-quality early education program. Children's cognitive growth and language development are primarily influenced by the daily interactions between children and the adults who are teaching them, caring for them, and guiding their learning opportunities. The curriculum, learning environment, and materials available to children are important elements of quality, but it is the teacher's ability to implement the curriculum and to use effective instructional approaches that result in a long-term difference for learning (Whitebrook, 2003). [See Appendix A and http://www.iir.berkeley.edu/cscce for additional information.]

Many preschool teachers do not have formal training in providing explicit instruction or supporting and expanding children's cognitive and language skills. Some school-based early education programs hire elementary

school teachers and, although these teachers traditionally have at least a bachelor's degree in education, they need additional training in child development, language acquisition, early literacy, observation, and assessment.

Professional development for preschool staff should be based on knowledge from scientifically-based research of how children develop their cognitive language, literacy, and other essential skills for school readiness. For example—

- strategies for reading to children,
- extending discourse; and
- teaching new words.

In addition, preschool educators can benefit from sustained professional development that uses such strategies as mentoring and coaching. For example, a coach might model effective teaching strategies for the teacher, and/or observe the teacher's instruction, which is followed by discussion and reflection on the effectiveness of instructional strategies and how they support young children's progress.

The statutory definition of "professional development" in section 9101(34) of the ESEA, which applies to Title I preschools, lists a number of activities. Those most applicable to the preschool level are listed below.

Professional development includes activities that—

- are high-quality, sustained, intensive, and classroom-focused in order to have a positive and lasting impact on classroom instruction and the teacher's performance in the classroom;
- are not one-day or short-term workshops or conferences;
- are designed to advance teachers' understanding of effective instructional strategies that are based on scientific research;
- are aligned with and directly related to any applicable State content standards;
- provide instruction in methods of teaching children with special needs; and
- are regularly evaluated for effectiveness.

B-10. How do high-quality preschool programs engage parents?

The quality of family environments and parent-child interactions is central to a child's literacy and cognitive development. Parents strengthen their child's literacy development and school-related competencies when they engage in language-rich, parent-child interaction, provide supports for literacy in the family, such as by reading to their children, and hold appropriate expectations of the child's learning and development. High-quality preschool programs provide explicit training for parents in the

skills and behaviors that support their child's development. For example, parents and other family members should be encouraged to—

- talk with children and engage them in conversations, and help them to name objects in their environment ("labeling");
- read and re-read stories;
- encourage children to recount experiences and describe ideas that are important to them;
- visit the library and museums; and
- provide opportunities for children to draw and print, using a variety of implements, such as markers, crayons, and pencils.

Teachers and parents are partners in preparing children for future school success. It is essential that teachers engage in consistent and meaningful sharing of information with parents and caregivers, including meeting with parents to talk about any areas in which their child is experiencing difficulties. In addition, by sharing specific information about the topics children are learning, and the skills they are developing, teachers strengthen parents' ability to support their children's learning at home. Some examples of ways in which teachers can communicate with parents are—

- talking to parents as they deliver and pick up their children;
- sending home newsletters or notes that share what children are learning at school;
- arranging regular meetings to discuss the child's progress; and
- identifying strengths and any areas in which the child could use extra support at home.

Teachers should communicate with parents in other languages when appropriate to facilitate effective communications, (see for example, 34CFR200.6(c)(2) of Title I regulations). Teachers also should work with parents to develop a plan for summer or other vacation periods between preschool and kindergarten that allows the child to continue in an instructional program and prevents the loss of previously acquired skills. Teachers can encourage parents to become their child's advocate and spend time in the preschool observing and helping their own child.

B-11. How can preschools effectively transition children from preschool to kindergarten?

Some of the ways in which preschool programs can help ensure continuity in children's learning are—

- coordinating the professional development activities of preschool and kindergarten teachers in order to align prekindergarten and kindergarten curricula and goals;

- arranging for kindergarten and preschool teachers to visit each other's classrooms; and
- having preschool teachers provide the future kindergarten teacher with children's portfolios or a written record of their learning during preschool.

Sharing information about a child's experience in preschool is particularly important in cases where a child may need extra support in order to experience success in school. For example, for children who are having particular difficulty with spoken language or cognitive skills upon entry to kindergarten, the preschool teacher should provide the kindergarten teacher with the child's history, which would likely include documentation of steps taken to help the child progress toward his or her program goals, and a discussion of areas where the child is still experiencing difficulty.

B-12. How can gains made in preschool be sustained in subsequent years?

