

EASTON AREA SCHOOL DISTRICT  
**KINDERGARTEN  
TRANSITION PLAN**

**A Comprehensive Guide for a Successful Kindergarten Transition  
Process**



Created in partnership with



**Family Connection of Easton/Kindergarten Connection**



## **INTRODUCTION**

Each year a new crop of children make their way from preschool or home to the doors of kindergarten as they begin their educational journey. A substantial body of research demonstrates that when the transition to kindergarten is done well, an educational foundation is laid that can impact life-long learning. For the children, this assimilation into their school culture depends in many ways on this initial experience. For the family, this time signals whether they are accepted as equal partners in their child's education, a vital link to children's school success. The community is needed to sustain this effort.

Transition is simply a matter of opening doors and hearts and welcoming the newcomers into a positive community of teachers, parents, and community partners. Providing families a chance to practice for this important change makes perfect sense.

This plan may be shared within and between districts with permission. It should be modified to meet the population at hand and adjusted as needed over time.

# TABLE OF CONTENTS

|   |    |
|---|----|
| Vision, Mission & Overview .....  | 3  |
| Qualities of An Effective Transition Program .....                      | 4  |
| Transition: <i>A Moving from One Situation to Another</i> .....         | 5  |
| Transition Plan: <i>The Steps that Will be Taken and by Whom</i> .....  | 6  |
| Transition Planning: <i>A Framework that Provides Information</i> ..... | 8  |
| Transition Activities: <i>Events Designed to Bridge the Gap</i> .....   | 14 |
| General Transition Calendar .....                                       | 18 |
| Barriers to Transition .....  | 19 |
| Evaluating Transition .....   | 19 |
| Acknowledgements .....  | 20 |
| Appendix .....  | 21 |
| Resources .....   | 25 |
| Transition Forms and Materials .....                                    | 27 |

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## VISION

The Easton Area School District Kindergarten Transition Plan is a comprehensive model that serves as a bridge of support for children and their families making the major life change from pre-kindergarten or home to kindergarten. Intentional collaboration and communication among families, the school, and community partners will create an experience that recognizes and supports the culture of all children and their families.

## MISSION

To provide a successful transition program for children coming into kindergarten in the EASD that will meet the individual needs of the child and family. The collaboration of all entities (children, families, and educators) involved is essential to create a seamless experience. Thoughtful and deliberate attention to this experience by those who are directly involved can make this a positive process for a young child and his or her family to insure the promotion of lifelong learning.

## OVERVIEW

This transition plan helps to set the stage and direction for a child's school career by addressing the specific components that will ensure a successful experience. The formal school setting should be perceived as a welcoming, inclusive place where learning occurs in a positive environment. This is where the children begin to draw conclusions about school as a place they want to be and about themselves as learners. The entities addressed in this plan are all stakeholders in this process. Child, family, childcare and school all play a role in making this plan a complete best practices approach to transition into school.



**THE JOURNEY**

## Qualities of an Effective Transition Program

### Effective transition programs do the following:

- Establish positive relationships between the children, parents, and educators
- Facilitate each child's development as a capable learner
- Differentiate between "orientation-to-school" and transition-to-school
- Draw upon dedicated funding and resources
- Involve a range of stakeholders
- Are well-planned and effectively evaluated
- Have flexible and responsive needs
- Are based on mutual trust and respect
- Rely on reciprocal communication among participants
- Take into account contextual aspects of a community of individual families and children within the community

(Starting School: Effective Transitions. Dockett and Perry, ECRP. Vol 3 No. 2)

## I. TRANSITION- A Moving From One Situation to Another

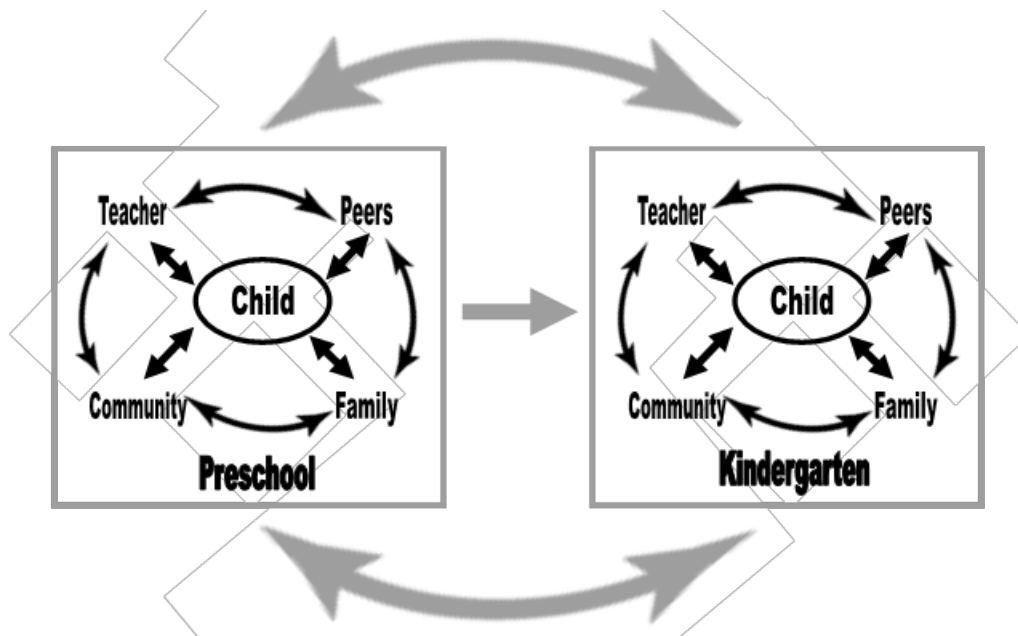
### WHY DOES TRANSITION TO KINDERGARTEN MATTER?

