Planning for Terrific Transitions:

A Guide for Georgia Schools on Kindergarten Transition

A partnership publication by:

Bright from the Start Georgia Department of Early Care and Learning

Georgia Association on Young Children

Georgia Department of Education

Georgia Parent Teacher Association (PTA)

Georgia Parents as Teachers Network

Georgia Public Broadcasting

Smart Start/United Way of Metropolitan Atlanta

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Planning for Terrific Transitions: Overview

What is School Transition?

School Transition is a process that prepares all partners – students, families, schools and communities - to develop knowledge, skills, and relationships that help students move from one educational setting to another.

- The transition into Kindergarten is an important time in children's lives. The entrance into Kindergarten from home or from a pre-school program may be a point of considerable change for families, children and staff. Transition practices attempt to bridge and overcome issues which arise during this time.

- School transition is a process – not just two or three activities – and it involves communications and partnerships among four groups: **schools** that are ready for children; **community** participation and support; **family** knowledge and involvement; and **preschools and child care settings** committed to preparing children.

- Successful school transition is not a one size fits all process. Plans should be customized to meet the needs of the school community.

- Transitioning through change is a skill that children and families must be taught and given many opportunities to practice.

- Transition planning can strengthen bonds between preschools and elementary schools, including addressing consistency in expectations and curriculum across programs.

What are the Results?

Parents and children know the school – its staff, the school facility, the curriculum and expectations, as well as other families. Children are excited the first day because they already know what to expect and have people they know – school personnel as well as peers - waiting for them. Teachers are able to start teaching earlier and report fewer behavior problems (and tears!) the first few weeks of school.

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Planning for Terrific Transitions: School Transition Team and Plan

School districts may find it helpful to develop district policies for school transition teams, activities, and alignment to ensure that children have a successful transition into school and experience school success. One way to do this is by having individual elementary schools or clusters of elementary schools form Kindergarten Transition Teams to: (a) build relationships among key partners to identify needs, goals, and resources; (b) craft an annual Kindergarten transition community plan and calendar that engages each of the partners; (c) implement the plan, engaging additional community partners; (d) develop a feedback or evaluation process to measure the impact of the transition policies and activities.

Listening to Parents, Children, and Kindergarten Teachers

The planning process begins by engaging parents, children, and school staff. Schools can plan focus groups or conduct surveys with parents and school staff to learn more about how school transition is perceived. Parent and community volunteers, interns, the Parent Teacher Association (PTA), or other parent organizations may be able to assist with this fact-finding step. Some questions to consider when beginning this process include:

- What is the school already doing to ensure that children and families have a successful transition? Is the school ready?
- What kind of communication exists between the Georgia Pre-K programs, other early learning center based programs, family child care, relative caregivers, home visiting programs - and the school? How can local community organizations/partners participate in the process?
- What do Kindergarten teachers see as the need?
- What do parents of this years Kindergarten students have to say about the transition process? What worked? What would be better?

Developing a Kindergarten Transition Team

The Kindergarten Transition Team is typically convened by the school leadership and is a collaborative partnership that may include:

- **School administrators and staff (e.g., principal or designee, Kindergarten teachers, Title I staff, counselors, family engagement professionals)**
- **Georgia Pre-K (including program operated by for profit and not for profit groups)**
- **Pre-K School Transition Coach**
- **Head Start**
- **Faith based early learning programs**
- **Family child care**
- **Home visiting programs (e.g., Healthy Families Georgia, Parents as Teachers, the Nurturing Program)**
- **Agencies (e.g., library, University of Georgia Cooperative Extension Services, Georgia Family Connection Partnership)**
- **Community leaders (e.g., city or county council members, President of the Kiwanis)**
- **PTA or PTO**

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Each school-based transition team should have a designated Kindergarten Transition Team Coordinator who is responsible for convening the meetings and coordinating activities. The Coordinator may be the principal or an assistant principal. It may be the school counselor, the Title I parent involvement coordinator, or another school staff member who has an interest in this work. Title I funding may be used for some of the school transition activities, while your community partners will help you access other resources.

Below are examples of activities that your team can use to launch, implement, and evaluate school transition work:

- Host a discussion about school transition and the purpose and role of creating a Kindergarten transition team.