Participating in even one year of early education of sufficient high quality can make an important contribution to children's later reading and school success. However, programs achieve the most enduring and meaningful results when children continue to receive comparable educational services at least through the primary grades. These follow-on activities include parent involvement and activities that are designed to promote continuity in children's educational experiences (Reynolds, 2000).

C. State Administration

C-1. What type of oversight responsibility do SEAs have for Title I preschools?

As the Title I grantee, the SEA is responsible for oversight of all Title I programs, including preschool programs operated with Title I funds. [*Sections 1111 and 1112, ESEA.]*

C-2. How can SEAs support Title I preschools?

Some SEAs are presently supporting Title I preschools through their early childhood endeavors by—

- disseminating information, through publications, conferences, and other events, that describes how Title I funds can best be used to support preschool programs;
- coordinating Title I efforts with offices for early childhood education (where they exist);

- developing State preschool standards in the cognitive and language domains;
- monitoring programs to ensure that Title I preschool is meeting program goals;
- considering early intervention as an appropriate measure to prevent later academic difficulties when providing technical assistance to schools that are in school improvement; and
- providing funds for professional development and improving the cognitive focus in preschools through special initiatives.

C-3. What type of technical assistance can SEAs provide to LEAs in order to ensure high-quality Title I preschools?

In addition to supporting Title I preschools through broad-based efforts, such as those mentioned in C-2, SEAs can provide targeted support to LEAs through technical assistance that is specifically focused upon improving local program quality.

SEAs can –

- provide professional development for early childhood educators, by holding on-going workshops and training for practitioners to learn how to apply research-based practices in their classrooms, and providing support for follow-up coaching and mentoring opportunities;
- provide information about the State content standards for K-3;
- disseminate information through a list-serv, conferences, or other events in order to share research-based practices to use in preschools and highlight particularly effective preschools in their State; and
- encourage the use of mentoring relationships between effective preschools and those that are struggling.

C-4. What achievement standards apply to preschool programs receiving Title I funds?

The Department encourages SEAs to develop developmentally appropriate preschool content standards that are aligned with the SEA's K-3 content standards and that specify what children are expected to know and be able to do when they arrive at kindergarten, and also to develop preschool achievement standards that measure those aligned preschool content standards. If a preschool is located in a State that does not have preschool content standards, or if the State preschool standards do not address the cognitive and language domains, local preschools are encouraged to develop standards that will ensure that children acquire the skills they need to be successful in school.

An LEA that uses Title I funds to provide early childhood development services to low-income children below the age of compulsory school attendance must ensure that those services comply at a minimum with the

achievement standards established under section 641A(a) of the Head Start Act. *[Section 1112(c)(1)(G), ESEA.]* The specific Head Start standards applicable to Title I preschool programs are in regulations at 45 CFR 1304.21—Education and Early Childhood at: http://www.headstartinfo.org/pdf/1304.pdf.

If an SEA has preschool achievement standards that are different from and enhance the Head Start achievement standards, LEAs should use those SEA achievement standards in addition to the Head Start standards. Title I preschool programs using the Even Start Family Literacy Program model, or Even Start programs that are expanded through the use of Title I funds, are not required to comply with the Head Start achievement standards. *[Section 1112(c)(3), ESEA.]* However, Even Start programs are governed by indicators of program quality (performance standards) developed in each State for that program.

C-5. What requirements must a Title I preschool program meet if it uses an Even Start model?

A Title I preschool program using an Even Start model must integrate early childhood education, adult literacy or adult basic education, and parenting education into a unified family literacy program. *[Section 1231, ESEA.]* Additionally, the Title I preschool programs using an Even Start model must include program elements (1) through (15) in section 1235 of Title I, Part B (Even Start Family Literacy Program). The legislation for the Even Start Family Literacy Program is at:

http://www.ed.gov/programs/evenstartformula/legislation.html?exp=0.

D. LEA and School-Level Administration of Preschools

D-1. How may preschool programs be funded under Title I?

There are several ways in which preschool programs may be funded under Title I. For example—

- A participating school may use its Title I funds to operate a preschool program.
- An LEA may reserve an amount from the LEA's total allocation to operate a Title I preschool program for eligible children in the district as a whole or for a portion of the district. *[Section 1112(b)(1)(K), ESEA.]*

D-2. How may district-operated Title I preschool programs be funded?

An LEA may reserve an amount from the LEA's total allocation and distribute those funds to specific Title I schools, or other comparable public early childhood education programs to operate Title I preschool

programs. Head Start, Even Start, and Early Reading First are examples of such programs. [See G-2 and G-3] *[Section 1112(b)(1)(K), ESEA.]*

D-3. Where may Title I preschool services be provided?

