



EDUCARE:

Re-envisioning Education
Beginning at Birth



EDUCARE: Re-envisioning Education Beginning at Birth

“These public-private partnerships are the only way we’re going to get there. If we continue to point fingers, if we continue to work in silos – when adults fight, kids lose. It takes adults putting egos aside, putting historical differences aside, and saying ‘Let’s figure out a better way to do it.’ This (Educare) is a better way to do it and it’s starting to become a real national model.”

– U.S. Secretary of Education Arne Duncan,
speaking at the September 17, 2009, dedication of Educare of
Oklahoma City

In late 1999, philanthropist Susie Buffett wanted to make the smartest possible investment to improve public education in her hometown of Omaha, Nebraska. She and her then-foundation president, Dan Pedersen, spoke with Superintendent John Mackiel regarding how he would choose to use private funds to enhance opportunities for Omaha’s 46,000 students, including children speaking more than 60 languages and large numbers from economically stressed homes. While many aspects of his school district needed additional resources, Superintendent Mackiel gave top priority to investing in the first five years of life and learning.

Today, about 300 parents begin each morning with infants and toddlers in tow, or with excited four-year olds running ahead, by entering one of two Educare schools in Omaha, brightly-colored, specially designed buildings housing a comprehensive birth-to-age five early childhood program. Located adjacent to Kellom Elementary School and Indian Hill Elementary School in two of the city’s poorest neighborhoods, the Educare schools are modeled on the first one on Chicago’s south side. This original flagship school was constructed with support from business leader Irving Harris and informed by a research-based program model designed by Chicago’s Ounce of Prevention Fund, a longstanding leader in early childhood advocacy and program development. These and all other Educare schools across America are public-private partnerships in which funding and governance includes the local schools, Head Start and Early Head Start, child care, philanthropy, and other community and private sector leaders. Building on Chicago and Omaha’s earliest sites, local leaders have opened Educare schools in Milwaukee, Tulsa, Denver, Miami, Oklahoma City, Seattle, Kansas City, and Maine. Several more are being developed, coast to coast, across America with support from a growing consortium of private funders. Educare is a growing network of comprehensive early childhood schools whose programs – and even architecture – are driven by what research tells us needs to be done to level the academic playing field for our nation’s most disadvantaged young children. Plus, Educare is a catalyst for broader policy and systems change locally and nationally.

Recent advances in research on early brain development confirm Superintendent Mackiel’s principle that the foundations of learning are forged long before children reach the schoolhouse door. With the roots of the achievement gap evident as early as 9 months (Halle et al, 2009), investing to strengthen early learning opportunities – at birth and even before; and starting first with children who are most at risk – is a critical step in any comprehensive education reform effort. If our goal is to rectify the persistent education performance gap between privileged and less-privileged students, we must ensure that all students enter school physically healthy, with key language and literacy skills as well as the social and emotional capacity to approach learning – and life – with confidence, curiosity and enthusiasm.

This issue brief, written for education and state policy leaders, provides a detailed description of the opening chapter in the Educare story, including:

- a portrait of the Educare strategy: state-of-the-art facilities, a research-based birth-to-age five program model, a unique public-private/early childhood-public education partnership, and a platform for policy and systems change;
- a summary of recently completed early evaluation data on the impact of Educare on children in the first five operating Educare schools: Chicago, Omaha, Milwaukee, Tulsa, and Denver; and
- implications of the Educare model for public education and early childhood policy.

Early Learning and the Achievement Gap

“As chiefs, we must use our leadership, our passion for the power of education, and our commitment to equal opportunity to radically reform the way our country, states, and communities support young children and their families. If we fail to do this, our hopes for a race to the top to new levels of educational performance and attainment may turn into a frightening dive to the bottom.” Council of Chief State School Officers Early Childhood Task Force. [A Quiet Crisis: The Urgent Need to Build Early Childhood Systems and Quality Programs for Children Birth to Age Five.](#)

As Nobel Prize winning economist Paul Krugman recently pointed out, living in poverty has always been a form of exile (Krugman, 2008). Low-income families often live in isolation from a wealth of opportunities that middle class families take for granted: safe places for their children to play, nearby parks and playgrounds, backyard gardens, trips to the zoo and the library, books and games, and access to high quality early education programs. Like all parents, they want their children to succeed in school and in life, but often they lack the resources to give their children the best start. The result is that 43 percent of all children under age 6 – some 10 million children living in low-income families – are often left behind.

The evidence is alarming. Lags in the developmental progress of disadvantaged children show up very early and achievement disparities between low-income and more affluent children grow larger throughout the early years of life.

- Differences in vocabulary growth begin to appear as early as 18 months. On average, by age 3, children in poverty, have heard 30 million fewer words than their same-age non-impooverished peers (Halle et al, 2009; Hart & Risley, 1995).
- By age five or entrance to kindergarten, children in poverty, on average, enter kindergarten 18 standard score points behind their non-impooverished peers in the areas of early literacy and mathematics/problem solving (Lee & Burkham, 2002; US Department of Education, National Center for Education Statistics, 2001; Dickinson & Tabors, 2001; Hair & Halle 2003).
- Secure early attachments set the stage for success throughout the life span (in personal relationships, in approaches to learning, and in cognitive development). Yet, up to 50% of families living in poverty have children with less than secure attachments, compared to 30% of all families (Erickson et al, 1985).

- Kindergarten teachers point to social emotional competence as the most important part of school readiness and the number one reason for recommending kindergarten grade retention. Children who enter kindergarten unable to relate well to their teachers and peers, and unable to manage anger and other negative emotions, often struggle with learning. As these children move through school, their difficulty in academic achievement leads to more disruptive behavior. By late elementary and middle school, between 50-70 % of disruptive, off-task behavior occurs because children are unable to meet the academic demands placed on them (The Child Mental Health Foundations and Agencies Network, 2000; NECDL Pre-Kindergarten Study, 2005).

Fortunately, recent advances in neuroscience and child development give us hope. We now know that rich and engaging early learning experiences and nurturing, responsive relationships with parents and caregivers are as important to a young child's developing mind as nutritious meals and good health care are to their developing bodies. And we know that economic analysis confirms the value of investment in the early years. In fact, Nobel-Prize-winning economist James Heckman calculated a 10% rate of economic return on effective investments in the first five years proving that investing in young children is economically wise and developmentally beneficial (Heckman, 2008).

Armed with this science, and a growing demand for proven, research-based practices, early childhood practitioners have been refining interventions for young children and families. Research and demonstration projects like the Chicago Parent-Child Centers, the Abecedarian program, Head Start and Early Head Start have helped to delineate the critical program features that can make a difference for children most at risk of poor educational and life outcomes. We now know what it takes to buffer the risk factors too many of our young children face and what we can do to promote healthy development for all children. The challenge, of course, is "to take what we know from the lab to the street." To go to scale, we must find ways to take the lessons learned from science and clinical trials and find the resources and the political will to bring high-quality early childhood programs to the many communities in need across the country.



