THE PRESCHOOL TO KINDERGARTEN STUDENT PROFILE: IMPROVING KINDERGARTEN TRANSITIONS THROUGH SOCIAL-EMOTIONAL INFORMATION

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THE PRESCHOOL TO KINDERGARTEN STUDENT PROFILE: IMPROVING KINDERGARTEN TRANSITIONS THROUGH SOCIAL-EMOTIONAL INFORMATION

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Abstract

of

THE PRESCHOOL TO KINDERGARTEN STUDENT PROFILE: IMPROVING KINDERGARTEN TRANSITIONS THROUGH SOCIAL-EMOTIONAL INFORMATION

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The past decade has seen an unprecedented focus on kindergarten readiness aimed at ensuring that children have a successful transition into formal schooling. Most of the documented transition practices have focused on generalized top-down communication from the kindergarten teacher to the family and have excluded any input from the preschool teacher (Pianta Cox, Taylor & Early, 1999). The preschool teacher is an under-utilized transition agent who has valuable information regarding the child’s growth and skills that could be used to advance communication and inform instruction so the elementary school is truly ready for the child. The purpose of this project is to develop a tool that can facilitate preschool-to-kindergarten communication and improve kindergarten transition planning. Meeting notes from the Folsom-Cordova Community Kindergarten Collaborative provided the impetus and informed the format for the Preschool to Kindergarten Student Profile (PKSP). The design is based on the California State Preschool Foundations for Social-Emotional Development (2008), the five key developmental domains identified by the National Educational Goals Panel (Murphey & Burns, 2002), social-emotional measures recommended by the National Institute of Child
Health and Human Development (2002) and Pianta’s (2001) norm referenced Student-Teacher Relationship Scale. This project has the potential to expand the awareness of both preschool and kindergarten teachers regarding the importance social-emotional development as a key factor that affects how children transition into new environments. The PKSP provides salient information so kindergarten teachers can create individualized transition plans that can not only create continuity for children as they move from the preschool to elementary environment but also can set the direction for children’s future academic trajectory on a more successful path (Gutman, Sameroff & Cole, 2003; Raver, 2002).

_________________________, Committee Chair

Dr. Kimberly Gordon-Biddle

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Date
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Chapter 1

INTRODUCTION

Statement of the Problem

The past decade has seen an unprecedented focus on kindergarten readiness aimed at ensuring that children have a successful transition into formal schooling. Not only must children be ready for school (National Education Goals Panel, 1995; 2000), but the school must also be ready for the child (National Association for the Education of Young Children, 2004). Children who experience success during their first year in school are more likely to experience success throughout their academic trajectory (Gutman, Sameroff & Cole, 2003). For many preschool children the transition into the new kindergarten environment, with its emphasis on skills and performance, can be stressful and potentially geared towards failure, especially if they do not receive effective support from their family, friends, teachers and community (Pianta, Rimm-Kaufman, & Cox, 1999).

Most of the documented transition practices have focused on generalized top-down communication from the kindergarten teacher to the family and have excluded any input from the preschool teacher (Dockett & Perry, 2003; Pianta, Cox, Taylor & Early,
1999). The preschool teacher is an under-utilized transition agent who has an established relationship with the child and the family and has valuable information regarding the child’s growth, progress and skills that could be used to advance communication and inform instruction so the elementary school is truly ready for the child. Thus, there is a need for a kindergarten transition strategy that includes dialogue between preschool and kindergarten teachers in order to alleviate misconceptions regarding readiness, improve family-school communication and provide continuity between the two environments (Graue & DiPerna, 2000; Love, Logue, Trudeau & Thayer, 1992).

Although many school districts utilize some form of pre-kindergarten assessment, these tools are limited to observable skills the child can perform at the time of the assessment. By including preschool social-emotional assessment data in the upstream, kindergarten teachers will have access to more culturally sensitive and valid observations conducted in an environment where the child is more comfortable. These data can inform practices more completely than skills testing conducted by unfamiliar people in a new and distracting environment (Meisels, 1999). Communication between the preschool and the kindergarten regarding social-emotional development will enhance the efficacy of the transition process by providing a more complete view of the child that empowers the school to become the agent of readiness for the child.
Purpose of the Project

The goal of this project is to establish a clearly defined and easily accessible communication tool that can be utilized by local public kindergarten teachers in the Folsom-Cordova Unified School District and their public and private preschool counterparts that serve that area. This tool would foster dialogue, provide clear definitions of school readiness expectations, pave the way for continuity of information and bridge the two environments so that each child can experience a smoother transition into kindergarten.

Although the most effective transition practices are those that involve personal communication and information sharing (Pianta, Cox et al., 1999), these are the ones least likely to be utilized. It is imperative that a clear communication system be established that includes an open invitation that guarantees receptivity to contact and information sharing. Interpersonal communication between preschool and kindergarten teachers that is concise and effective for transitioning purposes will not happen without an established and easy-to-use format upon which both parties have collaborated and agreed.

Significance of the Project

This project is unique in that the impetus for establishing communication comes from the private preschool community in the form of peer-to-peer dialogue with the
public school system rather than as a top-down directive that is self-contained within the public arena. Recent empirical and qualitative data have pointed to the importance of the home-school-community connection in facilitating school readiness and a child’s successful transition into kindergarten (Early, Pianta & Cox, 1999; Graue, Kroeger, & Prager, 2001). However, the weakest link in this ecological triad is the community. In this model, the preschool is not considered school but rather a community factor that up to now has been relatively ignored in the transition process. However, preschools can and should be vital partners in the transition process. They have established family relationships and relevant assessment data that could augment or even eliminate the need for pre-kindergarten testing. The exclusion of public and private preschool programs from the kindergarten transition process has limited the effectiveness of these practices and prevented children from experiencing optimal success in their new environment.

Since school readiness is a locally-defined construct (Graue, et al., 2001), the final format of any communication channel between preschool and kindergarten teachers will be unique to each school district but the process of establishing and sustaining the channel can be generalized and replicated in other districts. The potential success of this project is in filling in a major gap in the kindergarten transition process based on the timely transmission of valid, locally-desirable information that will improve the overall effectiveness of our transition efforts, create stronger preschool-kindergarten partnerships, improve continuity of environments and benefit each child as they successfully transition into kindergarten.
Definition of Terms

*Kindergarten Readiness*

In its broadest sense kindergarten readiness is about how children, families, early education environments, elementary schools and communities work together to ensure that all children have access to opportunities, individualized support, and reasonable and appropriate expectations that will promote and sustain early and continued school success (Maxwell & Clifford, 2004). Often considered solely from the perspective of what skill sets the child possesses that will ensure a successful entry into elementary schooling, it is unreasonable to expect the child to be ready for school; rather, the school must be ready to meet the needs of the child as they enter school (NAEYC, 2004).

*Kindergarten Transition*

On an ecological level, kindergarten transition refers to the physical and relational changes that impact children, families, schools and communities when a young child enters formal schooling (Rimm-Kaufman & Pianta, 2000). The ease with which a child transitions into the kindergarten environment has been positively correlated with future school success (Gutman et al., 2003). In practical terms, kindergarten transition refers to the community-based practices employed by parents, early educators, kindergarten teachers and other school or community personnel in order to ease the child’s transition from one environment to another. (Rimm-Kaufman, Pianta & Cox, 2000).
**Pre-Kindergarten Assessment**

This term refers to the locally defined process employed by many public and private school systems to assess what cognitive, social, language and motor skills a child possesses prior to entering kindergarten. These assessments can be informal or formal and can vary in reliability and validity (Epstein, Schweinhart, DeBruin-Parecki & Robin, 2004; Meisels, 1999).

**Social-Emotional Development**

Within the context of family, community and culture, social-emotional development, this term refers to the increasing ability of the child, from birth through age five, to form close and secure adult and peer relationships; experience, regulate and express emotions in socially and culturally appropriate ways; and the ability to confidently interact and explore the environment and learn (Center on the Social Emotional Foundations for Early Learning, 2008).

**Theoretical Basis**

The theoretical basis for this project begins with Bronfenbrenner’s (1977) Bio-Ecological Systems Model, which posits that a child’s life is impacted by the confluence of many ecological systems including family, home, school, community and national policies. The current emphasis on educational reform and accountability standards has altered the kindergarten environment so drastically that transitioning practices are more
crucial than ever before if children are to move successfully from preschool to kindergarten.

Limitations and Assumptions

This project focused solely on the preschool to kindergarten transition process in one suburban school district. Although the process of developing communication tools between preschool and kindergarten teachers can be replicated, the actual procedures and outcomes will vary for each school district. The success of this project assumed that there was a shared vision and reciprocal support from district administration, community preschools and kindergarten teachers to achieve a common goal. Therefore, the development and implementation of this communication tool was highly dependent on the cooperation and collaboration of the stakeholders led by the vision and support of district administrators.

The focus of this project was primarily aimed at communication between private and public preschools and the public school district; communication between private and public preschools and private elementary schools was not explored.

This project was the initial phase of collaboratively developing an informative communication tool between preschool and kindergarten teachers that could inform and improve kindergarten transitions. There needs to be a future phase that includes data collection that can provide verification that the Preschool to Kindergarten Student Profile was effective in informing and improving kindergarten transition strategies.
Organization of Project

Chapter 1 has presented an Introduction to this project related to children’s transition from preschool to kindergarten. The Literature Review is documented in Chapter 2. Chapter 3 outlines the methods used to accomplish this project. Discussion, Recommendations and Conclusions related to this project are described in Chapter 4. The communication tool and related resource materials created by this project can be found in the Appendices.
Chapter 2

LITERATURE REVIEW

Every year American children begin kindergarten and start their academic career. For most, this is their debut into formal schooling and the success or failure of their initial kindergarten experiences can impact their future school competence (Gutman et al., 2003). In an era of increasing school accountability and pressure to meet state standards, there has been an increased focus on how to ease a child’s transition from preschool into kindergarten in order to maximize their academic and developmental potential. Whether a child seamlessly bridges or awkwardly leaps between preschool and kindergarten requires more than being ready for school or the school being ready for the child. Successful transitioning depends on preparation, communication and continuity between all the systems involved: the child, the family, the preschool and the kindergarten (Bronfenbrenner, 1977; Pianta, Kraft-Sayre, Rimm-Kaufman, Gercke & Higgins, 2001).

Although there are many suggested transitioning practices, research has shown that these practices are typically limited to a few child-centered or school-based activities mostly aimed at increasing skills, easing fears or providing top-down communication from the school to the parent (Rimm-Kaufman & Pianta, 2000). There is great disparity between parents, preschool teachers and kindergarten teachers about what constitutes school readiness and how to facilitate a child’s smooth transition into kindergarten (Piotrkowski, Botsko, & Matthews, 2000; Wesley & Buysse, 2003). Much of this
disparity comes from either a lack of information or conflicting information due to poor communication between the home, school and community. According to Pianta, Kraft-Sayre et al. (2001), the parent-preschool relationship is a rich but underutilized resource that should be capitalized upon as an effective strategy for solidifying the home-school-community linkage and improving kindergarten transitions.