The transition to formal school sets the tone and foundation of a child's school career and can even be a turning point in a child's life. "Kindergarten is the place in which children make important conclusions about school as a place where they want to be and about themselves as learners." (Bailey in Pianta, 1999, p.xv)

Research has shown that children, especially those at risk for school failure, who experience

continuity as they enter the formal world of school are more likely to sustain gains that were achieved in preschool programs.

All partners benefit from a smooth transition. Children become more motivated and self-confident. Families learn to better communicate with and influence the educational system. Early learning providers see the fair value of their work. The receiving school experiences a child ready for school supported by an engaged family.



#### EXPLANATION OF GRAPHIC

The transition plan is built on the interconnectedness of relationships among the child, teacher, family, peers and community as the child moves from home/preschool to school over time.

## II. TRANSITION PLAN

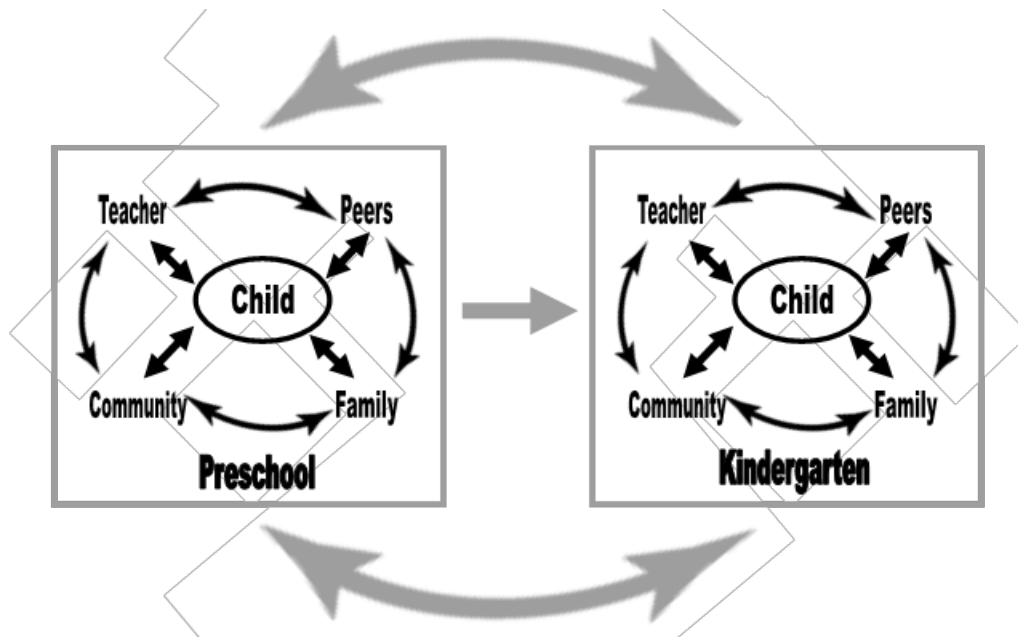
### *The Steps That Will Be Taken and by Whom*

#### STRATEGY

Ensuring children will have a smooth transition to school requires multiple approaches. Sharing important information, conducting welcoming activities, and creating valuable interactions for incoming kindergartners and their families in order to familiarize them with the school environment are all helpful. Beginning early in

the fall before kindergarten entry and continuing throughout the kindergarten year allows reinforcement of this effort. Supporting and engaging families to address varied needs, educating and involving communities, and creating strong partnerships with preschools are tenets of this plan as well.

This diagram was used again to reinforce the importance of the interconnectedness that builds relationships. Responsibility for school readiness lies not only with the child, but also with the families, communities, and schools that shape his or her development over time. (American Academy of Pediatrics)



#### EXPLANATION OF GRAPHIC

The transition plan is built on the interconnectedness of relationships among the child, teacher, family, peers and community as the child moves from home/preschool to school over time.