Preschool services may be provided at any location that other Title I services may be provided, including public school buildings, public libraries, community centers, privately owned facilities (including facilities owned by faith-based organizations (FBOs)), the child's home and other appropriate settings.

D-4. If appropriate facilities are not available to house a preschool program in the district or a school, how might preschool services be provided?

If appropriate district or school facilities are not available for preschool services, the district and school should consider working with children in existing childcare programs such as Head Start, Even Start, Early Reading First, or a program funded under the Child Care Development Block Grant, or a site conducting a family literacy program. In any case, the setting should be of sufficient quality to facilitate effective program implementation.

D-5. What children are eligible for participation in a Title I-supported preschool program in a school operating a schoolwide program?

A preschool that is part of a Title I school operating a schoolwide program is not required to identify particular children as eligible to participate in the Title I preschool. Rather, all children in the attendance area of that school are eligible for preschool services. *[Section 1114(a)(2), ESEA.]*

D-6. What children are eligible for participation in a Title I-supported preschool program in a Title I targeted assistance school?

To be *eligible* to attend a Title I preschool program in a targeted assistance school, preschool-age children ─ like school-age children ─ must be failing or most at risk of failing to meet the State's challenging student academic achievement standards as determined by multiple, educationally related, objective criteria established by the LEA and supplemented by the school. With respect to preschool children, this determination must be made on the basis of criteria such as teacher judgment, interviews with parents, and developmentally appropriate measures of child development. *[Section 1115(b), ESEA.]*

The use of family income to determine eligibility for Title I preschool is allowable, especially for the purposes of prioritizing when there are not

sufficient Title I resources to serve all preschool age children with other educational needs, but children should not be identified for Title I preschool solely on the basis of family income.

In addition, children who participated in a Head Start, Even Start, Early Reading First, or Title I preschool program at any time during the two preceding years, homeless children, and children in institutions for neglected or delinquent children are automatically eligible for Title I preschool and to continue into Title I school programs. *[Section 1115(b)(2), ESEA.]*

D-7. May an LEA or school use Title I funds to identify eligible preschool children?

Generally, it is the responsibility of an LEA and school to use information it already has available to identify at-risk children. However, if an LEA has no existing assessment data for preschool children, Title I funds may be used for identifying these children.

D-8. Must a schoolwide program include plans to assist preschool children in the transition from preschool to local elementary school?

Yes. A schoolwide program must include plans for assisting preschool children in the transition from early childhood programs, such as Title I preschool, Head Start, Even Start, or Early Reading First, to local elementary school programs. *[Section 1114(b)(1)(G), ESEA.]* [Also see examples of transition activities in B-11.]

D-9. What responsibility do targeted assistance programs have with respect to assisting preschool children in the transition from preschool to local elementary school?

Targeted assistance programs must coordinate with and support the school's regular education program, which may include services to assist preschool children in the transition from early childhood programs such as Head Start, Even Start, Early Reading First, or State-run preschool programs to elementary school programs. *[Section 1115(c)(1)(D), ESEA.]*

D-10. May an LEA or school use Title I School Improvement funds for a preschool program?

Yes. If a local educational agency or school receives School Improvement funds, the district or school may use those School Improvement funds to conduct a preschool program if the preschool program is a strategy that addresses the specific academic issues that caused the district or school to be identified for school improvement, and the preschool program is

carried out in accordance with the district's or school's improvement plan. *[Sections 1116(b)(3)(A), 1116(c)(7)(A), ESEA.]*

D-11. Are LEAs or schools required by Title I to test preschool children?

No. Under Title I, third grade is the earliest grade at which children must be tested. *[Section 1111(b)(3)(C)(v), ESEA.]* However, the more that teachers know about children's academic, social, and emotional development, the more able they are to meet those children's needs. Therefore, the Secretary recommends that LEAs and schools develop age-appropriate screening and assessment measures to assist with individualizing instruction so that all Title I preschool students develop a strong foundation in literacy and numeracy. In addition, through initial screening and by checking the children's progress, teachers and schools can identify those children who need special help or who face extra challenges.

Screenings and assessments for preschool children do not imply the use of paper- and-pencil, and large-group assessments, which are not allowed below the third grade in some States. Rather, appropriate assessments for preschool children include individually administered standardized assessments, observational checklists completed by teachers while students play, or an analysis of student work. The information gleaned from these types of assessments should then be used to make informed decisions about instruction and enhance teaching and learning, rather than to make judgments regarding the efficacy of a school or a system.

When choosing a screening or assessment tool, LEAs and schools should ensure that it has been validated for its intended purpose and population. For example, it is not appropriate to use a first-grade skills assessment for screening or assessing a preschool-age child.

