



KINDERGARTEN TRANSITION PRACTICES IN NYS

Responses from the Kindergarten Transition Summit Orientation on March 12, 2019.

Work with your District

- **Professional Development:** Coordinate professional development opportunities for Prekindergarten sites. Include expectations for teachers and administrators.
- **Feast Together:** Hold a breakfast for principals and Kindergarten teachers to talk about best practices in transitioning from Head Start to Kindergarten.
- **Focus Groups:** Hold focus groups with the child care community and Prekindergarten/Kindergarten teachers. Each group shares what a day in their life looks like; how they teach; their expectations; and discuss how to better prepare children and families for Kindergarten.
- **Live the Experience with Teachers:** Provide opportunities for Prekindergarten and Kindergarten teachers to experience each classroom and talk about how to support transitions for students.
- **Connect the CPSE and CSE Chairs:** When working with children with special needs, ensure families are connected to therapists and provide annual review/summary to forward to CPSE chair. Have CSE observe all children prior to Kindergarten placement and meet with Prekindergarten staff.
- **Know the Demographics:** Share aggregated student socioeconomic information with school districts prior to end of school for review by registrars for placement of students in appropriate classroom setting.



Develop Supports for Families and Children

- **Develop Plans:** Work with parents to develop transition plan to give to Kindergarten teachers. Provide each Kindergarten teacher with a written overview of each child's developmental needs/strengths, suggestions for classroom placements, dynamics of relationship with other children in the class. Head Start teachers meet with Kindergarten teachers to review transition plans.
- **Get a Jump-Start with Families:** Establish a five-week Early Head Start transition to Head Start classroom program that provides parents an opportunity to visit the classroom, learn what their child will learn and how to support them. Likewise, children visit their future classroom with their future teacher and learn about the daily schedule and can ask questions.

- **Mock-Kindergarten Day:** Bus Prekindergarten students from off-site to the school for the morning, provide a snack in the cafeteria, play on the playground, meet the principal, and visit a Kindergarten classroom for an activity with the students.
- **Take Advantage of Summer:** Conduct summer learning camp for Prekindergarten students who might have difficulty learning. Hold summer reading program for incoming Kindergarteners and their families.
- **Hold a Fair:** Kindergarten transition fairs at district events, libraries, charter schools, story areas, movie areas, plays, telling preschoolers about Kindergarten. Distribute information packets.
- **Buddy Up:** Have Kindergarten students read or be a pen pal with children attending Head Start. Kindergarten students help Prekindergarten children with art project to bring home.
- **Involve the Community:** Invite Kindergarten teachers to community meetings with parents and invite all community-based organizations and Prekindergarten teachers to meet with Kindergarten teachers to discuss the children and families who are transitioning.
- **Make a Checklist:** Implement a transition process checklist that includes: an evening orientation; Kindergarten visitation to classrooms and tour of school, CPSE to CSE (if appropriate) process.
- **Make a Timeline:** Assist families with Kindergarten registration, provide all parents with dates of orientation provided to all CPSE participation as part of 4410 section of program. Have Head Start teachers and parents complete a form each Spring that provides the Kindergarten teachers with information (including academic; family changes; children's interests; any fears; if child has behavior plan).
- **Make a Book:** Make "My School Book" for each child to bring home. On each page, identify a person in the new school (nurse, principal, teachers, social worker, etc.) and important places in the school (classroom, playground, lunchroom, etc.).
- **Meet with the District:** Representative from school district comes to child care center to explain the registration process. Family school navigators show transition Kindergarten video in the homes of families and leave a copy with the family. Transition video shown in preschools; at parent jams; movie nights for Prekindergarten children and parents. During the Prekindergarten school year, a parent educator offers a class - "Getting Ready for Kindergarten" – at each Kindergarten location. Parent educator reads a Kindergarten book to the parents, gives each parent a copy of the book, and teaches an activity that parents can take home and do with their children. There is a question and answer time at the end.
- **Use Toolkits and Guides:** Provide activity guides, literacy kits, and gear up for Kindergarten sheet for parents to be distributed at Kindergarten screenings. Provide goodie bags for families and children during Kindergarten registration, with booklet with various activities, pencil, crayons, pencil sharpener, glue stick, writing booklet. Distribute resource guide with activities for one- to four-year olds, compiled by 25+ early childhood workers and printed by local BOCES. Available at libraries, businesses, schools, Head Starts and more. www.wcpsf.org
- **Have a Visit:** Visit the classroom with your child to complete a transition activity. Visit the school, sit in a Kindergarten classroom, share songs sung in Prekindergarten and Kindergarten.
- **Go to a Party:** Attend a Kindergarten kickoff party during May and June, provide opportunities for Prekindergarten classes (in school buildings) to visit Kindergarten classroom. Encourage your Prekindergartner to write questions to Kindergarteners for them to respond.
- **Talk with Teachers:** Talk with teachers during March parent conferences about what to expect next year.
- **Go Online:** Use the transition tools from the National Center for Learning Disabilities. They are all free, downloadable and apply to all students! Tools for screening; tools for parents; some Spanish language. www.ld.org.
- **Read a Book:** Read a "Kindergarten Here We Come" booklet to your child.
- **Go to the Library:** During the summer months, attend weekly open library, preschool story & craft time, food pantry open hours, and curbside markets where kindergarten registration staff are available.
- **Go to Camp:** In August, attend a one-week special Kindergarten camp (with Kindergarten teachers). Get your child ready for new routines, snacks, lunch.