CEELO POLICY BRIEF

State Approaches to Family Engagement in Pre-K Programs

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Family engagement is an integral part of a successful early childhood system. But what does family engagement mean and what does it look like? What actions can states take to best guide and support districts and programs in designing and implementing aligned and effective family engagement plans? This brief focuses on approaches to family engagement in state funded pre-K programs and the important role family engagement plays in ensuring family members are welcomed as supporters as children's first teachers in early childhood programs and as children transition to the K-12 school years.

This paper draws on work CEELO engaged in with two states as they developed guidance on family engagement - one a Preschool Development Grant (PDG) state and the other a state expanding its pre-K program. Each state was at a different stage of their family engagement work. One was in the process of developing a plan and sought advice on defining family engagement and designing the approach and recommended strategies. The other state already had a developed plan and was seeking information on how best to support implementation in programs.

This document is organized as follows:

- I. Why Family Engagement is Important
- II. Approaches to Developing Guidance for Programs on Family Engagement
- III. Strategies to Support Effective Implementation

I. Why Family Engagement is Important

Research indicates that family engagement[1] provides a number of benefits for young children academically and socially; including supporting improved literacy and math skills.[i] An examination of nearly 100 family engagement research studies found that "parents from diverse backgrounds, when given direction, can increase their involvement with their children's learning at home and at school and that, when parents are more involved and more engaged, children

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[1] The term family engagement is used instead of parent engagement to account for children in homes where grandparents or guardians are the primary caregivers.

tend to do better academically and socially."[ii] Engaging families is a viable and effective tool to help improve academic and social outcomes for children. (For more information on the research base on family engagement, see the Resource Section, which features several policy reports and briefs that include more in-depth analysis of research that demonstrates the positive effect of family engagement on children and families.)

What Is Effective Family Engagement?

Epstein's Framework[1] identifies six types of involvement that form a comprehensive family engagement approach:

- **"Parenting -** Help all families establish home environments to support children as students.
- **Communicating -** Design effective forms of school-to-home and home-to-school communications about school programs and children's progress.
- **Volunteering -** Recruit and organize parent help and support.
- **Learning at home –** Provide information and ideas to families about how to help students at home with homework and other curriculum-related activities, decisions, and planning.
- **Decision making -** Include parents in school decisions, developing parent leaders and representatives.
- **Collaborating with the community -** Identify and integrate resources and services from the community to strengthen school programs, family practices, and student learning and development."

Within these six types, programs choose practices that fit their needs. This document provides sample practices, challenges, redefinitions, and expected results for children, teachers, and families.

II. Approaches to Developing Guidance for Programs on Family Engagement

Most state pre-K programs do have requirements on family engagement for programs. The NIEER State of Preschool Yearbook provides information on some family engagement practices in state pre-K programs. In the 2012-2013 school year, 92.5 percent or 53 programs reported a requirement in one or more types of comprehensive service related to family engagement for all programs.[2]

Table 1: State Pre-K Requirements Related to Family Engagement

Type of service	Frequency	Percent
Parent involvement activities	45	85%
Parent conferences and/or home visits	42	79%
Parenting support or training	27	51%
Education services or job training for parents	13	25%
Health services for parents	10	19%

As seen in Table 1, most states require some level of family engagement practices, though the depth of the requirements and strength of implementation is not as easily identifiable from this data. While these requirements are important, they won't meet their maximum effectiveness unless they are contained in a cohesive and strategic approach to family engagement. This document seeks to guide policymakers through key considerations to craft an approach to nest these practices in.

State policy makers can consider the following as they assess current policy on family engagement and develop additional guidance to strengthen support for local programs:

- *Will the state define the terms "family" and "family engagement?*
- *Will the state create a framework for an overarching vision and goals for family engagement?*
- *Will the state create or revise program standards around family engagement? Will it be required?*
- *What training and supports will be provided? Is there funding to support it?*
- *To what extent will the state communicate and disseminate their family engagement plan? And how?*

The remainder of this section offers information and examples once the decisions on the above have been addressed. States are in different stages of their family engagement approaches and for those who already have the above pieces in place, we suggest moving forward to the following section on implementation supports.

Defining family and family engagement

Defining *family* and *family engagement* provides clarity and a common understanding and set of expectations for stakeholders, including programs, families, and the community. This strengthens consistent implementation of family engagement practices across settings.

Family

The term *family* is often used in place of *parent* in recognition that many family configurations do not fit neatly into the legal term of parent. A child's grandparent, sibling, distant relative, family friend, and other individuals may play significant roles in the child's development. An inclusive definition encourages individuals working with children to think beyond a legal definition of family and to identify and engage with those who fill a consistent role in the child's development. Reflecting this trend toward a more inclusive definition, the Every Student Succeeds Act (ESSA) added "family members" to language that refers to parents when discussing family engagement (now "parents and family members" instead of "parents"). An example of an inclusive definition of "family" comes from [Michigan's pre-K standards](#):

> *People related to each other by blood, marriage, adoption, or legal guardianship. Family members include biological parents (custodial and noncustodial), adoptive parents, foster parents, step-parents, grandparents and other relatives of significance to the child, and all siblings (half, step, full). In addition, any individual that the family defines as a part of their family, who has extensive contact with the child, and/or is a significant person in the child's life, could be included.*

Family engagement

Definitions typically include information on the parties involved, the settings, and the continuum of activities in which families and service providers are engaged. Many family engagement approaches also address cultural and linguistic issues as well as considerations regarding partnerships among those engaged in the activities. These definitions identify the following:

- *Who* – Which individuals or entities are included?
- *Where* – What settings are involved?
- *Purpose* - What should family engagement do?
- *How* - Through what approaches will the purpose be achieved?
- *Key principles* - What principles should guide all family engagement?

Table 2 below highlights how some states and entities have addressed these questions. **Full definitions are available in *Appendix A – Family Engagement Definitions*.**

Table 2 Family Engagement Definitions

State/ Entity	Who/Where	Purpose	How	Key principles
Maryland	Families, schools, and communities All settings where children learn – home, EC settings, school, community	Support student learning and achievement Support family well-being, strong parent-child relationships, and ongoing learning and development of parents and children	Building relationships Meaningful and effective strategies that impact student learning and achievement	Shared responsibility Universal design Cultural competence Adequate resources to be sustainable
Illinois	Parents, educators, and community members	Academic, physical, social, emotional, and behavioral development of youth	Deliberate process embraced throughout the school Empower adults to support children	Mindful of diverse school-communities – language, culture, school experiences Responsive
Michigan	Staff, family members[3]	Support learning	Positive partnerships with all family members	

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[3] Family member include mothers, fathers, non-custodial parents, guardians or foster parents, grandparents, and others closely involved.