E. Qualifications of Teachers and Paraprofessionals in Title I Preschool Programs

E-1. What are the required qualifications for teachers working in Title I preschools?

Well-trained teachers are important to the quality of early childhood education programs and the successful development and learning of young children. Preschool teachers working in Title I preschool programs, in States that consider preschool as part of public elementary education, must meet the applicable Title I teacher qualification requirements. *[Sections 200.55 and 200.56, Title I Final Regulations, December 2, 2002.]* The Improving Teacher Quality Non-Regulatory Guidance is available at: http://www.ed.gov/programs/teacherqual/guidance.doc and the Title I Final

Regulations are available at:
http://www.ed.gov/legislation/FedRegister/finrule/2003-2/041803a.pdf.

E-2. What are the required qualifications for paraprofessionals working in Title I preschool programs?

In Title I preschool programs in targeted assistance schools—

- all paraprofessionals paid with Title I funds must have earned a secondary school diploma or its recognized equivalent; and
- any paraprofessional paid with Title I funds and hired after January 8, 2002, must have (1) completed at least two years of study at an institution of higher education; (2) obtained an associate's or higher degree; or (3) met a rigorous standard of quality, and demonstrate ─ through a formal State or local academic assessment ─ knowledge of, and the ability to assist in instructing, reading readiness, writing readiness, and mathematics readiness. All paraprofessionals paid with Title I funds and hired by an LEA must meet these requirements by January 8, 2006.

In Title I preschool programs in schoolwide program schools, all paraprofessionals must meet the above requirements, regardless of how their salary is funded.

Paraprofessionals who only serve as translators or who conduct parental involvement activities must have a secondary school diploma or its equivalent, but do not have to meet these additional requirements. *[Section 200.58, Title I Final Regulations (December 2, 2002).]* [For more information on paraprofessionals, see http://www.ed.gov/policy/elsec/guid/paraguidance.doc.]

E-3. Who qualifies as a paraprofessional in a Title I preschool program?

A paraprofessional, for the purpose of meeting staff qualification requirements in a Title I preschool, means an individual who provides instructional support under the direct supervision of a qualified teacher. Instructional support may include: assisting in classroom management, conducting parent involvement activities, providing instructional support in a library or media center, acting as a translator, or providing instructional support services such as helping children practice reading readiness, writing readiness, and mathematics readiness skills taught by the teacher. Paraprofessionals should not be providing direct instruction or introducing new content or skills. A paraprofessional does not include individuals who have only non-instructional duties, such as providing personal care services or performing clerical duties. *[Sections 200.58 and 200.59, Title I Final Regulations (December 2, 2002).]*

E-4. Do the requirements apply to paraprofessionals working in preschool programs jointly funded by Head Start and Title I?

The requirements apply to paraprofessionals working in a non-schoolwide Head Start program that is jointly funded with Title I funds if the paraprofessional is paid with Title I funds; for example, a program where Title I funds the instructional component and Head Start funds the remainder of the program activities. The requirements also apply when a jointly funded program is part of a Title I schoolwide program. *[Section 200.58(a)(3), Title I Final Regulations (December 2, 2002).]*

E-5. What are the requirements for the supervision of paraprofessionals working in a Title I preschool program?

Paraprofessionals must provide instructional support under the direct supervision of a teacher. A paraprofessional works under the direct supervision of a teacher if the teacher plans the instructional support activities the paraprofessional carries out, evaluates the achievement of the students with whom the paraprofessional is working, and the paraprofessional works in close and frequent physical proximity with the teacher. *[Section 200.59, Title I final regulations, (December 2, 2002).]*

As a result, a Title I preschool program staffed entirely by paraprofessionals is not permitted. A Title I preschool program where a paraprofessional provides instructional support and a teacher visits a site once or twice a week but otherwise is not in the classroom, or a program where a paraprofessional works with a group of students in another location while the teacher provides instruction to the rest of the class, would also be inconsistent with the requirement that paraprofessionals work in close and frequent proximity to a teacher. [For more information, see the Draft Paraprofessional Guidance http://www.ed.gov/policy/elsec/guid/paraguidance.doc.

A paraprofessional may assume limited duties that are assigned to similar personnel who are not working in the Title I preschool program including noninstructional duties and duties that do not benefit participating students, if the amount of time the paraprofessional spends on those duties is the same proportion of total work time as the time spent by similar personnel at the same school. *[Section 222.59(d), Title I Final Regulations.]*

E-6. May Title I funds be used to provide professional development for preschool teachers and paraprofessionals not paid with Title I funds?

