

ESEA REAUTHORIZATION: EARLY CHILDHOOD EDUCATION

HEARING OF THE COMMITTEE ON HEALTH, EDUCATION, LABOR, AND PENSIONS UNITED STATES SENATE ONE HUNDRED ELEVENTH CONGRESS SECOND SESSION

ON

EXAMINING ELEMENTARY AND SECONDARY EDUCATION ACT (ESEA)
REAUTHORIZATION, FOCUSING ON EARLY CHILDHOOD EDUCATION

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ESEA REAUTHORIZATION: EARLY CHILDHOOD EDUCATION

TUESDAY, MAY 25, 2010

U.S. SENATE,
COMMITTEE ON HEALTH, EDUCATION, LABOR, AND PENSIONS,
Washington, DC.

The committee met, pursuant to notice, at 2 p.m. in Room SD-430, Dirksen Senate Office Building, Hon. Tom Harkin, chairman of the committee, presiding.

Present: Senators Harkin, Dodd, Murray, Sanders, Brown, Casey, Hagan, Merkley, Franken, Bennet, and Burr.

OPENING STATEMENT OF SENATOR HARKIN

The CHAIRMAN. The hearing of the Health, Education, Labor, and Pensions Committee will come to order.

I welcome everyone to our 10th hearing on the reauthorization of the Elementary and Secondary Education Act. Today's discussion will inform us about what we can do to ensure that more young children begin their elementary school education fully prepared to learn and succeed.

We all know that learning starts at birth, and the preparation for learning starts even before birth. Yet over three-quarters of children ages 3 to 4 do not have access to the early learning opportunities they need. As a result, nationwide, we spend billions of dollars trying to close the gaps in student achievement that could be tempered by investing in high-quality early learning opportunities.

By the time most children from low-income families reach kindergarten, their achievement levels are an average of 60 percent behind those of their peers from more affluent backgrounds. These same children also tend to possess vocabularies only one-third the size of their middle-class peers. We know that high-quality early learning opportunities provided by committed, well-trained, and caring providers can enable children to overcome these challenges and close this gap.

A solid initial investment in young children will save us billions in future spending on remedial education, criminal justice, health, and welfare programs. Children who participate in comprehensive high-quality early education programs are also more likely, over their lifetimes, to be healthier, more steadily employed, and earn higher incomes and, of course, to lead more productive and fulfilling lives.

ESEA reauthorization offers an important opportunity to help States and school districts ensure that more young children are prepared to succeed in school. To ensure that school leaders and teachers have the skills and resources they need to support early learning, we have to think about how early education programs can better align with existing K through 12 systems.

So reauthorization of ESEA also gives us an opportunity to clarify and strengthen current law, directing States, school districts, and schools to coordinate title I activities with Head Start programs and other early childhood development programs.

We have had a lot of important hearings. This is our 10th one in this series, but I think this one today gets it where we have sorely been lacking in the last, pick your number of years—20, 50, 30, 40—somewhere in there, or maybe more.

I always hold up this book at hearings like this. This is a book called “The Unfinished Agenda: A New Vision for Child Development and Education,” put out by the Committee for Economic Development. Actually, it was a subcommittee of the Committee for Economic Development. It was first published in 1990.

This Committee for Economic Development was established by the business community, and the leaders are the CEOs and chairmen of Fortune 500 companies, like Mr. Griswell who we have here today. It is a who’s who list of the great leaders in business in the 1970s, 1980s, and early 1990s.

They commissioned this study to better understand what we needed to do in education so that our economic future will be brighter, so that the economic system of America will continue to prosper and grow.

After about 3 or 4 years of having hearings and conducting the investigation, in 1990, Jim Renier, who then was the CEO of Honeywell, and was the chair of this committee, and they brought me this book. It was 1990. I was not chairman of this committee then. I was sitting clear down there at the end, but I was chairman of the Appropriations Committee that funded education at that time.

They brought me this report, and the executive summary was quite important. What they found was, basically, that education begins at birth, and the preparation for education begins before birth. This whole thing is just about what we should be doing to improve the quality of and access to quality early childhood education. The commission focused on the importance of early learning in 1990, and we have done precious little since then.