State/ Entity	Who/Where	Purpose	How	Key principles
Early Head Start/ Head Start	All those who support children's learning In the home, early childhood program, school & community	Support family well-being, strong parent-child relationships and ongoing learning and development of parents and children	Building relationships	Shared responsibility
National Family, School, & Community Engagement Working Group/PTA	Schools, families, and other community agencies and organizations (pre-K programs, school, after-school programs, faith-based institutions)	Support children's learning and development	Schools & community engage families Families actively support their child	Shared responsibility Meaningful and culturally respectful
Draft US ED and HHS Policy Statement on Family Engagement	Family Institutions where children learn	Support family wellness and children's learning and development	Positive relationships between families and staff Systematic inclusion of families as partners in children's development, learning, and wellness	Systematic inclusion

Frameworks

Frameworks[4] provide a foundation that grounds the program standards of a family engagement plan in clear expectations around goals for all parties involved. It also provides organizational and process conditions necessary to meet them. Involving a stakeholder group representative of all those working with young children and families – state and local agencies and organizations, families themselves – lends itself to a framework that is actionable across all early learning settings. How the framework is structured will vary, but they typically describe goals or outcomes for families and children, state principles that guide all strategies, and describe practices that support effective family engagement.

Alignment

Many programs that fund services for young children include requirements or guidance on family engagement. The first step in constructing a framework is awareness of and alignment with these to support consistent expectations and to address fears implementers may have of being overburdened. The list below highlights several programs that include family engagement indicators or standards. **More detailed information is provided in *Appendix B – Alignment Considerations*.**

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[4] This paper uses the term "framework" to describe documents that describe visions, outcomes, and guidance for programs.

- **Head Start's** [framework](#) has been used frequently to inform other family engagement frameworks. Section 1304.40 of the Head Start Program Performance Standards lists [family partnership requirements](#).
- **Every Student Succeeds Act (ESSA)** includes requirements on family engagement, which are accessible on the [ESSA](#) page of the US Department of Education website.
- **State QRIS standards** often includes family engagement standards, see the [QRIS Compendium](#) for state-specific standards.
- **NAEYC Accreditation Standards** has requirements around family engagement in [Standard 7](#).
- **Child Care and Development Block Grant (CCDBG)** includes guidance on family engagement. More information is available [here](#).
- **Individuals with Disabilities Act (IDEA)** promotes family engagement practices - specific requirements are available [here](#).
- In addition to state-specific frameworks, several frameworks are available at the national level.

> Alignment is critical to providing a clear message and set of expectations that is actionable and understandable for districts and programs. State staff should identify the frameworks in use in the state, across types of program and sectors, and include stakeholders to ensure that the family engagement framework, guidance, and standards for state pre-K programs is consistent with existing requirements and guidance from other programs.

Components of a Framework

Found in multiple frameworks is clear language on respecting and viewing the family as the child's first educator and as a source of rich information about the child. Families hold key pieces of information that can be taken together with what the educator observes in the classroom to form a more complete picture of the child. Early childhood educators are also in a position to orient parents to the state's early learning guidelines, explain assessments and the results, and design plans to support a child's development.

Most frameworks or statements center on principles that drive all family engagement work and the expected outcomes from the engagement. While the strategies or interventions implemented will differ by program, they are all guided by the same set of identified principles and intended outcomes. Principles include working with families as collaborators and partners, reciprocal and two-way communication methods, cultural and linguistic awareness and respect, empowerment of families, and supporting a comprehensive approach. Outcomes tend to revolve around the child's school-readiness, development, and improved family outcomes.

As states articulate the principles that guide the development of the state family engagement approach, many stakeholder groups begin by reviewing the existing frameworks and determining which principles are most appropriate for the state. Families should be active participants in the process. The state should also identify programs and entities that work with pre-K aged children and invite them to form a stakeholder group to guide the development of any framework or guidance.

Table 3 below highlights examples of principles and/or outcomes for several frameworks or statements from national departments and organizations. Note that not all have both principles and outcomes.

Table 3 Principles and Outcomes Identified in Family Engagement Frameworks

Source	Principles and/or Outcomes
[Policy Statement on Family Engagement: From the Early Years to the Early Grades](#) (US Departments of Health and Human Services and Education)[5]	Principles of Effective Family Engagement Practices • Create continuity for children and families • Value respectful and trusting relationships between families and professionals • Develop goal-oriented relationships that are linked to children's development and learning • Engage families around children's health, mental health, and social and emotional well-being • Ensure that all family engagement opportunities are culturally and linguistically responsive • Build staff capacity to implement family engagement practice principles • Support families' connections and capabilities • Systemically embed effective family engagement strategies within early childhood systems and programs • Develop strong relationships with community partners that support families • Continuously learn and improve
[The Head Start Parent, Family, and Community Engagement Framework](#)	Seven family engagement outcomes: • Family Well-being • Positive Parent-Child Relationships • Families as Lifelong Educators • Families as Learners • Family Engagement in Transitions • Family Connections to Peers and Community • Families as Advocates and Leaders Child outcome: "Children are ready for school and sustain development and learning gains through third grade."
[Harvard Family Research Project](#)	Outcomes identified are the child's school success and the family's engagement in the child's learning and development. They identify an early childhood approach that promotes family engagement as embedded as a core component in all practices to promote child development and learning, rooted in all of the processes designed to meet an organization's goal for young children, and addressing and supporting the different needs, strengths, and interests of all children and their families.[iii] This approach is informed by the [The Head Start Parent, Family, and Community Engagement Framework](#).
[National Association for the Education of Young Children](#)	Six principles: • Programs invite families to participate in decision making and goal setting for their child • Teachers and programs engage families in two-way communication • Programs and teachers engage families in ways that are truly reciprocal

[5] At time of publication the policy statement was in draft form. Post publication this documented was updated with the final.