Title I funds may be used to provide professional development for any teacher or paraprofessional working in a Title I preschool program supported partly by Title I funding even if their salary is not paid for with Title I funds if the training is related to the Title I program and is designed to meet the educational needs of Title I children. For example, Title I

funds may be used for professional development for a Head Start teacher working in a preschool program jointly funded by Title I and Head Start if the training is related to the Title I program or is designed to help the Head Start teachers meet the educational needs of Title I children.

Under certain conditions, Title I funds may also be used for joint professional development for non-Title I preschool teachers and paraprofessionals working in programs with no Title I funds, such as Head Start staff, and for Title I elementary school teachers and paraprofessionals. For example, Title I funds may be used for such joint professional development if the children served in the non-Title I preschool are likely to be attending a Title I school when they enter kindergarten, and if the purpose of the professional development is to improve coordination between the non-Title I preschool and the Title I school or to facilitate children's transition from preschool into the Title I elementary school.

F. Parental Involvement

F-1. Why is parental involvement important in preschool programs?

Parental involvement in the education of children should begin as soon as they start school. Early childhood, preschool, and kindergarten programs that train parents to work with their children at home tend to have significant, positive effects. Children who participate in these programs have better grades and ratings from teachers both of which tend to improve the longer they are in the program. They also make greater gains than children who do not participate in such programs (Henderson & Mapp, 2002).

Studies that compared levels of involvement found that achievement increased directly with the extent to which parents were engaged in the program. Children who participated from all family backgrounds and income levels made gains and in some cases, children having the most difficulty in school made the greatest gains (Henderson & Mapp, 2002).

F-2. Do the parental involvement provisions in section 1118 of Title I apply to preschool programs?

All provisions in section 1118 apply to Title I preschool programs except the requirement in section 1118 (d)(2)(A) concerning discussion of the school-parent compact at parent-teacher conferences in elementary schools. [See F-3.]

F-3. Do the LEA and school's written parental involvement policies apply to parents of children in Title I preschool programs?

Yes, as applicable. For example, if an LEA operates a preschool program at the district level, the pertinent parent involvement provisions would be those applicable to the LEA.

F-4. What is the relationship between Title I parental involvement policies and those in other programs?

Title I LEAs and schools must, to the extent feasible and appropriate, coordinate and integrate Title I parent involvement strategies and activities with parent involvement strategies under other programs such as Head Start, Reading First, Early Reading First, Even Start, Parents as Teachers Program, the Home Instruction Program for Preschool Youngsters, and State preschool programs. *[Section 1118(a)(2)(D) and 1118(e)(4), ESEA.]*

F-5. How can Title I preschools build capacity for significant parental involvement?

The quality of family environments and parent-child interactions is central to a child's literacy development and education. As described in B-10, parents strengthen their child's literacy development and school-related competencies when they engage in language-rich parent-child interaction, provide support for literacy in the family and hold appropriate expectations of the child's learning and development. Accordingly, preschools can provide parents with educational training in those parenting skills most closely associated with children's language and cognitive development. Furthermore, preschools can share the preschool curriculum goals and indicate how parents can support this learning at home.

Also, preschools should create systems for ongoing communication with parents, such as regular parent-teacher conferences and frequent reports on children's progress. Program staff can also work with parents to develop a plan to consistently reinforce cognitive skills during summer or other extended vacation periods between preschool and kindergarten, which will help prevent the loss of previously acquired skills.

Schools or school districts can inform parents of resources on how to support their children's development, such as directing them to Parent Information Resource Centers (PIRCs) funded by the Department. More information is available about the PIRCs at: www.pirc-info.net.

Also, preschools can encourage parents to volunteer in the preschool classroom and provide opportunities for parents to observe classroom instruction. In addition, those activities identified in the LEA and school's

parental involvement policies have been specifically designed to build capacity for parental involvement.

F-6. May schools include parents of children in Title I preschool programs in professional development activities?

Yes. Title I schools must provide reasonable support for parental involvement activities as parents of participating children may request, including allowing parents to participate in professional development activities that the school or LEA deems appropriate. In addition, LEA plans must describe the strategy the LEA will use to coordinate the Title I program with professional development programs funded under Title II of the ESEA, to provide professional development to principals and teachers and, if appropriate, to other individuals including parents. *[Section 1118(e), ESEA.]* [See B-10]

G. Coordination with Other Federal Programs

G-1. How must Title I preschool programs coordinate with other preschool programs providing educational services?

