



Durham's Transition to Kindergarten Plan



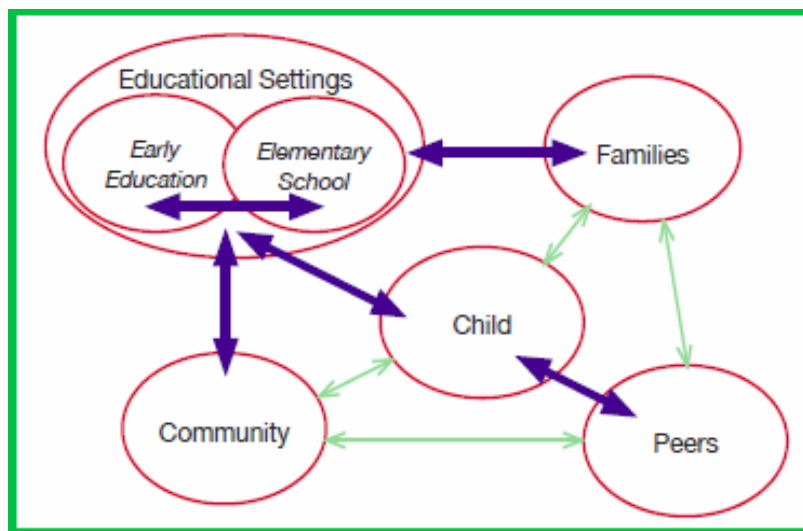
Developed by Durham Public Schools and Durham's Partnership for Children, 2009

School Readiness: *"School readiness includes two key pieces: the condition of children as they enter school and the capacity of schools to educate all kindergartners. Each of these pieces requires strong support from families, the early childhood community, public schools, and other community agencies."*

- North Carolina Ready School Initiative

Transition to Kindergarten:

The transition to Kindergarten is one of the most significant transitions that a young child experiences and lays the foundation for future success in school. A smooth transition to kindergarten is a shared responsibility among many individuals and institutions including children, families, teachers, schools and the community. Transition to Kindergarten is a *process* that begins in preschool and continues through kindergarten and is experienced by all partners rather than an event that happens to an individual child.



Source: Good Beginnings Alliance (2004). *Steps to Kindergarten Transition*.

Desired Outcomes for Durham's Transition to Kindergarten Plan:

- Develop a set of Transition to Kindergarten activities for all children, families and early educators.
- Create greater understanding within the community about early child development and learning and expand community resources.
- Educate all early educators (child care teachers and kindergarten teachers) about ways to support and foster a smooth transition for children and families.
- Assess children at kindergarten entry on all five domains of learning through the use of existing data sources and the development of a standardized kindergarten assessment to inform, plan and develop effective school readiness and transition initiatives.

Durham's Transition to Kindergarten Plan – Goals and Strategies

Goal #1: Develop a set of coordinated transition and orientation to kindergarten experiences that result in children that are ready to be successful and schools that are ready to receive children and their families.

Transition for Families – Provide coordinated and consistent messages, materials and events for families of young children about early development, learning and transition to kindergarten. DPS and DPFC will communicate about these activities and when appropriate jointly plan, advertise and implement transition/orientation activities for young children.

- **Transition events for families:** Choice Fair, Kindergarten Welcome Sessions, Family Information Nights, Community Registration Nights, Countdown to Kindergarten
- **Communications with families:** Parent materials, web site and e-newsletters, Kitchen Table Conversations and press coverage on transition

Transition for Professionals – Provide information, support and opportunities for pre-k and kindergarten teachers to learn about and engage in meaningful transition activities.

- Develop support materials on a variety of transition activities, reconvene Teachers Talk, a group of preschool and kindergarten teachers, for networking and shared learning among kindergarten and pre-k, establish Ready Schools Teams to pilot transition activities and offer joint professional development trainings for pre-k and kindergarten teachers.

Transition for the Community: Develop community awareness and engagement around early childhood, transition and kindergarten through coordination with existing efforts such as Durham Partnership for Children's Corporate Champions for Children, Durham Public Schools' Business Advisory Committee, the Faith Initiative, Durham's medical community, and other community groups.

Goal #2: Assess incoming kindergarten students on each of the five domains of development to inform, plan and develop effective school readiness and transition initiatives.

- Gather information about children's child care and early experiences prior to entering kindergarten.
- Develop and implement a standardized kindergarten assessment that assesses students in the five domains:
 - Cognitive development,
 - Language and communication,
 - Health and physical development,
 - Social and emotional development, and
 - Approaches to learning.
- Develop protocol for using Kindergarten Health Assessments (KHA) as a source of data for the health and physical development domain.

For more information about Durham's Transition to Kindergarten Plan, please contact Kate Irish, Durham's Partnership for Children, 919-403-6960, kate@dpfc.net or Kate MacDonell, Durham Public Schools, 919-560-9403, Kate.MacDonell@dpsnc.net