- Review existing school transition assessments and/or conduct a survey of the groups involved to find out what is already being done to address transition issues. Consider using interns, volunteers, PTA or PTO members, or community partners to help with the assessment.

- Host a one day or evening round table discussion for early childhood education providers, Kindergarten teachers, school administrators, parents, health care providers, and others to learn about each other's programs and start building connections.

- Develop a written document establishing the goals of the Kindergarten Transition Team and how the partners will work together.

- Develop a calendar with at least quarterly meetings for the Team to discuss progress, issues, upcoming events, and a plan for evaluation.

Based on the transition goals, develop a list of school transition activities over the course of the year. The plan and calendar should include what the school, families, early learning providers, PTA, other parent organizations, and community leaders will do together.

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Developing a Kindergarten Transition Plan

The plan should include specific policies and activities that involve the child, the family, the early learning community, the community, and the school. Some activities or policies may involve two or more groups. To serve as an example, below is a list of possible activities and policies that your school team may consider in your plan, based on your assessment and goals.

1) The Learning Academy will host a meeting at the center in February and invite a representative of the school district to discuss Pre-K and Kindergarten registration, the curriculum, and expectations. Staff will help parents identify the elementary schools and options.

2) The PTA will host a Welcome New Parents event in the spring and a second event in the fall. Both events will have simultaneous interpretation from English to Spanish and parents who attend will be matched with a Kindergarten or first grade parent who will serve as their "Buddy."

3) The Valleytown Apartments will distribute flyers about school registration requirements prepared by the Transition Team at the rent office.

4) All of the partners will promote the quarterly school transition activities organized by the Title I staff as well as the 4-day Kindercamp for rising Pre-K and Kindergarten children funded by Title I and co-sponsored by the Kiwanis Club.

5) The child care resource and referral agency will identify family child care providers and relative caregivers whose children feed into the school and encourage them to participate in the quarterly transition events at the school planned by the Team.

6) When there is a Parents as Teachers (PAT) program working with the school, the Parents as Teachers parent educator will develop an individual child transition plan for every PAT child entering the school's Pre-K or Kindergarten and help the parent communicate to the teacher any special needs or strengths the child might have.

7) The school will invite early learning providers to participate in a joint training day coordinated by the Georgia Association on Young Children (GAYC).

8) The library will host literacy events for rising Pre-K and Kindergarten students and their caregivers and work with area family child care providers and centers to assure that children and their families have library cards.

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9) The school community, led by the County Family Connection and United Way, will coordinate activities to promote the importance of early learning and successful school transition during the Month of the Young Child (MOYC) in April and Read for the Record Day in October.

10) The Best Ever College Social Work class will work with the partners to develop a Kindergarten school transition evaluation plan. Questions that can be posed from the evaluation can include: What difference did the transition policies, plans, and activities have on the child, parent, teacher, or school?

Once you develop the plan with policies and activities, it is also important to incorporate ways to measure the plan's success. Develop evaluations with both quantitative and qualitative measures. Then, use the results from these evaluations, informal feedback, and interview sessions to discuss the school transition plan's impact and effectiveness for the past year and make adjustments as needed for continued improvement.

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Planning for Terrific Transitions: School Transition Activities

Schools often assume that the work of school transition begins once the child begins Kindergarten. However, the process of school transition should begin much earlier and is central to providing effective transitions for children and their families. Schools play a key role in helping children and families experience positive and successful transitions. In fact, research suggests the smoother the child's transition, the better the child's school success, both during the transition year and later throughout the child's academic life.

Schools can plan an array of transition activities to ensure that children and families start Kindergarten prepared and ready to learn. The following list provides examples of activities that would be great to incorporate into a Kindergarten School Transition Plan.

Items are grouped under four key principles:

1) ***Establish Relationships***
2) ***Promote Academics and Learning***
3) ***Provide Ongoing Communication***
4) ***Offer Support***

Establish Relationships

Link with children and families to form relationships before the first day of school and continue to build upon these relationships throughout the Kindergarten year.

1) Provide opportunities for parents to visit a Kindergarten class with their child at the school they will attend the following school year.

2) Contact preschoolers and their families periodically either by phone or face-to-face meetings to develop relationships and familiarity with them before they become officially part of the school community.

3) Encourage your school's Parent-Teacher Association (PTA) to adopt local childcare centers and Pre-K programs to invite and involve incoming families in school PTA efforts the year before their child enters Kindergarten.