An LEA's Title I plan must describe how it will coordinate and integrate services under Title I with other educational services such as Even Start, Head Start, Early Reading First and other preschool programs, including its plans for the transition of children in those programs to elementary school programs. *[Section 1112(b)(1)(E)(i), ESEA.]* An LEA must also describe, if appropriate, how it will use Title I funds to support preschool programs for children, particularly children participating in a Head Start, Early Reading First or Even Start program as these children are automatically eligible for Title I when then enter kindergarten. An LEA may support preschool programs by providing such services directly or through a local Head Start agency, an agency operating an Even Start program, Early Reading First, or another comparable public early childhood education program. *[Section 1112(b)(1)(K), ESEA.]*

G-2. How may a school or LEA coordinate the use of Title I funds with Even Start Title I, Part B funds?

SEAs and LEAs have considerable flexibility in coordinating Title I funds used for preschool with Even Start funds. For example, an LEA may include appropriate Title I activities as part of its Even Start project. A Title I preschool program could provide, in full or part, the early childhood component of an Even Start project. Similarly, Title I services that provide training for parents of Title I participants to help them assist in their children's education could also be included in an Even Start

project. Such coordination is enhanced by several other provisions as well. Title I funds may be used to increase parent involvement, *including family literacy [Section 1118, ESEA];* and Title I funds or in-kind contributions may be used to meet the local share requirement under Even Start. *[Section 1234(b)(1)(B), ESEA.]* If an LEA includes Title I activities as part of its Even Start project, it must ensure that the Title I activities are consistent with the requirements of the Title I program as well as Even Start.

G-3. How may a school or LEA use Title I funds to complement or extend Head Start programs?

In addition to supporting preschool children participating in Title I programs, Title I funds may also be used to complement or extend Head Start programs. In the examples listed below, all Title I requirements apply to the use of Title I funds—

- Eligibility for Head Start is based on the income levels of parents. Children eligible for Title I because they reside in an eligible attendance area and are most at risk of not meeting the State's challenging student achievement standards, might not qualify for Head Start under Head Start's income requirement. In this case, Title I funds may be used to provide services to Title I eligible children who are not eligible for Head Start services.
- Head Start may be unable to serve all its eligible students. Title I funds may be used to serve unserved children who are also eligible for Title I (i.e., those who reside in eligible Title I attendance areas and are failing, or most at risk of failing, to meet the State's challenging student achievement standards). Note that some Head Start-eligible children might not be eligible for Title I.
- Title I may be used to provide additional services to Head Start children who are also eligible for Title I services. This may include extending the daily program for additional time or increasing the number of days, providing services at times Head Start is not operating, or enriching services through provision of extra personnel to work with Title I-eligible children.
- Title I funds may provide educational services for children who are eligible for both Title I and Head Start, with Head Start funds providing other services.

G-4. Are children with disabilities eligible to participate in Title I preschool programs?

Yes. Children with disabilities are eligible to receive Title I services on the same basis as eligible children without disabilities.

G-5. Are migrant children eligible to participate in Title I preschool programs?

Yes. Migrant children are eligible to receive Title I services on the same basis as eligible non-migrant children. *[Section 1115(b)(2)(A), ESEA.]*

G-6. Are Title I preschool programs required to coordinate with Migrant Education Program (MEP) services?

Yes. The statute requires LEAs to coordinate and integrate Title I services with services provided at the LEA or school level for migratory children. *[Section 1112(b)(1)(E)(ii), ESEA.]* Similarly, the MEP has a responsibility to coordinate with Title I programs. *[Section 1304(c)(1)(B), ESEA.]* The requirements for such coordination increase program effectiveness, eliminate duplication, and reduce fragmentation of the instructional program.

G-7. What is the relationship between Early Reading First and Title I preschool?

Early Reading First is designed to transform existing early education programs, such as Title I preschools, child care agencies and programs, Head Start centers, and family literacy programs such as Even Start, into centers of early learning excellence that will result in preschool-age children developing the early language and cognitive skills they need to enter school ready to read. Early Reading First funds provide the opportunity for these preschool programs to change the classroom environment, provide professional development for staff in scientific reading research-based instruction, support preschool children's language and cognitive development, and use screening assessments and progress monitoring to identify and work with preschool children who may be at risk for reading failure. *[Sections 1221 –1226, ESEA.]*

H. Fiscal and Legal Requirements

I.

H-1. May Title I funds be used to pay the cost of renting or leasing privately owned facilities for preschool instructional purposes or for office space?

Yes. The cost to rent or lease space in privately owned buildings is allowable if the space is necessary to ensure the success of the program, appropriate space is not available to the grantee, and the cost is reasonable.

H-2. May Title I funds be used for minor remodeling to accommodate a preschool program?

