



# What We Know About Access to High-Quality Early Childhood Education and How We Can Improve Access

DIANE SCHILDER, ED.D.  
CEELO AND EDUCATION DEVELOPMENT  
CENTER, INC.  
NOVEMBER 6, 2015

---



# Agenda

- Introductions
- Why the topic is important
- Current trends
- Policy issues
- Research
- Small group activity
- Next steps



# Introductions

- Principals
- School improvement grant coordinators
- Title 1 administrators
- Special education coordinators
- Teachers
- Other?



# Questions for Consideration

- How many have a preschool in your school or district?
  - What funds support the preschool?
  - What is the participation rate?
- About how often do you think children are expelled from preschool or retained in Kindergarten?
  - Why are children being expelled from school?
  - Why are children retained?
  - What is the impact of expulsion and retention on children?



# Why the Topic is Important



# Research Shows High Quality Early Education (including Preschool) Produce Large Benefits

- High-quality preschool can payoff with about 10 to 1 ratio of earnings benefits to costs (Bartik, T. J., Gormley, W., & Adelstein, S., 2012)
- Benefits of preschool high enough that payoff is large even at state or local level (Bartik)
- The economic benefits of high quality early childhood education are well established and widely recognized (MacEwan; Camilli, Vargas, Ryan, & Barnett, 2010)
  - Special education placements significantly lower for students who attended high-quality ECE
  - Retention significantly lower



# Low-Income Children's Access to High Quality Preschool

- Young children who live in poverty lag behind their peers from their earliest school years and poor children often do not enter school adequately prepared for success (Ramey)
- Yet **59%** of preschool-aged children nationally have access to any type of preschool.
- Children in New Hampshire are even less likely to participate in preschool: **88% of children in NH (12,122 children) are NOT attending preschool.**

Source: National Institute for Early Education Research (NIEER). (2013). 2013 State Preschool Yearbook. <http://www.ed.gov/news/press-releases/new-report-shows-greater-need-access-high-quality-preschool-america's-children>



# What Are the Current Trends in Preschool Expulsion?

- Preschool expulsion rates are **3.2** times the rates of K-12 students
- Each year an estimated 5,117 across the country are expelled from preschool.
- 10 percent of preschool teachers reported having expelled at least one child in the previous 12
- Who is most likely to be expelled?
  - **Four-year-olds** are expelled at a rate about 50 percent greater than three-year-olds
  - **Boys** are expelled at a rate over 4.5 times that of girls
  - **African-Americans** are about twice as likely to be expelled as Latino and Caucasian children, and over five times as likely to be expelled as Asian-American children
  - Children **attending public schools** are significantly more likely to be expelled compared with those attending private preschool or Head Start





# What Are the Current Trends in Retention in Early Grades?

- More than **140,000** kindergarten students nationwide were held back a year in 2011–12, representing about 4% of all kindergarten students in public schools.
- **Students with disabilities** served by IDEA represent 14% of students enrolled and 17% of students retained in elementary schools.
- **English learners represent** 14% of students enrolled and 18% of students retained in elementary schools.
- **Boys** represent 61% of kindergarteners retained



# Does the age or grade when retention occurs make a difference in students' outcomes?

- Research suggests retention is better done at the earliest time possible to formatively improve academic performance and minimize emotional or social distress.
- Limited research currently examines the short-or long- impact of students below third grade.
- Multiple retentions increased the probability that students will drop out of school.



# Policy Issues



# Policy issues

U.S. Department of Health and Human Services and U.S. Department of Education have issued a policy statement on Preschool Expulsion:

- Raise awareness about expulsion, suspension, and other exclusionary discipline practices in early childhood settings, including issues of racial/national origin/ethnic and sex disparities and negative outcomes for children associated with expulsion and suspension in the early years;
- Provide recommendations to States, districts and programs on establishing preventive, disciplinary, suspension, and expulsion policies and administering those policies free of bias and discrimination
- Provide recommendations on setting goals and using data to monitor progress in preventing, severely limiting, and ultimately eliminating expulsion and suspension practices in early childhood settings
- Highlight early childhood workforce competencies and evidence-based interventions and approaches that prevent expulsion, suspension, and other exclusionary discipline practices, including early childhood mental health consultation and positive behavior intervention and support strategies
- Identify free resources to support states, programs, districts, schools and teachers, and providers in addressing children's social-emotional and behavioral health, strengthening family-program relationships



# Research on Impact

- Limiting access to high-quality early education **increases the achievement gap** at school entry
- **Expelling children from preschool presents a missed opportunity** to address young children's socio-emotional and cognitive needs prior to school entry
- Crafting and implementing **policies and practices** to support administrators, teachers and parents in addressing behavioral and cognitive challenges **can address the problem of preschool expulsion**



# Research on Impact of Expulsion

- Preschool behavior problems are the *single best predictor* of adolescent delinquency and adult imprisonment.
- Expulsion from preschool leaves young children without access to the education and early intervention. In the absence of these supports, children are most likely to develop chronic behavior problems, contributing to
  - school failure, peer rejection, substance abuse, truancy, incarceration, unemployment, divorce, psychiatric illness, and early death in adolescence and adulthood
  - more costly and long-term interventions to keep problems in check

Source: Splett, J. & Hawks J., 2011:

<http://hdfs.missouri.edu/cfpr/documents/briefs/expulsion.pdf>



# What Others Have Done

- Title 1 and School Improvement Grant funds can be used to support high-quality preschool
- Some states, districts and schools have developed policies to align federal funds to support a cohesive preschool agenda
- Some states, districts and schools are systematically monitoring young access to preschool
- Some states are adopting policies to reduce incidents of preschool expulsion



# Policy Considerations and Options for Reducing Expulsion

Some states, districts and schools have . . .

1. Developed a policy to recommend early intervention and a process for documenting gaps in early intervention services
2. Provided access to behavioral consultation for preschool teachers
3. Supported teacher training in the area of classroom behavior management
4. Required preschool programs to implement program policy and practice strategies to support behavior management
5. Supported teacher training in cultural awareness
6. Provided consistent policy development and funding to fully support teacher training, consultation services, and intervention strategies





# Small Group Activity

- Review Indistar Indicators and Wise Ways:
  - Indicator 3 and 4: District and school have a system in place for determining the nature and extent of early learning opportunities each student has experienced prior to school entry.
  - Indicator 6: All teachers providing education to pre-K through grade three students have specialized education in early childhood education or child development.
- Determine whether any of these options are appropriate for your district and school and how they might help your district or school address issues of preschool expulsion and early grade retention
- Report back



# Report Back

- How do the indicators address issues of expulsion and retention?
- If you were to select these indicators, what action steps might you include in your continuous improvement plan?



# Working Together for Better Outcomes



# Next Steps

- Contact us if you want additional information at [dschilder@edc.org](mailto:dschilder@edc.org)
- Use resources on the CEELO website to assist with action steps including the annotated bibliography on expulsion and the Wise Ways on access to high quality early learning opportunities:
  - [CEELO website](#)
  - [Incorporating Early Learning Strategies in the School Improvement Grants \(SIG\) Program](#)
  - [Indistar Indicators](#)
  - [Expulsion annotated bibliography](#)