In the first decade of the 21st century, there has been growing recognition and support for increasing investments in early childhood programs. The impact of Head Start, coupled with advances in science, has spurred the growth of state-funded voluntary preschool programs. Thirty-eight states plus the District of Columbia now have a state-funded preschool program for four-year olds. While progress is being made across the nation to enroll qualified children, Oklahoma is the only state guaranteeing that virtually every child can start school at age four. Head Start has also led the way in recognizing that for many children, beginning at three or four is already too late. In 1995, the Early Head Start program was created, using a three percent set-aside of Head Start dollars. Legislation reauthorizing Head Start and Early Head Start in 2007 required half of all new funding to be used for expansion of Early Head Start, thus growing the numbers of children who can benefit from early learning programs. The recent federal economic stimulus package pumped additional funds into education from

cradle to career with more than two billion dollars directed toward expansion of Early Head Start and Head Start and another two billion designated for the Child Care Development Block Grant. Despite these investments by the federal government and states, not all children eligible for early learning programs are able to be served.

Beyond providing funding, there is still much to be done to create coherent, integrated early childhood systems that can make a significant difference in the lives of young children.

- Without increased investments, existing programs like Head Start and state-funded preschool cannot meet the standards of program intensity, workforce quality, and comprehensiveness that research tells us are needed to achieve desired outcomes.
- Relatively few dollars support programs that serve expectant parents and children from birth to three. When programs do exist in a community or state that provide services both for infants and toddlers and for preschoolers, they most often are segmented by age group, program auspices and funding sources; three year olds often are left out entirely, served neither in infant/toddler programs nor in preschool settings.
- Transitioning from one program to another is yet another challenge to families already burdened with many concerns. And, limited resources often hinder Head Start and preschool programs from helping children and families make the kind of transition to kindergarten that they know would be useful for children, families and teachers alike.

The Educare model was developed as an attempt to address some of these pressing concerns. It is an intensive, intentional strategy working to reduce an achievement gap that is crippling the futures of too many of our nation's young, and creating a drop-out rate that is one of the largest in the industrialized world (Herbert, 2008). Because K-12 educators struggle with these issues every day, they increasingly are as motivated as their early childhood colleagues to support investments for very young children and their families. To be effective advocates, however, educators at every level are looking for more information – about what program designs and components, funding mechanisms and policies will best ensure the impact that is needed.



Educare presents one such design worthy of public school educators' close attention. A relatively new, rapidly expanding initiative, Educare is a state-of-the-art, comprehensive model of services and evidence-based practice to engage the most at-risk young children and their parents. With preliminary evaluation evidence that is positive and promising, the initiative represents the best thinking of our nation's most experienced program leaders and researchers. It is a model that builds partnerships across disciplines and sectors, between early childhood professionals, the private sector, and K-12 educators, to support the key ingredients of school readiness: nurturing healthy social emotional development, enhancing language and early literacy skills, focusing on numeracy and problem-solving, improving intellectual development and ensuring physical health and safety.

WHAT IS EDUCARE?

“What attracted us to Educare was the opportunity to create a truly research-based model of early education to influence our other statewide programs and initiatives. It also reflects our longstanding interest in maximizing the full engagement of parents. We liked the concept of partnership across funding streams and leveraging new private sector investments. So we worked through our Early Childhood Cabinet to identify funding sources, including economic development programs, to support the costs of Educare’s higher level of quality.”

- Susan Gedron, Former Commissioner, Maine Department of Education

Educare centers have undertaken a complex job: to change the life trajectory of children at risk of entering kindergarten so far behind their more advantaged peers that they may never catch up. The complexity of the task requires complex solutions. To this end, Educare strategies exist on multiple and intertwined levels:

- » A **place** in the community that represents hope and renewal.
- » An evidence-based **program** that prepares children for school and works to narrow the achievement gap.
- » A **partnership** for creating a community-based comprehensive birth-to-five program and a new way of doing business.
- » A **platform for policy and program change** locally and nationally.

Educare is a PLACE

“A program needs a recognizable place.”

Dr. Ed Zigler, Yale University

At the founding of Head Start almost 50 years ago

There is no mistaking, or missing, an Educare center. Each school is a newly constructed facility, placed in a low-income community yet designed to be the equal of the finest early education centers in more affluent neighborhoods. Its eye-catching icon – a brightly colored schoolhouse frame – adorns every center, affirming to parents, business leaders, policy makers and the public that investing in early childhood is critically important for all children. Equally important, each Educare is located close to a public elementary school, providing another essential message: programs for children from birth-to-age-five are, first and foremost, about education and learning begins at birth.

An Inside Look at Educare of Omaha

As one drives through streets lined with low-rise townhouses and apartments surrounding Educare of Omaha at Kellom Elementary, the neighborhood might not feel as needy as some inner-city communities. Yet these parents share the challenges of families everywhere who lack the wages, job opportunities and education to provide stable and safe environments for their children. Those who work often hold two jobs, with changing or unpredictable hours.

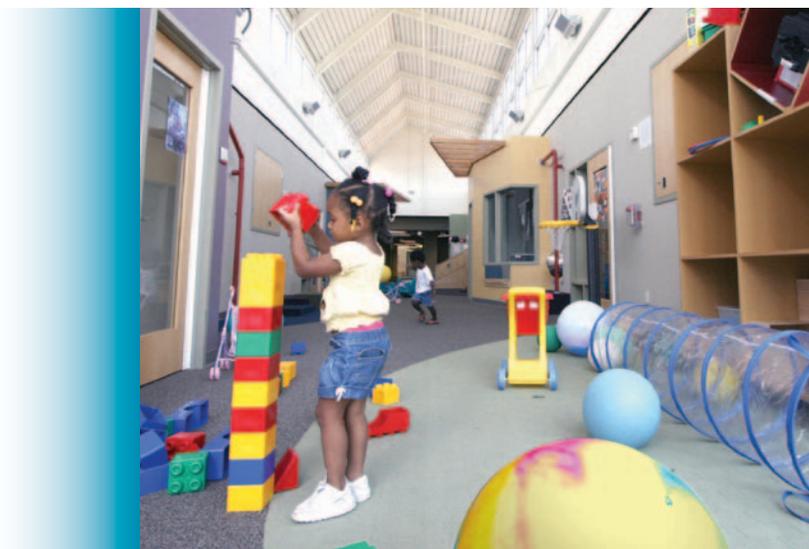
As visitors approach, Educare’s red arches are clearly visible and welcome families and guests alike. Bricks line the sidewalk leading up to the entryway, each

representing a \$25 donation from community members – parents, teachers, even construction workers, all of whom wanted to be part of the partnership that created the facility. Entering Educare, visitors are greeted in a bright two-story high circular rotunda – the “community piazza” and central hub of the school. Windows circling the ceiling of the rotunda allow light to stream through a beautiful multi-colored glass flower which hangs from the ceiling – a symbol of beauty and growth. Cushioned benches provide a place for parents to sit with their children, get coats on or off, or visit with other parents and staff.