Theoretical Framework

While a universal definition of school readiness continues to be elusive, there is growing consensus that readiness is multi-dimensional, highly variable, and dependent on cultural and contextual influences that change over time (Bronfenbrenner & Morris, 1998; Graue et al., 2001; Love et al., 1992; Rimm-Kaufman & Pianta, 2000). Ecologically oriented systems models theoretically connect the concepts of school readiness and effective school transitioning together as part of a larger view of child development. Bronfenbrenner’s (1977) bio-ecological model posited that child development takes place though progressively more complex interactions between a child and the persons, objects, and symbols in his or her immediate environment. Bronfenbrenner and Morris (1998) later expanded this model to include a chronosystem, recognizing the impact of length of time and frequency of interactions on developmental outcomes. The ecological systems model is child-centered, focusing on the child’s experiences and the nature and endurance of the relationships between different settings that influence what the child experiences.
Accordingly, a child’s readiness for school is a product of the child’s experiences in various settings such as the family, childcare, peer groups, religious gatherings, and health care, as well as influences from mass media, cultural values, socio-economic status, and community expectations. The quantity and quality of the child’s relationships within these settings and the connections between the settings influence each child’s individual development. Also included in this model is the impact of the adult relationships on the child; not just adult-child but also how adult-adult relationships influence a child’s experiences and development. In this model, the relationships between parents, preschool teachers and kindergarten teachers are highly significant in terms of how children are prepared for and successfully transition from preschool to kindergarten.

Regrettably, this relational model of school transitioning is often at odds with the disparate perspectives on school readiness that rely solely on chronological age or focus exclusively on cognitive skills that continue to persist today (NAEYC, 2004). Foundational to the concept of school transitioning is the construct of school readiness, a complex issue that includes widely divergent perspectives regarding how, when and why a child is ready to begin formal schooling. Meisels (1999) divided conceptualizations about school readiness into four discrete categories: nativist, environmentalist, constructivist, and interactionist. The nativist approach holds that readiness is centered in the child and that children are not ready to learn until they have reached a certain level of biological maturity that will allow them to concentrate on schoolwork. According to the nativist perspective, nothing can accelerate or improve a child’s readiness for school;
each child will become ready in her own time. Conversely, the environmentalist view defines readiness in terms of the child’s external behaviors; the child either does or does not possess the skills deemed necessary to be ready for school. This externally driven approach to development emphasizes that readiness can be accomplished through environmental interventions.

Rejecting the idea that readiness is either biological or environmental, the constructivist approach takes into account both the child’s unique genetic characteristics and developmental experiences within the context of family, community and culture. The focus of school readiness is transferred away from the child and it becomes incumbent upon the local community to be responsible for defining readiness. The last perspective Meisels (1999) defines as interactionist, an approach that focuses on readiness for learning rather than readiness for school. This perspective is in agreement with Bronfenbrenner’s Ecological Model (1977), in that readiness is viewed as a bi-directional interaction between children’s biological and environmental experiences and community and school expectations. This more comprehensive view of readiness takes into account the reciprocal relationship between the child and the school and their effect on each other.

Rimm-Kaufman and Pianta (2000) applied the expanded ecological systems theory with the inclusion of the chronosystem (Bronfenbrenner & Morris, 1998) to kindergarten transitioning and proposed the Ecological and Dynamic Model of Transition. This model describes the vital network of child, home, school, peer and community factors that directly and indirectly influence a child’s successful entrance into
formal schooling. Building also upon Meisels (1999) interactionist perspective of school readiness, the Ecological and Dynamic Model of Transition posited that the interactions between the child, school, teacher, family and community factors form patterns and relationships over time that are discrete outcomes as well as developmental agents. Based on this theoretical model, effective interactive relationships between preschool and kindergarten teachers are not only a precursor to school readiness and transition success, they are also an outcome of the overall transition process. In effect, kindergarten transitioning is its own ecological system and the quality of relationships between parents, preschool and kindergarten teachers including the frequency of contact, shared vision, and depth of trust, all play an important role in guiding the child towards a successful school career (Carlton & Winsler, 1999; Crnic & Lamberty, 1994; Gutman et al., 2003; Rimm-Kaufman et al., 2000).

The New Kindergarten

The focus and purpose of the kindergarten year has changed dramatically over the past twenty years, changes that are both directly and indirectly related to the American push for education reform. Friedrich Froebel originally conceived kindergarten as a natural learning environment, a place where young children could become gradually socialized into formal schooling through exploration and play (Wesley & Buysse, 2003). The shift from kindergarten as a place where a child became ready for school to a place where a child had to be ready for school began in 1991 when the National Education
Goals Panel was established and with the subsequent publication and clarification of the six National Education Goals. Goal One states “All children in America will start school ready to learn” (NEGP, 1995; 2000). Known as the readiness goal, no other goal has inspired so much controversy or demanded as much time and investment from educators as they struggle to identify what it means to be ready for school (Love, 2001; Meisels, 1999).

Complicating the school readiness landscape has been the advent of additional national education policies that focus on school accountability through the establishment of performance standards, regular assessments, and punitive consequences in order to encourage schools to elevate student academic performance. Most notably the No Child Left Behind Act of 2001, which was revised in 2008, with its focus on literacy and testing students as early as second grade, has created the need for children to be prepared to learn how to read during the kindergarten year. The emphasis on academic skills in kindergarten is a significant departure from the kindergarten of just a generation ago and has required parents, educators and local communities to rethink how they prepare their children to be ready for transitioning into this new environment.

There is growing concern that the disparity between the importance of social-emotional development as an indicator of school readiness and national policies that emphasize cognitive development has caused confusion and frustration for parents and teachers because they are unclear about what it means to be ready for school (Wesley & Buysse, 2003). Rimm-Kaufman et al. (2000) found that 46% of the kindergarten teachers they surveyed reported that their greatest concern regarding school readiness was that
nearly half of the children in their classrooms could not follow directions. The National Research Council (2000) reported that 60% of the children entering school had the requisite cognitive skills to be successful but only 40% had the social-emotional skills necessary to succeed in kindergarten. Conversely, according to Piotrkowski et al. (2000), parents and preschool teachers believed that knowledge-based skills were more important for school readiness than social skills. Given these divergent beliefs, children are arriving at kindergarten with more academic knowledge but fewer social skills (Raver, 2002). Furthermore, if parents believe their children are ready for school but teachers consider the children to be ill-prepared (Rimm-Kaufman et al., 2000) then clearly, there needs to be consensus and communication between parents, preschool and kindergarten teachers about what readiness really means.

Although most of the emphases in both the Bioecological Model of Development (Bronfenbrenner & Morris, 1998) and the Ecological and Dynamic Model of Transition (Rimm-Kaufmann & Pianta, 2000) are focused on positive, or proximal, experiences, it is important to acknowledge the presence or absence of protective and preventive processes as well. If communication between parents, preschool and kindergarten teachers about salient kindergarten readiness attributes, such as social-emotional development, promotes positive outcomes, then conversely the current lack of communication between these parties may prevent children from experiencing optimal transitions into kindergarten. The creation and usage of a preschool to kindergarten communication tool has the potential to positively affect the child and several key elements of the child’s mesosystem: family, classroom and community.
Given the dynamic nature of readiness and the tremendous variability in individual child development, it is incumbent upon the local community to define readiness expectations and to facilitate school readiness through kindergarten transition practices (Crnic & Lamberty, 1994; Graue et al., 2001). Not only must the child be ready for school according to locally-defined constructs, the community and the school should work together to ensure that children experience continuity within their environment as they shift from home or preschool to the elementary classroom through strategic transitioning practices (Duda & Minick, 2006; Lin, Lawrence & Gorrell, 2003, Love et al., 1992). Just as readiness is not a static skill set, transitioning into kindergarten is more than just moving from one physical location to another, it also encompasses a shift in the child’s identity and social-emotional contexts. Children are active agents in the transition process and respond differently and creatively to new environments. Thus, there is a need for communities to focus on integrated and comprehensive transition strategies that conceptualize readiness in terms of continuity rather than discontinuity and success rather than failure (Lam & Pollard, 2006).

Effective Transition Practices

The responsibility for helping children transition has traditionally been placed upon the kindergarten teacher, which has resulted in a wide range of individually
implemented transition practices. Pianta, Cox et al. (1999) surveyed a national sample of 3,595 kindergarten teachers regarding their use of transition practices, including their ease or difficulty in implementation. Of the 21 practices reviewed, the most common were teacher-initiated, took place after the start of school, and involved generic, non-personal communication. The least-often utilized practices were those that involved making personal contacts before the start of school. In a companion study, Pianta et al. (2001) reported that the most common transition practice used by preschool teachers was to take preschool children on a visit to a kindergarten classroom, although individual contact between the preschool and kindergarten teachers either did not occur or occurred infrequently. Preschool teachers also have a significant influence on young children’s school readiness and adjustment. Most preschool teachers have an established trust relationship with parents that could be capitalized upon as part of an effective transition process (Palermo, Hanish, Martin, Fabes & Reiser, 2007; Pianta et al., 2001).

Family-initiated transition practices tend to be associated with income-level. Wealthier families with more formal schooling experiences are more likely to talk to the child about what to expect in kindergarten than lower-income families who may have less access to information and be more disenfranchised from the school system but neither group is likely to initiate direct contact with the school beforehand (Diamond, Reagan, & Bandyk, 2000; Early et al., 2001; Graue et al., 2001). Although progress has been made in advancing awareness for the need to communicate readiness expectations and coordinate transition practices on the local level, it appears that most transition activities
continue to be inconsistent, non-specific, and ineffective (Early et al., 2001; Germino-Hausken & Rathbun, 2002).

The most effective transition practices are based on reciprocal communication, specific information, and shared responsibility among the family, preschool and the kindergarten (Dockett & Perry, 2003; Graue, et al. 2001; Mantzicopoulos, 2003; Palermo et al., 2007). Transition activities that enhance relational and informational linkages during a child’s shift from preschool to kindergarten promote stability and facilitate adjustment. In one of the first studies to provide evidence that transition activities initiated by the preschool are positively associated with children’s successful kindergarten adjustment, LoCasale-Crouch, Mashburn, Downer, and Pianta, (2008) found that the most effective transition activity was contact between the preschool and kindergarten teacher about specific children and curriculum. Effective transitioning is also a process where all stakeholders benefit from multiple planned interactions over time that includes a variety of communication modalities rather than singular one-time events (Duda & Minick, 2006; Schulting, Malone & Dodge, 2005).

