

TeachME Professional Development

Examining the Effectiveness of Practices to Support Early Learning

Executive Summary

1. Although participation in high-quality preschool can improve academic, behavioral, social-emotional, and cognitive outcomes for students of varying backgrounds, without additional and continuous supports as children proceed through the elementary grades, participation in preschool does not inoculate against the potential challenges that children may face.

- A. True
 - B. False
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I. Introduction-P-3 Alignment and Differentiated Instruction

2. One reason why initial benefits of preschool do not persist through elementary school is that children who make early gains in preschool may not have the opportunity to maintain their learning trajectory if their early elementary instruction focuses on students who are more prepared and have high-level skills.

- A. True
 - B. False
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Prevalence of Practices

3. According to the data on parent involvement and communication, schools need additional strategies to engage which groups of parents?

- A. Parents of children with disabilities
 - B. Parents who lack education
 - C. Parents who are low-income and non-English speaking
 - D. Parents in rural areas
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Program and Site Selection

4. The Midwest Expansion, a model which builds upon the model of the Child-Parent Centers implemented in Title 1 Schools in Chicago, gives a larger role to the principal, focuses on home visits and attendance in lieu of only school-based parent activities, improves curriculum alignment, combines in-person and online professional development, and emphasizes a balance of:

- A. Differentiated and collaborative activities
 - B. Child-initiated and teacher-directed instruction
 - C. Intentional instruction and critical thinking
 - D. Developmentally appropriate practice and peer interactions
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Analysis/Observations

5. Site visitors recorded ALL of the following examples of alignment EXCEPT:

- A. Collaborative teacher conversations about aligning instruction
 - B. Interviews or discussions with older students about instruction across grades
 - C. Common instructional practices across grades
 - D. Training focused on common instructional practices across grades
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II. Cross-Site Findings-Common Approaches to P-3 Alignment

6. Even though the curriculum was aligned from preschool to grade three, it was important for teachers to be flexible and to adapt the curriculum to meet the needs of their students.

- A. True
 - B. False
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7. In these case studies, coaches were valued because:

- A. They helped teachers understand the goals and expected outcome of each specific curriculum
 - B. They were available when teachers needed them
 - C. They were mentors, who helped teachers succeed instead of pointing out their mistakes
 - D. All of the above
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8. When differentiating instruction, the staff of all five case study programs used groupings that were:

- A. Homogenous
 - B. Random
 - C. Student driven
 - D. Flexible
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9. According to staff from all five programs, one of the key factors for successful, differentiated, and small-group instruction is:

- A. Parent buy-in
 - B. Teacher knowledge
 - C. Having multiple teachers or aides in the classroom
 - D. Efficiency of professional learning communities (PLCS)
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Program Outcomes and Successes

10. The staff from all five programs reported improvements in each of the following areas: vocabulary and language skills, summative test scores, student engagement and attendance, and parent involvement.

- A. True
 - B. False
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Challenges and Lessons Learned

11. According to the report, when new practices are being implemented, what is a challenge that upper elementary teachers face when they are reassigned to early elementary grades?

- A. Having to change their classroom management and discipline practices
 - B. That they may have not been taught the differences between older and younger children's brain functioning
 - C. That they won't have time to learn the new curriculum as they are also dealing with a different grade
 - D. All of the above
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III. Profiles of the Five Case Study Programs-Boston Public Schools

12. Boston Public Schools (BPS) has worked to expand and enhance its early childhood education programs to provide all children with a strong and early start to their formal education, and has incorporated developmentally appropriate instructional strategies such as more movement and play-based learning.

- A. True
 - B. False
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Outcomes and Successes

13. ALL of the following were considered successes after the BPS implemented the new curricula EXCEPT:

- A. An increase in students' abilities to think critically
 - B. An increase in students' abilities to work collaboratively
 - C. Significant increases in Massachusetts Comprehensive Assessment System (MCAS) scores after the first year of implementation
 - D. Students using a higher level of vocabulary than previous years
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Chicago Child-Parent Centers-Midwest Expansion (CPC)

14. In order to promote children's academic success and to facilitate parent involvement in children's education, the CPC program emphasized a focus on vocabulary and language development at school and at home as one of its core elements.

- A. True
 - B. False
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Early Works Initiative/Challenges and Lessons Learned

15. In implementing the Early Works Initiative, one challenge faced by Earl Boyles Elementary was identifying funding sources to initiate the program.

- A. True
 - B. False
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FirstSchool/Outcomes and Successes

16. When analyzing data, the FirstSchool teachers and coaches found that a large portion of the day was spent transitioning to and from the classroom, in which no instruction was taking place. Their solution was to:

- A. Calculate the missed time and extend the school day by that much time
 - B. Implement learning activities during the time students transitioned through the hallways
 - C. Establish an additional technology/computer block
 - D. Create an education center at school where children could attend during their recess and lunch breaks
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Sobrato Early Academic Language Program

17. One stated goal of the Sobrato Early Academic Language (SEAL) is to prioritize developing academically proficient and literate students who can express themselves exclusively and articulately in English.

- A. True
 - B. False
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Outcomes and Successes

18. According to principals, coaches, and teachers, students who participated in SEAL:

- A. Received higher California Standards Test math scores
 - B. Showed significant growth in written language
 - C. Had greater improvement in oral language skills
 - D. Received higher California Standards Test language arts scores
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Challenges and Lessons Learned

19. SEAL program staff offered which advice for others interested in implementing a program like SEAL:

- A. Clearly communicate the goals and expectations to school staff when the program begins
 - B. Get to know the community served by the school
 - C. Provide consistent professional development to teachers through coaching
 - D. Recognize that time and patience are important, and change in teacher practice and student outcomes takes at least two to three years
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IV. Conclusions

20. Teachers and principals are concerned about the continued implementation of the case study programs because some of the critical parts of the programs may not be able to be funded in future years, such as materials and:

- A. Time needed for training
 - B. Staff
 - C. Data
 - D. Partnerships
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