What is clear as one walks through and listens to staff talk about the space is the **intentionality** of every aspect of the building. Top architects have been engaged to design a building meant to provide high-quality, safe, stimulating and predictable environments for young children and their families, to counter what is often unavailable in their homes and neighborhood. Architectural plans are always developed in close collaboration with program staff so that the building serves the program, rather than the program adapting to the space available.

Branching off in two directions from the rotunda are hallways leading to Educare's infant-toddler and preschool classrooms. One is quickly aware that even the hallways speak to young children. Walls are painted in soft, warm tones, and the children add the color with their artwork and moveable structures of blocks and circles that they can play with as they pass by.

The infant and toddler rooms in each paired classroom are connected by low windows: growing infants can see where they're headed while toddlers can look back for the comfort of knowing they haven't moved far. The infant spaces in these rooms are small and cozy, resembling rooms in a home. A teacher holds a baby, explaining to her that visitors have come to see her school. Language is critical and teachers and aides take every opportunity to provide a running narration for every child in their care, regardless of age. The connected room for toddlers is divided for group time and individual play areas. One teacher sits on the floor as two children explore some toys. Across the room, a teacher comforts a child in a rocking chair while another reads a picture book to two toddlers in the reading corner.



The hallways are deliberately wide, built to serve as an extension of the classrooms themselves, and a place for both individualized time between teacher and child and for large motor activities, especially important during bad weather. On rainy days, the hallways are busy with activity. Teachers keep a close eye as toddlers chase a ball down a chute; a two-year-old pushes a child's grocery cart filled with books, proudly saying “book” and holding one up for a visitor to see. Overlooking the hallway are Master Teachers' offices, with large windows that allow for observation without intrusion of too many adults in one space.

Extending in the other direction from the rotunda are three pairs of connected preschool classrooms. The connected classrooms exemplify continuity and community. The rooms are designed with cozy areas for reading, areas for “messy” play (art projects and water play); areas for group interaction (building

with blocks and dramatic play) and for individual learning (writing, science, using computers). As with the infant-toddler rooms, every classroom is furnished with developmentally appropriate furniture, books and toys, all of which support positive, intentional teacher-child interactions that nurture and stimulate healthy development.

In the center of the building is the staff lounge and offices where teachers can do planning and office work (there are no teacher's desks in classrooms, as the focus there is always on the children). Behind these offices is a large multi-purpose indoor play gym, used for large motor activities – the safety and space for the running and jumping and larger group activities that all children need. In the center's on-site kitchen, staff prepare meals and snacks designed to meet the majority of young children's daily food needs. Breakfast, lunch and snacks are served family-style – children, even toddlers, serve themselves and are encouraged to try new foods.



Next to the central rotunda is a large room that provides additional space for training and workshops. Here, parents gather for Parent Forums held throughout the year on topics ranging from toilet training, effective discipline, nutrition (including feeding a family on a tight budget, living with picky eaters and preventing obesity), and dealing with the stresses of parenting (including free massages). One important topic is providing information on how young children learn (through doing, seeing and interacting rather than through worksheets, a commonly held belief). It is also a place for parent-child interactive activities (art, music and movement, puppet plays, for example). This room is also available for neighborhood child care providers and other community groups, reflecting the role the center plays not just as an early childhood center but also as a community center. WIC programs, public school teachers and other community non-profits all make use of the training room. Workshops for child care providers are particularly popular – by offering them close to providers' homes, the center has reversed a long-standing trend of child care providers not attending training events.

Finally, an outdoor play area offers a wonderful play space. Paths lined with trees, shrubbery and plants provide room for children to ride bikes, play in sprinklers, plant gardens and explore butterflies and blossoms. Each age group – preschoolers, toddlers and infants – can enjoy its own fenced off space with developmentally appropriate playground equipment and cushioned protection for safety. Gates dividing each area allow the space to be opened up when one large space is needed.

Visit each subsequently designed Educare school and you'll see important improvements: "birth-to-five neighborhoods" of classrooms rather than hallways separated by age, crafted to further support Educare's commitment to nurturing predictable relationships through continuity of care; play therapy rooms for individualized consultation; playgrounds that feature outdoor musical instruments and specially designed rolling hills meant to nurture growth. Each improvement underscores Educare's commitment to ongoing learning.

Educare is a PROGRAM

The Educare model was initially developed by the Ounce of Prevention Fund in Illinois. Since 1982, the Ounce had been working with young children and families living in one of the poorest neighborhoods in the nation. Yet, as the children entered the primary grades they were remaining severely behind in cognitive and social-emotional skills. The organization decided to get innovative and redesign their program services in order to obtain the outcomes they had set out to achieve.

Taking a step back, staff and administrators reflected on what they had learned about their work with families struggling to survive in a community of severe poverty and community violence. They reviewed existing research on best practice and developed a new model that would create the best learning environment to prepare children and their families for the best school experience possible. Lessons learned from their experience and all the best available research helped the Ounce define key features of the new model. It would be:

- A comprehensive birth-to-five program in a single site, allowing sustained support to children over time;
- An intentional, outcomes-based design, built on evidence-based best practice;
- A model in which families were an integral part of services; and
- A model of braided funding.

By combining a variety of public and private funding streams, the Educare model builds on and enhances program features first established by Head Start and Early Head Start. Educare schools provide the high quality and intensity of services that most early care and education programs in low-income communities lack the resources and infrastructures to offer.

In essence, Educare reflects the best that science tells us young, at-risk children need to enter kindergarten healthy and ready to achieve. The model's core features include:

- 1. Consistent, individualized attention to children and families that begins early and continues over time.** At Educare, families are offered services that begin prenatally, with intensive support before, during and after childbirth and continue through their children's first five years, including transition into kindergarten. Families enjoy a carefully planned, sequenced continuum of supports from an interdisciplinary team that includes classroom teachers, family support specialists, and health, mental health, and language consultants.

With this approach, staff teams have the opportunity to build a cumulative picture of the family and the child's development over time, and parents are spared the burden of finding new providers as their children grow from infants to toddlers to preschoolers. It also helps counter the instability and challenges often faced by high-risk families.

To ensure that children receive the individualized care and attention they require in the early years, classroom groupings are kept small and teacher-to-child ratios are high: three-teacher classroom teams care for eight children in the infant and toddler classrooms and seventeen children in the preschool classrooms. (In contrast, Head Start classrooms have group sizes of 17 or 20 with two teachers in each group). Small caseloads (30 families per staff) also

allow family support workers to provide individualized support to parents and other family members.

