
Vision: Each child will experience healthy, natural transitions from one learning environment to the next, whether it is the child’s home, an early care and learning program or a formal school setting. Every school community will have the necessary resources, knowledge, and skills to develop “ready schools”, “ready families”, and “successful children”.

A Community School... is both a place and a network of supportive partnerships between the school and the community, promoting improved student learning, stronger families, and healthier communities.

In the Tulsa area, the community schools concept is organized and supported through the TACSI community-wide partnership. It is delivered at participating neighboring elementary schools in the Tulsa and Union public school districts. TACSI is an initiative of Tulsa’s Metropolitan Human Service Commission, with coordination and support provided by the Community Service Council of Greater Tulsa.

Linkages will use community resources to strengthen the connection between the early care and learning community and community schools and provide strategies for how schools and programs can best communicate with and provide support to children and families as they progress through the educational system.

Successful transitions...

- are sustained through a system of supports that are intentional and coordinated.
- take into account the people and settings that affect a child’s transitions, including the influence of the child’s unique culture and community experiences.
- are a result of countless exchanges connecting children, families, early care and learning programs, and schools.
- are the responsibility of communities, families, early learning programs, and schools.
- involve the whole child-social emotional, physical, language, and cognitive domains of development are taken into consideration.
- include partnerships between early intervention services, early care and learning programs, schools, and other agencies, throughout the community.
- are possible for every child.

Linkages will serve as a link in building sustaining relationships among children, families, community schools, early care and learning programs, and the larger community. The purpose of this link is to create an effective continuum of quality, developmentally appropriate opportunities for children, birth through age eight, in the Tulsa area. The results of the initiative will create mutually supportive policies and practices that link early care and learning systems and community schools.

Communities • Schools • Families • Children

- Ready communities provide the necessary support and resources to develop ready schools, ready families, and ready children.
- Ready schools strive for continuity between early care and learning and elementary programs and continue the emphasis on continuity between grade levels. Ready schools also ease the transition between home to school.
- Ready families have the skills to support their child in being successful in school, are fully engaged in their child’s education, and have an accurate understanding of the school’s expectations of their child.
- Successful children have the support needed to achieve the developmentally appropriate social, cognitive, and physical skills needed to be successful in school.

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Early Childhood and Community School Linkages Project, in partnership with the Coalition for Community Schools/Institute for Educational Leadership through the generous support of the W.K. Kellogg Foundation
Rationale: The Early Childhood and Community Schools Linkages Project is a partnership between the Coalition for Community Schools and the Institute for Educational Leadership. The national project is being implemented through the generous support of the W.K. Kellogg Foundation. The project’s rationale is based on current research and policy initiatives that confirm that coordinating high quality programming and policy support from early childhood through the elementary grades offers a direct pathway to school improvement. Community schools are well positioned to create the kind of linked infrastructure that is needed to ensure students progress through the educational pipeline successfully, preventing drop-out and supporting lifelong success.

The purpose of the project is to demonstrate strategic linkages between quality comprehensive early childhood opportunities and effective community schools that lead to better results for vulnerable children, and lay a foundation for success in school and life. Linkages will serve as a link in building sustaining relationships among children, families, community schools, early care and learning programs, and the larger community. The results of the initiative will create mutually supportive policies and practices that link early care and learning systems and community schools.

Outcomes:

- Sustainable, collaborative relationship among early childhood and community school partners at the local and state level.
- Move to scale by reaching out to other communities and informing local, district and state policy and practice.
- Describe to policymakers and practitioners how linkages were made, what lessons were learned, and what results were achieved on building integrated systems for supporting the academic and nonacademic development of children and families.
- Curricula, pedagogy, and expectations are on a continuum in all early care and learning and community school environments and maintain an emphasis on the needs of the individual child, not the needs of the ECL/CS setting.
- Results-driven, sustainable system at the local level that provides continuous high quality services and learning experiences for children and families from birth through 3rd grade.
- Supportive state policies and funding mechanisms that ensure the sustainability of linkages between early childhood systems and community schools statewide.
- Agreement on measures of success drives development across early care and learning and community school efforts.
- Demonstrate that community schools offer a flexible and efficient vehicle for moving communities toward long-term, positive results for children, families, school, and communities.