Evidence exists for the importance of empowering communication across the home-school-community connection and the effectiveness of collaborative and reciprocal preschool-kindergarten transitioning practices (Graue et al., 2001; LoCasale-Crouch et al., 2008; Pianta et al., 2001). Unfortunately, implementation on the local level remains sporadic and inconsistent due to persistent misconceptions regarding responsibility and lack of established home-preschool-kindergarten partnerships (Wesley & Buysse, 2003). There are a few models for establishing deliberate and on-going communicative
partnerships, namely North Carolina Partnership for Children (2002) and SERVE (2004). The Smart Start model designed by the North Carolina Partnership for Children (2002) is a comprehensive plan for involving children, families, childcare providers, teachers and community representatives in the kindergarten transition process that employs a community transition coordinator to ensure communication and cooperation among the various stakeholders. The SERVE (2004) model is a more comprehensive plan that focuses on strategies so that medical, social and educational services can be coordinated, continuous, and inclusive in order to minimize obstacles and create seamless transitions for the child. However, both of these models rely on the bureaucratic top-down leadership of the public school system. Duda and Minick’s (2006) attempt at a collaborative partnership for more effective transitioning enhanced understanding between the participants while they produced a generic brochure but failed to create a sustainable communicative relationship.

Articulation, the process of connecting information about students from one class to another to insure continuity of services, is vital for the success of children already attending school (Gutman et al., 2003; Hallam, Grisham-Brown, Gao, & Brookshire, 2007). As important as this process is for existing classes within a school, how much more important is this kind of articulation for children entering into an unfamiliar environment with new expectations. In the context of kindergarten transitioning, continuity refers to the experiences that children and families have as they move from preschool to kindergarten. When these two environments are similar or compatible, the resulting transition is easier or smoother (Pianta et al., 2001). There is a wealth of social-
emotional knowledge that needs to be communicated from the preschool level to the kindergarten in a direct, concise and objective manner so that there can be a connection between the preschool and kindergarten environment that supports the child’s continuity and optimizes their transition experience.

Ready to Learn

There are a number of important socioemotional competencies that children acquire in the preschool years that contribute to their readiness to learn in kindergarten. Preschool social competence and emotional regulation, the ability to initiate and engage in positive adult and peer interactions, negotiate social conflict, self-regulate behaviors and attend to others have been associated with positive approaches to learning, the ability to adjust to a new school environment and later academic achievement (Ladd, Birch & Bubs, 1999; Murphey & Burns, 2002; National Institute of Child Health and Human Development (NICHHD), 2002; Pianta, 2001). The California Department of Education’s Preschool Learning Foundations, Volume I (2008) specifically notes the connections between the social-emotional competencies, in addition to cognitive and motivational competencies, and school readiness and academic success. When young children feel good about themselves, are able to develop and sustain positive relationships with adults and peers, know how to identify, express and manage their emotions, they are more likely to be ready to learn (California Department of Education (CDE), 2008; Raver, 2002).
This conceptualization of readiness to learn is based on the assumption that children who have attended preschool have also had access to the appropriate kinds of interactions, experiences, and environments that promote healthy social-emotional development. However, using social-emotional developmental benchmarks, such as the California Preschool Learning Foundations (2008) as descriptors for readiness should not be considered definitive or prerequisite. The value of assessing social-emotional development as an indicator of school readiness is that it provides a snapshot of who the child is, identifies social-emotional strengths and weaknesses, allows teachers to engage in more responsive interactions which leads to stronger relationships with all children. Children who experience warm and caring relationships with teachers and other significant adults are more likely to have positive academic experiences (Bronfenbrenner, 1977; Pianta, 2001).

Although no public school system can legally deny any child who meets the age requirement entrance to kindergarten, many districts employ kindergarten readiness screenings to determine placement recommendations. These screening instruments usually focus on observable cognitive skills in addition to parental information, although schools vary widely in terms of what cognitive skills they expect from entering kindergarteners (Costenbader, Rohrer & Difonzo, 2000). Young children are developmentally unreliable test takers, yet many of them are asked to demonstrate their academic skills in the unfamiliar elementary school environment in front of strangers and often before the onset of any specific transition activities. The results of such testing may create a false impression of the child’s actual readiness, which can be particularly
problematic for some children since these first impressions have been linked with the persistence of an achievement gap between children of varied racial, ethnic, and socioeconomic groups (Doucet & Tudge, 2007). Given the variety of cultural, educational, and family environments from which kindergarten children come to school, relying on a single test to determine readiness is misleading at best and can have long term negative consequences due to possibly erroneous early labeling (Meisels, 1999).

Despite the attention given in screening to cognitive skills, research points to a consistent association between children’s social-emotional competencies and their readiness to learn (Gutman et al., 2003; Ladd et al, 1999; Raver, 2002; Rimm-Kaufman et al., 2000). Thus, there is a need to develop a culturally sensitive and developmentally appropriate process for kindergarten teachers to get a more accurate picture of the child’s readiness to learn. Specifically, teachers need an instrument or process that is specifically focused on social-emotional development rather than on what the child already knows but may not be able to produce on command in a novel situation (Meisels, 1999, Doucet & Tudge, 2007, Piotrkowski et al., 2000).

Preschool teachers have the unique ability to observe and assess young children over time in a more naturalistic environment. They have the opportunity to develop relationships with families that afford insight into children’s social-emotional competency and readiness to learn as well as any cultural and socioeconomic factors that can affect development. Many high-quality preschools, both public and private, conduct on-going child assessments as a means of measuring individual progress and program effectiveness (Epstein et al., 2004). Naturalistic assessments allow a child to maintain a
familiar environment and routine, afford the child multiple opportunities to demonstrate competency, and when done over time, more accurately reflect a child’s developmental progress (Maxwell & Clifford, 2004).

Kindergarten teachers who can access information about a child from multiple sources, including the preschool teacher, family and the child himself, have a more accurate portrait of the child, his skills, and transition needs. This rich source of data is a more effective way of assessing a child’s readiness than relying on a single pre-kindergarten skills test (Bronfenbrenner, 1977; Bronfenbrenner & Morris, 1998; Rimm-Kaufman & Pianta, 2000). This data can also be used to inform differentiated instruction, avoid erroneous early labeling, and contribute to closing the achievement gap among disadvantaged cultural and socioeconomic groups (Diamond et al., 2000; Doucet & Tudge, 2007; Hallam et al., 2007; Pianta et al., 2001). Thoughtful, research-based communication from the preschool can not only assist in the transition process but also provide rich layers of information regarding social emotional and cognitive skills that the kindergarten teacher needs to know.

A young child’s development is determined by the experiences within the home and in those settings outside the home where he or she spends the most time, usually childcare or preschool (Bronfenbrenner & Morris, 1998). According to Bronfenbrenner and Morris (1998), development is optimized when connections are made between adults in those settings that establish continuity between environments. When the number of connections increases, when the quality of the communication is improved between home, preschool and kindergarten, there is a better outcome for all children. The
Ecological and Dynamic Model of Transition also calls for the establishment of communication links between the home, school and community in order to facilitate and improve transitions (Rimm-Kaufman & Pianta, 2000). Too often, the preschool teacher has been overlooked or undervalued in the transition process, resulting in a loss of continuity and shared information across environments that diminish the effectiveness of transition strategies. There is a communication void between the preschool and kindergarten teacher that needs to be filled if we are to ameliorate the transition into kindergarten for children and families. Open communication between preschool and kindergarten teachers that is co-constructed, succinct and stable over time will not only serve as a bridge between environments but also pave the way for each child’s success.
Chapter 3

METHODS

Background and Initial Project Steps

This project was carried out in the Folsom-Cordova Unified School District (FCUSD), which serves approximately 19,000 students residing in a large suburban area located northeast of downtown Sacramento, CA. The district encompasses a broad range of socio-economic and ethnic populations including transient and non-English speaking families as well as middle-class and more affluent families. According to the California Department of Education’s Demographics Office, in 2009 the district’s student population was comprised of 61% Caucasian, 16% Hispanic; 14% Asian, and 8% African-American students. Twelve percent of the students were English Language Learners, and 32% qualified for Free or Reduced Price Meals.

Although these statistics reflect the entire district, it is important to note that the district is sharply divided between the more ethnically diverse Rancho Cordova section and the more affluent Folsom area. In Rancho Cordova, 53% of the population is Caucasian, the average 2008 family income was $55,700 and 19% of the residents have a Bachelor’s degree (City of Rancho Cordova, 2010). In Folsom, 75% of the residents are Caucasian, the average 2008 family income was $124,000 and 40% of the residents hold
a Bachelor’s degree or higher (City of Folsom, 2010). The district operates seven state and federally funded preschool programs, six in Rancho Cordova and one in Folsom.

The FCUSD School Readiness Coordinator, funded by a First Five of California grant, is responsible for overseeing local readiness efforts, including neighborhood play groups, pre-kindergarten screenings, and community education and outreach. This includes partnering with the Sacramento County Office of Education’s (SCOE) Kindergarten Transition Collaborative and the Preschool Bridging Model, both of which are also partially underwritten by First Five of California. In 2008, SCOE and First Five of California urged their grantees to establish Community Kindergarten Transition Collaboratives in order to foster private-public partnerships that would benefit local readiness efforts for all children.

At their March 2009 meeting, the FCUSD Community Kindergarten Transition Collaborative generated a list of key student information items that FCUSD kindergarten teachers would like to receive from local preschools. The most common thread was for a succinct one or two page summary that included the child’s progression in social-emotional development, a self-portrait, and a writing sample.

Although some local school districts employ district-wide pre-kindergarten assessment tools or checklists conducted by the kindergarten teachers, FCUSD does not currently have a uniform instrument that kindergarten can utilize, making it the responsibility of the individual teacher to collect whatever information they can, if any, to aid in the transition process. In addition, none of the area districts has a vehicle for
collecting information directly from the preschool, making this project a unique contribution to the transition process.

The Folsom-Cordova Unified School District (FCUSD) in conjunction with the Folsom Cordova Community Kindergarten Transition Collaborative began investigating kindergarten readiness checklists in 2009 with the intent of adopting a district-wide instrument that could be included as part of their kindergarten transition practices. After reviewing several different instruments being utilized by other districts and county agencies, the consensus was that they were not adaptable for FCUSD’s needs because they were over-weighted in the cognitive skill areas, did not include enough social-emotional information and were not designed for use by the preschool teacher. The FCUSD’s School Readiness Coordinator expressed interest in piloting a proprietary instrument that would better meet their needs. Thus, the purpose of this project was to create a locally defined and useful communication tool for transmitting relevant readiness information, specifically social-emotional development, from the preschool to kindergarten teachers as an effective means for improving kindergarten transitions within a targeted school district. This project is unique in that it was designed by a private-sector preschool director in partnership with the public school district with the intent that both private and public preschool and childcare providers could capture salient social-emotional information about children and transmit that information to the kindergarten teacher in a succinct and efficient manner.
In order to assist the local community served by FCUSD in achieving more effective kindergarten transitioning for their students, this project encompassed six phases:

A. Creation of the Preschool to Kindergarten Student Profile (PKSP).

B. Revisions of the PKSP based on critiques and comments from the FCUSD School Readiness Coordinator and members of the FCUSD Community Kindergarten Transition Collaborative.