	• Programs provide learning activities for the home and in the community • Programs invite families to participate in program-level decisions and wider advocacy efforts • Programs implement a comprehensive program-level system
US Department of Education Dual Capacity-Building Framework for Family-School Partnerships	Goals of family engagement are to build capacity of staff and families in: capabilities (skills and knowledge), connections (networks), cognition (beliefs, values), and confidence (self-efficacy). This framework identifies outcomes for staff and schools AND families to drive the ultimate outcome of supporting student achievement & school improvement. • School and program staff - ability to: honor and recognize families' funds of knowledge, connect family engagement to student learning, and create welcoming, inviting cultures. • Families – ability to take roles of: supporters, encouragers, monitors, advocates, decision makers, and collaborators

State examples of frameworks or guidance include:

- **Illinois'** Family Engagement Framework is a tool for schools districts and schools to support school-family partnerships that lead to improved student learning and development outcomes.
- **Maryland'**s The Early Childhood Family Engagement Framework: Maryland's Vision for Engaging Families with Young Children reflects a state-wide vision for family engagement that can be used across all types of ECE programs and environments. It provides a common ground for all auspices of ECE programs to refer to in a non-proscriptive manner (note that programs may have other family engagement requirements for different funding streams).
- **New Jersey'**s Division of Early Childhood Education offers a Family Engagement Guidance document that offers guidance on roles & responsibilities, collaboration, transition strategies, and evaluation.
- **Ohio** has developed guidance on roles and responsibilities to support school, family, & community partnerships. It defines the role & responsibilities and offers essential practices, with early childhood-specific guidance

Additionally, the Harvard Family Research Project offers a number of examples of State Policy on Family Engagement on numerous topics: transition, equity, collaboration, and promising practices.

An approach many states use to inform frameworks or guidance for programs is Strengthening Families, which builds protective factors in families "to increase family strengths, enhance child development and reduce the likelihood of child abuse and neglect."[iv] Over 30 states are using this framework in their early childhood work, such as QRIS, Workforce Knowledge and Competency Framework, Early Childhood Comprehensive Systems planning, and Early Childhood Advisory Council. This two-pager describes how the Strengthening Families approach is used in early childhood education.

Program Standards

Family engagement standards detail the strategies a program should (or must) meet as part of an effective approach that is in line with the principles and anticipated outcomes of family engagement. States with developed pre-K family engagement approaches identify and define the set of standards that are included as program requirements or recommended practices. Successful strategies are attuned to and responsive to the culture and desires of the families and the context and values of the community where the program lives. Therefore, it is critical to design standards in a way that programs or schools can adhere to them while also having the flexibility to tailor their approach to meet the goals of the families in their community. The breadth of the standards tends to fall into two approaches, as seen in the table below.

> **Without an overarching vision and identified purposes, piecemeal efforts at family engagement occur that are misaligned, siloed, and ineffective. Family engagement is also not a stand-alone component – successful approaches infuse family engagement throughout the program.**

Table 4 Standards by Type of Approach

Approach	Types of Standards
Focus on supporting child's development outcomes: This is a narrow approach that incorporates activities that focus on supporting the child's outcomes in the program. The intent of these activities is two-way communication and mutually shared information to create avenues to improve child development across all developmental domains.	• Home visits • Parent-teacher conferences (formal and informal)/ frequent communication • Involving families in the transition to pre-K and from pre-K to K • Family involvement in the program (during or after hours) • Family involvement in decision making
Focus on child AND family development outcomes: This approach is the ideal as it incorporates the activities that support child development and builds on them activities that build the families' strengths as well. This is a deeper approach but requires more time and resources on the program side.	• Access to comprehensive services • Family/Parent education • Family/Parenting support • Family/Parent leadership opportunities

For required items it is important to keep in mind the extent of resources available (time, financial, training etc.) and what supports will be necessary to help programs meet the standards. **See *Appendix C – Questions to Consider for Standards Implementation* for key questions to ask for each type of standard. For selected state program standard examples, see *Appendix D – Examples of State Family Engagement Standards.***

Once standards are established, monitoring should include provision of evidence that the program conducted family engagement activities in the intended spirit. Requiring documentation to show whether the standard was met or not can assist in determining how well the standard is being implemented.

III. Strategies to Support Effective Implementation

Family engagement policy requires training and supports for administrators, teachers, and other staff. In some cases, this starts by cultivating buy-in on the importance of family engagement. This section discusses strategies states can use to support programs in implementation. While a key ingredient is research-supported interventions or models, this document is geared towards developing high-level plans that encapsulate a family engagement approach and support systematic selection of an intervention of approach. ***Appendix E – Family Engagement Intervention Models* describes repositories and resources for selection of interventions and models that are research-based.**

Conditions

For family engagement to work well, programs can create an environment that creates awareness of the benefits of strong family engagement and they can implement practices that support staff in their application with families. Ideally, each program would have a family engagement plan that ties together activities to meet standards in a cohesive and comprehensive approach.

The Harvard Family Research Project identifies an approach specific to early childhood that promotes family engagement as a core component in all practices to promote child development and learning, rooted in all of the processes designed to meet an organization's goal for young children, and addressing and supporting the different needs, strengths, and interests of all children and their families.[6] This approach is informed by the The Head Start Parent, Family, and Community Engagement Framework. Meanwhile, the National Association for the Education of Young Children identifies six practices of family engagement. The US Department of Education has also released a framework for family and community engagement. The table below shares the areas that support the implementation of family engagement practices in the context of a program.

Table 5 Foundations and Conditions that Nurture Effective Family Engagement

Entity	Conditions	
Harvard Family Research Project	*Program foundations* • Program leadership • Professional Development • Evaluation and continuous improvement	*Practices* • Program environment • Transitions • Engaging families as teachers • Home visiting • Educator-family relationships • Community partnerships
The Head Start Parent, Family, and Community	*Program foundations* • Program Leadership • Continuous Program Improvement • Professional Development	*Program impact areas (levers to reach child and family outcomes)[7]* • Program environment family partnerships

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[6] Harvard Family Research Project, http://www.hfrp.org/early-childhood-education/overview#approach

[7] Family engagement outcomes - family well-being, positive parent-child relationships, families as lifelong educators, families as learners, family engagement in transitions, family connections to peers and community, families as advocates and leaders.

Child outcomes children are ready from school and sustain development and learning gains through third grade

Engagement Framework		• Teaching and learning • Community partnerships
NAEYC	• Programs invite families to participate in decision making and goal setting for their child. • Teachers and programs engage families in two-way communication. • Programs and teachers engage families in ways that are truly reciprocal • Programs provide learning activities for the home and in the community • Programs invite families to participate in program-level decisions and wider advocacy efforts. • Programs implement a comprehensive program-level system of family engagement.	
US Department of Education - Dual Capacity Building Framework for Family-School Partnerships	*Organizational conditions* • Initiatives are purposefully designed as core components of educational goals such as school readiness, student achievement, and school turnaround • Capacity-building efforts are embedded into structures and processes such as training and professional development, teaching and learning, curriculum, and community collaboration. • Programs operate with adequate resources and infrastructure support.	*Process conditions* • Initiatives are aligned with school and district achievement goals and connect families to the teaching and learning goals for the students. • A major focus on the initiative is on building respectful and trusting relationships between home and school. • The initiatives focus on building the intellectual, social, and human capital of stakeholders engaged in the program. • Learning is conducted in group rather than individual settings and is focused on building learning communities and networks. • Participants are given opportunities to test out and apply new skills.