2. A balanced approach to emotional, social, cognitive and language development. Like Head Start, Educare services encompass all domains of a young child's growth and development. The best evidence suggests that two aspects of early childhood experiences are most predictive of school and life success: 1) early attachment and social emotional experiences; and 2) early literacy and language development. Research also indicates the value of sustained exposure to the arts. These areas receive special emphasis in the Educare model.

- Early attachment and social-emotional development. The roots of healthy social-emotional development – the ability to express and manage positive and negative emotions, develop close and positive relationships with peers and adults, and have the confidence to explore their environment – are developed in children's earliest relationships with important adults in their lives, first and foremost their parents, but also teachers and other caregivers. Through Educare's relationship-based work, parents and staff partner to address this important area of child development. Staff members receive special training on age-specific social-emotional development and continually reflect its importance in their work with families. Specially developed tools are used to screen and assess the social-emotional development of every child in care. Infant mental health consultants are additional members of the Educare team, available for ongoing work with parents, teachers, and other staff members.



- Early literacy and language development. Research tells us that the first three years of life are critical to children's later literacy development, and that young children learn best within the context of close and caring relationships with their parents and other primary caregivers. How much language children are exposed to and within what context both matter for language development. At Educare, classroom activities center on the use of language. Teachers are trained to continually create opportunities that increase children's exposure to language, and to encourage children's curiosity about and exploration of their surroundings, behaviors fundamental to the acquisition of language. Family support staff enhance the classroom focus on language by helping parents understand the importance of language and how they can encourage early literacy and language development at home. A special emphasis is placed on helping parents and staff increase their positive language interactions with their children and reduce negative judgments and commands. Schools also create as many opportunities as possible to share, lend and give books to families, many of whom have few if any books in their homes.

- **Integration of the arts.** A unique aspect of the Educare model is the deliberate integration of arts into programming. Neurological studies show that sustained exposure to music and visual arts can have a beneficial effect on brain development. Dancing and singing can contribute to children's acquisition of new language and the development of social skills important to later school success – taking turns, listening, following directions, for example. Embedding the arts – music, dance, poetry, theater, visual arts – throughout the Educare model also supports the creativity and varied learning styles of children. Staff have observed children who have been nonverbal begin to speak through singing, and those who have been withdrawn to gain confidence through music, painting or dancing. Community artists provide live performances for children and their families, and serve as classroom artists-in-residence. The arts program helps expose parents to the arts as well (often for the first time) through on-site activities and organized field trips, providing parents additional opportunities for sharing new experiences and language with their children.

- 3. Strong parent support and involvement.** Research also has shown that parents who are involved in their child's preschool activities are more likely to remain involved when their children are in elementary school, and children whose parents are involved do better in school (Weiss, Caspe & Lopez, 2006; Reynolds & Clements, 2005; Meidel & Reynolds, 1999). Like Head Start, Educare is a two-generational model: focusing its efforts on the growth and development of parents as well as their children.



Guided by research, Educare schools focus their work with parents on three areas known to improve child outcomes: promoting the parent-child relationship; providing parents with information about their child's growth and development; and encouraging parents' involvement in and advocacy for their child's education and school. Educare teachers receive training on how to develop relationships with parents as they drop off and pick up their children: sharing with parents how their children have spent their day, and listening and responding to parents' own concerns. Family support teams work with Educare parents to develop and enhance parents' roles as their children's primary nurturers and educators. They are available during all program hours, and make home visits at least twice a year. Caseloads are kept small to allow individualized

interactions. To ensure that families receive a range of needed services, family support specialists also develop strong relationships with community resources in order to facilitate referrals for services not available on site. To engage parents further, Educare encourages parents to participate in curricula development and serve in various program governance roles. Regularly scheduled parent workshops, mini-forums, and parent-child activities all encourage parent engagement.

- 4. Highly qualified and well-compensated staff.** Studies show that professional development is related to program quality and program quality predicts developmental outcomes (American Association of Colleges for Teacher Education, 2004; Bloom, 1996; Bowman et al, 2001). Based on these findings, Educare dedicates significant resources to hiring highly trained and educated staff and providing ample opportunities for ongoing learning and professional development. At Educare, three-person classroom teams include a *Lead Teacher* with a bachelor's degree in early childhood, an *Assistant Teacher* with at least

an associate degree in early childhood (many have bachelor degrees in other areas), and a *Teacher's Aide* with a high school diploma and coursework in child development or child care. In addition, Family Support Teams work with every child and family, and include a *Family Support Specialist* with a bachelor's degree in social work or its equivalent, and a *Family Support Supervisor* with a master's degree. Every effort is made to support these highly-skilled staff with competitive salaries. Many Educare pay their staff the same as public school teachers, but the salary total is stretched over 12 months instead of the 10-month public school year.

- 5. A focus on staff support and retention.** Team teaching, high teacher-to-child ratios and small group sizes help provide important supports to staff facing the daily challenges – and rewards – of working with vulnerable children and families. Educare further supports its staff through an infrastructure that includes regular, reflective supervision, in-class coaching from Master Teachers, on-site consultation by health, mental health and speech and language specialists, and ongoing opportunities for training and professional development.

Teaching and family support staff meet regularly to develop and implement unified family and program service plans. This **interdisciplinary approach** provides opportunities for staff to create a shared understanding of their work with families, to problem solve around differences in approach and service delivery, and to ensure that services are coordinated and responsive to individual child and family needs.



Through the Bounce Learning Network of Educare schools, teachers receive training, coaching and mentoring in the use of age-appropriate, research-based teaching strategies, based on the framework of each center's chosen teaching curriculum. Extensive training and support is provided to help teachers work positively with challenging behaviors, including 30 to 50 hours of training on social-emotional development.

Many staff members report that this package of peer and supervisory support and learning built into the Educare structure is an added, highly valued benefit of their work at Educare. Educare serves as an important training ground for young teachers, who may move on after several years to other early childhood or K-12 teaching venues, but take with them a unique and invaluable foundation in high-quality teaching skills.

EVIDENCE-BASED PRACTICE AND CONTINUOUS IMPROVEMENT

Outcomes-based research informed the initial design of the Educare model. Through a process of continuous improvement locally and as a network of programs, research continues to inform program design and strategies. Programs draw from a variety of disciplines, including education, developmental psychology, infant mental health and social work.

Every Educare school is part of a national, multi-site implementation study being conducted by the FPG Child Development Institute at the University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill. [see sidebar *Promising Returns*]. The study is designed to document the features of Educare and how implementation of the model contributes to program quality and improved outcomes for children and families.