## PROCESS

The transition process we have selected includes four facets: ready schools, family knowledge and involvement, preschools and child care settings committed to preparing children, and community participation with a strong emphasis on each partner's role as the child's advocate.

Ideally transition begins the fall before entry into kindergarten and continues between all partners throughout the kindergarten year. Transition practices vary depending on the population of families. (Pianta) Plans must be tailored to meet the individual needs of a district and its' school populations. The needs of all partners should be represented in this process for success.

## READINESS

The language used in the school readiness world can be confusing. For our purposes we will use the following definitions.

1. Readiness will be defined as encompassing the entirety of a child's physical, cognitive and socio-emotional attributes, which serve as the foundation for early brain development and learning. (American Academy of Pediatrics)
2. Readiness refers to the conditions, skills, knowledge and behaviors children need when they start kindergarten. These typically include: physical health and well-being, language and communication, social-emotional development, cognitive development, general knowledge and approaches to learning or life skills. (The School Readiness Playbook, A Guide for Community Partners)



### III. TRANSITION PLANNING

*A framework that provides information to children, families, and educators on the transition process*

#### THE FOUR FACETS OF THE TRANSITION PROCESS

1

##### READY SCHOOLS

Ready schools assume the role of being prepared for all children regardless of their needs. Establishing strong school-child-family-peer relationships is the foundation for success. Transition work ideally is carried out in teams and should continue throughout the kindergarten year. Importantly, ready schools embrace the transition process and include the following components:

##### Provide Information

Communication is vital and flows freely from school to home and from home to school regularly via multiple routes. Communication from parents is integral to this process.

Various district means may include the following:

- Handbooks
- Calendars
- Websites
- Flyers
- Social media
- Emails
- Text messages
- Skype
- Teacher notes
- Phone calls home before or soon after school begins
- Home visits before start of school
- Early class lists
- Newsletters

##### Emphasize On-Time Kindergarten Registration

Research supports that children who register on-time are more likely to be present the first day of school, a key to school success. On-time registration allows districts to hire enough staff, to set appropriate class size, and to generate early class lists.

*Transition effort can include the following:*

- Assist in early dissemination of registration materials at events
- Post banners and signs advertising registration
- Enlist preschool and community partner assistance in communicating registration information by providing regular updates
- Encourage same month kindergarten registration each year
- Intent to Register forms at each event
- Provide evening registration
- “Hit the Streets” with community partners to remind families of impending registration
- Promote registration through multiple channels: clinics, housing department, WIC, radio etc.
- On-line registration availability
- Participate in United Way Hi5 effort

##### Promote Regular Kindergarten Attendance

Research increasingly reveals the importance of regular attendance in kindergarten for both immediate and long-term school success for

children. Children who miss 10% of the first year of school suffer in reading, math and general knowledge. Informing families about the importance of developing attendance habits early can improve school success. It is worthwhile noting that research shows that early chronic absence from school can have an even greater negative impact on low-income children. Children and families that know what to expect because they have been invited to visit the school and meet staff are likely to be more excited about attending the first day of school.

*Transition effort can include the following:*

- Sharing information on the need for regular attendance in kindergarten with families early and often
- Using materials from *Attendance Matters* website to promote attendance
- Hosting multiple welcoming events for families prior to kindergarten year
- Seeking to understand and eradicate barriers families face regarding regular attendance
- Having a first day “Kindergarten Welcome” that entices families to come the first day
- Researching new initiatives to improve attendance e.g. University of Pittsburgh text program, etc.

### **Host Transition Events**

Host welcoming transition events that promote continuity between pre-K and home to school and familiarize children and families with school buildings, staff and school policies. These events allow educators to share important information (e.g. registration) early and to enlist families as valuable partners. These events should run the fall before kindergarten and during kindergarten and be promoted and marketed.

Transition events/opportunities can help children to succeed in a new environment with new expectations by reducing stress and improving academic growth while enhancing social-emotional skills.

*Transition events can include the following:*

- Activities designed to promote parent/child together time
- A welcoming and fun environment
- Attendance of district staff
- Learning strategies and social-emotional tips are provided for parents as teachers
- Parents helping in the event planning
- Collection of parent feedback to be used when planning future events
- Events should reflect diverse cultures in school populations
- IU screening
- Availability of translators
- Giveaways and raffles
- Easily recognized, standardized event names and logos

### **Host Kindergarten Orientation**

This district event signals the official start of the school year while continuing transition into this new phase.

- Children and families meet teachers
- Children and families see school building
- Information for the start of school is shared
- Opportunity for questions from parents

### **Collaborate with Early Care/Education Partners**

A strong professional partnership with early education providers has multiple benefits to the receiving schools, incoming children, and families. This relationship provides a channel through which important district information

can be shared with families. Early Educators have knowledge and experience with the children heading to kindergarten and their visibility at transition events provides continuity and familiarity to families and children headed to kindergarten. Early Education dialogues allow discussion on shared Pre-K/kindergarten topics and allow relationship building between pre-K and kindergarten teachers.