Topics that may need specific support include (but are not limited to): finding and engaging community partners, collaborating across sectors (e.g., with health, mental health, child welfare, etc.), how to most appropriately communicate with families, and cultural and linguistic competence.

Recommendations

There are a number of considerations to support effective implementation, including:

- **_Build awareness around family engagement._** When practitioners and community members believe in the importance of family engagement, they will be more committed and connected to an intentional and thoughtful implementation. Sharing examples of successes other programs experience as a result of their family engagement approach offers a compelling reason to take a more in-depth approach to it. For instance, family engagement is an important strategy in combating chronic absenteeism, which is an issue that more stakeholders are concerned about addressing.

> The Family Engagement Community of Practice is a shared space for professionals interested in and working on issues related to family engagement to come together to share ideas, strategies, experiences, and resources. Providers can find supports for family engagement through participation.

- *Provide guidance to providers through documents and tools on family engagement standards and strategies.* Consider including guidance within a framework or plan, or as a companion piece, to help practitioners make the connection between the intent and application. Also consider making supports and resources that are accessibly online, such as tip pages, links to best practices, and other support documents. These can be geared to program staff and families. For example, Georgia's Department of Care and Early Learning (DECAL) features a handbook on their website for families to prepare them to participate in the pre-K program. Their parent orientation video walks families through the states' Early Learning Guidelines. It also shows examples of how teachers use them in the classroom.

- *Provide information geared to families in multiples formats.* Family preferences and access to different media formats vary. Making material available through websites, texting, flyers, and YouTube videos are all means to get information directly to families. Obtaining feedback from families from the beginning takes the guesswork out of the process of figuring out which method will work best.

- *Create professional development opportunities.* All professional development activities should be designed and tailored to the expressed needs of staff. For some topics, coaching may be a powerful tool to support teachers in adopting new techniques and practices. Teachers may understand the importance of collaborative family conferences, but may desire skill-building in how to facilitate one. For instance, the Flamboyan Foundation provides ongoing coaching to teachers to implement family engagement practices, such as home visits and parent-teacher conferences. This report by the Harvard Family Research Project provides guidance on professional development.

- *Provide funding to support family engagement training and activities.* Devoting money to training is a wise use of funding. Many family engagement activities require teachers' attendance outside of school hours. Provide funding not only for the activities themselves, but the teachers' time at these activities, recognizes the importance of the work and the contribution of the staff. Devote funding to provide substitutes while teachers attend trainings of conduct home visits.

- *Create a position at the state or local level to coordinate and support family engagement.* A lead staff-member devoted to family engagement can serve as a point of contact, a disseminator of information, a clarifier of policy, a designer of professional development, and a connector between stakeholders. This position can create peer-to-peer learning opportunities to more widely disseminate strategies that have worked in different localities. They can also create connections between programs and other entities for partnerships, such as museums, libraries, and community organization (e.g., entities that work with immigrant families). As part of its Preschool Development Grant work, Connecticut created a state-level position to work solely with district on family engagement. Virginia and Montana created a family engagement coordinator positions for each division/district as part of Preschool Development Grant.

IV. Conclusion

States play an important role in setting the foundation and an overarching vision for effective family engagement in pre-K programs. This is done through a common framework, program standards, and supports that guide programs to create their own family engagement approach that is robust and tailored to their specific populations while also consistent with other early learning setting in terms of principles and intended outcomes.

Additional Resources

A wealth of resources on family engagement can be found online and in print. The resources below were considered most valuable for those working at a state-level as they provide overviews of family engagement, examples of state practices, and information on how to support providers.

Policy Statement

Policy Statement on Family Engagement: From the Early Years to the Early Grades

Frameworks

Partners in Education: A Dual Capacity-Building Framework for Family-School Partnerships

The Head Start Parent, Family, and Community Engagement Framework: Promoting Family Engagement and School Readiness, from Prenatal to Age 8

The Early Childhood Family Engagement Framework: Maryland's Vision for Engaging Families with Young Children

Policy Briefs and Reports

Engaged Families, Effective Pre-K: State Policies that Bolster Student Success shares research findings on the importance of family engagement. It discusses actions state policymakers can take to support family engagement in early childhood programs.

Family Engagement and Children with Disabilities: A Resource Guide for Educators and Parents provides resources across a number of topics: families as advocates, family roles in assessment and intervention, and families as partners in student learning.

Family Involvement Makes a Difference: Evidence That Family Involvement Promotes School Success for Every Child of Every Age summarizes research findings on how family engagement affect outcomes for children.

Getting Parents "Ready" for Kindergarten: The Role of Early Childhood Education presents preliminary evidence on the role of family involvement in young children's transitions to elementary school for children and preparing parents for later involvement in their children's learning.

The Impact of Family Involvement on the Education of Children Ages 3 to 8: A Focus on Literacy and Math Achievement Outcomes and Social-Emotional Skills summarizes findings of 95 studies of family

engagement. Types of family engagement discussed are: learning activities at home, family involvement at school, school outreach to engage families, and supportive parenting activities

Parent Engagement from Preschool through Grade 3: A Guide for Policymakers features highlights of research on preschool through grade three parent engagement, promising models, opportunities for states to strengthen parent engagement, and recommendations for policymakers.

Family Engagement Guidance and Supports

Center on School, Family, and Community Partnerships is non ECE-specific, but does address elementary ages and has useful resources. One of its projects is the National Network of Partnership Schools, which provides training and supports on family engagement to educators.

Family Engagement Inventory is a webpage from the Administration for Children and Families (USHHS) that provides materials to learn how family engagement is defined and implemented across different fields of practice: early education, education, child welfare, juvenile justice, and behavioral health.

Harvard Family Research Project develops valuable resources for information and tools to support family engagement. They cover a wide range of topics such as program environment, transitions, engaging families as teacher, professional development, program leadership, and outreach.

Head Start Parent, Family, and Community Engagement Webpage features a framework and a variety of valuable materials on family engagement.

Strengthening Families is an approach that builds protective factors in families to increase family strengths, enhance child development, and reduce the likelihood of child abuse and neglect.

Resources to Support Practitioners

Building Partnerships: Guide to Developing Relationships with Families provides definitions, tools, reflective strategies, additional resources to build positive goal-oriented relationships. It aligned to the OHS Parent, Family, and Community Engagement Framework and Head Start Performance Standards.