Each school works with a local evaluation partner, often a local university, to collect data for the national study and to design and implement an ongoing local evaluation. Evaluations include a focus both on individual children and on program implementation. Educare children are assessed using norm-referenced assessment tools, with the overall goal of helping children develop the cognitive and emotional skills they need to succeed in school. Assessment results are shared with teachers and program leadership on an on going basis; teachers use the information to guide goal setting with children and families, and their approaches to teaching. For example, an assessment of Spanish-speaking children served by Educare of Omaha showed gains of 15 points in the children's English language scores, but no gains in their Spanish language scores. Because Educare's goal with bilingual children is to support their native language along with English, the school re-assessed their strategies. Teaching teams were re-configured to include in one classroom, two teachers who were

bilingual, and in another, a Lead Teacher who spoke English, with a bilingual assistant teacher and bilingual aide. Teaching teams received training in working with dual language learners, and learned strategies to encourage Spanish in the homes.

Because the solid majority of low-income, at-risk children enter kindergarten well below average and behind their peers, the results of the Educare implementation study summarized in the sidebar are encouraging. For vocabulary and school readiness skills – both highly correlated with later school success – the children in Educare schools performed at or near average levels by the time they entered kindergarten. For the highly challenged population that Educare serves, an average of “average” is significant. At the same time, the data show that schools have skill areas that can still be improved. These results will serve as an invaluable guide to focus future program efforts.

Promising Results: Educare Implementation Study Data – January 2011

The FPG Child Development Institute at the University of North Carolina-Chapel Hill is engaged in an implementation study of the network of Educare schools. Data collected during the 2010 school year from nine Educare centers show promise (Yazejian & Bryant, 2011). The study measures the quality of classrooms as well as the progress made by Educare children. National norms for children of the same age, regardless of income level or other risk factors, serve as the comparison for each Educare child's progress.

Improved vocabulary skills

Good communication skills and vocabulary consistently predict later school success. In this study, the Peabody Picture Vocabulary Test IV (PPVT-IV) is used to measure children's progress with vocabulary development. The PPVT is a standardized measure where the average score is 100 and the average range of scores is 85-115. The implementation study found that kindergarten-bound Educare children, from English-speaking homes, average 94.8, well above most low-income children in other large studies of early achievement. Further, the study illustrated that the earlier the child is exposed to Educare the better. Children who enrolled in Educare before age 1 had a PPVT score of 98.3 and those who enrolled between ages 1 and 2 scored 96.7. Early enrollment in Educare prepares children for success in elementary school.

Improved classroom quality

Numerous studies indicate that classroom quality is predictive of child outcomes. Classrooms that have strong interactions between children and teachers and that use equipment, space and materials effectively provide the most promising environment for early learning. Educare uses the Infant-Toddler Environmental Rating Scale (ITERS) and the Early Childhood Environmental Rating Scale (ECERS) to assess the quality of Educare classrooms. The implementation study found that 85 percent of Educare infant-toddler classrooms and 83 percent of Educare preschool classrooms scored in the good to excellent quality range. This differs significantly from other national studies that find infant-toddler and preschool classrooms to be in the minimal to good range.

Educare is a PARTNERSHIP

Long before the concrete is poured for a new Educare school, time has been spent building the true foundation upon which the program's success depends: a strong and committed partnership across sectors, disciplines, and funding streams.

Each Educare school is anchored in its community by a private funder, and through carefully executed and nurtured partnerships, leverages the resources of the local public schools, the federal Head Start/Early Head Start program, state child care programs and other public and private stakeholders. Before plans for a building can begin, public sector organizations must agree by contract to blend multiple funding streams into one effort and forge a plan for working together. This partnering, involving both funding agreements and policy changes that undergird the agreements, takes time; the planning phase of an Educare school can take a year to complete.



Once the public sector agreements are in place, a capital campaign becomes an initial and powerful way to engage business and philanthropic leaders in the Educare model. While creating private sector partnerships to support the bricks and mortar, the campaign also serves to raise awareness, and bring new voices to the early childhood table.

The high-quality comprehensive programming that is the hallmark of the Educare model does not come cheaply. Only by **blending all available funding streams** is Educare able to deliver the level of quality and intensity of service that is necessary to improve outcomes for vulnerable children. Head Start dollars provide core funding, while other funds support program enhancements critical to the Educare model. Together, these public and private funds support the type of early childhood education experience that research shows is necessary to produce strong outcomes for young children with multiple risk factors:

- A staffing structure that promotes individualized care (small caseloads and small class size);
- Salary levels that attract highly educated and skilled staff from various disciplines;
- A level of service intensity that meets the level of family needs;
- Evidence-based best practice and continuous improvement strategies;
- Comprehensive on-site family support services, including infant mental health; and
- Full-day, full-year programming.

Blended funding streams also help create better coordinated services. By blending funding into a single program operating under one roof, Educare helps to bridge service gaps and support programs that are truly centered on what individual families and children need. Parents are relieved of the difficult task of understanding and juggling the often conflicting requirements of different programs, and Educare is able to create the predictable, continuous care and education that young children need to thrive.

Once a school has been built, and the program implemented, a carefully planned shared governance structure provides the cement to maintain the partnerships, ensuring

both stability and growth. Shared governance committees create a table around which stakeholders, including parents, come together to share challenges, problem solve, and maximize resources for the benefit of young children and families. These shared governance structures are an especially effective way of keeping business and philanthropic leaders engaged and of encouraging public partners at the table to work together to maximize outcomes for young children in poverty in ways they generally have not done in the past.

The Public Schools – An Essential Partner

Partnering with a community's educators and public school system is a critical first step in fulfilling Educare's vision of preparing low-income children for school success. Increasingly, school leaders – like **Superintendent John Mackiel** in Omaha – are recognizing the value of investing resources and time in the earliest years to prevent costly interventions later on. From better reading scores at third and eleventh grade to higher graduation rates, there is a preponderance of evidence that quality early learning opportunities like those provided through Educare can have a long-term impact on student achievement. Such findings are sparking discussion and spurring action across the nation among state chiefs of education and local superintendents to more clearly define their role in supporting a coherent early childhood system that prepares the most at-risk children for school and, in so doing, chips away at the achievement gap.



The Educare-school partnership is forged from the very public beginning. Its most visible sign is location: every Educare school sits either adjacent or very close to the neighborhood elementary school, reinforcing Educare's message that children are born learning and the importance of building/re-envisioning a public education system that begins at birth. Even more important than the symbolism of the location, is the long-term commitment of the public school to supporting the overall success of the community's school. Local schools agree to be an active member of the local Educare Governance Board. Some school

districts also provide the land for the Educare school as well as programmatic funding (e.g., through state preschool programs or federal dollars like Title 1 or Early Reading First). When operating budget support is received from the local school district it helps Educare sustain itself over time. The amount of financial resources the schools bring to the table can have very strong effects on Educare's ability to provide high-quality, early learning opportunities that prepare children for kindergarten.