Here were people that said, you know, don’t forget about high school and college, but unless we go down to the earliest ages and start investing there, we are never going to catch up. And I think the intervening 20 years since 1990 have shown this to be true.

I am hopeful that this panel will help us start thinking about how we redesign ESEA to start focusing on early childhood education, how we strengthen transitions and support kindergarten readiness.

If I ask people to define elementary education, how would you define it?

We could expect all types of responses. So I throw out to all of you, maybe we ought to redefine elementary education as beginning at birth, acknowledging that elementary education begins at

birth. And in that definition should build upon the policies, the programs, and the supporting mechanisms around it.

But unless we define it, if early childhood education is not reflected in our thinking around elementary education, then what are we doing? We are not doing anything. If elementary education begins when you go to kindergarten or go to first grade, well, then we are going to continue to have the same problems we had back in the 1980s and early 1990s and that we have had ever since. We will always be swimming upstream, attempting to catch up.

So I'll just throw that out there for your thoughts. I am anxious to listen to all of you today. I have read all of your testimony. They are great testimonies.

I will yield to Senator Burr for opening statement.

STATEMENT OF SENATOR BURR

Senator BURR. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

More importantly, thank you for holding what I think is an important hearing on the topic of early childhood education. I also want to thank all of our witnesses for their time, for their experiences, for the knowledge that they will share with us on improving early childhood education.

I want to especially welcome Henrietta Zalkind, the executive director of the Down East Partnership for Children. She is here today to share the phenomenal work she has been doing in the areas of Nash and Edgecombe Counties, I might say some of the most challenging areas of our State and of the country.

Quality early childhood education and childcare are critically important to ensure that future generations of students are prepared for the 21st century. In their early years of development, children form cognitive, social, emotional and physical skills that they will need the rest of their lives, both inside and outside of the school classroom.

Quality early childhood education and childcare are essential for ensuring that all children, regardless of their socioeconomic status, race, or disability, enter school ready to learn and, more importantly, ready to succeed. I am especially proud that one of the most important studies on the benefits of early childhood education and care was conducted in my home State of North Carolina. The Carolina Abecedarian? Abecedarian, am I close?

[Laughter.]

The Abecedarian Project was a controlled scientific study of the potential benefits of early childhood education for low-income children born between 1972 and 1977. I think that is about the time you got here, Mr. Chairman, wasn't it?

The CHAIRMAN. Yes, that is about right.

Senator BURR. Children from low-income families received high-quality educational interventions in a childcare setting from birth through age 5. The children's progress was monitored over time with follow-up studies conducted at ages 12, 15, and 21.

Children who participated in the intervention experienced higher cognitive test scores from the toddler years to age 21 and higher academic achievement in reading and math. Additionally, children in the intervention completed more years of education and were more likely to attend a 4-year college. These findings are a testa-

ment to the importance of quality care and education for children ages birth to 5.

While I know today's topic is the reauthorization of elementary education and that we will hear a lot about how title I and other ESEA programs can support quality preschool, I think it is also important that we remember the other major Federal programs for early education and childcare, especially Head Start, Early Head Start, the Childcare Development Block Grant, or CCDBG, and IDEA, I-D-E-A. Rather than trying to improve the early childhood experience solely through the reauthorization of ESEA, I hope that the committee will also take the opportunity to make needed improvements to CCDBG and the Head Start programs.

While we are behind in reauthorizing elementary education, it is important to remember that the Childcare Development Block Grant has not been reauthorized since 1996, and there are other critical changes needed to that block grant to ensure infants and toddlers receive high-quality care in a healthy and safe setting.

To ensure children age birth to 5 have the best start possible, it is essential that all of our Federal programs—ESEA, Head Start, the Childcare Development Block Grant, and IDEA—work together and that all programs are pulling in the same direction and, more importantly, toward the same goal of all children, regardless of background, succeeding in school, succeeding in college, succeeding in the workplace. That should be our goal and our vision.

I thank the chair.

