

## MODELS OF SCHOOL-BASED AND SCHOOL-LINKED COMPREHENSIVE EARLY CHILDHOOD EDUCATION PROGRAMS

### 1. Background Information

In his book, *The Basic School: A Community for Learning*, the late Ernest L. Boyer, President of the Carnegie Foundation for the Advancement of Teaching, spoke of a shared vision where the school is a place where everyone comes together to promote learning. It is a place where beyond an educational program, the school provides basic health and counseling services, referrals for families, and a new calendar and clock, with after-school and summer programs for learning and creative play.

The National Education Goals Panel, in its position statement entitled *Ready Schools*, offers ten keys to developing schools that create learning climates for children which:

- ✍ Provide a smooth transition between home and school
- ✍ Strive for continuity between early care and education programs and elementary schools
- ✍ Commit to the success of every teacher and adult who interacts with children during the day
- ✍ Are learning organizations that alter practices and programs if they do not benefit children
- ✍ Take responsibility for results
- ✍ Help children learn and make sense of their complex and exciting world in terms of curriculum and instruction, incentives for learning, and effective use of time
- ✍ Commit to the success of every child
- ✍ Introduce or expand approaches that have been shown to raise achievement
- ✍ Serve children in communities
- ✍ Have strong leadership

### 2. Program Models

#### **Sample Design for High Quality Comprehensive Early Childhood Education Programs**

##### *School-based Programs*

A variety of early childhood education programs are housed inside the school building preferably a separate section or wing of the building. Children, from birth to age five or from age three to five, are either attending early childhood education programs, either half-day or full day, as needed. The classroom environment are of similar high quality and the curricular programs and instructional approaches of varies early childhood programs are similar and well coordinated. The teachers and assistants are responsive to children's individual needs, set high expectations, and include children with special needs and disabilities. The school-based early childhood program has a series of services to provide immediate early intervention, such as developmental and health screening, special instructional services, or family involvement services. In addition, the school offers

homevisiting, family literacy, and health services to families upon request by families or in the form of a referral by a case manager or staff specialist.

The school would also create a welcoming climate for parents with the help of the school's Parent-Teacher Association (PTA) and/or parent councils. The school could offer special enrichment programs for young children. The teachers and other staff members would be involved in on-going professional development with the help of the local community college or university.

The comprehensive services, created by a broad-based partnership of public school and non-public school programs, would be coordinated by an assigned well-qualified staff member with strong professional background in early childhood education who would work closely with a steering committee comprised of representatives from the collaborating agencies. An on-site case manager who would work with an interdisciplinary team would coordinate services for families.

### *School-linked Programs*

School-linked comprehensive early childhood education programs differ from school-based programs only in being located outside a school building. For instance, many of the all-day early childhood education services might be housed in one facility located close to the school or school cluster while some of the support services are housed at the school. Because of the physical distance, school-linked models pose a challenge to maintaining close communication and collaboration. The role of the project coordinator is crucial in forging the partnership to make these models effective. On the other hand, school-linked models create the opportunity for greater outreach to a variety of communities.

A variation of school-linked comprehensive early childhood education programs is school-based models with "satellite" projects in specific neighborhoods or communities. While all the services are offered in the school, the program establishes a set of services in other schools or community-based programs. For instance, the satellite project could include specific family literacy or family support services.

For more information about school-based, school-linked comprehensive early childhood education programs, refer to:

Boyer, E.L. (1995) The basic school. The Carnegie Foundation for the Advancement: Princeton, NJ  
Children's Aid Society (1997). Building a community school. Author: New York, NY  
National Education Goals Panel (1998) Ready schools. Author: Washington, D.C.  
Ochshorn, S. (2000). Partnering for success: Community approaches to early learning. Child Care Action Campaign: New York, NY