Beyond location and funding, individual Educare schools are finding unique ways to strengthen their partnership with public schools. In several communities, district superintendents are active participants in and vocal advocates for their Educare school and its mission. In many, the public schools, or some other public body like the local park district or the local municipality, have donated the land on which the center is built. For other sites, public schools also provide significant in-kind support such as custodial services and utilities. Educare of Seattle, supported by the Bill & Melinda Gates Foundation, is spearheaded by the local educational services districts.

While Educare schools clearly benefit from their partnerships with the public schools, the public schools are benefitting as well. In Omaha, the Educare center has been a catalyst for renewal in the local school district. Educare of Omaha “jump-started” a discussion on early childhood and its place in the public education system. Educare’s high-quality program standards (e.g., staff qualifications, staff-child ratios, class size) have begun to influence the standards of all early childhood programs in the Omaha Public Schools – Educare standards are becoming the community norm. With Educare’s focus on easing transitions for children and families, schools also are creating important partnerships with the kindergarten teachers who receive Educare children. Kindergartens benefit from the transition planning Educare does with parents, and kindergarten teachers may call upon Educare staff with questions and concerns about individual students.

Despite these developing Educare-school partnerships, many challenges remain. The earliest assumptions – that children in Educare programs will move on to the school next door – has proven wrong in many cases. The reality is that families served by Educare are extremely mobile, moving in and out of neighborhoods and school districts. In addition, through school choice initiatives, families are selecting elementary schools other than their neighborhood school. With this reality in mind, some programs are tackling transition issues by providing parents with as much information as possible while their children are still at Educare, through workshops that help parents learn what to expect in the public school systems and how best to prepare their child for kindergarten. Other schools are working with families individually to help them find the “right” school match for their child. Still others, like Educare of Denver and Educare of Chicago, are forging comprehensive birth-to-elementary school initiatives.

In addition to transition challenges, Educare and their public school partners who offer preschool are needing to navigate a delicate dance as they compete for children who could be served in either setting. Further, given Educare’s commitment to evaluation and continuous learning and improvement, it is essential that Educare researchers “follow” children and families as they move into and through schools. A strong partnership between Educare researchers and the school is needed to make the long-term tracking work.

Educare is a PLATFORM FOR CHANGE

Through the uniqueness of their buildings, the quality and comprehensiveness of their services, the partnerships that draw attention and resources across public and private sectors, and the evaluation findings now being generated across a growing national network, Educare schools are uniquely positioned to be catalysts for change in their communities and across the nation.

When the Ounce of Prevention Fund and its partners opened the doors of the first Educare center on the south side of Chicago, there were no illusions that Educare would provide all the answers, or be the magic bullet that ensured greater success for children raised in families and communities with limited resources and many challenges. The Ounce was committed, however, to changing the way services for very young children and their families were delivered, in hopes that a comprehensive collaborative approach would be the beginning of more positive change – for the children, their families, the neighborhood schools and the community itself.

While the challenges continue and the learning is ongoing, the innovative model has inspired other school superintendents, like-minded philanthropists and early childhood providers to create Educare in their communities. What’s more, each can be tailored to meet local needs: the Tulsa school includes an on-site health clinic; the Milwaukee location

is adjacent to a non-profit that includes an on-site clinic; the Denver center stands beside a teacher training institute on the historic Clayton Early Learning campus as part of an innovative pre-birth to fifth grade effort with the Denver public schools. Educare of Miami and the second Educare in Omaha serve primarily Spanish speaking populations and work to develop state-of-the-art approaches for children and families for whom English is a second language.

Educare is a vehicle to model, build and inform best practice.



The model's focus on high quality, continuity of care, blended funding, and partnering with schools is informing the early childhood field across the nation. The **Bounce Learning Network** of Educare schools serves as a forum for program and management staff from Educare centers to share ideas and strategies, debate approaches and discuss the challenges of implementing their programs over time. Through the Network, the lessons being learned in day-to-day practice at Educare schools, informed by research and ongoing evaluation, are fashioning new approaches to more effectively address the needs of at-risk children from birth to age five. These lessons underscore the evidence that:

- children are learning from birth;
- environment influences development beginning prenatally;
- achievement gaps develop early;
- children who receive high-quality services for five years beginning at birth fare better than those who spend two years before kindergarten in a high-quality preschool or Head Start program; and
- the more we can do to equalize and enrich learning supports for at-risk children as early as possible, the less remediation the schools will have to do.

Feedback from local evaluations and the national Educare Implementation Study are also providing new insights and sparking new or expanded program design. For instance, Educare of Omaha is opening its doors to hundreds of child care providers in the surrounding community. These caregivers, who because of the extensive time they spend with young children whose parents are working or moving from welfare to work, can benefit from the same support, information, and guidance that parents receive.

Educare is a catalyst for policy change.

With their unconventional buildings, comprehensive model, and evidence-based practice, Educare schools are ideal **showrooms** where elected officials and education policymakers can see firsthand what high-quality early care and education for infants, toddlers, preschoolers and their families looks like. When school superintendents visit an Educare school from other districts or states, are greeted by a fellow superintendent, and see the proximity of the site to the local elementary school, these visual cues make an inescapable statement, reinforcing what the superintendents will see and hear on their visit: a program with rich language environments, caring

relationships between children and caregivers, children energetic and interactive – the very attributes known to create future students with the motivation, language readiness and social and behavioral skills to get the most out of their formal education.

Indeed, lessons from a visit to an Educare school can yield powerful and lasting impressions:

- Educare of Chicago has welcomed through its arches numerous policymakers from Illinois since it opened in 2000. Over this time, the state has supported a historic expansion of birth-to-five funding with more than \$486,359,000 in public funds being allocated to early childhood education and child care services.
- Educare of Omaha served as an important showcase for Nebraska policymakers as they expanded preschool funding in the state, and then went on to create a \$60 million public-private early childhood endowment that used \$20 million in private dollars to leverage \$40 million of Education Land Trust funds. This was not a simple effort, as it required the passing of a statewide referendum that would rewrite the state constitution to include the belief that children are born learning. Dr. Douglas Christensen, Nebraska Commissioner of Education at the time, played a key role in the effort, becoming a vocal advocate for the use of the Education Land Trust Funds to create the Nebraska Early Childhood Endowment. The partnerships with Head Start and the Omaha Public Schools that had been forged as part of creating the Educare school were critical in garnering support for the Endowment.
- Educare of Tulsa inspired policymakers in Oklahoma to create a \$25 million public-private endowment to fund services for infants and toddlers. The state contributes \$10 million in state education funds and the private sector contributes \$15 million to the Oklahoma Pilot Early Childhood Program. Here too, Oklahoma's Superintendent of Education Sandy Garrett was instrumental in supporting this and other early childhood efforts in the state.