The CHAIRMAN. Thank you very much, Senator Burr.

Again, I thank you all for being here. I will introduce the witnesses, and we will start from left to right.

First, we have Mr. Barry Griswell, someone I have known for a long time. Mr. Griswell has had a long and distinguished career in the financial services industry, most recently retiring as the CEO of the Principal Financial Group in Des Moines.

Beyond his professional accomplishments, his activities in the community are just amazing. He has done much for our State and the communities. He is president of the Community Foundation of Greater Des Moines, which has directed philanthropic funds and private resources to promote collaborative initiatives that improve academic achievement particularly for children and youth identified as low income or at risk of dropping out or falling behind.

Next is Dr. Larry Schweinhart, president of the HighScope Educational Research Foundation in Michigan. HighScope is a non-profit organization that supports research and good practice in early childhood education. He directed a seminal study on the Perry Preschool Program that identified long-term effects of a high-quality preschool education program for young children living in poverty.

After Dr. Schweinhart, we will hear from Robert Pianta, dean of the Curry School of Education and director of the Advanced Study of Teaching and Learning at the University of Virginia in Charlottesville. Dr. Pianta has conducted several large-scale studies on the effect of early childhood on children's development and achievement and is an expert on effective teaching and teacher professional development.

And finally, we will hear from Henrietta Zalkind, just introduced by Senator Burr, the executive director of the Down East Partnership for Children in Rocky Mount, NC. This is a nonprofit organization that works with parents, childcare providers, teachers, schools, and other human service agencies to provide high-quality early learning opportunities to children in North Carolina.

Again, I thank you all for joining us here today. Without objection, all of your statements will be made a part of the record in their entirety. We will go from left to right, I ask that you sum up your testimony in 5 to 6 minutes? Five, I am told.

[Laughter.]

Then we can get into a good discussion of this extremely important topic.

So, Mr. Griswell, again, welcome. It is good to see you here, please proceed.

STATEMENT OF J. BARRY GRISWELL, BOARD MEMBER, FORMER CHAIRMAN AND RETIRED CHIEF EXECUTIVE OFFICER OF PRINCIPAL FINANCIAL GROUP, PRESIDENT OF THE COMMUNITY FOUNDATION OF GREATER DES MOINES, AND A MEMBER OF THE BERRY COLLEGE BOARD OF TRUSTEES, DES MOINES, IA

Mr. GRISWELL. Thank you, Chairman Harkin.

It is nice to see you all, distinguished Senators and staff. I am honored to be able to say a few words about a topic that I am very passionate about. My passion stems from a couple of different perspectives.

First, I grew up in a broken home. An alcoholic father, a mother that worked two jobs to make ends meet, and I saw it from that perspective as a child. But that is not why I am here today, because that is important to me. I am here today, rather, to talk from a business perspective and just talk a little bit about how important early childhood education is to the business community and, therefore, to our country.

I will give you a quick story. I did not get very involved in social issues until about 10 years ago, and I got involved with United Way in our local community. I was so struck by all of the needs, and I wanted to work so hard to make sure that those needs were taken care of. I found out something that you all know, and I was a little late coming to this understanding. And that is the understanding that the real systemic problems in our society around crime, around dropout rates, around mental health, around most of the problems we have actually stem from poor early childhood development.

I was quite amazed when I started looking at the studies that have already been mentioned—the Perry Preschool, the Abecedarian, and many, many others. As a business person, I began to be made aware that these are problems that can be addressed, problems that can be solved. And if we don't do it, the price of unreadiness for school is just enormous.

So, I became convinced at a very real and personal level that I needed to do what I can as a business leader to try to spread the word to other business leaders that the real answer to the future

of our country is to make sure that every single child goes to kindergarten ready and prepared to learn.

I learned, for example, as you all know, that 85 percent of the brain structure is developed in the first 3 years of life. I learned, for example, that a third of our kids today enter kindergarten coming out of poverty, and that third that does that go to kindergarten behind, and they typically stay behind. By the third grade, they are woefully behind and will never catch up.