C. Approval of the final draft of the PKSP for local piloting by the FCUSD School Readiness Coordinator.

D. Presentation of a training workshop on the PKSP to the FCUSD Community Kindergarten Transition Collaborative.

E. Completion of the PKSP by teachers at a Rancho Cordova private preschool and a Rancho Cordova state preschool program for children scheduled to transition into Rancho Cordova Elementary School.

F. Review of feedback from the PKSP training and local piloting by the FCUSD School Readiness Coordinator and discussion of options for future use of the PKSP within the district.
Development of the Preschool to Kindergarten Student Profile (PKSP) was based on the California Preschool Learning Foundations for Social-Emotional Development (2008), the five key developmental domains identified by the National Educational Goals Panel (Murphey & Burns, 2002), social-emotional measures recommended by the National Institute of Child Health and Human Development (NICHHD, 2002) and Pianta’s (2001) norm referenced Student-Teacher Relationship Scale (STRS). Using these resources as a framework, a one-page preschool student summary including a social-emotional developmental checklist, writing sample, and a self-portrait, was created. Social-emotional checklist statements were developed or adapted from each of the three sources and categorized according to the California Preschool Learning Foundations (2008). Then, duplicate statements were discarded and similar statements were combined, resulting in a final checklist of 29 statements.

The Social-Emotional Development Preschool Learning Foundations (2008) are organized under three main headings: Concepts of Self (Self Awareness, Self Regulation, Social Emotional Understanding, Empathy and Caring, Initiatives in Learning), Social Interaction (Interaction with Adults and Peers, Group Participation, Cooperation and Responsibility) and Relationships (Attachment to Parents, Close Relationships with Teachers and Caregivers, and Friendships). Due to their almost identical descriptors, Interaction with Adults and Interaction with Peers were combined into one category for this project.
The five key social-emotional development domains defined by the National Educational Goals Panel (2002) are: Autonomy, Language Skills, Pro-Social Skills, Emotion Regulation and Behavior Regulation. For the purposes of this project, Language was divided into two categories: Expressive Language and Receptive Language to more fully describe a child’s language abilities. In the same vein, Behavior Regulation was split into Behavior Issues and Behavior Regulation to more accurately describe observations concerning compliance and impulse control.

The NICHHD (2002) identified six main measures for social-emotional development: Social Competence, Attachment, Emotional Competence, Self-Perceived Competence, Temperament/Personality, and Socialization Agent’s Behavior. The last category highlights the importance of social relationships between children and significant caregivers in fostering healthy social-emotional development including how adults model emotional expressiveness and react to children’s emotions.

The Student-Teacher Relationship Scale (Pianta, 2001) consists of a 28-item questionnaire rated on a 5-point Likert scale that is divided into three subscales measuring conflict, closeness and dependency. The STRS assesses the quality of the relationship between the student and the teacher from the teacher’s perspective as a predictor of the child’s ability to successfully transition into a new school environment.

Building upon these frameworks, the researcher developed the Preschool to Kindergarten Student Profile. The PKSP consists of four sections. The first section at the top of the form includes demographic and personal information about the child, including name, nickname, birth date, gender, home language, preschool name, attendance dates, as
well as the name of the preschool teacher completing the profile and contact phone number for further clarification if necessary.

The social-emotional checklist directions and statements are included in the second section of the PKSP. The 29 descriptive statements were cross-referenced against the seven National Educational Goals Panel (2002) categories and the 11 California Preschool Learning Foundations for Social Emotional Development (2008) in order to ensure that each statement accurately reflected the category it was meant to describe and that each category was evenly and fairly represented. The cross-reference table also included additional descriptions underneath each checklist statement for further amplification and clarification. Given that social-emotional development consists of a broad range of traits that do not all develop in a uniform pattern, the directions for the checklist statements allow teachers to make a checkmark next to the statement if they have observed the student exhibiting the trait consistently, leave the area blank if the teacher has not yet observed the trait in the student, and write a “D” for developing if the student is beginning to exhibit the trait but yet on a consistent basis.

The third section, on the reverse side of the page, is an area for the child to draw a self-portrait and a line for the child to write their name if they are able. Self-portraiture reveals a child’s concept of self, their ability to attend to detail, their understanding of symmetry, and fine motor development (Lewis & Greene, 1983). According to Lewis and Greene (1983), young children’s drawing follows a sequential course beginning with amoeba-like circles and spider-leg appendages, to overly-long stick figures with large heads and facial features to increasingly more representational and proportional drawings
as the child develops a more consistent sense of self in conjunction with increased fine motor control. The name writing section is included because the California Preschool Learning Foundations (2008) for Language and Literacy, Writing Strategies 1.3 states that children at the end of their preschool experience should, “Write first name nearly correctly” (p. 70). Although not specific to social-emotional development, this section is developmentally appropriate to include and informative for prospective kindergarten teachers.

Comments and Revisions

The first draft of the Preschool to Kindergarten Profile was presented to the FCUSD School Readiness Coordinator who forwarded the document to the FCUSD Community Kindergarten Transition Collaborative members with an invitation for them to respond with any comments. The original social-emotional checklist statements were organized according to common preschool skill sets (Independence, Language, Listening, Social, Emotional, Self-Control). The private preschool providers who responded liked this organization but both the public preschool and kindergarten teachers who responded preferred that the social-emotional checklist be arranged in numerical order by the major headings and sub-headings in the California Social-Emotional Development Preschool Learning Foundations (2008), for children at or around 60 months of age.

The other comments and requests were centered on ways to include additional information about children and ease of use issues. One kindergarten teacher requested
that there be a space for a photo so she could quickly identify the child with the information at the beginning of the school year. Several preschool and kindergarten teachers requested an area for notes where they could write in context-specific comments about a child’s social-emotional behavior, especially if the preschool teacher felt the need to leave a statement blank. Another kindergarten request was to include a place to date when the preschool teacher completed the PKSP. In conversation with the FCUSD School Readiness Coordinator, it was agreed that these comments had merit although they conflicted with the desire to keep the PKSP limited to a single page format. A note section and a date-completed line were added. There was some discussion about adding an area for a photograph or a request to attach a photograph. It was determined that there were parental release issues that would be difficult for all preschools to comply with, rendering this particular request imprudent.

Other requests from the kindergarten teachers went beyond the scope of social-emotional development, such as adding a section about whether or not a child was receiving speech services and adding information about any known allergies. The FCUSD School Readiness Coordinator noted that kindergarten teachers earnestly desire to receive as much information about incoming students as possible in an easy to use format. However, some of the requested additions did not align with the current goals of the Preschool to Kindergarten Profile and addressing those particular requests was deferred for the future.
Approval

The FCUSD School Readiness Coordinator approved the final version of the Preschool to Kindergarten Student Profile on March 1, 2010. A training workshop for members of the Folsom Cordova Community Kindergarten Transition Collaborative was scheduled for their next meeting on Wednesday, March 24, 2010 at Williamson Elementary School.

Training Workshop

Twenty-five members of the Folsom Cordova Community Kindergarten Transition Collaborative, including private preschool teachers, publicly funded State Preschool and Head Start teachers, FCUSD kindergarten teachers, a special education coordinator and an elementary school principal attended the training workshop. The School Readiness Project Coordinator for Sacramento County of Education began the meeting with a brief overview of kindergarten transition trends and an invitation to attend the next countywide Kindergarten Transition Summit. The Preschool Bridging Model Early Education Specialist for Folsom-Cordova Unified School District introduced the PKSP, commenting on how it can assist in the kindergarten transition process. Attendees were given paper copies of the profile and the power point presentation so they could follow along. The PowerPoint presentation, entitled “Creating Connections,” covered several topics: a) foundational background regarding kindergarten transitioning practices,
b) the predictive quality of social-emotional development on school adjustment, c) attributes of the child who is ready to learn and d) an in-depth examination of the 29 statements comprising the social-emotional developmental checklist of the PKSP and the corresponding California Preschool Learning Foundations (2008).

Piloting the Revised PKSP

The FCUSD School Readiness Coordinator requested that a pilot of the revised PKSP be conducted prior to presenting the Profile to her administrator for approval and implementation. A group of preschool teachers was asked to complete the profiles using real data and aliases so the reviewing kindergarten teachers could not identify students. A group of kindergarten teachers were asked to review a set of 12 random profiles that would comprise a hypothetical kindergarten class. The participating preschool and kindergarten teachers presented a report of their piloting at the Kindergarten Transition Collaborative meeting on April 21, 2010. This report focused on ease of use, problems encountered, revision suggestions, and overall usefulness in improving the kindergarten transition process.

The principal of Rancho Cordova Elementary School and the director of First Covenant Preschool volunteered their schools to participate in the pilot. Rancho Cordova Elementary is located in an older residential area. The school has 20 classrooms and serves 439 students in kindergarten through fifth grade as well as housing a state-funded preschool classroom. The school population consists of 42% Hispanic, 39% Caucasian
and 13% African American students, 45% of whom are considered to have limited English proficiency. The two participating preschool teachers have both been teaching within the State preschool program for over five years. Both teachers have achieved B.A. degrees and have participated in numerous FCUSD in-service trainings. First Covenant Preschool is located in a commercial area. The tuition-based preschool consists of four classrooms serving 85 children ages three to five; 50% of them reside within the Folsom-Cordova Unified School District boundaries. The school population consists of 85% Caucasian, 10% Asian, and 5% African American. One of the participating teachers has an A.A. degree in Early Childhood Education and is a Mentor Teacher with the California Early Childhood Mentor Program with over 15 years of teaching experience. The other participating teacher has completed the 12 Early Childhood Education units required by the State of California, Department of Social Services, Title 22, to be a fully qualified preschool teacher and has two years of teaching experience.

All of the preschool and kindergarten teachers participating in the pilot had attended the training workshop. The preschool teachers from each site completed the PKSP for 12 random students. The resulting 24 profiles were forwarded to the two participating kindergarten teachers, one from Rancho Cordova Elementary and the other from Theodore Judah Elementary in Folsom.

There was some discussion about the most effective way for preschool teachers to complete and deliver the PKSP to the kindergarten teachers in a confidential yet efficient manner. The group consensus was to use a sealed 9x12 envelope with a special Profile sticker on it and use US Postal Service or Inter-Office mail it to send it to the intended
school. The mailing envelopes were distributed to the First Covenant Preschool teachers on Monday, April 5, 2010 and to the Rancho Cordova Elementary State Preschool teachers on Tuesday, April 6, 2010. The First Covenant Preschool profiles were mailed to the kindergarten teacher at Theodore Judah Elementary and the Rancho Cordova Elementary profiles were forwarded to the participating kindergarten teacher at that school. All participating preschool teachers agreed to complete the profiles and forward them to their reviewing kindergarten teacher by Tuesday, April 16, 2010.