4) Plan an open house that allows parents and children to visit classrooms, meet school staff, teachers, and administrators, as well as see the library, playground, gym, or other school facilities.

5) Invite families to special school-wide activities such as spring fairs, curriculum nights, and entertainment – related assemblies to help parents and their children build connections to their new school.

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6) Pair Kindergarten support staff with preschool children to build bonds and assist families' support and assistance as transition needs arise.

7) Allow the Kindergarten teacher to interact directly with tentative children for next year's Kindergarten class the spring of the children's Pre-K year by visiting their Pre-K class to read a story or lead an activity.

8) Make personal contact with families within the first few days of their child starting Kindergarten to ask how the child did their first few days of school.

Promote Academics and Learning

Provide families with information that helps prepare children for the academic, social, and emotional skills in Kindergarten.

1) Share school readiness information with parents throughout the year before children begin Kindergarten and encourage parents to practice skills at home.

2) Provide a list of children's books available at the public library or bookstore that parents can share with their child about Kindergarten.

3) Disseminate home-learning calendars and activities that parents can do with their child over the summer months prior to Kindergarten entry.

4) Hold a weekly story time in the library for preschoolers.

5) Plan a luncheon that gives parents and children the opportunity to eat lunch in the cafeteria to learn the routine, practice manners, and utilize self-help skills.

6) Allow parents and children the opportunity to tour and take a ride on a school bus.

7) Incorporate past preschool activities into Kindergarten classes to provide continuity for children.

8) Provide parents with home learning activities such as early literacy activities, word or letter learning games, and number maps to ensure children have the knowledge needed to begin Kindergarten.

9) Introduce Kindergarten rules and rituals in Pre-K and childcare programs throughout the preschool year.

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Provide Ongoing Communication

Create an open system of communication to inform families about all aspects of the child's school.

1) Provide families with written information in a language they can understand concerning need to know items such as: picking up children, before and after school care, school supplies, school uniforms, paying for school lunches, school calendars, important phone numbers and school day hours the spring before Kindergarten begins.

2) Hold Kindergarten round ups or informational meetings at the school, in the community, and at childcare facilities the winter before children begin Kindergarten to discuss school readiness, registration guidelines, health and nutrition information, and other transition topics.

3) Hold information sessions that provide information to the parents of incoming students on screenings and services available such as speech, occupational therapy, physical therapy, and other special education services.

4) Create newsletters and resource materials that provide families Kindergarten transition activities the year before Kindergarten and throughout the Kindergarten year.

5) Provide helpful pamphlets to families on what the school will expect of them and tips on things they can do at home to prepare children for Kindergarten transition.

6) Set up information booths at community and faith based organization events to provide parents with Kindergarten registration information.

7) Keep parents informed of activities and events provided to help their child prepare for Kindergarten by reaching out to Pre-K programs and childcare centers.

8) Hold family meetings with the child's Kindergarten teacher to discuss expectations prior to the school year beginning.

9) Send invitations to families asking them to visit Kindergarten classes the spring of the child's preschool year.

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Offer Support

Establish a support network to help families navigate the process of entering a new school setting before the 1st day of school and throughout the Kindergarten year.

1) Hold Kindergarten transition support groups and invite past Kindergarten parents in to talk about their transition experiences the spring before children enter Kindergarten and throughout the Kindergarten year.

2) Ask Kindergarten teachers or Kindergarten support staff to conduct home visits with families before and after their children enter Kindergarten.

3) Maintain periodic contact with Kindergarten families throughout the school year to address transition needs, concerns as well as to help the family develop skills to navigate the educational system.

4) Hold parent-teacher conferences throughout the school year with Kindergarten families.

5) Provide a special parent orientation session after Kindergarten exclusively for Kindergarten families.

6) Encourage preschool teachers to visit or write letters to former students in the Kindergarten classroom during the first month of school to ease the transition process.

7) Develop a Kindergarten family buddy system by pairing two new Kindergarten families together to share in the transition process or pair a new Kindergarten family with a first grade family to provide transition guidance.

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Planning for Terrific Transitions: Kindercamps

Preparing Children, Families and Schools for "Big School"

A "kindercamp" is a school transition activity for families and children who are transitioning from home and/or early learning setting to a Pre-K program or Kindergarten. Kindercamps provide the opportunity for the children to become acclimated to their new "big school," to experience school routines, to learn or practice skills needed in Kindergarten, and to develop relationships with school staff and other Kindergarteners - prior to the actual first day of school.