We know that that same group actually represents the highest rate of dropout in high school. We know that you can actually predict incarceration rates by looking at third and fourth grade reading levels. As a business person, I was amazed at this, and I really wanted to rally the troops to do something about it. I am very pleased to report that I think the business community is stepping up.

The Business Roundtable—unfortunately, Chairman, I am afraid we did let a lot of time lapse from that study that you quoted. But the Business Roundtable did another study in 2003, all the major corporations in the United States, and they, too, found that for every dollar you invest in early childhood, you can get \$4 to \$7 to \$8 in return. That is a terrific, terrific investment, and return on investment.

I think it goes beyond that. If you think about our future as a country, if you think how are we going to compete in a global economy that is enormously competitive, it seems to me we will never do so without maximizing human capital. How can you say that we are maximizing human capital if a third of our youth are not getting through high school and college? How can we possibly compete with the great countries around the world that are producing great students and great workers if we don't go back to the fundamental beginning?

If I were put in charge of a corporation today and somebody said you are putting out a product that has poor quality, I would not marshal all of my resources to try to fix the poor quality at the end. I would go back to the beginning, and I would try to re-engineer what is causing the poor quality. We spend so much of our money on incarceration, on prisons, on jails, on mental health. Even on post-secondary education, which is vitally important for research, but does very, very little if the kids go to kindergarten behind. They will never, ever catch up.

I have just become a very convinced and avid believer that this is an issue that we can take on, that we should take on. In Iowa, the Iowa Business Council has worked with both Governor Vilsack and Governor Culver to provide funding. We need Federal help. It needs to be a collaboration between business, State government, Federal Government, the research institutions.

And if we do come together, if we do collaborate, I believe we can make a big, huge difference. I think if we don't, I think we have some very rocky times ahead of us. Whether you are an individual, a community, a State, or, indeed, the Federal Government, we have a great deal at stake in reauthorizing ESEA.

Thank you, Chairman Harkin. And by the way, 27 minutes early.
[The prepared statement of Mr. Griswell follows:]

PREPARED STATEMENT OF J. BARRY GRISWELL

SUMMARY

INTRODUCTION

As an individual who has had nearly 40 years in business, including 8 years as the CEO of a Fortune 500 company, I have had the experience of evaluating many, many investment opportunities. I have found that when one goes looking for investments with reliable predictability of consistently high returns, none of us can go wrong with an investment in early childhood development.

EARLY LOCAL UNITED WAY EXPERIENCE

In 2002, shortly after becoming CEO at Principal, I had the good fortune to serve as chair of the United Way of Central Iowa, and as part of the experience, I became aware of United Way efforts to build a comprehensive early childhood initiative for central Iowa.

UNITED WAY OF AMERICA

Introduction of Born Learning, and expansion to affiliates throughout the country.

BUSINESS ROUNDTABLE/IOWA BUSINESS COUNCIL

Increasingly over the last decade, various business organizations have thoroughly embraced this issue.

VILSACK ADMINISTRATION AND PROGRESS MADE

During his terms as Iowa Governor, Tom Vilsack pursued an agenda dedicated to the principles of opportunity, responsibility, and security. Governor Vilsack created the Iowa Community College Early Childhood Education Alliance to serve as an advocate to deliver state-wide quality education and to facilitate the sharing of "best education practices" in a united and seamless manner benefiting Iowa's economy, families and children.

PRINCIPAL CHILD DEVELOPMENT CENTER

Having become a strong believer in the need for high quality child care, I worked with my company to build the Principal Child Development Center, a state-of-the-art facility created to offer high-quality care and education for the children of employees of the Principal Financial Group.

CONCLUSION

I remain convinced that investing in early childhood education is one of the very best investments we can make.

INTRODUCTION

As an individual who has had nearly 40 years in business, including 8 years as the CEO of a Fortune 500 company, I have had the experience of evaluating many, many investment opportunities. I have found that when one goes looking for investments with reliable predictability of consistently high returns, none of us can go wrong with an investment in early childhood development. I came upon this reality quite serendipitously.