Review of the Pilot of the Revised PKSP

The Folsom Cordova Community Kindergarten Transition Collaborative met on Wednesday, April 21, 2010 at Williamson Elementary School to review the results of the pilot administration of the revised PKSP. The four private and three public preschool teachers and two public kindergarten teachers participating in the pilot were in attendance in addition to twenty-one other members, including a private family child care provider, Head Start teachers, a principal, special education teacher, State preschool teachers, public kindergarten teachers, and private preschool teachers. The Folsom-Cordova Early Childhood Education Specialist for the Sacramento County Office of Education’s Preschool Bridging Model spoke on the upcoming Kindergarten Transition Summit sponsored by First Five, Preschool Bridging Model and the Sacramento County Office of Education.
The FCUSD School Readiness Coordinator invited the Director of First Covenant Preschool to briefly present a review of the PKSP. She then asked the participating preschool and kindergarten teachers to share their thoughts and comments about the revised PKSP and the piloting process. She specifically charged them to comment on the practicality and usefulness of the Profile.

The only feedback from the private preschool teachers was a desire to use the more colloquial version of the profile that was organized with skill set headings rather than the format in the revised version, which was organized according to the California Preschool Learning Foundations (2008). The State Preschool teachers, however, appreciated that the checklist was categorized according to the Preschool Learning Foundations. One State preschool teacher explained that she will be expected to document and meet the Social-Emotional Preschool Learning Foundations next year as part of the Desired Results Developmental Profile - Revised (CDE, 2008) and that the PKSP helped her to understand them better and focus her thoughts as she completed the checklist. Another State preschool teacher commented that she would consider completing the Profile on her students at other times during the year because she felt the information was valuable for her own classroom management. All of the private and public preschool teachers agreed that the Profile was easy to complete.

The principal at Rancho Cordova Elementary, whose site hosted both the participating State preschool teachers and one of the reviewing kindergarten teachers, was very excited about the information gained from the PKSP but concerned about the logistics of delivering the PKSP to the teachers. The pilot was successful because the
PKSP was directed to one kindergarten teacher at her site, but in a real-world situation the PSKP would be distributed among many teachers at a given site. Since State preschool sites are centralized, not all students will be staying at the same site and the potential for error is considerable. She felt that with the current budget cuts and understaffing, expecting the school clerical staff to have cumulative files ready for incoming kindergarteners before August might be unrealistic. The concern was that even with a special envelope, the PKSP could get lost if not immediately put in a student’s cumulative file or passed directly to the kindergarten teacher.

The comments from the two kindergarten teachers who reviewed the Profiles were quite positive. One commented that although she received summaries of the Desired Results Developmental Profiles (DRDP-R) (CDE, 2008) on each State preschool child, she considered them too overwhelming and time consuming to read. She appreciated the brevity and wealth of information contained on the single sheet PKSP. She also commented that although she was unfamiliar with the Preschool Learning Foundations, she found that the headings were informative and well organized. Both of the participating kindergarten teachers responded that as they read the Profiles they began to think of ways to assist these children transition into kindergarten based on this new information. The kindergarten teacher from Theodore Judah said that she would continue her current practices of conducting pre-kindergarten assessments and participating in her school’s welcome-to-school picnic for incoming kindergarten families but felt that the Profile information was pertinent to how she structured her classroom environment and instruction during the first few weeks:
Out of the 12 Profiles I read, three were children that were obviously slow-to-warm which made me start thinking about what kind of centers would be good for them. How great it would be to know which children need to be steered towards a more self-directed activity where they could take the time they need to get ready to join the group. I think this kind of information is going to help children transition into kindergarten so much faster.

The kindergarten teacher from Rancho Cordova Elementary concurred and felt that any information she could have on a child would be beneficial because she was worried she would not have as much time to get to know the children if class sizes were increased. “If I know ahead of time who might have issues with impulse control, then I can set up activities so they are successful from the start rather than taking a week to find out that this kid needs step by step instructions or he’ll just grab and go.”

There was some further discussion among the attendees regarding the issue of labeling. Several preschool teachers feared that kindergarten teachers would be biased for or against children based on their PKSP information. There was also some discussion regarding the district’s desire to use a uniform pre-kindergarten assessment and a further concern that children with a completed PKSP would be privileged over those who did not have one. Due to time constraints, the FCUSD School Readiness Coordinator tabled the discussion to be revisited at the next Community Kindergarten Collaborative meeting.

This last meeting to review the piloting of the revised PKSP represented the last phase of this project. It is hoped that further efforts towards discussion and implementation of the PKSP will continue among the district and community partners in the future.
DISCUSSION

The current climate of school reform and accountability has highlighted the need for children to enter school ready to learn and participate in a successful kindergarten experience as a key component for their continued and future academic success. As an increasing number of children participate in pre-kindergarten learning experiences, there is a vital wealth of information at the preschool level that can be utilized to optimize the transition process. Effective kindergarten transitioning can no longer solely be the responsibility of the kindergarten teacher (Bronfenbrenner & Morris, 1998; Rimm-Kaufman & Pianta, 2000). It depends on the ability of schools and communities to connect and communicate with each other in order to support children’s entry into kindergarten from a wide variety of early childhood settings (Ackerman & Barnett, 2005). Children are more likely to experience an easier transition into kindergarten and be ready to learn more quickly when there are elements of continuity between their preschool and kindergarten environments (Gutman et. al., 2003). The following sections provide a discussion of the development and implementation of this project to improve kindergarten transitions.
Improving Kindergarten Transitions

The Preschool to Kindergarten Profile meets the need for communication and continuity between the preschool and the kindergarten settings. Originally, it was envisioned as a tool that would facilitate public-private partnerships but it soon became clear that there was also a need for a tool like this to open communication and continuity between public agencies, many of whom reside on the same campus but do not have any opportunities to share articulation information. The inclusion of kindergarten and preschool teachers in the creative process assured both sets of stakeholders that their needs and concerns would be validated. A recurring theme during the process was how much both sides wanted to be able to communicate with each other but lacked a concrete and acceptable format within which to do so. An added benefit was the increase in dialogue between public and private preschool teachers and public kindergarten teachers during the two Community Kindergarten Collaborative meetings where the Profile was discussed.

The focus on social and emotional development rather than cognitive skills as an indicator of being ready to learn instead of ready for school was an important factor. The kindergarten teachers felt that the PKSP filled in a large information gap that they had been heretofore unable to access in an efficient manner. The preschool teachers were eager to share their information and appreciated being valued as partners in the transition process. At no time did any preschool teacher complain about having to take the time to complete the form or question why it was important. The true test was whether the
kindergarten teachers believed that the information would cause them to add to or change their current transition practices. All of the kindergarten teachers felt that the information would allow them to create individualized and repeatable transition activities that would be more successful than solely relying on the large group activities that they currently employed.

This project contributes to the existing body of literature that highlights the need for transition practices that are consistent, relational and personally meaningful (Pianta, 2001; Pianta, Cox et al., 1999; Pianta et al., 2001). By linking the social-emotional competencies outlined in the California Preschool Learning Foundations (2008) to school readiness, this project has the potential to also expand the awareness of both preschool and kindergarten teachers regarding the importance social-emotional development as a key factor that affects not only how children transition into new environments but also how they perceive their own capabilities and the direction for their future academic trajectory (Gutman et al, 2003; Raver, 2002; Schulting et al., 2005).

Issues to Be Resolved

The piloting of the Preschool to Kindergarten Student Profile confirmed the need for the establishment of a defined distribution process and on-going training in social emotional development and kindergarten transitioning. The timing of when to send completed Profiles from the preschools to the elementary schools in order to coincide with the completion of class lists and student cumulative files needs to be refined. More
importantly, there needs to be a buy-in from school principals and clerical staff regarding the importance and time-sensitivity of the Profile. There was some discussion regarding whether placing the Profile in the child’s cumulative file for the teacher to retrieve was sufficient or if it would be more expedient to batch the profiles together by class and deliver them directly to the teacher. Although procedural in nature, the school principal who participated in the pilot admitted that without clear directions and a strong statement of administrative support, other principals who may not be as aware of the Profile’s value would not be as inclined to make the distribution of the Profile a priority.

There was also some concern that the information contained in the Profile could lead to unintentional bias or unwarranted labeling of some children, specifically those with impulse control or behavioral issues. The Profile itself does not contain any specific labels and closely follows the California Preschool Learning Foundations (2008) which encompass multiple facets of social-emotional development rather than focusing on specific behaviors. However, it is within the realm of possibility that a kindergarten teacher might hyper-focus on a particular item on a Profile, such as “the child does not respond positively to redirection” (Social Interaction 4.0 Cooperation and Responsibility) and assume that the child is defiant or difficult. Both of the kindergarten teachers who reviewed the completed Profiles responded to this hypothetical situation by stating they would have immediately looked for any notes written on the Profile that would clarify what was going on and then contact the preschool teacher for further clarification if necessary. Neither teacher was inclined to label a child based on the Profile information but it should be noted that both teachers who participated in the pilot were experienced
and well-trained kindergarten teachers. Perhaps the best way to prevent the possibility of labeling based on the Profile information would be to provide on-going training for both preschool and kindergarten teachers on the Preschool Learning Foundations for social-emotional development and how they affect readiness to learn. Mashburn and Henry (2004) found that collaborative trainings that included both preschool and kindergarten teachers rather than segregated trainings were more effective in achieving a better understanding of what children need to be successful in kindergarten.

Based on anecdotal evidence during the meetings, it also seemed that the more educated and well-trained preschool teachers understood the important contribution that social-emotional development makes towards school readiness than their less educated peers. Mashburn and Henry (2004) who found a positive relationship between a preschool teacher’s level of education and their ability to accurately assess children’s readiness for school have confirmed this pattern. The private preschool teachers, who collectively had a lower level of education than the State preschool teachers, did not like using the Profile that outlined the California Preschool Learning Foundations (2008), preferring instead to use the more colloquial Profile organized according to skill sets. Since the checklist statements in the two versions are the same, just organized differently, future piloting and usage of the PKSP is needed in order to determine whether there would be differences in use between the two versions of the Profile related to the preschool teacher’s comfort level with one particular version over the other. It may be advantageous to use two versions if it assists teachers in clarifying their observations. Conversely, it may be confusing to the kindergarten teachers to review two different
versions of the Profile. It would appear that the better solution for the success and continued utility of the Preschool to Kindergarten Profile would be to encourage systematic and ongoing collaborative training for the private preschool teachers.

Limitations

While the Preschool to Kindergarten Student Profile provides a valuable tool for improving transition service, its ultimate usefulness is dependent upon voluntary participation and collaboration among the preschool and kindergarten teachers in the district. This participation is most challenging for private preschool teachers and family childcare providers, who are generally less connected to the public programs and schools in the area. One way to encourage participation would be through education and relationship building between private providers and the local school district. The Folsom-Cordova Community Kindergarten Collaborative represents an important start in this relationship building, but further serious attention needs to be given to making active membership attractive to both private and public preschool and kindergarten teachers, many of whom work long hours and are already over-burdened with obligations. Traditionally, there has been a sense of distrust and competition between the private and public sector, which will need to be overcome by strong leadership on both sides in order for the private sector to willingly participate in improving kindergarten transitions.