*Transition can include the following:*

- Reciprocal Teacher Visits from Pre-K to Kindergarten and Kindergarten to Pre-K
- Written teacher observations after visits
- Provide professional development hours at dialogues to encourage teachers to attend
- Pre-K partners share in the planning of transition events
- Pre-K teachers share information on children
- Pre-K trips to kindergarten classrooms for 4 year olds
- Foster Pre-K to Kindergarten peer relationships
- Include Pre-K students in school-wide events

- Invite families of preschool children to attend school wide events eg. concerts, fairs, math/literacy nights

### **Brand Kindergarten Transition**

Creating a brand to represent the move to kindergarten is a fun means of welcoming families and of marketing kindergarten transition to families at a glance. Reddy Rover bags and shirts allow children to recognize future classmates.

*Transition efforts can include the following:*

- A Reddy Rover mascot that can visit events
- Registration sling bags with the Reddy Rover image
- Reddy Rover tees
- Reddy Rover on all information pieces



*Easton Area School District Kindergarten Transition Logo*



## FAMILY KNOWLEDGE AND INVOLVEMENT

Research supports that family engagement sustains early childhood educational gains with a lifetime effect. For families this is a time of change in which they may feel they are losing their role/control in the life of their child. Family expectations and support of their child's learning is essential and important. Transition work should inform, educate, and empower all families and support family involvement in the schools. Helping families to know how to advocate on behalf of their children is a primary goal.

### Informing and Educating Families

Informed and educated families are most able to support a child's learning. Studies show parents across all socioeconomic levels want their children to succeed in school. Not all parents know how to help. Cultural differences, parent's past negative school experiences and unfamiliarity with educational terminology may limit parent involvement and must be countered to ensure strong parent engagement. Organizations such as the PTA can help to bridge such gaps. Parent education should address both academic and family matters such as behavior and child development.

*Transition efforts can include the following:*

- Families are welcomed as equal partners seeking meaningful involvement
- Surveying parents to learn what they are interested in learning to be more engaged
- Creating welcoming, respectful school environments that encourage parent/district interaction

- Seeking ways to provide information via community partners to reach less engaged families
- Connecting families and community resources re: language needs, medical needs, early intervention, basic needs, etc. to increase family stability
- Providing translators when necessary
- Creating a parent welcome center with parent information provided in multiple languages and computer accessibility
- Encouraging and facilitating parent volunteering in schools
- Educating parents who need help assisting their child to meet academic goals
- Creating parent environments that assimilate diverse groups eg. Second language, Title I, etc.
- Encouraging parent leadership from all socio-economic groups
- Strong and active parent/teacher organizations

### Supporting and Empowering Families

Family involvement at the school the child will attend enhances a child's smooth transition into the school culture to the benefit of the child, parent and school and is especially important for low-income families. Schools must reach out in culturally and linguistically responsive and appropriate ways to families. Research shows that parents who feel welcomed tend to be more involved.

*Transition efforts can include the following:*

- Connecting families with agencies that can support their basic needs
- Identifying and eradicating barriers to family involvement
- Providing activities and materials to support transition in the home
- Simplifying the process for parent clearances

- Defining parent engagement
- Providing parents regular opportunities for advocacy training via workshops, PTA, etc.
- Seeking parent input on children’s strengths and weaknesses
- Helping build/support parent networks
- Including all cultures
- Understanding diverse cultural needs/beliefs (Intercambio)
- Deepening parent engagement over time

### 3

## PRESCHOOL AND CHILDCARE SETTINGS COMMITTED TO PREPARING CHILDREN

Quality early learning programs support the rapid brain development that occurs in young children. High quality programs foster the connections needed for children’s school success by coordinating their work with other programs and with school districts. Programs such as Head Start/Pre K Counts provide a model for engaging parents.

The latest research finds that high quality programs are most valuable to at-risk children. Findings show at-risk children who attend Pre-K are more likely to graduate from high school and less likely to engage in crime, reducing long term negative effects on society.

### Promoting Alignment and Collaboration Between ECE and School Districts

Children’s learning is enhanced when bonds between families, schools, and communities are strengthened. Research suggests that alignment between preschool and kindergarten experiences builds on children’s prior skills through sharing curricula and activities. Classroom environments aligned and designed to meet the developmental needs of children

foster intellectual and emotional growth. In school child care classrooms provide continuity and tend to increase parent engagement in the educational system.