Kindercamps range in duration, from 3 or 4 days to 6 weeks. Most are half day. They typically occur the last few weeks before school starts but may take place any time during the summer. Kindercamps are generally staffed by Pre-K teachers, Kindergarten teachers and aides, other school personnel, and volunteers. The "kindercamp leader" may be a school counselor, an assistant principal, or a teacher. Many kindercamps are planned by the school's transition team as part of the school's plan to ensure a smooth and successful transition for rising Pre-K and/or Kindergarten students and their families. The kindercamps are funded through a variety of sources, including Title I, grants, and community donations.

Many school districts have integrated kindercamps into their Title I plans. Some school districts offer kindercamps in each of the Title I schools while others may only offer them in selected schools, chosen on the basis of income or other criteria.

Kindercamp Activities at a Glance

Routines. Kindercamp activities may include riding the school bus, going through the line and eating in the school cafeteria, finding the bathrooms, sitting in desks in the Kindergarten classes, and playing on the playground. The children practice raising their hands, using their words to say what they need, standing in line, and sharing. These activities help the child feel comfortable and safe the first day of school.

Learning is fun. Most kindercamps include activities that build or strengthen skills necessary for Pre-K or Kindergarten. Kindercamp is fun! Some camps use themes that incorporate activities such as cutting with scissors, using shapes to make pictures, learning how to say their full name and phone number, and reading time. Other kindercamps offer field trips. Most importantly, Kindergarten or Pre-K teachers are able to observe the children during these activities and provide ideas to the parents for at home activities.

Making friends. Kindercamps include time for socialization. When children arrive the first day of Pre-K or Kindergarten, they already know school staff names, and may have also met their teacher and even the principal! Most importantly, they know children in their class.

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Parent Involvement. Kindercamps engage families in a variety of ways. Some kindercamps involve family members during the activities by providing skills building activities that they can then continue to do with their child(ren) before school starts and throughout the school year. Families can also receive books that are read to the children during the kindercamp so that they can re-read them during the transition period. Other ideas include families attending "adult only" sessions where they learn about the Pre-K or Kindergarten curriculum and standards, and what is needed for registration if they are not already registered. This is also a good time to share information on eating a healthy breakfast, a bedtime routine, getting to school on time, the importance of talking to their children about the school day, and the many ways they can get involved with the school. And, like the children, they are able to meet key people at the school – before the first day.

Benefits of Kindercamp

Kindergarten teachers report that children who participate in kindercamps are often the leaders in their class. Kindercamps help eliminate the fear and the tears that often occur the first few weeks of the school year. Teachers report that they can start "teaching" sooner! Parents report that meeting the teachers and the principal and getting to know the school helps them feel more comfortable communicating with the staff during the year and more likely to get involved in school activities.

Getting Started

Districts may decide to establish a district planning team that develops the parameters of the kindercamps. Some decisions may be made on the district level, others at the school level. The following suggestions are offered to help school districts and individual elementary schools begin their kindercamp planning.

When planning kindercamps, start by considering the following:

- **Planning Team:** Who needs to be involved in the planning process? Consider this as an opportunity to collaborate with other schools and to involve new or existing partners. At the school level, kindercamp transition teams may include the principal, other school leadership, the counselor, social worker, transition coaches, parent involvement coordinators, Title I administrators, Kindergarten and Pre-K teachers, and parents. Invite one of your business or early learning partners to serve as well.

- **Funding:** What funding is available? Consider Title I funds, special grants, and community donations, including volunteers and in kind services. Depending on funding and the purpose of kindercamp, the kindercamps range in numbers served. Some camps serve 15 to 20 children and others are larger, serving 100 or more children.

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- **Criteria for participation:** Which children will be served? Some kindercamps target children for either Pre-K or Kindergarten that have not been enrolled in a formal early learning program, including those who have been at home with families, relative caregivers, or neighbors. Others target children who did not attend the school's Pre-K program and work closely with early learning programs. Others operate on a first come first serve basis. Some schools enroll at their Kindergarten round up and only serve children who have completed the enrollment. Another targeted group may be younger siblings of children currently enrolled in the school or identify children with special needs.