The ultimate follow up goal for this project would be for every kindergarten teacher to have a completed PKSP for each entering child. Unfortunately, achieving this
goal may be unrealistic in that not every child attends preschool and there is no way to mandate that every private preschool or family childcare provider participate. However, even limited use of the PKSP could make a positive improvement in the transition process. Given the positive feedback from the kindergarten teachers, it could be expected that improving the kindergarten transition process for some children would have a positive ripple effect for the other children in the class.

Collaborative training sessions that include both preschool and kindergarten teachers might ameliorate the limited opportunities for two-way communication afforded by the Profile. The PKSP provides preschool teachers the opportunity to communicate up the line to the kindergarten teachers, but a reciprocal communication from the kindergarten teachers is not required. Although the preschool teacher’s contact information is on the Profile, it is the kindergarten teacher’s option to contact the preschool teacher or not. Bringing both preschool and kindergarten teachers together for collaborative training would not only increase social-emotional understanding and improve how the Profile is utilized, it would add another ecological communication connection between programs, and develop partnerships that will benefit kindergarten transitions for all children (Bronfenbrenner and Morris, 1998; Pianta, Rimm-Kaufman et. al., 1999).
Future Uses and Dissemination

The Preschool to Kindergarten Student Profile developed in this project has been accepted for use in the Folsom-Cordova Unified School District on a voluntary basis. The Profiles will be made available to any private or public preschool teacher or family childcare provider as requested through the Folsom Cordova Community Kindergarten Collaborative. There has also been considerable interest in the Profile from private preschools outside of the Folsom-Cordova school district as a means of establishing relationships with the public and private elementary schools that they serve.

The results of this project have also spawned further efforts at studying and enhancing the kindergarten transition process. Currently, the FCUSD School Readiness Coordinator is considering developing a district-wide transition package that would include the Community Kindergarten Collaborative, joint and proprietary trainings, standardized pre-kindergarten assessments and the PKSP. The State preschool program has expressed strong interest in using the Profile, which would immediately add a level of legitimacy to it and possibly encourage other private providers to participate as well.

The Preschool to Kindergarten Student Profile, while initially developed to meet the needs of a particular district and its partner preschools could be used in any district or school. The Twin Rivers Unified School District Community Kindergarten Collaborative has already expressed interest in using it.

The PKSP provides an excellent platform for on-going in-service training related to the California Preschool Learning Foundations (2008) for social-emotional
development. As the California Department of Education continues to develop and refine early education teacher competencies and works towards establishing the statewide Early Learning Quality Improvement System, the Profile has the potential to play an important role in improving how early educators promote social-emotional development and establish key relationships that could foster optimal kindergarten transitions for all children.

Conclusion

This project has resulted in the development and implementation of the Preschool to Kindergarten Student Profile, a tool which will help improve kindergarten transition practices for children and facilitate relationships among public and private preschools and elementary schools. The need for articulating social-emotional developmental information between early childhood settings and kindergarten as a means of informing kindergarten transitions and creating continuity between environments continues to increase in importance. Effective transitioning cannot happen with a single group event, it takes synergistic communication and collaboration as well as pertinent information in order to plan individualized activities that will support the success of each child and positively impact their academic trajectory. The key is a commitment to children and strong leadership across all sectors that can bring families, public school teachers and private providers together to share information using effective and collaborative tools such as the Preschool to Kindergarten Student Profile.
APPENDIX A

Preschool to Kindergarten Student Profile
Preschool to Kindergarten Student Profile

Student Name ________________________ Nickname ________________________
Birth date: ___________ Male ☐ Female ☐ Home Language ________________________
Preschool Name: ________________________ Dates Attended: ________________________
Preschool Teacher: ________________________ Phone Number: ________________________

Directions: Check if student exhibits the trait consistently.
Write D if student is beginning to develop the trait.
Leave blank if you have not observed the trait in the student.

California Preschool Learning Foundations for Social Emotional Development

Concepts of Self
1.0 Self Awareness
- Child takes care of personal needs (dresses self, toileting, cares for belongings).
- Child works and plays independently when required.

2.0 Self Regulation
- Child handles frustration by making a second choice.
- Child is flexible and can adapt to minor changes in routine or environment.
- Child is able to wait for a turn to use materials or participate in group activities.
- Child can stay on task without disturbing others.

3.0 Social Emotional Understanding
- Child expresses appropriate emotional responses.
- Child uses words to describe ideas or creative efforts.

4.0 Empathy and Caring
- Child shows concern for others and offers assistance if needed.

5.0 Initiatives in Learning
- Child can retell a story and explain a sequence of events.
- Child completes projects within the time allowed without constant attention.
- Child is willing to try new tasks and delights in own accomplishments.

Social Interaction
1.0/2.0 Interactions with Adults and Peers
- Child speaks clearly in sentences of 4 or more words.
- Child makes needs and wants known with appropriate words.
- Child uses words to solve problems when angry or frustrated.
- Child engages in imaginative play.

3.0 Group Participation
- Child follows classroom rules and routines.
- Child listens and follows directions during group activities.
- Child sits and listens for up to 20 minutes.
- Child participates willingly and with interest in group activities.

4.0 Cooperation and Responsibility
- Child responds positively to redirection by changing behaviors.
- Child understands and follows multiple step directions.
- Child cooperates with adults and peers.

Relationships
1.0 Attachment to Parents
- Child separates from caregiver / parent easily.
- Child can self-comfort or be easily soothed when upset.

2.0 Close Relationships with Teachers and Caregivers
- Child knows when and how to ask for adult help.
- Child engages in conversation with adults.

3.0 Friendships
- Child can meet and play with peers without adult assistance.
- Child has at least one good friend in the classroom.

Notes:

Copyright 2010 Dawn Larson Jeske
Date: _______________________
Directions: Have child draw a self-portrait and write their name on this page.

This is a picture of me!

This is how I write my name:__________________________________________ __________
# APPENDIX B

**Social-Emotional Domains Matrix**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Statement</th>
<th>Dependence Independence</th>
<th>Expressive Language</th>
<th>Receptive Language</th>
<th>Social Engagement Pro-Social Skills</th>
<th>Emotion Regulation &amp; Expression</th>
<th>Behavior Issues &amp; Compliance</th>
<th>Attention &amp; Behavior Regulation</th>
<th>OECD Foundations</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Concepts of Self</td>
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<tr>
<td>Self Awareness</td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>Child takes care of personal needs.</strong></td>
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<td></td>
<td>1.1 Self Awareness 2.1 Self Regulation</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Child及eaxes daily routine activities without adult aid.</strong></td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>Child makes independent choices. Child continues an activity without adult directions and encouragement.</strong></td>
<td>x</td>
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<td></td>
<td>1.1 Self Awareness 2.1 Self Regulation</td>
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<tr>
<td>Self Regulation</td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Child handles frustration by making a second choice.</strong></td>
<td>x</td>
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<td></td>
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<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>2.1 Self Regulation</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Child is able to wait for a turn to use toys and materials.</strong></td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Child is flexible and can adapt to small changes in routine or environment.</strong></td>
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<td></td>
<td>x</td>
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<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>3.1 Self Regulation 1.8 Parental Attachment 2.1 Teacher Relationship</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Child is willing to attempt new tasks. Child adjusts well to new situations. Child trusts adults and is flexible. Child shows an interest in new situations.</strong></td>
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<tr>
<td>Statement</td>
<td>Dependence Independence</td>
<td>Expressive Language</td>
<td>Receptive Language</td>
<td>Social Engagement Pre-Social Skills</td>
<td>Emotion Regulation &amp; Expression</td>
<td>Behavior Issues &amp; Compliance</td>
<td>Attention &amp; Behavior Regulation</td>
<td>COO Foundations</td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>Child is able to wait for a turn to use materials or participate in group activities.</td>
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<td>2.1 Self Regulation 3.1 Learning (x) 3.1 Group Participation</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Child exhibits physical and emotional self control while waiting for a turn.</td>
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<tr>
<td>Child can stay on task without disrupting others.</td>
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<td>x</td>
<td></td>
<td>2.1 Self Regulation</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Child uses self control and measure constraint.  Child can ignore minor disturbances and remain focused on a task.</td>
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<td>x</td>
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</tbody>
</table>

**Social Emotional Understanding**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Statement</th>
<th>Dependence Independence</th>
<th>Expressive Language</th>
<th>Receptive Language</th>
<th>Social Engagement Pre-Social Skills</th>
<th>Emotion Regulation &amp; Expression</th>
<th>Behavior Issues &amp; Compliance</th>
<th>Attention &amp; Behavior Regulation</th>
<th>COO Foundations</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Child examines appropriate emotional responses.</td>
<td></td>
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<td></td>
<td>3.1 SE Understanding 3.3 Empathy 3.1 Cooperation 3.2 Parent Attachment 3.1 Teacher Relationship</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Child expresses appropriate emotions when interacting with others or waiting for a turn.</td>
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<tr>
<td>Child uses words to describe ideas or creative efforts.</td>
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<td>x</td>
<td>x</td>
<td></td>
<td>3.1 SE Understanding</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Child can communicate abstract representations and feelings to others when engaging in creative play.</td>
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<tr>
<td>Statement</td>
<td>Dependence</td>
<td>Independence</td>
<td>Empathy</td>
<td>Antisocial</td>
<td>Receptive</td>
<td>Language</td>
<td>Social Engagement</td>
<td>Pre-Social Skills</td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>Empathy and Caring</strong></td>
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<tr>
<td>Child shows concern for others and offers assistance if needed.</td>
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<tr>
<td>CIW expresses appropriate emotions and emulates and acts accordingly.</td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Initiates in Learning</strong></td>
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<tr>
<td>Child can recall a story and explain a sequence of events.</td>
<td>x</td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>Child can remember a past event and tells it. Child can retell a story and answer questions about it after listening to it.</td>
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<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>Child completes projects within the time allowed without constant attention.</td>
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<tr>
<td>CIW stays on task and can work independently without constant monitoring and encouragement. CIW delights in own accomplishments.</td>
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</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
### Social-Emotional Domains Checklist

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Statement</th>
<th>Dependence</th>
<th>Independence</th>
<th>Competence</th>
<th>Social Engagement</th>
<th>Pre-Social Skills</th>
<th>Expression</th>
<th>Regulation &amp; Expression</th>
<th>Behavior</th>
<th>Attention</th>
<th>Behavior</th>
<th>CSE Foundations</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Child is willing to try new tasks and delights in own accomplishments.</td>
<td>x</td>
<td></td>
<td>x</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>x</td>
<td>x</td>
<td>x</td>
<td>1.1 Self Awareness</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Child completes an activity without constant attention and encouragement.</td>
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<td>3.1 Learning Initiative</td>
<td></td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>Child displays information and persistence. Child exhibits self-confidence</td>
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<tr>
<td>and a willingness to try. Child keeps trying even when the task is difficult.</td>
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</tbody>
</table>