If appropriate space is not available, Title I funds may be used for minor remodeling, which means minor alterations in a previously completed building and does not involve building construction or structural alterations to buildings. *[34 CFR Section 77.1(c).]*

H-3. May a portion of Title I funds be used to provide preschool participants with comprehensive services?

Yes. If preschool children have need for health, nutrition, and other social services, a portion of Title I funds in a targeted assistance school may be used to address those needs, if appropriate, based on a comprehensive needs assessment and funds are not reasonably available from other public or private sources. *[Section 1115(e)(2), ESEA.]*

H-4. Must Title I preschools meet the supplement-not-supplant requirement?

Yes. *[Section 1120A(b), ESEA.]*

H-5. Are children in private preschools eligible for equitable Title I services?

Not generally. Section 1120 of Title I requires an LEA to provide equitable services to eligible children who are enrolled in private elementary schools and secondary schools. As a result, unless State law considers preschools to be part of elementary education, children in private preschools are not enrolled in an elementary school and thus are not eligible to receive Title I services.

H-6. What portions of the Education Department General Administrative Regulations (EDGAR) apply to Title I preschools?

The following parts of EDGAR apply to Title I preschools: Parts 76, 77, 80, 81, 82, 84, 85, 97, 98, and 99. EDGAR is available at: Education Department General Administrative Regs (EDGAR).

Appendix A: Resources on High-Quality Early Childhood Education

The following resources represent a small sample of the research-based resources available on preschool. This list is not exhaustive. The U.S. Department of Education is providing the list of resources below for the reader's convenience, and no official endorsement by the U.S. Department of Education is intended or should be inferred. The views expressed by the authors are their own, and do not necessarily represent the policies of the Federal government or the U.S. Department of Education.

Teaching our Youngest, A Guide for Preschool Teachers and Child-Care Family Providers

This guide, published by the U.S. Department of Education, can be obtained free of charge by calling 1-877-EDPUBS (433-7827) or 1-800-USA-LEARN. Order on-line at **edpubs@inet.ed.gov**.

Reports

The National Reading Panel (NRP) reviewed more than 100,000 studies on reading and identified five components essential to a child's ability to learn to read: phonics, phonemic awareness, fluency, vocabulary, and comprehension. NRP's findings and their analysis and discussion of these five areas of reading instruction are published in **Reading First: The Research Building Blocks for Teaching Children to Read**. Additional information is available at: Report of the National Reading Panel: Teaching Children to Read.

Put Reading First: The Research Building Blocks for Teaching Children to Read is designed for classroom teachers. It describes the findings of the NRP and provides analysis and discussion in five areas of reading instruction. The publication is also available from EDPUBS at no cost by calling 1-877-EDPUBS (433-7827) or 1-800-USA-LEARN. Order on-line at **edpubs@inet.ed.gov**.

Suggested Reading: Summaries

Adams, M.J., Foorman, B.R., Lundberg, I., & Beeler, T. (1998). **Phonemic Awareness in Young Children**. Baltimore: Paul H. Brookes Publishing.

This book addresses the "research to practice" issue in phonemic awareness and includes activities that stimulate the development of "phonemic awareness" in early education programs. While most teachers are familiar with the term "phonemic awareness" and its importance in the process of acquiring literacy, knowing how to teach and support "phonemic awareness" learning has been a challenge for many. The authors intend to close the gap between the research findings and classroom instruction by providing a developmental curriculum in "phonemic awareness" based upon validated classroom research that originated in Sweden and Denmark, and was then adapted and researched in classrooms in the United States.

Apel, K., & Masterson, J. (2001). **Beyond Baby Talk: From Sounds to Sentences - A Parent's Guide to Language Development**. California: Prima Publishing.

Sponsored by the American Speech-Language-Hearing Association, this book describes how children develop language from their earliest words to sentences. With the understanding that parents are the primary language role models for their children, the authors provide parents with a guide to understanding language development as well as ways in which they can interact with their children to promote language development.

Burns, M.S., Griffin, P., & Snow, C.E. (Eds.). (1999). **Starting Out Right: A Guide to Promoting Children's Reading Success**. Washington, D.C.: National Academy Press.

This book is edited by members of the Committee on the Prevention of Reading Difficulties in Young Children. It is intended for parents, teachers, policymakers, and community members. The book addresses the following central questions:

- What kinds of language and literacy experiences should be part of all preschool and childcare settings?
- What should reading instruction look like in kindergarten and the early grades?
- What questions should be asked of school boards, principals, elected officials and other policymakers who make decisions regarding early reading instruction?
- Is my child making progress in reading related skills and early reading?