*Transition efforts can include the following:*

- Include in-school Pre-K classrooms in schoolwide activities
- Invite incoming 4 year olds for classroom visits
- Establish a buddy system between current and incoming kindergarteners
- Collaborate with Pre-Ks to improve on-time registration and transition work
- Invite Pre-K families to attend school district events throughout the school year e.g. holiday concerts, math and literacy nights, etc.
- Share end of year records on Pre-K children with kindergarten staff
- Provide Pre-K records to principals in summer for creating class lists
- Support community literacy efforts that reach non-Pre-K children
- Encourage reciprocal teacher visits and gather feedback/discuss
- Utilize technology to share classroom experiences between Pre-K and kindergarten (kindergarten DVD and book)
- Utilize technology to share information with families (virtual tours, etc)
- Collect data to assess the value of alignment
- Encourage district staff to visit preschools to share information and read stories

### Creating a link to Non Stars Programs

Develop a mentoring/support relationship including providing materials, professional development opportunities, and information to these partners. Invite them to be on the transition team.

# 4

## COMMUNITY SUPPORT AND PARTICIPATION

Sustaining quality transition to kindergarten requires the ongoing help and support of many. The use of the broader definition of readiness offered in this plan highlights the need for coordinated and connected community services. “Ready” children need early and regular access to medical and dental care, safe living environments free of toxins, housing, social services, etc. These needs are greatest among lower income families. Communities can offer manpower, ideas, and resources. Many partners working together can better support the many needs of today’s most vulnerable families, removing obstacles to school success and avoiding the achievement gap. Our effort to uncover and provide early support to the children not in preschool requires our community partners.

*Transition efforts can include the following:*

- “Hitting the streets”/outreach to provide registration information
- Distributing free books
- Use of community space for events
- Early childhood research/advocacy collaboration with higher education
- Early childhood literacy promotion and advocacy work at community events
- Distribution of readiness materials and registration information via community clinics and agencies
- Partnering with local libraries, police, and city
- Funding support
- Community support of parent and teacher organizational work
- Regular discussions to evaluate and adjust efforts to assist with transition



## RELATIONSHIPS

## **IV. TRANSITION ACTIVITIES**

*Events designed to bridge the gap between Pre-k, home, and kindergarten*

### **EASTON AREA SCHOOL DISTRICT TRANSITION ACTIVITIES**

#### **FALL FESTIVAL**

*(October)*

This event is offered to all incoming kindergarteners and their families the fall of the year before kindergarten. The primary purpose of this event is to share kindergarten registration information with families. The event intentionally strives to welcome and familiarize families with schools while providing fun parent/child activities. Community partners and Pre-Ks are invited. Kindergarten staff is present. Raffles/readiness materials/free books/light refreshments are provided.

#### **LEARN THE LIBRARY**

*(fall and spring)*

All area preschools are invited to the library. District transportation is provided to schools in need. Children learn from the librarians about basic practices such as finding books, returning books, library services, etc. All groups enjoy a story, tour, music, and a variety of fun activities. Each child receives a free book. Preschool teachers provide a list of attendees and receive registration information to take back to their school. Schools will receive a cd/book on a "Day in Kindergarten" to use in their classroom as a transition tool. Teachers will be surveyed on the value of this tool.

#### **EARLY EDUCATION DIALOGUES**

*(multiple)*

The Dialogues are a professional development opportunity for kindergarten and pre-K teachers. School administrators, school board members, community partners and other districts are invited. A community partner presents briefly at the start of the Dialogue to familiarize attendees with organizations/ services that are available in the community. Topics vary and teacher input on areas to be presented is solicited. Attendees are asked to provide feedback via a survey form. In addition to providing professional development, the Dialogues are intended to build relationships between Pre-K and Kindergarten teachers.

#### **PRESCHOOL REGISTRATION PACKET/EARLY SIGN UP**

*(January)*

This effort was piloted in 2017 to improve on-time registration. Families received their registration packet at their child's preschool, completing and returning the form to the preschool in advance of registration. This was designed to streamline the process on the day of registration and to provide early contact information to the district.

## **KINDERGARTEN REGISTRATION READINESS BAGS**

*(March)*

At registration families receive readiness materials to use over the summer to support parents as child's first teachers. The materials are suggested by teachers and developmentally appropriate. Families are asked to complete a brief survey on their child's academic/social skills in exchange for materials and the survey is shared with kindergarten teachers at the start of the child's kindergarten year.

## **BEE READY PRESCHOOL SESSIONS**

*(April)*

The Bee Ready initiative supports summer learning for children most in need. As Easton has summer programs in place for these children, this readiness session provides a continuum of learning for those most in need. This year there will be 2 sessions each at Cheston and Paxinosa schools. Activities include touring the school and spending time in the kindergarten classroom. Children carry a sling bag and at each stop on the tour they receive an item or two associated with that location (e.g. band aids at the nurse's office) and a short explanation of what typically happens at each location.

Classroom activities include story times modeled for parents, activity centers common

in kindergarten, scavenger hunts, games, parent question and answer sessions, videos of staff, pictures of staff unable to attend, free books, readiness materials and tips for parents on use of materials. Each school has a bicycle raffle on the last night. Parents are surveyed after each session in order to gain their input for future sessions. Community partners, preschool partners, retired teachers, school staff, and Family Connection staff these events.