#### Social Interactions

<p>| Interactions with Adults &amp; Peers                                         |            |              |            |                   |                   |            |                         |          |                                      |
|--------------------------------------------------------------------------|------------|--------------|------------|-------------------|-------------------|------------|-------------------------|----------|                                      |
| Child speaks clearly and in 4+ word sentences.                           | x          |              | x          |                   |                   |            |                         |          | 1.1 Self Awareness                   |
| Child can clearly communicate own feelings and needs and raise self      |            |              |            |                   |                   |            |                         |          | 1.6 Adult Interaction 2.0             |
| understood.                                                              |            |              |            |                   |                   |            |                         |          | Peer Interactions                   |
| Child makes needs and wants known with appropriate words.               | x          |              | x          |                   |                   |            |                         |          | 1.1 Adult Interaction 1.6             |
| Child knows when and how to ask for adult help. Child can communicate    |            |              |            |                   |                   |            |                         |          | 1.3 Parent Interaction 1.3            |
| clearly with peers to meet personal and social goals.                   |            |              |            |                   |                   |            |                         |          | Parental Attatchment 2.3 Teacher     |
|                                                                           |            |              |            |                   |                   |            |                         |          | Relationship                        |
|---------------------------------------------------------------------------|--------------------------|---------------------|--------------------|---------------------------------------|--------------------------------|-------------------------------|-------------------------------|-----------------|
| Child uses words to solve problems when angry or frustrated.             |                          |                     |                    |                                       |                                |                               |                               | 2.1 Self Regulation |
|                                                                           |                          |                     |                    |                                       |                                |                               |                               | 2.5 Understanding  |
|                                                                           |                          |                     |                    |                                       |                                |                               |                               | 3.0 Adult Interaction |
|                                                                           |                          |                     |                    |                                       |                                |                               |                               | 2.2 Peer Interaction |
|                                                                           |                          |                     |                    |                                       |                                |                               |                               | 5.0 Friendships    |
| Child engages in imaginative play.                                       |                          |                     |                    |                                       |                                |                               |                               | 2.6 Peer Interaction |
|                                                                           |                          |                     |                    |                                       |                                |                               |                               | 3.0 Friendships    |
| Child participates in imaginative play with peers.                       |                          |                     |                    |                                       |                                |                               |                               | 3.1 Group Participation|
|                                                                           |                          |                     |                    |                                       |                                |                               |                               | 4.1 Cooperation     |
| Child follows classroom rules &amp; routines.                                 |                          |                     |                    |                                       |                                |                               |                               | 3.1 Group Participation|
|                                                                           |                          |                     |                    |                                       |                                |                               |                               | 4.1 Cooperation     |
|                                                                           |                          |                     |                    |                                       |                                |                               |                               | 3.1 Group Participation|
|                                                                           |                          |                     |                    |                                       |                                |                               |                               | 4.1 Cooperation     |
|                                                                           |                          |                     |                    |                                       |                                |                               |                               | 3.1 Group Participation|
|                                                                           |                          |                     |                    |                                       |                                |                               |                               | 4.1 Cooperation     |</p>
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Statement</th>
<th>Dependence Independence</th>
<th>Expressive Language</th>
<th>Receptive Language</th>
<th>Social Engagement Pro-Social Skills</th>
<th>Emotion Regulation &amp; Expression</th>
<th>Behavior Issues &amp; Compliance</th>
<th>Attention &amp; Behavior Regulation</th>
<th>CCL Foundations</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Child listens and follows directions during group activities.</td>
<td>x</td>
<td>x</td>
<td>x</td>
<td>2.1 Self Regulation 3.1 Group Participation 3.1 Learning Initiative 2.2 Teacher Relationship</td>
<td></td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>Child participates willingly and with interest in group activities.</td>
<td>x</td>
<td>x</td>
<td>x</td>
<td>2.1 Self Regulation 3.1 Group Participation</td>
<td></td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>Child sits and listens for up to 20 minutes.</td>
<td>x</td>
<td>x</td>
<td>x</td>
<td>2.1 Self Regulation 3.1 Group Participation</td>
<td></td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>Child demonstrates attention to adult and peer nonverbal communication without distracting or interfering with others.</td>
<td>x</td>
<td>x</td>
<td>x</td>
<td>2.1 Self Regulation 3.1 Group Participation 3.1 Learning Initiative 3.1 Group Participation</td>
<td></td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>Child listens attentively during group activities. Child is engaged in questioning and discovery.</td>
<td>x</td>
<td>x</td>
<td>x</td>
<td>2.1 Self Regulation 3.1 Group Participation 3.1 Learning Initiative 3.1 Group Participation</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>Cooperation and Responsibility</td>
<td>x</td>
<td>x</td>
<td>x</td>
<td>2.1 Self Regulation 4.1 Cooperation 2.1 Teacher Relationship</td>
<td></td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>Child responds positively to redirection by changing behavior.</td>
<td>x</td>
<td>x</td>
<td>x</td>
<td>2.1 Self Regulation 4.1 Cooperation 2.1 Teacher Relationship</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>Child responds positively to redirection by changing behavior.</td>
<td>x</td>
<td>x</td>
<td>x</td>
<td>2.1 Self Regulation 4.1 Cooperation 2.1 Teacher Relationship</td>
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<tr>
<td>Statement</td>
<td>Dependence Independence Antenomy</td>
<td>Expressive Language</td>
<td>Receptive Language</td>
<td>Social Engagement Pre-Social Skills</td>
<td>Emotion Regulation &amp; Expression</td>
<td>Behavior Issues &amp; Compliance</td>
<td>Attention &amp; Behavior Regulation</td>
<td>COG Foundations</td>
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<tr>
<td>Child understands and follows multiple step directions.</td>
<td>x</td>
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<td></td>
<td>2.3 Self Regulation</td>
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<td></td>
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<td></td>
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<td>4.0 Cooperation</td>
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<tr>
<td>Child tolerate and follow directives without excessive reminders.</td>
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<td></td>
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<td>2.1 Teacher Relationship</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Child cooperates with adults and peers.</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>x</td>
<td>x</td>
<td>x</td>
<td>x</td>
<td></td>
<td>1.1 Adult Interaction</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Child accepts and follows group routine. Child measures adult authority,</td>
<td></td>
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<td>4.1 Peer Interaction</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>and redirection. Child is willing to take turns during the lesson during</td>
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<td>4.2 Cooperation</td>
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<tr>
<td>peer play.</td>
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<td>1.2 Parent Attachment</td>
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<td>3.2 Teacher Relationship</td>
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<td></td>
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<td>Attachment to Parents</td>
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<tr>
<td>Child separates from caregiver/parent readily.</td>
<td>x</td>
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<td>x</td>
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<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>1.1 Self Awareness</td>
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<tr>
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<td>2.1 Self Regulation</td>
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<tr>
<td>Child has a trusting relationship with adults.</td>
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<td></td>
<td>1.3 Parent Attachment</td>
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</tbody>
</table>
# Social-Emotional Domains Checklist

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Statement</th>
<th>Dependence</th>
<th>Independence</th>
<th>Expressive Language</th>
<th>Receptive Language</th>
<th>Social Engagement</th>
<th>Pro-Social Skills</th>
<th>Emotion Regulation &amp; Expression</th>
<th>Behavior Issues &amp; Compliance</th>
<th>Attention &amp; Behavior Regulation</th>
<th>COE Foundations</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Child can self-consistently be easily identified when upset.</td>
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<td></td>
<td>2.1 Self Regulation</td>
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<tr>
<td>Child expresses appropriate emotions and trust in caregivers. Child is able to receive comfort from adults other than parents.</td>
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<td>x</td>
<td></td>
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<td></td>
<td>3.1 SE Understanding</td>
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<tr>
<td>Close Relationships with Teachers and Caregivers</td>
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<td></td>
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<td>1.1 Parent Attachment</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Child knows when and how to ask for adult help. Child can communicate clearly with peers to meet personal and social goals.</td>
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<td>x</td>
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<td>2.1 Teacher Relationships</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Child makes an effort to solve own problems before seeking adult assistance. Child is aware of own limits, respects others, knows when to ask for help, and trusts adult intervention.</td>
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<td>1.1 Self Awareness</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Child engages in conversation with adults</td>
<td>x</td>
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<td>2.1 Self Regulation</td>
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<tr>
<td>Child rarely engages adults in dialogue. Child makes needs known appropriately. Child speaks clearly and makes non-verbal responses.</td>
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<td>2.1 Communication</td>
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<table>
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<tr>
<th>Statement</th>
<th>Dependence</th>
<th>Independence</th>
<th>Antisocial</th>
<th>Impulsive</th>
<th>Language</th>
<th>Self-Concept</th>
<th>Social Engagement</th>
<th>Pre-Social Skills</th>
<th>Emotion Regulation</th>
<th>Expression</th>
<th>Behavior Issues</th>
<th>Compliance</th>
<th>Attention &amp; Behavior Regulation</th>
<th>CSE Foundations</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Friendships</strong></td>
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<tr>
<td>Child can interact and play with friends without adult assistance.</td>
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<td>2.1 Peer Interaction 3.0 Friendships</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Child enters play in a positive manner.</td>
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<tr>
<td>Child has at least one good friend in the classroom.</td>
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<td>2.6 Peer Interaction 3.0 Friendships</td>
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<tr>
<td>Child can initiate and maintain a reciprocal social relationship.</td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>Note:</strong> The comments are amplifications of the preceding statement.</td>
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APPENDIX C

Creating Connections Power Point
Creating Connections
3/24/10
Dawn Larson Jeske

Creating Connections for Better Kindergarten Transitions
The Preschool to Kindergarten Student Profile

- Understand how private-public partnerships and pre-K to kindergarten communication can improve the transition to kindergarten
- Understand the importance of developing social-emotional competencies as a means of improving school readiness
- Learn how using the Preschool to Kindergarten Student Profile can improve the kindergarten transition process for all children.

Learning Objectives

- Communication between pre-K and kindergarten teachers...
  - creates a continuity of services
  - defines what is really important
  - transmits valuable social-emotional information
  - allows pre-K AND kindergarten teachers to prepare children with individualized transition activities
  - and improves the kindergarten transition for ALL children.