Compendium of Parenting Interventions presents a list of evidence-based parenting interventions, with information on the type of outcome at both the child level and family level, cost information, and qualifications so that programs can identify interventions that best fit their needs.

Culture Counts: Engaging Black and Latino Parents of Young Children in Family Support Programs provides an overview of family support programs and aims to identify the features and strategies that may be most effective for reaching and engaging black and Latino families. It presents recommendations for designing, adapting, and evaluating culturally-relevant family support programs and services.

Famliy & Community Partnership Professional Development "To-Go" is a resource from Head Start that offers interactive resources to support successful professional development for family engagement.

Family Engagement Community of Practice is a shared space for professionals interested in and working on issues related to family engagement to come together to share ideas, strategies, experiences, and resources. While it is part of the Preschool Development Grant Technical Assistance, it is open to all.

Family Involvement Network of Educators (FINE) is a free resource you can join to receive email updates about new resources, idea exchanges, and evaluation methods.

Growing and Sustaining Parent Engagement: A Toolkit for Parents and Community Partners guides the readers on how to implement three strategies to support family engagement by creating a family engagement roadmap, checklist, and support network. First LA commissioned the toolkit, which was prepared by the Center for the Study of Social Policy.

Immigrant Parents and Early Childhood Programs: Addressing Barriers of Literacy, Culture, and Systems Knowledge identifies the needs of newcomer parents across the range of expectations for parent skill, engagement, and leadership sought by ECEC programs, and strategies undertaken to address these needs. The study is based on field research in six states, expert interviews, a literature review, and a sociodemographic analysis.

Implementing Parenting Interventions in Early Care and Education Settings: A Guidebook for Implementation is a companion piece to the Compendium of Parenting Interventions. It provides tips and best practices for practitioners.

Preparing Educators to Engage Families for Student Achievement identifies how teacher preparation programs can increase the competency of incoming educators to implement effective family engagement practices.

The Relationship Between Administrator Qualifications and Family Engagement explores how directors' qualifications are related to factors that contribute to family engagement practices in early childhood programs.

Supporting Parent Engagement in Linguistically Diverse Families to Promote Young Children's Learning: Implications for Early Care and Education Policy explores what we know about linguistically diverse families. It features of early care and education programs that appear to contribute to high levels of parent engagement in linguistically diverse families and recommendations for policy.

Toolkit of Resources for Engaging Parents and Community as Partners in Education, Part I: Building an Understanding of Family and Community Engagement is a tool a district or program can use to build an understanding of family and community engagement. It guides the reader to reflect on beliefs and assumptions and how to get to know the families served.

State resources

Georgia Pre-K Family Handbook is an information resource for families whose children are enrolled in Georgia's Pre-K Program.

Racing to the Top: Maryland's Promising Practices in Family Engagement shares Maryland's approach to family engagement, detailing the infrastructure and strategic approach in its Race to the Top Plan.

The Early Childhood Family Engagement Framework: Maryland's Vision for Engaging Families with Young Children is the product of a collaboration between early childhood stakeholders in Maryland. It provides a framework for all early learning settings to create a consistent experience throughout early learning

settings. The document lays out seven goals for family engagement, identifies foundation areas of a program and strategies for points of impact. It is informed by the *Head Start Parent, Family and Community Engagement Framework*, the U.S. Department of Education's framework, and the experience and insights of individuals in the state who work with ECE programs.

Appendix A – Family Engagement Definitions

State	Family Engagement Definition
Maryland	Family engagement is a shared responsibility of families, schools, and communities for student learning and achievement; it is continuous from birth into the school-age years; and it occurs across the various early care and learning settings where children are. Family engagement means building relationships with families that support family well-being, strong parent–child relationships, and the ongoing learning and development of parents and children alike. It reflects culturally competent and universal design approaches, encompassing the beliefs, attitudes, behaviors, and activities of all families, as well as early care settings that support all children's positive development. Family engagement happens in the home, early childhood settings, school, and community. Sustainable family engagement operates with adequate resources, including public–private partnerships, to ensure meaningful and effective strategies that have the power to impact student learning and achievement.
Illinois	Meaningful family engagement is based on the premise that parents, educators, and community members share responsibility for the academic, physical, social, emotional, and behavioral development of youth. Family engagement is fostered through a deliberate process that is embraced throughout the school. It empowers adults to jointly support student growth, addresses any barriers to learning, and ensures college and career readiness. Foremost, effective family engagement systems, policies and practices are mindful of diverse school-communities that are rich in language, culture, and school experiences. They are responsive to student and family needs.
National Family, School, and Community Engagement Working Group **National Parent Teacher Association (PTA)**	Family engagement is: • A shared responsibility in which schools and other community agencies and organizations are committed to engaging families in meaningful and culturally respectful ways, and families are committed to actively supporting their children's learning and development. • Continuous across a child's life, spanning from Early Head Start programs to college preparation high schools. • Carried out everywhere that children learn – at home, in pre-kindergarten programs, in school, in after-school programs, in faith-based institutions, and in community programs and activities
Early Head Start/ Head Start	In Head Start and Early Head Start programs, parent, family, and community engagement means building relationships with families that support family well-being, strong parent-child relationships and ongoing learning and development of parents and

State	Family Engagement Definition
	children alike. It refers to the beliefs, attitudes, behaviors and activities of families that support their children's positive development from early childhood through young adulthood. Family engagement happens in the home, early childhood program, school and community, and is a shared responsibility with all those who support children's learning.
Draft Policy Statement on Family Engagement – US Department of Education & US Department of Health and Human Services	We refer to "family engagement" as the systematic inclusion of families as partners in children's development, learning, and wellness. Engagement is enabled by positive relationships between families and staff in the institutions where children learn. The goal of family engagement is to support family wellness and children's learning and development.

Appendix B – Alignment Considerations

Key programs to consider include:

- *Head Start* – Head Start, from its inception, has placed great value on family engagement. Its [framework](#) has been used frequently to inform other family engagement frameworks. Section 1304.40 of the Head Start Program Performance Standards lists [family partnership requirements](#).