Bee Ready is advertised at kindergarten registration where parents may sign up. Reminders are mailed and all are called as the event draws near. Social media is utilized as well. There is an opportunity for families to sign up for the district's summer session at Bee Ready.

## **SPRING TO KINDERGARTEN**

*(May)*

Each spring incoming kindergarteners and their families are invited to visit the school the child will attend in the fall. This event is promoted at registration and through preschool partners and community partners. Currently each school plans their own visit and includes time in a classroom, meeting staff, and touring the school. Spring to Kindergarten events conclude with popsicles on the playground for peer/peer and parent/parent introduction. Free readiness materials and books are distributed. Games can be held on the playground to increase child and family interaction.



## **PRESCHOOL DEVELOPMENTAL CHECKLISTS**

*(late spring)*

Willing preschools complete checklists on their transitioning children. The information is provided to kindergarten teachers for their review. The information captured is the same information parents provide at registration.

## **LITTLE RED WAGON STORY TIMES IN THE PARK**

*(late summer/other)*

Little Red Wagon provides story time and fun in two local parks throughout the year. This event follows the district summer program intentionally providing ongoing literacy support. Children are grouped by age and stories are read to them as they snack. Readers include district and Pre-K teachers, parents, and community partners. Police officers visit and read to the children. Following the story children play with materials provided. This year the activities were STEM based. Each child receives at least one free

book at each session and some giveaways. A district bus visits each park during the last session so the children can speak with the driver and hear about bus behavior expectations. The bus can serve as a visual reminder to the neighborhood that school is opening soon.

## **RECIPROCAL TEACHER VISITS**

Preschool and kindergarten teachers are offered the opportunity to visit one another's classrooms during the school year or in summer. Teachers are asked to fill out a detailed observation form.

## **PROJECT LEAP**

LEAP (Literacy Embraced Actively through Partnerships) is a long standing literacy project created to encourage and support developing language skills in children. Project Leap is a collaborative effort. Work currently supports existing community literacy efforts with new plans to connect preschools/daycares to the school district.

## **NEW THIS YEAR**

### **KINDERGARTEN CLASSROOM VISITS**

*(school year)*

Preschools will be matched with a kindergarten classroom based on the geographic location of each. Transportation by the district can be considered. The preschool and kindergarten teachers will be given each other's contact information to allow them to plan and carry out the visits and they may visit as often as they choose. The visiting preschool teacher may count this as a reciprocal visit and fill out the observation form. Kindergarten teachers will be permitted to visit a preschool classroom at the 7:30 am meeting time for a reciprocal visit. Observation form will be completed.

### **INTERCAMBIO**

*(January – April)*

Spanish speaking families in the EASD and Lafayette College students meet for interactive language exchanges. Snacks and activities for the children are provided when families meet twice a month.

### **ATTENDANCE SLING BAGS**

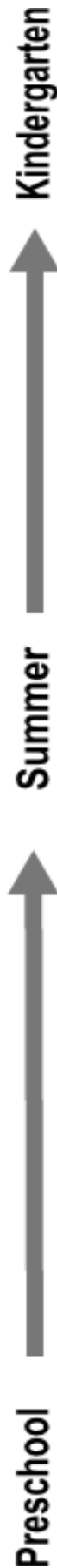
Each child receives a Reddy Rover sling bag on the first day of school that contains readiness supplies. The bag is kept at the child's desk and each day the teacher reviews how to use one item in the bag with the class. When all items are reviewed by the kindergarten teacher, the bag is sent home. Instructions are given to the children to show their family what they learned. A note to the family is included in the bag and must be signed and returned to school after the child has demonstrated to the family how to use the items.

### **DIRECTOR'S SESSION**

*(2-3 times a year)*

Discussions between preschool and district administrators with the goal being to evaluate the effectiveness of transition work.

## General Transition Calendar



| Fall/Winter                                  | Early Spring                                | Late Spring                       | Summer                             | Fall                               | Ongoing                             |
|--|---|-----------------------------------|------------------------------------|------------------------------------|-------------------------------------|
| Build Family - School Relationships          | Register & Welcome                          | Inform & Acclimate                | Fun Readiness & Connect with Peers | Enter School & Continue Transition | Continuing & Maintaining Transition |
| Fall Festival                                | Bee Ready Sessions                          | Spring to Kindergarten            | Little Red Wagon                   | Kindergarten Orientation           | Little Red Wagon                    |
| Early Educator Dialogues                     | March Registration                          | Preschool Developmental Checklist | Summer School field trip           | Open House                         | Support in-school PreK classrooms   |
| Learn the Library                            | Free registration bags with supplies        | Early Education Dialogue          |                                    | First Day Backpacks                | Kindergarten Liaisons               |
| Director's sessions                          | Kindergarten Classrooms visit by preschools | Principal/Teacher Survey          |                                    | Director's Session                 | Project Safe Move                   |
| Intercambio                                  | Parent Survey                               | Reciprocal Teacher Visits         |                                    | Reciprocal Teacher Visits          | Early Childhood Coalition           |
| Holiday concerts at local elementary schools | Learn the Library                           |                                   |                                    |                                    |                                     |

## V. BARRIERS TO TRANSITION

Transition work requires the ability to remain open minded and to adapt to changing circumstances as needed. The work of transition must address the population at hand.