EARLY LOCAL UNITED WAY EXPERIENCE

In 2002, shortly after becoming CEO at Principal, I had the good fortune to serve as chair of the United Way of Central Iowa, and as part of the experience, I became aware of United Way efforts to build a comprehensive early childhood initiative for central Iowa. In conjunction with this effort a group of women associated with United Way of Central Iowa developed a comprehensive business plan for early childhood development to increase the quality of care being provided by care centers in central Iowa, and led a fundraising effort to raise the level of quality of care being provided in 15 specific centers around Des Moines. The effort focused on those with a minimum of centers and home providers whose children in their care are 85 percent subsidized by the State of Iowa. The goal of working with the centers and home providers was to provide incentives and resources to move them up the con-

tinuum of a quality rating system that aims to raise quality of care in the areas of:

- professional development
- health and safety
- environment
- family and community partnership
- leadership and administration

It was through this that I began to learn about the powerful research around brain development in the first 5 years, and how early reading rates translate into predictors for future school performance, graduation rates, and even incarceration rates. I learned things like:

- By age 3, roughly 85 percent of the brain's core structure is developed.
- The first 5 (and particularly the first 2) years of life are critical to a child's life-long development. During the first years of life, the brain develops most rapidly, establishing neural connections that form the brain's hardwiring. These years are not only important to language and cognitive development, they are also critical to social and emotional development—the ability to form attachments and to deal with challenges and stress. (“Seven Things Policy Makers Need To Know About School Readiness” Charles Bruner, Ph.D., January 2005)
- Increasing the graduation rate 1 percent can cause a societal savings of \$1.8 billion each year, solely from reduction of crime.
- From Art Rolnick, Ph.D. and Rob Grunewald of the Minneapolis Federal Reserve Bank: Persuasive economic research indicates that there is a very promising approach to economic development that has been long overlooked. It rests not on a strategy of State and local governments offering public subsidies to attract private companies from other communities. It rests, rather, on government support of something much closer to home—quite literally: our youngest children. This research shows that by investing in early childhood development (referring to investments from prenatal to age 5), State and local governments can reap extraordinarily high economic returns: benefits that are low-risk and long-lived.

UNITED WAY OF AMERICA

When I served on the board of United Way of America, I began to see these issues from an even larger perspective. For example, I was made aware of the Abecedarian Project, a carefully controlled scientific study of the potential benefits of early childhood education for poor children. Children from low-income families received full-time, high-quality educational intervention in a childcare setting from infancy through age 5, and progress was monitored over time with follow-up studies conducted at ages 12, 15 and 21. The young adult findings demonstrate that important, long-lasting benefits were associated with the early childhood program.

Several years ago, the United Way of American launched the Born Learning program to raise national awareness of the importance of early brain development in the first 5 years of life. Today, virtually every local United Way has a focus on early childhood learning.

BUSINESS ROUNDTABLE/IOWA BUSINESS COUNCIL

Increasingly over the last decade, various business organizations have thoroughly embraced this issue. For example, in 2003, The Business Roundtable and Corporate Voices for Working Families joined forces to issue *Early Childhood Education: A Call to Action from the Business Community*, which cited findings on a solid return on investment of from \$4 to \$7 for every \$1 spent on quality early childhood education.

At the same time, the Iowa Business Council has had early childhood education as one of its top priorities for at least the past 6 years. The Council worked with Governors Vilsack and Culver to get signed into law House file 877—a bill to expand access to quality preschool to nearly every 4-year-old in the State of Iowa. According to the groundbreaking Economic Policy Institute report, for every dollar spent in Iowa on universal, quality preschool, by 2050 the State would receive \$8.40 back due to decreased spending on other State programs, higher pay for individuals and savings from reduced crime.

VILSACK ADMINISTRATION AND PROGRESS MADE

During his terms as Iowa Governor, Tom Vilsack pursued an agenda dedicated to the principles of opportunity, responsibility, and security. He is recognized as an innovator on children's issues and education, economic and healthcare policy, and efforts to make government more efficient and accessible. Iowa is known for its

strong K–12 education system in part due to Vilsack’s initiatives. He developed aggressive early childhood programs, reduced class sizes, created a first-in-the-nation salary initiative to improve teacher quality and student achievement, and enacted a more rigorous high school curriculum. His leadership also led to Iowa becoming a national leader in health insurance coverage, with more than 90 percent of children covered.