- *Every Student Succeeds Act (ESSA)* – The Act requires school districts to use at least one percent of funds towards family engagement activities and involve families in how to use the funds. A policy must be developed and it, along with practices, are evaluated with family input. It builds in additional family engagement requirements from NCLB. In addition, "the district must carry out at least one of the following strategies to engage families effectively: professional development for school staff (and may include parents); home-based programs; information dissemination; collaboration with community organizations; and other related activities."[v] Statewide Family Engagement Centers will be funded to provide supports. While not a requirement, establishment of parent advisory boards was offered as a potential means of involving parents. Requirements are accessible on the [ESSA](#) page of the US Department of Education website.
    - o "The State educational agency will support the collection and dissemination to local educational agencies and schools of effective parent and family engagement strategies, including those included in the parent and family engagement policy under section 1116."
    - o *Title I (NCLB, ESSA)*
        - Under No Child Left Behind (NCLB), schools receiving Title I funds were required to use a family engagement strategy. With the passage of the Every Student Succeeds Act (ESSA), an expectation for engaging families continues. Schools must develop policies with input from families, conduct annual meetings with families, and describe how responsibility will be shared and how communication will be conducted between families and teachers.[vi]
    - o *School Improvement Grants* - All models in the [School Improvement Grant](#) (SIG) require family engagement. Although the SIG program will not continue under ESSA, there are useful resources developed for the program. CEELO and the Center on School Turnaround (CST) conducted [case studies](#) of SIG schools using an early learning approach identify family engagement as a key component. For more information on the new Early Learning Model, we suggest viewing [this CEELO-Center on School Turnaround webinar](#) on the model's components.

- *State QRIS standards* – Family engagement standards exist in many state QRISs. The comprehensiveness and detail vary by state with "few states' QRIS include standards that describe explicit requirements for programs to help parents learn about ways they can promote their children's learning."[vii] To learn more about state-specific family engagement requirements,

see the QRIS Compendium. In each state profile, there an indicator name *Features of family partnership and engagement*.

- *NAEYC Accreditation Standards* – Standard 7 lists requirements around family engagement – knowing and understanding the program's families, sharing information with families, and nurturing advocacy skills in families.

- *Child Care and Development Block Grant (CCDBG)* – The grant "indicates that States must provide consumer education to parents and families, on a variety of issues, including research and best practices concerning meaningful parent and family engagement. In addition, the law outlines a set of activities that States may engage in to improve the quality of child care. Among those allowable activities is providing professional development opportunities that address engaging parents and families in culturally and linguistically responsive ways, to expand their knowledge, skills, and capacity to become partners in supporting their children's positive development"[viii] More information is available here.

- *Individuals with Disabilities Act (IDEA)* - IDEA promotes family engagement practices. It requires schools to include the families in the creation of an Individualized Education Plan (IEP) for the child. It also "includ[es] a system of parent training and information centers to help families learn about services for their children and their children's disabilities, and how they can support their children's development and education."[ix] Specific requirements are available here.

The Family Engagement Statement by US Departments of Education and Health and Human Service offers more detailed descriptions of intent and purpose of family engagement provisions in the federally-funded programs.

Appendix C – Questions to Consider for Standards Implementation

The following tables outline potential standards and considerations for states to support program implementation. The standard itself may not provide enough information for a program to implement it appropriately. States should provide additional guidance and clarification for programs.

Activities that focus on child's development (but aren't limited to):

Activity	Considerations for states to support program implementation
Home visits[8]	What training do teachers need to conduct a successful home visit? What resources are needed to implement home visits?
Parent-teacher conferences (formal and informal)/ frequent communication	How many times a year is this required? How will it be documented? What are the most critical pieces of information that will be exchanged? How will early learning standards and assessment information be communicated?
Involving families in the transition to pre-K and from pre-K to K	Which family members are included? How are pre-K and K teachers engaged? What incentives or resources are used to support the activities?
Family involvement in the program (during or after hours)	What are the ranges of family involvement activities? What hours are these offered? How can these be scheduled to best accommodate families in the communities? The range of activities could include parent nights, volunteering, etc. Ensuring there are opportunities for families with non-traditional working hours and days must be considered.
Family involvement in decision making	How are parents engaged? What steps are taken to ensure a broad range of families are engaged? What cultural and linguistic issues need to be addressed to engage families?

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[8] In this context, home visits refer to visits teachers make to a home during the school year to exchange information, such as expectations, routines, etc. at the beginning of the year. In this case, it is different than home visiting that entails consistent visits to the home by a trained practitioner with the intent to mentor or coach families.

Standards that support family well-being and development include (but aren't limited to):

Activity	Considerations
Access to comprehensive services	What service providers are already offering comprehensive services? How can the approach maximize existing resources? What comprehensive services are important to include? Should the program or others in the community offer access to a range of services such as health, mental health, social, or other services in the community?
Family/Parent education	What family or parent education activities and resources exist in the community? What approaches are most appropriate for the families in the community that take into account cultural and linguistic issues?
Family/Parenting support	What family or parent education activities and resources exist in the community? What approaches are most appropriate for the families in the community that take into account cultural and linguistic issues?
Family/Parent leadership opportunities	What family or parent education activities and resources exist in the community? What approaches are most appropriate for the families in the community that take into account cultural and linguistic issues?

Appendix D – Examples of State Family Engagement Standards

Illinois

The Illinois birth to five program standards (ISBE), section 5 (p 31) center on family and community partnerships. The ISBE family engagement framework that extends through grades is available here. These frameworks offer standards with an associated list of indicators for each:

- Standard V.A. The child is viewed in the context of the family and the family is viewed in the context of its culture and community.
- Standard V.B. The program leadership and staff seek and facilitate family participation and partnerships.
- Standard V.C. The program assures that families have access to comprehensive services.
- Standard V.D. The program develops a partnership with families in which the family members and staff determine goals and services.
- Standard V.E. The program takes an active role in community and system planning and establishes ongoing collaborative relationships with other institutions and organizations that serve families.

All state-funded pre-K) must be enrolled in the state's QRIS. Section 2 describes family and community engagement standards and indicators of evidence. The highest ranking is for:

- Program implements at least five family supports (see list in PAS7 item 17) AND Implements two family- staff conferences per year; a plan for daily communication between teaching staff and families; a plan for family involvement in routine classroom activities and/or program planning and a written plan for referring families as appropriate to social, mental health, educational, wellness, and medical services
- Program implements a written plan of activities and strategies that facilitate the transition of children and families into and out of classrooms, early learning environments, community services, and school settings (including transition to kindergarten) AND Program shares this plan with parents and community/ school stakeholders

Maryland

In the ECE-wide Family and Community Engagement Framework, the strategies in the framework cut across multiple goals and text boxes are included that describe a strategy (e.g., Child Care and Parent Cafes) and highlights which of the goals it incorporates.