An Integrated Strategy

The Educare model is being used strategically to inform both practice and policy at the state and federal level. From closely examining practices and outcomes, to uncovering and advocating policy change, the thought leaders behind Educare are carefully engaging at multiple levels to continuously learn and bring about change in the early learning sector.

Bounce Learning Network

The Bounce Learning Network of Educare schools is a platform from which lessons learned from Educare **programs** can be used to leverage strong and lasting public and private investments in early childhood, to raise standards of quality across birth-to-five programs, and to advocate for the policy and systems change needed to ensure the well-being and healthy development of our most vulnerable children and families, and ultimately our society. For more information, visit www.educareschools.org.

Birth to Five Policy Alliance

The Birth to Five Policy Alliance is aimed at changing **state policies** by investing in local leadership and advocacy that can push local and state agencies to create more flexible rules that allow greater coordination of services for families with young children. The Alliance works both inside and outside state government to promote effective state policies, and develops and disseminates research to increase understanding of the early years. For more information, visit www.BirthToFivePolicy.org.

First Five Years Fund

The First Five Years Fund is aimed at changing **federal policies** so that the interests of at-risk children birth to five are included in policy and funding decisions at the federal level. The Fund also focuses on improving communications around early childhood issues, and securing substantial public/private sector investments for young children. For more information, visit www.FFYF.org.

Generous funding from the philanthropic community supports these efforts. Funders have included: Buffett Early Childhood Fund; W.K. Kellogg Foundation; the Bill & Melinda Gates Foundation; the J.B. and M.K. Pritzker Family Foundation; the George Kaiser Family Foundation; the Irving Harris Foundation; and an anonymous donor.

IMPLICATIONS FOR PUBLIC EDUCATION LEADERS

It is not enough to think outside the box. We need to find a different box to frame our thinking. Educare is one of those different boxes. It has caused us to think differently about children and families and how we need to better embed and connect schools to their communities.”

Dr. Douglas D. Christensen
Retired Commissioner of Education
Nebraska Department of Education

The Educare model is young but wise, strategically crafted and systematically nurtured. It represents a new way of doing business in the early childhood field. The Educare experience teaches us that it is possible to provide high-quality care that changes the learning experiences of our most at-risk children. It is possible to braid funding from public and private sectors, meeting the requirements of funders and providing more sensible, easy to access, comprehensive services to families with young children. And it is possible to share the learnings of Educare with policymakers so that they can understand the impact of positive early experiences on lifelong learning and success. Educare vividly reminds us that learning begins at birth and what happens in the earliest years is crucial to building a 21st century education system for the U.S.

In November 2009, the Council of Chief State School Officers issued “A Quiet Crisis: The Urgent Need to Build Early Childhood Systems and Quality Programs for Children Birth to Age Five.” In that document, the chiefs called for a radical transformation of the way our country, states and communities support young children and their families, beginning with the creation of coherent, integrated state early childhood systems. Educare provides an example of how this might work, albeit on a smaller scale. As chiefs move forward to act upon the recommendations in “A Quiet Crisis,” they should carefully study the Educare model, visit programs and meet with staff and families to understand how birth-to-five services can be connected to elementary education, and the importance of this partnership for ensuring greater academic success for children, especially those at-risk of school failure.

In particular, chiefs should take note of three essential lessons from Educare that can effectively advance a next generation of early childhood programs:

- 1. It is time to build coherent, integrated early childhood programs serving children birth-to-five.** In recent years, considerable attention has focused on the importance of preschool. While preschool is important for advancing early learning and the investments states have made to support preschool are commendable, research reminds us that learning begins at birth and the achievement gap can take root as early as nine months of age. For very young children growing up under economic, social, or psychological hard times, waiting until they are three or four years old ignores the tremendous potential of promoting their healthy development in the earliest years, and providing families with the information and support they want during one of the most critical periods of parenthood. Thus, building quality birth-to-five programs is imperative if we are to truly address the achievement gap.

As next steps, chiefs should:

- convene leaders in early childhood and public education to build a policy framework for integrated birth-to-five early childhood programs;
- in partnership with early childhood programs, identify and address barriers that inhibit integration; and
- collaborate with the governor's office to ensure amendments are made to rules, regulations, standards, data structures and funding to support a coherent, integrated statewide birth-to-five system.

2. Comprehensive high-quality early childhood programs are neither easy nor cheap but a necessary investment if we are to change the learning trajectory of economically insecure children and families.

Building the foundation for early learning involves attending to all domains of child development and the health and well being of the family as well. A diverse funding base that braids together public and private sector funding must support comprehensive early childhood programs to ensure the quality and intensity of services necessary to improve outcomes for at-risk children and their families. In addition, the involvement of multi-sector leaders is essential to ensure that the range of services and supports that are needed by children and families are provided in a coordinated and comprehensive manner.

As next steps, chiefs should:

- advocate for defining research-based program quality standards and applying them to all forms of publicly-sponsored early learning programs;
- fight for the funding necessary to enable all local birth-to-five programs to meet high-quality standards; and
- participate in discussions at the state and local level to facilitate multi-agency collaboration and ensure comprehensive services and supports targeted to the individual needs of children and families are commonplace in all programs.

3. Public schools are essential partners and must be full participants in planning, financing and oversight of early childhood programs.

When public schools and early childhood programs work in concert, everyone benefits – the children enjoy the benefits of quality programs that are thoughtfully designed to mutually align standards, families move through a more coordinated and integrated system, and schools benefit when, at kindergarten, they receive children who are well prepared and ready for the learning expected of them. But to realize these benefits, there must be an early and full partnership between schools and early childhood programs sharing responsibility for the planning, financing and oversight of programs, in so doing enhancing outcomes of the full education continuum beginning at birth. This is more than a nod of agreement or a memorandum of understanding: funds need to be blended; standards, curricula and assessment need to be mutually aligned; teacher training should be coordinated; and practices to engage families in children's learning at school, at home and in the community should be synchronized.

As next steps, chiefs should:

- set the tone for respectful, mutual planning that aligns early childhood and elementary education, paying close attention to development unique to the early childhood years when the foundations for future learning are established; and
- work in partnership with the early childhood community to pool resources and provide quality professional development, training, mentoring and coaching to support best practices during early childhood and through to grade three.

Today, education leaders nationwide understand more than ever the critical role high quality early childhood programs play in improving academic success for high-risk children. The Educare model presents a unique opportunity for chief state school officers and other education leaders to partner with colleagues across sectors in advocating for nothing less than a paradigm shift in how our nation views education – *starting not at kindergarten but at birth*. Experience tells us that change of this magnitude can only happen when advocacy, program, philanthropic and educational leaders speak with a collective voice, advocating for what neuroscience, child development research and four decades of rigorous evaluation tell us is the right thing to do.