Governor Vilsack created the Iowa Community College Early Childhood Education Alliance to serve as an advocate to deliver state-wide quality education and to facilitate the sharing of “best education practices” in a united and seamless manner benefiting Iowa’s economy, families and children.

PRINCIPAL CHILD DEVELOPMENT CENTER

Having become a strong believer in the need for high quality child care, I worked with my company to build the Principal Child Development Center, a state-of-the-art facility created to offer high-quality care and education for the children of employees of the Principal Financial Group.

The center serves children from age 6 weeks through pre-kindergarten. Children of all ages benefit from the high-quality, age-appropriate curriculum, including one that is preschool specific and designed to prepare children for success in school. The curriculum encourages learning through child-initiated activities. It incorporates an emphasis on global, environmental and health and wellness themes, while respecting and valuing diversity. In addition, all children have the opportunity to participate in a variety of enrichment programs that introduce them to the fine arts and physical education while supporting and engaging various community businesses and individuals. As a bonus, environmentally friendly practices are incorporated into the operation of the LEED-certified center.

CONCLUSION

I remain convinced that investing in early childhood education is one of the very best investments we can make, whether it be as individuals, communities, States, or indeed the Federal Government. It would certainly be easier to make such investments when financial times are thought to be good. The harsh reality is that in difficult times, there is greater need and an even greater sense of urgency to make the investment to insure that every child has the opportunity to enter kindergarten ready to learn and develop.

The CHAIRMAN. That is pretty good. Thank you very much, Mr. Griswell.

And personally, thank you for all you have done for our State.

Now we go to Mr. Schweinhart. Mr. Schweinhart, welcome. Please proceed.

STATEMENT OF LAWRENCE J. SCHWEINHART, Ph.D., PRESIDENT, HIGH/SCOPE EDUCATIONAL RESEARCH FOUNDATION, YPSILANTI, MI

Mr. SCHWEINHART. Thank you.

I would like to thank Chairman Harkin and the other members of the committee for inviting me to speak today in support of early childhood education in the Elementary and Secondary Education Act.

I am Larry Schweinhart, president of the High/Scope Educational Research Foundation, based in Ypsilanti, MI. This year, HighScope celebrates 40 years of research, curriculum development, and dissemination in early childhood education. Our mission is to lift lives through education, a mission that resonates well in the homeroom of this committee.

Let us be clear that early childhood education programs include early elementary programs in schools, as well as Head Start, Early Head Start, and childcare programs in community agencies. For the past several decades, the HighScope Perry Preschool Study,

which I direct, has provided a rationale for strengthening all of these programs.

This and several similar studies have found that high-quality early childhood education programs help children at risk of failure reach higher levels of school and adult job success and commit substantially fewer crimes. The economic return to taxpayers on this investment is enormous. A simple response to these findings is to add pre-kindergarten classes. A more complete response is to see in them a rationale for maintaining high quality in all early childhood education programs in schools, as well as community agencies.

A decade ago, this Nation made its first national education goal that all children will enter school ready to learn, and this goal is just as important today. The National Education Goals Panel recognized not only that we need children to be ready for school, but also that we need schools to be ready for all children.

The panel established a study group, which included Robert Pianta, who is speaking here today, to clarify the definition of Ready Schools. Subsequently, with funding from the W.K. Kellogg Foundation, HighScope developed and validated a Ready School Assessment tool to help school stakeholders measure the level of readiness in their school and discuss ways to improve their school's readiness over time.

Ready Schools smooth the transition between home and school. They strive for continuity between early care and education programs and elementary schools. They help children make sense of the complex and exciting world. They focus on approaches that have been shown to raise achievement. They are learning organizations that alter practices and programs that do not benefit children. They serve children in communities, take responsibility for results, and have strong leadership.

