

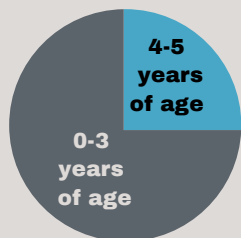
KINDERGARTEN BRIDGE



RECOVERING AND REIMAGINING

Recovering and reimagining education following the pandemic will take time. Furthermore, the impact on young children's learning and development remains to be fully understood.

Many of our incoming kindergartners have spent over a ¼ of their lives living a COVID normal, with the positive and negative impacts of this varying across communities, neighborhoods, and from family to family.



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In preparation of welcoming families and children and meeting individual needs during the upcoming academic year, this document provides a quick, research-based reference that outlines specific core features of summer learning while specifically relating these to supporting incoming kindergartners and their families.

While the research is not extensive, we recommend adhering as closely as possible to these structural and instructional components to increase the positive impact of any summer programming, including for incoming kindergartners.

STRUCTURAL COMPONENTS

Research has indicated the following core structural components as having the largest positive impact:

- **Duration:** five or six weeks and four to eight hours a day.*
- **Class size:** as few as 13 students for kindergarten.
- **Parent program:** using regular parent classes to engage families.

In planning a program, partner with families, preschool leadership, and community partners to clearly identify the purpose and goals of the program.

Collectively identify ways to address barriers and provide flexibility to families by providing transportation, grab-and-go meals, and wrap-around supports, and options to partner with families.

Provide welcoming and engaging environments to increase attendance, which has also been linked to increasing the program's positive impact.





INSTRUCTIONAL COMPONENTS

- **Evidence-based curricula**
 - Design instruction using **evidence-based curricula** aligned with program goals.
 - Align instruction and activities to the upcoming year.
 - Utilize curricula supporting **experiential and hands-on learning**.
- **Transitional routine/schedule**
 - Engage preschool leadership, community partners, and families to understand children’s routines and **experiences** of the past year.
 - Create a transitional daily schedule building from these routines while teaching and **positively reinforcing new expectations** to transition students into in-person kindergarten classrooms.
 - Provide multiple opportunities for both **small group** and **one-on-one learning** using paraprofessionals, tutors, specialists, or parent volunteers.
- **Focus on a few critical areas**
 - Identify a few critical areas (i.e., social-emotional, literacy, math) on which to focus that **align to data** received through data-sharing agreements, collaborations with preschools and families, and the program goals.
 - If limited data is available, identify a few critical areas which would **support student success** in entering kindergarten (i.e., building relationships, teaching routines, and expectations).
- **Engagement**
 - Provide **nurturing and engaging environments** through play, experiential learning, hands-on activities, project-based learning, and unstructured learning time.
 - Increase **opportunities for play** to support mental health and social-emotional wellbeing.
- **Staffing**
 - Select teachers that are highly **qualified, highly effective** during the year, and well-trained to **provide holistic programming**.
 - Provide opportunities for **effective professional development**, including training and coaching, for programming to support the goals of the program.
 - Tutors, or anyone working one-on-one with students, have been found to be most effective following participation in training and **ongoing coaching** in the areas in which providing additional support.

RESEARCH-INFORMED EXAMPLES

PORTLAND PUBLIC SCHOOL EARLY KINDERGARTEN TRANSITION PROGRAM EKT

Key features:

- Structure: Rising kindergarteners meet every morning for 3 weeks and receive breakfast, lunch, books, and school supplies
- Parent program: Parents meet 2 times each week with childcare available during sessions.
- Parent content is focused on the importance of attendance and supporting learning at home.
- Programming: EKT focuses on teaching school routines, student behaviors, and targeting any specific skills to support individual student success.
- Continuous evaluation and improvement: Partner with organizations in the community to evaluate program outcomes and inform improvement.

Key outcomes: University-district partnership found the following outcomes

- Students attending EKT had higher attendance rates, higher literacy fluency scores, and students were more likely to meet literacy benchmarks
- 5-year Study: Leveraging University-[School District Research Partnerships: Exploring the Longitudinal Effects of an Early Kindergarten Transition Program](#)
- Educator Perspective: [The Results are in: Kindergarten Transition Programs Really Work](#)

GEORGIA PROGRAM PRE-K SUMMER TRANSITION PROGRAM (STP)

Key Features:

- Structure: Rising kindergartners meet for 6 weeks, 6.5 hours a day.
- Targets students who did not attend Georgia's PK or fall within a priority group
- Class size: 12 students per class with 2 teachers (lead and assistant teacher)
- Parent Program: Transition Coaches build relationships with families to support family and child wellbeing and ongoing learning. Coaches offer at least 1 parent workshop a week.
- Programming: The summer transition program focuses on language, literacy, and math with instruction aligned to developmental standards or using approved curricula.
- Training offered for teachers.

Key outcomes: University-District partnership found the following outcomes

- University partnership found students had moderate gains in early literacy skills. While found to be significant for a 6-week program, a control group was not included in the study.
- [Summer Transition Program Reports](#)

COLORADO

School Readiness is currently looking for CO examples; please [contact](#) us if you are currently planning or implementing a Kindergarten bridge program.