**Possible barriers for districts include the following:**

- Limited funding
- Salary/contract issues for teachers
- Absence of a district transition plan
- Lack of buy-in by staff leadership and staff
- Neighborhoods perceived as too dangerous to allow home visits
- Literacy challenges for parents
- Delayed transition efforts
- Low parent engagement
- Difficulty in locating families for on-time registration

**Possible barriers for families include the following:**

- Work schedules
- Lack of child care
- Transportation limitations
- Health problems
- Prior negative experiences at a school
- Feeling uncomfortable in social situations
- Language issues
- Cultural and language differences
- Survival issues (food, clothing, shelter)
- Incarcerated parents
- Literacy challenges for parents

## VI. EVALUATING TRANSITION

Transition work requires consistent re-evaluation and assessment. At the outset clear goals, a plan to execute the goals, and a reliable tool to measure effectiveness are essential. Data collection should be ongoing and the plan should be revised as needed.

Some potential benefits of a quality transition program include:

- Greater understanding of child development
- More informed assessment of children's needs
- Improved school attendance
- Improved high school graduation rates
- Improved parent attendance at conferences
- Greater understanding of alignment of early education and kindergarten progress
- More collaborative and inclusive approaches to education
- Informed assessment provides better opportunities for teachers to meet the needs of children

## ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

This project would not have been possible without the hard work and dedication of the following contributors:

### **Terry Thomas**

Terry started in Early Childhood Education over 40 years ago. Since that time she has been involved with many aspects of care and education for young children and the education of adults in early childhood education. For a more informed view of Terry's career, you can visit her website [www.helping2grow.com](http://www.helping2grow.com). Terry currently runs a consulting business and has an adjunct faculty position at LCCC in the early education department.

### **Nancy Nicholas**

Nancy received a BA in Psychology from Lafayette College and MS in Early Childhood Education from George Peabody College for Teachers of Vanderbilt University and has taught kindergarten for 35 years in the Easton Area School District. She has recently retired from teaching, but continues to volunteer within the education community.

### **Deb Kelleman**

Deb received a BS in Clinical Psychology from DeSales University. Immediately following college she accepted a job at Crime Victims Council as a crisis counselor and served as a member of the local Crisis Response Team. For 10 years, Deb was a stay-at-home mom to two amazing boys and has recently started back to work with Family Connection as a member of the Family Support team.

### **Maryanne West**

Maryanne graduated from St. Luke's Hospital School of Nursing and Rutgers University. Maryanne is the current Kindergarten Connection coordinator. She is grateful to all those who generously shared their time and talents to create this first revision of the Easton Kindergarten Transition Plan. For more information regarding this plan, Maryanne can be contacted at [westm@eastonsd.org](mailto:westm@eastonsd.org)

# APPENDIX

## HEALTH AND WELLNESS

<http://pediatrics.aappublications.org>

## ATTENDANCE

<http://www.readyfreddy.org/for-schools-and-communities/attendance/>

## READINESS

### Using Work Sampling – Samuel J. Meisel

[www.ascd.org/publications/educational-leadership-dec96/vol54/num04/using-work-sampling-in-Authentic-Assessments.aspx](http://www.ascd.org/publications/educational-leadership-dec96/vol54/num04/using-work-sampling-in-Authentic-Assessments.aspx)

### The Vital Link: Early Childhood Investment is the First Step to High School

[www.ReadyNation.org](http://www.ReadyNation.org)

## ALIGNMENT AND STANDARDS

### Kindergarten Standards

[www.education.pa.gov](http://www.education.pa.gov)

### Pre-K Standards

[www.education.pa.gov](http://www.education.pa.gov)

