

**From:** Webster, Melinda  
**Sent time:** Tuesday, December 20, 2011 12:05:37 PM  
**To:** Cari Miller (Cari@excelined.org) <Cari@excelined.org>  
**Subject:** RE: The Effects of Preschool Education: What We Know, How Public Policy Is or Is Not Aligned With the Evidence Base, and What We Need to Know

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Yes! ... and I have another one...was just starting to write the email to you.

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**From:** Cari Miller (Cari@excelined.org) [mailto:Cari@excelined.org]  
**Sent:** Tuesday, December 20, 2011 12:05 PM  
**To:** Webster, Melinda  
**Subject:** The Effects of Preschool Education: What We Know, How Public Policy Is or Is Not Aligned With the Evidence Base, and What We Need to Know

Okay, so this article has some statement that I think would support Hanna's talking points, maybe. Thoughts?

**The Effects of Preschool Education: What We Know, How Public Policy Is or Is Not Aligned With the Evidence Base, and What We Need to Know**

**"It is also abundantly clear that 1 year of effective preschool education is not a panacea. Even with an earlier start and longer duration, preschool education is not an inoculation that guarantees complete and permanent elimination of the achievement gap for the disadvantaged children who should have priority for such programs because they benefit most."**

**"More broadly, preschool education policy should be developed in the context of public policies and programs to effectively support child development from birth to age 5 and beyond."**

The argument made in many circles—including policymakers at state and federal levels, advocacy, program planning, and development—is that early childhood education is a means to address concerns that an unacceptably large number of children are already, by 5 years of age, lacking in competencies fundamental to their school success—notably in the areas of spoken language and literacy (Duncan et al., 2007), self-regulation (Raver, 2008; Zaslow et al., 2003), social relational competence (Fantuzzo et al., 2007), and early math (Cross, Woods, & Schweingruber, 2009). The long-term effects of early gaps in achievement and social functioning are so pronounced that effective and efficient interventions targeted toward these gaps in the preschool period are essential, not only to the developmental success of children but also to the economic and social health of communities (Barnett, 2008; Barnett & Masse, 2007; Heckman, 2006; Heckman & Masterov, 2007; Magnuson, Ruhm, & Waldfogel, 2007a, 2007b). Early childhood education is viewed as a means by which policymakers can address these issues, as both small experimental studies and quasi-experimental studies of largescale programs have shown consistently positive effects of exposure to preschool (Gormley & Phillips, 2003; Howes et al., 2008; Magnuson et al., 2007a, 2007b; C.T. Ramey & Ramey, 2004; Wong, Cook, Barnett, & Jung, 2008).

Because this argument is supported by evidence and has been widely accepted, there has been a rapid expansion of preschool services for young children, mostly at ages 3 and 4 and mostly targeted toward low socioeconomic groups (Barnett, Hustedt, Friedman, Boyd, & Ainsworth, 2007). The most recent information indicates that 22% of all 4-year-olds are enrolled in state funded pre-kindergarten (pre-K), with 30 states planning to increase enrollment through specific efforts to raise the percentage of low-income children enrolled in preschool (Barnett et al., 2007). Thus, research evidence has been linked to policy.

However, despite significant investments over the past decade in the expansion and improvement of programs, the promise of early education as a scaled-up asset for fostering learning and development of young children in the United States is not yet being realized—too many children, particularly poor children, continue to enter kindergarten educationally far behind their peers (Jacobson-Chernoff, Flanagan, McPhee, & Park, 2007; Johnson, 2002; National Center for Education Statistics, 2000). Jacobson-Chernoff et al. (2007) reported results from the first follow-up of the nationally representative Early Childhood Longitudinal Study—Birth Cohort showing a gap of roughly one standard deviation on school readiness skills for children below the 20<sup>th</sup> percentile on family socioeconomic status. **Because the wide-ranging and diverse set of experiences in preschools are not, in aggregate, producing the level and rate of skill gains required for children to be ready for school (see Howes et al., 2008; Layzer & Price, 2008), some have argued that simply enrolling more children in more programs, although helpful, will not close, or even narrow in noticeable ways, the skills gap at school entry. Instead, investments (in research, program development, and policy) The Effects of Preschool Education initiatives are urgently needed to substantially enhance the positive effects of existing and expanding educational offerings on the very child outcomes in which skills gaps are so evident (see Moorehouse, Webb, Wolf, & Knitzer, 2008).** We believe that key challenges to heightening the impact of programs are to align policy with research, to identify gaps in the science, and then to close these gaps in the knowledge base while acting on points of alignment.

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**From:** Webster, Melinda [mailto:Melinda.Webster@fldoe.org]  
**Sent:** Tuesday, December 20, 2011 11:44 AM  
**To:** Cari Miller (Cari@excelined.org)  
**Subject:** RE: Help!

Let me do some digging....

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**From:** Cari Miller (Cari@excelined.org) [mailto:Cari@excelined.org]  
**Sent:** Tuesday, December 20, 2011 11:32 AM  
**To:** Webster, Melinda  
**Subject:** Help!  
**Importance:** High

Hey Melinda,

I'm trying to find information about the benefits of Preschool, BUT if not continued to be supported K-3, then there isn't much benefit at all. Are there any reports on this? New Mexico is looking for supporting documents. Basically, what Hanna wants to be able to say is that Prek, while a great addition to a K-3 plan isn't the

silver bullet, nor is it going to work as a stand-alone. Everything I read simply supports PreK, and says if they have it, they are more likely to have academic success well into high school. Any thoughts on reports that may support what she wants to say?

We can talk via phone if you prefer.

Sincerely,  
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