Pre-K

A summary of the scientific literature on Pre-K.



How This Impacts Children's Development

Instructional alignment from preschool through the early grades (PK-3) aims to ensure a seamless educational experience that builds on the gains made in preschool and further enhances learning in the early

elementary years. Ensuring continuity in teaching methods across these grades helps maintain a consistent approach to subject areas, which can boost children's familiarity, confidence, and overall success.

READ THE BRIEF: What does Pre-K Instructional alignment mean for policy and practice?

Talking Points from the SRCD Brief

- Some preschools through the early grades (PK–3) initiatives have endeavored to improve children's early educational opportunities and sustain the benefits of high-quality early care and education by continuing services. Continuity in instructional practices is less likely if: a) state and district standards and assessments for preschool are not well aligned; b) preschool standards and assessments are not aligned to those for early elementary grades; and c) schools do not provide opportunities for teachers to collaborate across grades.
- District policies and practices can mediate the effect of state policies on teaching.
    - However, district-level efforts will affect instruction and learning only if appropriate practices are put in place at the school level.
- Continuity in instruction can contribute to students' academic achievement when instruction is sequenced, connected, and elaborated, with less time spent repeating material or providing instruction beyond children's skill level.

Policy Considerations in the Brief

- Policymakers could align standards and assessments within and across grades at state and district levels. They could develop a database accessible to teachers that includes clear instructional frameworks.
- Education leaders should provide continuity in the relative emphasis on social-emotional development and academic skills in PK–3 curriculum and provide opportunities for collaboration among PK–3 teachers.
- Teachers should give students opportunities to broaden and deepen their skills by applying them in new contexts, and to take stock of their progress in understanding and skills.

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