## LANGUAGE AND CULTURAL AWARENESS

### Language and Cultural Diversity in the Classroom: The Investigator Club – Karen Nemeth

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## INCLUSION

Easton Transition Plan with IU 20 Early Intervention Preschool - pg.22-24

## **Easton Transition Plan with IU 20 Early Intervention Preschool**

### **1/12/2017**

1. The IU preschool early intervention staff reviews the entire transition process with families beginning at least one year before the child is eligible for school-age programming. 22 Pa. Code Chapter 14.154 € requires the IEPs of children in Early Intervention Preschool who are within one year to transition to a school age program, to include goals and objectives which address the transition process.
2. The Early Intervention (EI) staff identifies all children in the program who are approaching the age for kindergarten or 1st grade in their district of residence. A list of these students is maintained/updated throughout the year. The EI supervisors will share the number of students with district contact representatives at the December District Contact meeting and provides them a list of students by initials as well as current placements by February 1st.
3. The Early Intervention records of children who are no longer eligible for special education services cannot be shared with school districts or charter schools without parental consent (§301(14) of Act 212 of 1990).
4. By December 1 of each year, each service coordinator and speech therapist must review the children they identified, who are approaching the age for kindergarten or first grade in their district. The EI Preschool secretary sends their parents a letter explaining the transition process:  
The Notice of Your Child's Transition to School Age Meeting, to notify parents of the transition to school age process. This will be sent out to families in December to ensure it is received prior to the transition meetings being scheduled.
5. Transition Meetings are scheduled set up with IU Preschool early intervention staff and the Easton Area School District in the month of January or February.
6. During the meetings - The IU Preschool early intervention program gives the district contact person/Sp. Ed. secretary our current ER/IEP electronically through a shared Google Folder. At the meetings the preschool EI staff will ask families to complete the Intent to Register form. The form will allow parents to indicate if they intend to register with Easton Area School District or charter school. The families will then meet individually with the Easton Area School District Special Education representative or psychologists to discuss their child's strength and needs and discuss the options available in kindergarten and how the district will proceed in their evaluation or assessment process. The District will also share the registration dates and the importance of doing so.
7. If the child will be kindergarten age in the fall and the family does not want to enroll them in Kindergarten or with the district they can stay back a year and receive Early Intervention Preschool services during the upcoming year. While parents have the option of having their child remain, the Early Intervention Preschool Staff will discuss the advantages of having your child transition to school-age programs with children of the same age. If the child is

old enough for first grade in the upcoming school year -preschool early intervention services will end the first day of school in Easton Area school district.

8. If a family misses the Transition meetings - the IU preschool early intervention staff will contact the families to sign the intent to register and send the District the notice and current ER and IEP.
9. The IU preschool early intervention program with the district must complete all transition meetings before March 1st - this gives districts time to gain family consent and re-evaluate their students to ensure services are ready before the start of Kindergarten.
10. Easton Area School District's' responsibilities for the transition process for the new school year commence with receipt of the parents' Intent to Register form which is presented and signed at the transition meeting. School districts or charter schools may conduct a re-evaluation and develop individualized education programs (IEP) in accordance with the timelines mandated in 22 Pa. Code Chapter 14.
11. The school district or charter schools, and the parent may agree to waive a required reevaluation that is allowed under 34 CFR Sec. 300.303(b)(2) or may agree to implement the existing evaluation or IEP. Within a reasonable period of time from the receipt of the signed Intent to Register form, but no later than April 15, the school district or charter school will notify the parent in writing and initiate one of the options. Regardless of which option is chosen, an IEP will be implemented no later than 10 school days after its completion. If parents disagree with the IEPs offered by their school districts or charter schools and initiate a due process hearing or both parties agree to mediation, the children who will transition into kindergarten or school age programs must continue to receive the services described in their preschool IEPs (ensuring 'status quo') pending completion of dispute resolution options of mediations or due process hearings.
12. All children currently eligible for special education services in preschool early intervention and registered with the school district or charter school remain eligible for special education unless the district, the charter school, or the preschool early intervention program completes a re-evaluation that determines the child is no longer eligible for special education. All eligible children must have an IEP in place by the beginning of the school year.
13. After the transition meetings the IU preschool early intervention program continues to communicate with the district and will share any new ERs and IEPs as they are completed in the remainder of the school year.
14. If there is a new child that enters the IU preschool early intervention program between March-June - the IU preschool early intervention program will invite the District Contact to the IEP meeting and share the ER and IEP electronically once a release has been signed.



15. The IU preschool early intervention program has also worked with the IU based special education classrooms and programs to share students VB-Mapps and AAC Evaluations, Assistive Communication Devices and Boards so that students can start the year with what they need to succeed.
16. The IU early intervention preschool program has also created a Google Sheet to share information about individual strengths and needs and also individualized strategies and behavior plans.
17. The IU preschool early intervention program remain in communication with the district throughout the beginning of the year to support the students for a successful transition.
18. The IU preschool early intervention program will participate with Easton Family Connections to plan and participate in all transition activities throughout the year. The IU preschool program will provide screenings and resources for family and student support.
19. The IU preschool early intervention program will work with Easton Family Connections to identify preschool programs that are having difficulty with behaviors and select sites to target some behavioral training and parent support groups. The IU will utilize the *Include Me From the Start Program* and the IU early intervention preschool psychologist to provide these trainings in the community.

# RESOURCES

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# **TRANSITION FORMS & MATERIALS**