A Kindercamp Planning and Implementing Check List at a Glance

After the initial planning steps have been considered, use this check list to help work out the details.

☑ **Kindercamp planning team:** Who will serve on the planning team? Consider including a parent and other community groups as well as school staff.

☑ **Purpose and curriculum:** What is the purpose of your kindercamp? What curriculum will you use? Will you include field trips? What results would you like to see?

☑ **Criterion and number of children to be served:** How many children will be served? What is the criterion for participation?

☑ **Marketing and promotion:** How will you advertise? What partners will assist you? In addition to school personnel, apartment complexes, public health facilities, libraries, home visitation programs, and other community agencies and groups can help you recruit.

☑ **Cost:** Typically kindercamps are free to families. However, will you need to charge a small fee?

☑ **Registration:** What is the deadline? What information will parents need to register their child(ren)? How will you register children?

☑ **Dates and schedule:** When will the kindercamp be held? How many hours? Kindercamps typically range from 3 to 4 days to 6 weeks.

☑ **Forms:** What information and forms are required by your school?

☑ **Flyers and other printed information for families:** Consider a brochure and providing a schedule of activities.

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☑ **Budget:** What are all the costs associated with holding a kindercamp?

- Personnel: How will the kindercamp be staffed? Will you encourage parents and others to volunteer? Will you need janitorial or other personnel?
- Utilities
- Program supplies
- Food: Will you offer lunch? Snacks?
- Field trips
- Family activities and workshops
- Transportation
- Evaluation and feedback

☑ **Transportation:** Will transportation be offered? Will students have an opportunity to ride the school bus to and from home? Many school systems have the school buses pick-up and drop off children to and from the school.

☑ **Parent Involvement:** How will you engage families? Will they be involved in activities such as field trips? Will there be "adult sessions" with child care? Interpretation? Refreshments? Child care for infants and toddlers if needed?

☑ **Evaluation:** How will you measure "success?" How will you get feedback from the kindercamp staff, families, and children as well as Pre-K and Kindergarten teachers to help inform the next year's kindercamp? How will you share the pictures, the stories, as well as the data and lessons learned?

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Planning for Terrific Transitions: PTA as a Partner

PTAs and other parent organizations can be a valuable asset in assisting schools with Kindergarten transition by reaching out to families before their children even begin attending the school. PTAs can teach families about volunteerism, advocacy, and the benefits and value of being involved and engaged in their child's education, as well as provide increased communications and create programs that will encourage interaction between families, schools and the community. Current research shows that parents' involvement in school depends in part on how welcome they feel by the school. Many schools include a diverse student population, so it is important for PTA and other parent groups to ensure all families feel welcomed and valued.

Ways PTA Can Help

1) Parent volunteers can assist with greeting all families, helping to answer questions, and acting as liaisons to help families become familiar with the school environment. PTAs can also help to create a welcoming environment by posting photographs of the classrooms, teachers and past fun events or by sharing information about specific teachers' styles. All of which will help the students and families feel more at ease with their school transition.

2) Some families may need some advice on how to help their children cope with the anxieties related to transitions from preschool to Kindergarten. PTAs can host a wide array of special events prior to the start of Kindergarten. These transition-focused gatherings often have school staff, such as teachers, principals, PTA representatives, and parent liaisons present to meet parents and answer parents' questions.

3) PTAs can help to encourage peer networking among parents, creating buddy lists and opportunities for parents to meet others who have same-age children or who have already been through the transition experience with an older child.

4) One way to really help families with transition is to empower the parents to act as advocates for their children. PTA provides leadership development training to interested members and encourages all families to take an active role in their child's education.

5) Regular and meaningful two-way communication is very important. PTA can prepare newsletters and host websites to cover relevant topics that keep families informed. Topics for the fall might include learning how to work with school staff, volunteer opportunities with the PTA and at school, as well as how to work with their child at home for a successful Kindergarten experience. Topics for the spring might include helping parents prepare for the transition, information on parent's rights and responsibilities, immunization and other requirements for beginning school.

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PTA Programs and Events for School Transition

The following activities and events highlighted are particular ways PTAs can participate in school transition.

- Host a Kindergarten Play Date on the playground over the summer before school begins. This type of activity allows the incoming kindergartners and their families a chance to get to know one another in a fun and informal setting. The PTA can provide popsicles or other light refreshments to welcome them into the school community.