To meet the highest QRIS standards, a pre-K program must meet the following standards:

- Families receive frequent and regular information about the school's philosophy or mission, eligibility requirements and enrollment procedures, and other information such as: home/school communication, health and safety information, wellness, physical fitness and nutrition, emergency plans, teaching and learning, inclusion of children with disabilities or special health care needs and behavior management. Information is provided in hard copy and /or electronically.
- If the school provides snacks and/or meals to students, nutritional information is provided to families. Families who are homeless or in financial need are directed to food bank resources.

- If the school provides snacks and/or meals - fresh fruits and/or vegetables are provided at least twice a week. The school monitors meals provided from home to ensure that children are receiving nutritious, balanced meals. Students have opportunities for food choices. (LEA website for family/parent information and school nutrition program.) (Evidence: LEA website for family/parent information and school nutrition program.)
- Families are provided with at least five ways to be involved in the classroom, including conferences, activities, fundraising, decision-making, parent newsletters, volunteer in/and out of the classroom or parent surveys. Students provide input for projects that could be enhanced by family participation.
- The school conducts parent-teacher conferences at least twice a year. Students share portfolios with families. (Evidence: Copy of the school's family engagement section of the School Improvement Plan.)

Michigan

[Early Childhood Standards of Quality for Prekindergarten](#) lists the following standards, along with specific actions a quality program takes to meet it

- Multiple opportunities for regular involvement with the program and its staff including placement, planning for individualization and evaluation related specifically to their child.
- Families have multiple opportunities to participate in the child's classroom program as they prefer and are able to do so
- Families are provided a range of opportunities outside of the classroom for participation, education, and enrichment as part of their child's program as they prefer and are able to do so
- The program's policies and practices promote support and respect for the home language, culture, and family composition of each child in ways that support the child's health, learning, and social-emotional well-being
- Family members and members selected from the community participate in the program's advisory council; the council has responsibility for recommending direction in the planning, development, implementation, and evaluation of the program
- All families are provided with opportunities to assist in evaluation of the program.

North Carolina

While the [North Carolina pre-K Program Requirements & Guidance 2015-2016](#) does require family engagement, the approach and activities are left to the discretion of the local level. The program is required to keep a log of activities, opportunities, or communications available at the pre-K site. Examples of family engagement include:

- Home visits
- Formal and informal parent/teacher conferences
- Parent education
- Involving family members in decision making about the child

The document includes guidance as well (provide ongoing opportunities for engagement, provide events outside of regular school day, involve families in planning events, and how to locate outside resources).

Appendix E – Family Engagement Intervention Models

What are examples of effective models?

Two resources that provide ample examples of effective models are the [Compendium of Parenting Interventions](#) and a [report by MDRC](#) that reviewed studies of family engagement interventions. Given space constraints, each model from these two sources are not listed, we recommend going directly accessing these resources.

CEELO, as part of TA to a state in fall 2015, accessed three well-known and respected repositories of evidence-based programs - What Works Clearinghouse, ChildTrends' What Works, and the Promising Practices Network – to find effective models, searching for programs that touched on family engagement strategies that would work in early childhood programs. Each has its own standards and criterion for effectiveness. Of the three, What Works Clearinghouse has the most stringent criterion for a program ("intervention") to be deemed causal. This section provides an overview of the definitions and methodologies of each source.

What Works Clearinghouse Findings

The *What Works Clearinghouse*, an initiative of the Institute for Education Sciences (IES) at the U.S. Department of Education identifies studies that provide credible and reliable evidence of the effectiveness of a given practice, program, or policy (referred to as "interventions"). As noted earlier, this clearinghouse has extremely stringent criterion and, thus, many studies are not included because they do not meet the criteria. In the search we found no successful interventions that had parent engagement components.[9] However, WWC does not review every single intervention available – we only found a handful of early childhood interventions (geared at the pre-K level) that had a family engagement component.

Child Trends' What Works Clearinghouse

This site features a database - [LINKS (Lifecourse Interventions to Nurture Kids Successfully)](#) – that provides information on over 600 individual programs that have been evaluated by researchers. Programs can be searched for by target population, program characteristics, and outcomes. Programs are classified as either "working" or "not working."[10]To be classified as "what works," the intervention has to show, through an experimental evaluation, at least one positive outcome (short or long term) in a specific area. Child Trends cautions that positive impacts of some programs may fade over time and that a successful intervention is not guaranteed to produce the same strength of results when replicated. Program deemed as not working had no impact or produced only negative impacts.

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[9] Search terms: "parent", "family", "engagement"; reviewed all entries in their "early childhood" section
[10] For more information on definitions and methodology, go to http://www.childtrends.org/what-works/definitions-and-methodology/#sthash.LXTmGmyP.dpuf

Several interventions were found to have impacts (note that descriptions are taken verbatim from Child Trends):[11]

- Abriendo Puertas/Opening Doors Program is one of the largest programs in the U.S. working with low-income Latino parents of preschool-aged children. Child Trends conducted the first-ever random-assignment evaluation of a Latino parenting program. The evaluation found positive outcomes in parenting practices that foster academic success, such as reading with children at home, and knowledge of what to look for in quality child care.

- Incredible Years Series is a prevention and intervention program intended to enhance children's social and emotional competencies and ultimately reduce behavior problems. The series consists of three curricula that can be used independently or in conjunction with each other. The curricula are intended for use by parents, teachers and children. The training series incorporate a range of activities that promote positive parenting and teaching practices, interpersonal skills, academic competence, and general social skills. Overall, the Incredible Years Series has been found to decrease harsh discipline practices, improve pro-active parenting skills and the parent-child relationship, enhance children's academic and social competence, and decrease aggression.

- Oregon Social Learning Center Parent-Training Program is designed to help children who have problems with aggression and their parents. In this small-scale study, 19 cases were randomly assigned to either parent training or a wait-list control group. Families received as many sessions as deemed necessary. From pre-test to post-test were improvements in behavior between the experimental and control group.

- ParentCorps - is a culturally-informed, family-based intervention that focuses on issues related to living in high-risk communities and the strengths that families living in these communities possess. Specifically, this program, which is delivered in a school setting by teachers and other school staff, draws on diverse family practices, as well as cultural values, beliefs, and norms, to help parents identify goals for themselves and their children. The goal of the program is to strengthen positive behavior support and behavior management at school and at home in order to enhance children's self-regulation and early learning.

- Triple P-Positive Parenting Program - is a population-based multi-level system of parenting and family support. Through normalizing the challenges of parenting, and changing how parents view and react to their children's behaviors, the program attempts to reduce child behavior problems and teach healthy parenting. TP uses a combination of universal strategies (e.g., public media messages), and targeted consultations with parents individually and in groups.