The goal of the book is to share a wealth of knowledge based upon extensive guidelines, program descriptions, and advice on resources, and strategies that can be used in everyday life.

Gopnik, A., Meltzoff, A.N., & Kuhl, P.K. (1999). **The Scientist in the Crib**. New York: Morrow.

This book looks with great detail into the relationship between science and young children's development. There have been many rigorous scientific studies conducted that have helped us better understand how babies think and learn. The latest research on early childhood development tells us that babies and young children know and learn much more about the world around them than we ever have imagined. This book is not the typical parenting advice or "how to" book. Rather, it strives to take a different road and look at the science of babies' minds.

Hart, B., & Risley, T.R. (1999). **The Social World of Children: Learning to Talk**. Baltimore: Paul H. Brookes Publishing.

This book follows the groundbreaking study reported by Hart and Risley in their earlier book, **Meaningful Differences in the Everyday Experiences of Young American Children**. It goes beyond the discussion in the earlier book on the role of language experience in the intergenerational transmission of language competence and examines the patterns in that transmission. The authors provide tables and figures with their data and thoroughly discuss their findings. Hart and Risley state that they have a simple message for parents: their conversation matters when their children are young. Talking with children provides them with experiences that are important to both their cognitive and their social/emotional learning. The authors provide evidence that the language tools provided to children through conversation can contribute at least as much to a child's future success as their heredity and their choice of friends.

Lyon, G. Reid. (2003) Testimony before **The Committee on Health, Education, Labor and Pensions, United States Senate.**

Dr. Lyon is Chief of Child Development and Behavior Branch at the National Institute of Child Health and Human Development, National Institutes on Health, Department of Health and Human Services. His statement is entitled "The Critical Need for Evidence-Based Comprehensive and Effective Early Childhood Programs" and is available at: 2003.07.22: Head Start.

Neuman, S.B., & Dickinson, D.K. (Eds.). (2001). **Handbook of Early Literacy Research**. New York: Guilford Press.

This volume examines current research on early literacy and intervention. The *Handbook* begins by addressing broad questions about the nature of early literacy, and then continues by summarizing current knowledge on cognitive development, and emphasizing the importance of cultural contexts in the acquisition of literacy. Subsequent chapters focus on various skills and knowledge that emerge as children become literate, as well as the roles of peers and families in this process. The book devotes attention to the importance of meeting the literacy needs of all children and emphasizes the importance of coordinated school, family, and social services to provide the necessary support for those children who struggle most in school. Various approaches to instruction, assessment, and early intervention and research on the efficacy of these approaches are described.

Reynolds, Arthur J. (2000). **Success in Early Intervention: The Chicago Child-Parent Centers.** Lincoln, Nebraska: University of Nebraska Press.

This book reports on the effects of participation in the Title I funded Chicago Child-Parent Center (CPC) Program in which over 1,200 low-income preschool children participated. Since 1967, the CPC's provided educational and family support services from preschool to the early elementary grades for up to six years of continuous intervention. The data reported in this monograph are from the Chicago Longitudinal Study that began in the spring of 1986.

The strong support for the cognitive advantage hypothesis found in this study indicates that programs may be more likely to have long-term effects if they directly impact cognitive and scholastic development during the early childhood years.

Snow, C.E., Burns, S., & Griffin, P. (Eds.). (1998). **Preventing Reading Difficulties in Young Children**. Washington, D.C.: National Academy Press.

his book is a summary report developed from the findings of the Committee on the Prevention of Reading Difficulties in Young Children. It examines research findings to provide an "integrated picture of how reading develops and how reading instruction should proceed (p. vi)." The core message of the book with regard to reading instruction is: " reading instruction should integrate attention to the alphabetic principle with attention to the construction of meaning and opportunities to develop fluency (p. vii)."

The research reviewed in this book includes studies on normal reading development and instruction; on risk factors that can be useful in identifying children at risk for reading failure; and on prevention, intervention, and instructional approaches to ensuring the most optimal reading outcomes. The committee emphasizes the importance of high-quality preschool and kindergarten environments and their contribution to providing a critical foundation to facilitate children's acquisition of essential reading skills.

Whitebrook, Marcy. (2003). **Early Education Quality: Higher Teacher Qualifications for Better Learning Environments – A Review of the Literature.** Washington, DC: The Education Trust.

This report is a review of the literature on the relationship between teacher education and training and the quality of early education and care. Specifically, the authors draw the conclusion that early childhood classrooms where the teachers have at least a Bachelor's degree are more likely to be of higher quality—as in richer language environments, richer literacy environments, and better teacher-child interactions.