- Host a special "Kindergarten Open House" before school begins. Hold this open house at a separate time and include only Kindergarten parents and children. The parents and children can visit the classroom, talk with their teacher, see the school, visit the cafeteria and get a feel for this new environment that they will soon be experiencing. Have the school administration and PTA there to answer questions, give tours, and allow the parents to feel comfortable about their child beginning a new journey.

- Host a "Coffee, Tea and Sympathy Breakfast" for your parents the first day of school. Parents of Kindergarteners are invited to stay after they drop their students off to join other families for some breakfast, networking and support. Have the PTA provide some type of light breakfast, juice, coffee, and lots of tissues. This is a wonderful opportunity for parents to connect and discuss how they feel and at the same time learn about their school and volunteer opportunities to stay involved.

- Host an occasional "Coffee with the Principal and PTA President" in the morning when parents are dropping off their children at school. These gatherings provide parents with the opportunity to speak with the principal or PTA President, ask questions, and learn ways they can support their student's success through the school and PTA. These opportunities can occur monthly or quarterly, based on school and parent needs.

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Planning for Terrific Transitions: Funds for School Transition

Leveraging funds that can be used to support transition activities can be a difficult and confusing task, but it does not have to be. Schools can fund school transition teams, planning processes, activities, and evaluation through three primary sources: 1) Title I, 2) grants and donations, and 3) partners.

Title I

Title, I, Part A of The Elementary and Secondary Education Act of 1965 is primarily intended to provide funding for elementary and secondary education. Although there is no specific designated funding source for pre-school or transition activities within Title I, Part A, funds may be used for preschool and transition services for at-risk children within Title I funded schools and school districts at the discretion of the school or school districts. Expenditures for children from birth to age five have been allowable since the law's enactment in l965.

- They can reach children who are at-risk but are in families with income above the poverty level.
- They can be used for comprehensive services that are needed to prepare at-risk children for school success.
- They can go beyond school based programs to serve children in other early childhood settings within the community;
- They can be used to screen children to determine whether they are at-risk and to make services available, and;
- They can be used for professional development for teachers working with young children at-risk of school failure.

In 2004, the United States Department of Education issued non-regulatory guidance, *Serving Preschool Children Under Title I,* which is excerpted below to explain this funding source in more detail.

Where may Title I preschool services be provided?

Pre-school services may be provided at any location that other Title I services may be provided, including public school buildings, public libraries, community centers, privately owned facilities including facilities owned by faith-based organizations, the child's home and other appropriate settings.

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What is the relationship between Title I parental involvement policies and those in other programs?

Title I local education agencies (LEAs) and schools must, to the extent feasible and appropriate, coordinate and integrate Title I parent involvement strategies and activities with parent involvement strategies under other programs such as Head Start, Reading First, Early Reading First, Even Start, Parents as Teachers Program, the Home Instruction Program for Preschool Youngsters, and state preschool programs. (Section 1118(a)(2)D and 1118 (e)(4) ESEA)

Title I A, Section 1120 requires that activities be carried out to increase coordination between LEAs and Head Start agencies and if feasible other entities caring for our early childhood education and development programs serving children who attend the LEA. For example, funds could be used to

- **Establish channels for communication between schools and community counterparts**
- **Conduct meetings involving parents, Kindergarten or elementary school teachers and teachers from other early childhood development programs to discuss the development and other needs of individual children**
- **Organize and participate in joint transition related training of school staff**

Grants and Donations

School districts, often in partnership with public or community organizations (such as Georgia Family Connection Partnership, United Way, libraries, family resource centers, early learning collaboratives, and public health agencies) work together to identify and develop grant proposals. These grants can be: **federal,** e.g., grants addressing literacy, teen parents, school readiness; **state,** e.g., the Governors Office for Children and Families, Department of Early Care and Learning Transition Coaches, or l**ocal** e.g., United Way, local foundation, family foundations, individual donors. It may be possible to include school transition activities into the various grants.

Partnerships

The Kindergarten Transition Team membership and other community partners are a rich source of information and resources for your school transition activities. As part of their ongoing work and sustainability planning, the Team should identify sources of financial revenue and in kind services and resources.

