

Childhood Readiness and Success Team Notes
October 12, 2011



Team Goal: In Carroll County, all children are ready for Kindergarten and achieve at or above grade level success by the end of third grade.

Attendance: Martha Miller, Jay McIntire, Carol DeLaurier, Patty Ewen (NH DOE), Howard Cunningham, Nancy Coville, Ed Labonville & Cyndi Paulin

Decisions

- Move forward with definition that is community and parent friendly. Before the next meeting, individually review input from community session and bring ideas to next meeting.
- Factor in awareness from DOE that children are entering a setting that uses more group instruction.
- Work with community meeting participants and others on the best way to use the “definition” (especially how to best reach out to parents)

Discussion

Debrief/Review Kindergarten Readiness Community Conversation

- A lot of interest in the topic; articulate and knowledgeable group. The agenda was very full but participants stuck with the task and got it done. Tight format worked well – kept things moving.
- Great to see early childhood educators and Kindergarten teachers relating to each other, listening to each other and learning from each other. Participants seemed to appreciate being heard.
- Group ID'd critical issues around kindergarten readiness
 - There are many different perspectives about what Kindergarten Readiness looks like and what constitutes reasonable expectations of young children.
 - How to increase access to preschool or learning so all children have the opportunity for early learning. (Including costs)
 - How to reach/support parents that are the least connected.
 - Cross classroom visits/communication between early childhood providers and Kindergarten teachers for awareness about what happens in one another's classrooms before and after transition from one environment to the other. There are variations of what this looks like depending on individual programs and teaching styles.

Readiness Definition

- Reviewed input from the community conversation. The definition largely already reflects the ideas that were surfaced by participants. The team agrees that it can be improved by simplifying the language for parents.
- Discussed the idea of framing the indicators along a continuum from basic/beginning to “very ready”. This would give parents a way to see how to move their children forward and would hopefully be less overwhelming to them.
- Information/Resources from NH DOE (provided by Patty Ewen)
 - 98% of NH kids go to Kindergarten
 - 31% communities have full-day Kindergarten
 - 75% of NH families – both parents are working by the time their child is 2.
 - Financial issue not going away. Many legislators have never been to Kindergarten.

- State has a set of Grade Level Expectations that they have been using with districts since last spring. (Not yet formally adopted by legislature).
- Part of Public Kindergarten is group instruction and negotiating that setting. Consider including “sit in a chair for 5-7 minutes”; “follows three oral directions” (go inside, hang up coat and go to the rug); “can write or locate their own name” (find their cubby, etc.)
- Head Start is mandated to align with Kindergarten Readiness and has a framework that identifies 11 readiness domains.
- NH DOE is looking at 6 domains
 - Social Emotional Development (personal and social skills)
 - Physical (health and safety)
 - Numeracy (logic and reasoning)
 - Language and Literacy (EL) (writing, speaking, viewing, vocabulary)
 - Cognitive and Approaches to Learning
 - Creative Expression/Aesthetic Development (arts, nature, music)
- Kindergarten screening is a snapshot. How communicate with parents about where child is and suggested activities over the summer?
- **Suggested Resources:**
 - ReadyforKindergarten.org – proven program birth to 5. Provides 3 doses a year. Parent engagement is key. Cost \$135/child/year. Includes training, toys, teach parents. Communities can decide to use Title I funds – need to show parent interest and engagement. Good for Moms including teen Mom, Dads, grandparents or any adult familiar with the child.
 - Rainbow.com
 - AEPSI

Other:

Right time to start Kindergarten/Full Day Kindergarten

- The cut of dates for starting Kindergarten vary. The cut off dates themselves can pose a challenge because of where children are developmental at various ages. (Range among children born at the same time and multiplied by the range of ages within a classroom.)
- 75% of families in NH – both parents are working by the time children are age 2. This has a huge influence on what family needs are to simply manage where their child is physically during the day while they are at work and influences whether they can enroll their child in a half day public Kindergarten or need to find an alternative. Many 3 and 4 year old children are already “at school” full time. It can then be an odd experience to attend “half-day” school as Kindergartners.

Team focus – stay broad and focus on readiness as a whole or focus on one thing such as reading to children?

Next Meetings – Wednesdays (6:00-7:30 pm) at Tri-County CAP (Rte. 16, Tamworth)

- November 9
- December 14