Creating Connections
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• What are some of the ways pre-K and kindergarten teachers communicate?
• Kindergarten Readiness Screen (annually)
• Kindergarten Readiness Collaborate (once a year)
• Kindergarten Readiness Conference (annually)
• How can private and public preschool providers exchange information with kindergarten teachers that will directly impact kindergarten admission activities?
• Precon to Kindergarten Readiness Meet-

Child Development

- Approaches to Learning
- Cognitive Development
- Language Development
- Health and Physical Development
- Social Emotional Development

Social Emotional Development

- School readiness consists of social-emotional competencies as well as the cognitive and motivational competencies required for school success (Preschool Learning Foundations, 2008).
- The CDE Social-Emotional Development Preschool Learning Foundations are predictive of children's ability to adapt to school and succeed academically.
Creating Connections
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Dawn Larson Jeske

• Assumptions:
  1. Children have access to the appropriate kinds of social interactions, experiences, and environments that support healthy development.
  2. Social Emotional Development is distinctive from cognitive development: they are not
     exclusive of typical development; they are not
     synonymous over time, it cannot be assessed with
     a checklist.
  3. The goal is to provide a snapshot of what the child is in
     order for the kindergarten teacher to understand the
     child's behavior and prepare transition activities that
     will promote optimal success.

Social Emotional Development

What is Kindergarten Readiness?
  Kindergarten Readiness is a jointly defined set of skills and
  abilities that teachers expect children to have in order to be
  successful in kindergarten (Huston, 2001).

• What is Kindergarten Transitioning?
  Kindergarten Transitioning are those activities that assist
  children in successfully adapting into a new environment as
  they are ready to learn (Kaminski, 2000).

What is Continuity?
  Continuity refers to the experiences that children and
  families have as they move from preschool to kindergarten
  when the two environments are SIMILAR or COMPARABLE.
  (Children learn's buffer from and prepare for kindergarten
  through engaged and meaningful experiences (Kaminski, 2000).

The Ready School or the Ready Child?
  The only true requirement in California for kindergarten entry is that a child MUST BE
  FIVE YEARS OLD BY DECEMBER 2 of the
  current year.
  The Ready Child - the school expects the child to
  enter with a certain set of skills and
  competencies.
  The Ready School - the school is ready for
  every child and able to accept differences in
  skills and competencies.

  We want children who are
  READY TO LEARN (NAEYC, 2004)

Social Emotional Development
Creating Connections
3/24/10
Dawn Larson Jeske

- Children who are ready to learn
  - Have had social interactions and experiences that promote social emotional development including these:
    - Early learning experiences
    - Social emotional understanding
    - Self regulation
    - Social interactions/understanding
    - Interactions with adults
    - Interactions with adults and peers
    - Group participation
    - Cooperation and responsibility
    - Interaction with peers
    - Friends
  - The goal is to give kindergarten teachers the information they need so they can plan transition activities that promote success for all children

Social Emotional Development

- Preschool Teachers have valuable social emotional information about children
- Kindergarten Teachers want to know about the social emotional development of their new students
- Must be:
  - Based on developmentally sound research
  - Linked to CA Preschool Learning Foundations
  - Easy to complete and transfer
  - Simple, brief and USEABLE

Preschool to Kindergarten
Student Profile

4
Creating Connections
3/24/10
Dawn Larson Jeske

- 1.0 Self Awareness - Self confidence shaped a child's interest, motivation and persistence in academic work (Lam & Poland, 2006).
- Child takes care of own needs.
- Child works and plays independently.
  - Confident in own abilities
  - Aware of own unique characteristics
  - Aware of self as an independent person
  - Seeks adult approval

Concepts of Self

- 2.0 Self Regulation - Impulse control impacts classroom conduct and is positively associated with reading and mathematics achievement (NICHD, 2002).
- Child handles frustration by making a better choice.
- Child is flexible and can adapt to changes in routine.
- Child is able to wait for a turn.
- Child can stay on task without disturbing others.
- Controls emotions and behaviors with minimal adult intervention.
- Anticipates routines and manages transitions.
- Responds positively to minor changes in the routine or environment.

Concepts of Self
Creating Connections
3/24/10
Dawn Larson Jeske

3.0 Social Emotional Understanding – A socially and emotionally competent child has more successful peer and adult relationships which is positively associated with academic competency (Planta, 2001).

- Child expresses appropriate emotional responsiveness
- Child uses words to describe ideas or creative efforts
  - Expresses appropriate emotions
  - Understands other people's feelings
  - Able to express own thoughts and feelings

**Concepts of Self**

4.0 Empathy and Caring – The helping response contributes to a child's ability to successfully cooperate with others and work in groups (Ladd, Birch, & Bube, 1999).

- Child shows concern for others and offers assistance if needed.
  - Offers words of encouragement or support
  - May offer assistance (water, hand-dry, book)
  - Beginning to be more concerned with how the person feels than what happened to the person

**Concepts of Self**

5.0 Initiative in Learning – Classroom participation is an important predictor of kindergarten achievement. Build on the other Concepts of Self (Early, Planta, & Cox, 1999).

- Child can retell a story and explain a sequence of events
- Child completes projects within time allowed
- Child is willing to try new tasks and delights in own accomplishments
  - Curious, interested, self-reliant
  - Independent, self-motivated
  - Understanding, can predict everyday routines

**Concepts of Self**
Creating Connections
3/24/10
Dawn Larson Jeske

Social Interaction

- 1.2.3 Interactions with Adults and Peers: Social connections with adults and peers are important for school success. Positive peer relationships are an important component of children’s social development. (Fulbright, Hanish, Martin, Pekrun, & Rescor, 2008)
- Child speaks clearly in sentences of 6 words.
- Child speaks in complete sentences with appropriate words.
- Child uses words to solve problems
- Child engages in imaginative play.
- Child communicates clearly for understanding
- Child collaborates with peers and adults
- Child is able to express ideas through play
- Child is able to engage in related sequential pretend play

Social Interaction

- 3.0 Group Participation: The ability to work cooperatively and constructively with groups is essential for group learning activities. Builds upon Concepts of Self and Social Interaction (Lottets, & Perry, 2003).
- Follows classroom rules and routines.
- Listens and follows directions.
- Stays seated and listens for up to 20 minutes.
- Participates willingly in group activities.
- Concerns for group members and behaviors.
- Understands routines, follows rules, and makes suggestions.
- Attentive and contributes to shared learning.
- Sense of responsibility and fairness for all

Social Interaction

- 4.0 Cooperation and Responsibility: A child’s self-perception as being cooperative and helpful or “good” is important to school success and the motivation to achieve (Bandura, 1977).
- Child responds positively to redirection.
- Child understands and follows multi-step directions.
- Child cooperates with adults and peers.
- Seeks approval through attentiveness and cooperation.
- Takes responsibility for actions.
- Seeks approval through attentiveness and cooperation.
Creating Connections
3/24/10
Dawn Larson Jeske

1.0 Attachment to Parents: Children with secure and supportive family relationships have fewer conduct problems and better work habits in school. (Plata, Rimm Keenan, & Cox, 1999).
- Children and their families feel a strong connection to a single caregiver or parent.
- Children engage in reciprocal relationships with their caregivers.

Relationships

- Child分离 from caregiver/parent easily.
- Child feels self-confident or protected when upset.
- Child's sense of self is not dependent on the close presence or a parent.
- Child trusts the choices that a parent has made for them.
- Child engages in warm, reciprocal relationship with a parent.

2.0 Relationships with Teachers and Caregivers - Similar to parental relationships, a child's relationships with teachers outside the home are protective of a child's classroom adjustment, attentiveness and social competency (Plata, 1981).
- Child knows who and how to ask for adult help.
- Child engages in conversation with adults.
- Positive teacher-child relationship contributes to a child's well-being for learning.
- Peer teacher-child relationships are associated with improved academic performance and decreased behavior problems.

Relationships

3.0 Friendships - Rewarding reciprocal relationships are associated with positive classroom experiences, motivation and academic achievement. (Ladd, Birch, and Rubia, 1999)
- Child can meet and play with peers without adult assistance.
- Child has at least one good friend in the classroom.
- Children with healthy friendships want to come to school.
- Friendships are characterized by positive and affectionate interactions.
- Children engage in more complex play.
- Friends also predict more positive conflict resolution.

Relationships
Creating Connections  
3/24/10  
Dawn Larson Jeske

- Self-Portraits reveal:  
  - Child’s concept of self (Self-Awareness)  
  - Attention to detail  
  - Understanding of symmetry  
  - Fine motor development

- Stages of Drawing:  
  - 3. Anomalous - large circle head, “spider-leg”  
    spider-mites, wide, wavy strokes  
  - 4. 2008 Figure - large head, legs and arms  
    (lines very long), facial features  
  - 5-6. Reconstituted - more proportionate, stick  
    body with clothing, more detailed, finer, more  
    controlled strokes

Self-Portrait

- CA Preschool Learning Foundations for  
  Language and Literacy, 4.0 Writing:  
  - 1.3 Write first name nearly correctly.  
    - Last name is not expected  
    - Upper and/or lower case is not specified  
    - Last name is not required  
    - Penmanship for 4-5 year olds to make large letters  
    - Short horizontal stroke  
    - Upper, lower left, and right, middle of page  
    - Crosses grasp (high and wide vs. low and firm)  
    - Stroke control (shaky or steady) and contact  
      points (over or undershooting)

Name Writing
APPENDIX D

FCUSD Kindergarten Transition Community Collaborative 3/24/10 Agenda
SCHOOL READINESS
FOLSOM CORDOVA UNIFIED SCHOOL DISTRICT

10840 Gadsten Way
Rancho Cordova, CA 95670
Phone (916) 861-0611
Fax (916) 861-0648

Folsom Cordova Unified School District
Kindergarten Transition
Community Collaboration
Williamson Elementary School
Multi Purpose Room
March 24, 2010
6:30 -8:00 PM

"All children enter kindergarten as eager, excited, capable & "ready" learners and families are informed and involved in the child's life."
Santa Maria-Bonita School District

Agenda

Introductions
Denise Thomson
FCUSD School Readiness Coordinator

Kindergarten Transition Trends
Anjanette Jones
Sacramento County Office of Ed
School Readiness Instructional Support Services

Kindergarten Profile Assessment
Dawn Jeske
Director First Covenant Preschool

What Is Needed?
Parents
Kindergarten Teachers
Preschools/Child Care

Where Do We Go From Here
Denise Thomson
APPENDIX E

FCUSD Kindergarten Transition Community Collaborative 4/21/10 Agenda
Folsom Cordova Unified School District

Kindergarten Transition
Community Collaborative
Williamson Elementary School
Multi-Purpose Room
April 21, 2010
6:30-8:00 pm

"A preschooler is no longer simply a child; he or she is a preschooler poised at the starting gate in the race of life." Neil Kurshan

Agenda

Introductions
Denise Thomson
FCUSD School Readiness Coordinator

Kindergarten Transition Summit
Patty Braun
Sacramento County Office of Ed
Early Childhood Specialist

Kindergarten Profile Review
Mary Jo Novak, Rancho Cordova Elem
Barbara Young, Theodore Judah Elem
Patricia Carbone, State Preschool
Dawn Jeske, First Covenant Preschool

Where Do We Go From Here
Denise Thomson
REFERENCES