“Two hundred years ago our country created a public education system. One hundred years ago our country created a higher education system. Now, still in the dawn of this century, it is our responsibility to finish the unfinished work – and create an early education system for the first five years of learning.” Joan Lombardi, Deputy Assistant Secretary and Inter-Departmental Liaison for Early Childhood Development, U.S. Department of Health and Human Services

Educare – An Expanding Initiative

Year	Activity
1997	Planning begins for first Educare school - Educare of Chicago .
2000	Educare of Chicago opens adjacent to Farren Elementary School.
2003	Educare of Omaha opens adjacent to Kellom Elementary School.
2004	Bounce Learning Network created, a consortium of programs implementing the core features of the Educare model.
2005	<p>Educare of Milwaukee opens adjacent to the Next Door Foundation, an agency with an on-site health center and near Clarke Street Elementary School.</p> <p>Birth to Five Policy Alliance created to bring together numerous national organizations working to promote bipartisan birth-to-five state policies.</p>
2006	Educare of Tulsa opens adjacent to Kendall-Whittier Elementary School; includes an on-site health clinic.
2007	<p>Educare of Denver opens on the historic Clayton Campus, near a training institute for early childhood teachers.</p> <p>First Five Years Fund established. Part of Educare's integrated strategy, FFYF promotes bipartisan birth-to-five federal policies and bolsters communication about the wisdom of investing in the first five years.</p>
2008	Educare of Miami-Dade opens as part of the United Way of Miami-Dade's Center of Excellence.
2009	<p>Educare of Oklahoma City opens adjacent to what will become the new Cesar Chavez Elementary School.</p> <p>The second Educare in Omaha opens adjacent to Indian Hill Elementary School.</p>
2010	Educare of Seattle, Educare of Kansas City, KS, Educare of Central Maine and a second Educare in Tulsa opened.
2011	Groundbreakings for Educare of Washington, DC , and Educare of West DuPage . Educare of Arizona opens in Phoenix.

Sources

American Association of Colleges for Teacher Education. (2004). *The early childhood challenge: Preparing high quality teachers for a changing society*. Washington, DC: Author.

Bloom, P.J. (1996). The quality of work life in early childhood programs: Does accreditation make a difference? In S. Bredekamp & B.A. Willer (Eds), *NAEYC accreditation: A decade of learning and the years ahead* (pp. 13 -24). Washington, DC: National Association for the Education of Young Children.

Bowman, B. T., Donovan, S., & Burns, M. (Eds.). (2001). *Eager to Learn*. Washington D.C.: National Academy Press.

The Child Mental Health Foundations and Agencies Network (2000) *A Good Beginning: Sending America's Children to School with the Social and Emotional Competence They Need to Succeed*.

Council of Chief State School Officers (2009). *A Quite Crisis: The Urgent Need to Build Early Childhood Systems and Quality Programs for Children Birth to Age Five*. Washington, DC: Council of Chief State School Officers.

Dickinson, D. K., & Tabors, P. O., Eds. (2001). *Beginning Literacy with Language: Young Children Learning at Home and School*. Baltimore: Paul H. Brookes.

Erickson, M. F., Sroufe, L. A., & Egeland, B. (1985). The relationship between quality of attachment and behavior problems in preschool in a high risk sample. In I. Bretherton and E. Waters (Eds.), *Child Development Monographs*, 50(1-2), 147-166.

Hair, E. & Halle, T. (2003) *Naturally Occurring Patterns of School Readiness: How the Multiple Dimensions of School Readiness Fit Together*. Poster presented at the Society for Research in Child Development, Tampa, FL.

Halle, T., Forry, N., Hair, E, Perper, K., Wander., L., Wessel, J., & Vick, J. (2009). *Disparities in Early Learning and Development: Lessons from the Early Childhood Longitudinal Study – Birth Cohort (ECLS-B)*. Executive Summary. Washington, DC: Child Trends.

Hart, B. & Risley, T. R. (1995). *Meaningful Differences in the Everyday Experience of Young American Children*. Baltimore: Paul H. Brookes Publishing.

Heckman, J. (2008). "Schools, Skills and Synapses." in *Economic Inquiry*, 46(3), 289-324.

Herbert, B. (2008, April 22). Clueless in America. *The New York Times*.

Krugman, P. (2008, February 18). Poverty is Poison. *The New York Times*.

Lee, V. E. & Burkam, D. T. (2002). *Inequality at the Starting Gate: Social Background Differences in Achievement as Children Begin School*. Economic Policy Institute: Washington, DC.

Miedel, W. & Reynolds, A. (1999). "Parent Involvement in Early Intervention for Disadvantaged Children: Does it Matter?" in *Journal of School Psychology*, 37(4), 379-402.

NECDL Pre-Kindergarten Study (2005) *Early Developments, Vol. 9 No. 1*. Chapel Hill, NC: Frank Porter Graham Center. http://www.fpg.unc.edu/~ncedl/PDFs/ED9_1.pdf.

Reynolds, A. & Clements, M. (2005). "Parental Involvement and Children's School Success," in Patrikakou et al., *School-Family Partnerships: Promoting the Social, Emotional, and Academic Growth of Children*. New York: Teachers College Press.

US Department of Education, National Center for Education Statistics. (2001). *America's Kindergartners: Findings from the Early Childhood Longitudinal Study, Kindergarten Class of 1998-99*, NCE 2001-070R, by Jerry West, Kristin Denton and Elvie Germino-Hausken. Washington, DC.

Weiss, H. B., Caspe, M., & Lopez, M. E. (2006). *Family involvement in early childhood education*. Cambridge, MA: Harvard Family Research Project.

Yazejian, N., & Bryant, D.M. (2009). Promising early returns: Educare implementation study data, March 2009. Chapel Hill: FPG Child Development Institute, UNC-CH.



THE COUNCIL OF CHIEF STATE SCHOOL OFFICERS

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

COUNCIL OF CHIEF STATE SCHOOL OFFICERS

Christopher Koch (Illinois), President

Gene Wilhoit, Executive Director

Tom Schultz, Project Director, Early Childhood Initiatives

This project was supported by funding from the Buffett Early Childhood Fund, the Birth to Five Policy Alliance and the Boeing Company. This report was written by Susan Miller and edited by Deborah Roderick Stark. The Council is grateful for the contributions of Michael Burke of the Buffett Early Childhood Fund, Gladys Haynes, Director of the Omaha, NE Educare Center and Portia Kennel and her colleagues at the Ounce of Prevention Fund.

Council of Chief State School Officers

One Massachusetts Avenue, NW, Suite 700

Washington, DC 20001-1431

Phone (202) 336-7000

Fax (202) 408-8072

www.ccsso.org

Copyright © 2010 by the Council of Chief State School Officers, Washington, DC

All rights reserved.



One Massachusetts Avenue, NW, Suite 700
Washington, DC 20001-1431
voice: 202.336.7000 | fax: 202.408.8072