Examples include:

- Local businesses: Food, volunteers, consumable materials, early learning toys and equipment

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- United Way: In kind services, volunteers, partner for collaborative grants, links to service groups and other organizations seeking to help

- Organizations (e.g., Kiwanis, Lions, NAACP, sororities and fraternities): Funding, book drives, volunteers, in kind services, sponsor special events

- PTA or PTO: Volunteers, perform qualitative assessments to assist with decision making for the school transition team, plan special transition programs and events for new parents before and after school starts, research, individual member contribution

- Health Departments/Pediatricians: Reading programs targeted to patients with young children, printed information, help with immunization and health screenings necessary for school registration

- Library: Transition events held at the library, reading lists for parents, book drives

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Planning for Terrific Transitions: PowerPoint, Brochure, and Video

A Kindergarten transition PowerPoint, brochure, and video have been developed in both English and Spanish to help early child care centers, Pre-K programs, schools and communities communicate the importance of school transition to their families. Limited copies of the brochures were printed and may be still available by contacting any of the partner organizations:

- Bright from the Start Georgia Department of Early Care and Learning
- Georgia Association on Young Children
- Georgia Department of Education
- Georgia Parent Teacher Association (PTA)
- Georgia Parents as Teachers Network
- Smart Start/United Way of Metropolitan Atlanta

In addition, a handout version of the brochure has been developed for ease of copying and distribution at any center, program, school, or organization's convenience. This can be accessed at http://public.doe.k12.ga.us/tss_title.aspx?PageReq=ParentEngagement
Once there, look for the Kindergarten Transition Handout link in the Parent Box or the Kindergarten Transition Toolkit link in the Administrator Box.

Some schools and school districts have developed a supplemental handout to accompany the Kindergarten transition brochure that references their local list of documentation required by families to register their child(ren) for Kindergarten. A sample of this supplemental handout is shown on the following page and it is encouraged for each school or school district to provide a similar document to families along with the brochure.

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SAMPLE
Kindergarten Registration Information

Parents and Families!

We are excited about having your child attend Kindergarten next year. To make sure your child has a smooth transition experience please review the following brochure on Kindergarten Transition. In addition, please bring the following information listed below with you when you come to register your child for Kindergarten. Without all of this information we will be unable to complete your child's Kindergarten registration. We are looking forward to meeting you and your child soon!

Legal Proof of Age:
Must provide:
- Certified Birth Certificate

Proof of Residence:
Must provide one of the following:
- Electric bill
- Cable bill
- Home telephone bill
- Rental contract
- Mortgage statement
- Property deed

Health Information:
Must provide all information that applies:
- Immunization Form 3231 **or** Affidavit of religious exemption
- Vision, Hearing, and Dental Exam Dorm 3300
- Doctor's note (If child has allergies)

U.S. Identification:
Must provide one of the following:
- Social Security Card or Social Security Card waiver

Student Information:
Must provide all information:
- Student information form
- Emergency contact form
- Request for special services form
- Custody documents
- Free/Reduced lunch form

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Planning for Terrific Transitions: References and Resources

References

Awake, Lynn (2003). *Kindergarten transitions: How Pre-K teachers can help. Program services paper.* Raleigh, NC: North Carolina Partnership for Children.

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Ewen, D., Matthews, H., & Mezey, J. (2005). *Missed opportunities? The possibilities and challenges of funding high-quality preschool through Title I of the No Child Left Behind Act.* Washington, D.C.: Center for Law and Social Policy.

Kraft-Sayre, M. E., & Pianta, R. C. (2000). *Enhancing the transition to Kindergarten: Linking children, families, and schools*. Charlottesville, VA: University of Virginia, National Center for Early Development & Learning.

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United States Department of Education (2004). *Serving preschool children under Title I: Non-regulatory guidance.* Washington, D.C.

Resources

Let's Go to School! A Guide for Families on Kindergarten Transition Brochure (Also in Spanish)

Let's Go to School! A Guide for Families on Kindergarten Transition Handout (Also in Spanish)

Let's Go to School! A Guide for Families on Kindergarten Transition PowerPoint (Also in Spanish)

Let's Go to School! A Guide for Families on Kindergarten Transition Video (Also in Spanish)

Kindergarten Transition Activity Calendar (2009) – Sample of a calendar developed by Bright from the Start: Georgia Department of Early Care and Learning that highlights Kindergarten transition activities families can complete at home with their children over the summer.

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