- Untitled Experimental Program for Mothers of Disadvantaged Preschool Children aimed to train mothers with low education and socioeconomic levels techniques to support the cognitive and language development of their preschool-age children. Mothers were taught to use inexpensive household materials to create learning toys to demonstrate reading and math concepts to their

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[11] Search terms: *Parent or Family Component, Parent Training/Education*; We only picked ones relevant to pre-K, so didn't include infant-toddler specific programs like Nurse-Family Partnerships

children. The program was found to improve children's intellectual functioning and language skills.

- [Home Instruction Program for Preschool Youngsters (HIPPY)](#) is a home-visitation program designed to teach parents how to enhance preschool-age children's school readiness. Home visits are conducted by paraprofessionals and are complemented by program-organized group meetings for parents. An experimental evaluation of HIPPY shows that parental participation can result in better cognitive and educational outcomes in children. Evidence suggests that HIPPY does not have this impact for children of parents with lower levels of program involvement.

The Promising Practice Network

This site offers resources on "best practices" in interventions aimed at improving the lives of children and families in four outcomes areas – healthy and safe children, children ready for school, children succeeding in school, and strong families.

Programs indicators are designated as proven or promising based on a rubric of criteria that cover type of outcome affected, substantial effect size, statistical significance, comparison groups, sample size, and availability of program evaluation documentation. In general, the proven programs meet a higher level or rigor. More information can be found on the [criteria page](#) of the Promising Practice Network website. Note that all descriptions come from the Network.

Proven Programs

- [The Abecedarian Project](#) was a comprehensive early education program for young children at risk for developmental delays and school failure. The Abecedarian Project involved two components: a preschool intervention and a school-age intervention. Evaluation findings include effects on child cognition, family indicators, and long-term impacts. The Abecedarian Project Program Package (available for purchase on this page: http://www.socio.com/eipardd01.php) includes a range of resources that can help providers to replicate the Abecedarian curriculum.

- [Child-Parent Centers](#) provide comprehensive educational support and family support to economically disadvantaged children and their parents. The guiding principle of the program is that by providing a school-based, stable learning environment during preschool, in which parents are active and consistent participants in their child's education, scholastic success will follow. The program requires parental participation and emphasizes a child-centered, individualized approach to social and cognitive development.

- [DARE to be You](#) focuses on improving the parenting skills of parents of young children (age 2 to 5) in order promote children's resiliency to problems later in life, which can, in turn, reduce children's alcohol and drug use as they grow up. The traditional DTBY focuses on reducing alcohol and drug abuse among 5 to 18-year-olds, but the program described here treats only preschoolers and their parents. There were several components of the program: a children's component, a parents' component, training for child-care providers, and training for social

service agency workers who work with families. The program was found to be most effective when provided in two-hour-long blocks for each session, with the sessions given over a 10- to 12-week period. Many positive results were found, including positive impacts on children's behaviors.

- Early Head Start (EHS) is a federally funded community-based program for low-income pregnant women and families with infants and toddlers up to age 3. Its mission is to promote healthy prenatal outcomes for pregnant women, enhance the development of children age 0-3, and support healthy family functioning. EHS programs utilize multiple strategies to provide a wide range of services to participants. Services include child development services delivered in home visits, child care, comprehensive health and mental health services, parenting education, nutrition education, health care and referrals, and family support. EHS offers children and families comprehensive child development services through one or more official program options: (1) center-based, (2) home-based, and (3) combination programs (in which families receive both home visits and center experiences). Findings include that EHS enhanced children's cognitive and language development at age 3. There were also significant effects on social=emotional behavior of children at age 3.

- HighScope Perry Preschool Program is an open framework of educational ideas and practices based on the natural development of young children. The program recognizes children as active learners, who learn best from activities that they themselves plan, carry out, and reflect on. Adults use complex language, as appropriate, as they observe, support, and extend the work of the child. Adults arrange interest areas in the learning environment; maintain a daily routine that permits children to plan, carry out, and reflect on their own activities; and join in children's activities, engaging in conversations that scaffold and extend children's plans and help them think through their ideas. The adults encourage children to make choices, solve problems, and otherwise engage in curriculum activities that contribute to their learning on key developmental indicators that encompass all areas of intellectual, social, and physical development. Positive impacts have been found in scholastic and cognitive outcomes, socioeconomic outcomes, criminal outcomes, and health outcomes.

Promising Programs

- Head Start is a federal matching grant program whose mission is to "promote school readiness by enhancing the social and cognitive development of children through the provision of educational, health, nutritional, social and other services to enrolled children and families" (ACF, 2008). For eligible low-income children, Head Start provides free access to preschools, which are provided primarily in centers and are expected to conform to a specific set of guidelines laid out in the Head Start Program Performance Standards and other regulations. In addition to early childhood education, Head Start incorporates parental involvement and facilitates access to health care services; most Head Start programs also provide at least one meal to children during the day. The program requirements are flexible to meet the needs of the community, allowing individual programs to determine such program characteristics as the number of hours per day, or months per year, that a participation must attend; curriculum; teacher salary; and mode of

delivery (in a home, a school, or a center). The majority of the favorable outcomes identified for participants in evaluation findings relative to the control group were in measures of language, literacy, and pre-writing, but this is also the category in which the most outcomes were measured.

- Parents as Teachers provides parents with child development knowledge and parenting support. Through a four-part intervention model known as the Parents as Teachers Born to Learn® model, trained and certified parent educators offer support to families from pregnancy to the time the children entered kindergarten. The goals of PAT are to increase parent knowledge of early childhood development, improve parenting practices, detect developmental delays and health issues early, prevent child abuse and neglect, and increase children's school readiness and success. PAT program services include home visits to families; health, hearing, vision, and developmental screenings of children; parent group meetings; and a resource network that links families with needed community resources.

- Smart Start's approach allows communities to make decisions and plans that are specific to the needs of their young children and families. All Smart Start programs are based on three core areas: (1) child care and education; (2) health care and education; and (3) family support and education. The individual services provided by each site under these core areas are tailored to each community depending on its specific needs, goals, and priorities. As such, the full range of services is not likely to be available at all sites.

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ABOUT CEELO:

One of 22 Comprehensive Centers funded by the U.S. Department of Education's Office of Elementary and Secondary Education, the Center on Enhancing Early Learning Outcomes (CEELO) will strengthen the capacity of State Education Agencies (SEAs) to lead sustained improvements in early learning opportunities and outcomes. CEELO will work in partnership with SEAs, state and local early childhood leaders, and other federal and national technical assistance (TA) providers to promote innovation and accountability.

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