This afternoon, I would like to focus on two research-validated principles of Ready Schools that the new ESEA can support—interactive child development curriculum and regular educational checkups. We need to have elementary schools train in and use an interactive child development curriculum. In such a curriculum, children not only follow teacher directions, but also initiate and take responsibility for their own learning activities.

The goals of a child development curriculum extend to cognitive, socio-emotional, and physical development—not just literacy and mathematics, as important as they are. Children develop cognitively when they learn how to think and solve problems. They develop socio-emotionally by developing commitment to education, a strong moral sense, and the ability to get along with other children and adults. Children develop physically when they learn how to keep themselves healthy and fit.

We also need to require and support early childhood education programs to conduct regular checkups on their curriculum quality and its effect on children's developmental progress not just by tests, but also by classroom observations that give teachers the information they need to do their job well.

With ESEA reauthorization, we have a rare opportunity to kick off a national Ready School movement, not just the latest educational fad, but as a well-defined program of educational reform.

We have a rare opportunity to support highly effective early childhood programs in schools and community agencies as a genuine investment with enormous returns to taxpayers.

[The prepared statement of Dr. Schweinhart follows:]

PREPARED STATEMENT OF LAWRENCE J. SCHWEINHART, PH.D.

SUMMARY

I thank Chairman Harkin and the committee for inviting me to speak today on early childhood education in ESEA reauthorization. I am Larry Schweinhart, president of HighScope Foundation, which is celebrating 40 years of research, curriculum development, and dissemination in early childhood education.

Early childhood education programs include early elementary programs in schools as well as Head Start, Early Head Start, and child care programs in community agencies. For the past several decades, the HighScope Perry Preschool Study, which I direct, has provided a rationale for strengthening these programs. This and several similar studies have found that high-quality early childhood education programs help children at risk of failure reach higher levels of school and adult job success and commit substantially fewer crimes. The economic returns to taxpayers on this investment are enormous. A simple response to these findings has been to add pre-kindergarten classes. A more complete response is to maintain high quality in all early childhood education programs.

A decade ago, this Nation made its first national education goal that all children will enter school ready to learn, and this goal is just as important today. The National Education Goals Panel recognized not only that we need children to be ready for school, but also that we need schools that are ready for all children. The Panel established a study group to clarify the definition of ready schools. Subsequently, with funding from the W.K. Kellogg Foundation, HighScope developed and validated a ready school assessment tool, based on the study group's definition, to help school stakeholders measure the level of readiness in their school and stimulate discussion about ways to improve their school's readiness over time.

The new ESEA can support two research-validated principles of ready schools—interactive child development curriculum and regular educational checkups. We need to have elementary schools train in and use an interactive child development curriculum. In such a curriculum, children not only follow teacher directions, but also initiate and take responsibility for their own learning activities. The goals of a child development curriculum extend to cognitive, socio-emotional, and physical development. In addition, we need to require and support early childhood education programs to conduct regular checkups on their curriculum quality and on children's developmental progress, not just by tests but also by classroom observations that give teachers the information they need to do their jobs well.

With ESEA reauthorization, we have a rare opportunity to kick off a national ready school movement, not just as the latest educational fad but as a well-defined program of educational reform. We have a rare opportunity to better recognize and treat highly effective early childhood programs in schools and community agencies as a genuine investment with enormous returns to taxpayers.

I thank Chairman Harkin, Ranking Member Enzi, and the other members of the committee for inviting me to speak today in support of early childhood education in the reauthorization of the Elementary and Secondary Education Act. My name is Larry Schweinhart and I am president of the HighScope Educational Research Foundation. HighScope is celebrating 40 years of research, curriculum development, and dissemination in early childhood education. Our mission is to lift lives through education, a mission that resonates well in the homeroom of this committee.

Let's be clear that early childhood education programs include early elementary programs in schools as well as Head Start, Early Head Start, and child care programs in community agencies. For the past several decades, the HighScope Perry Preschool Study, which I direct, has provided a rationale for strengthening these programs. This and several similar studies have found that high-quality early childhood education programs help children at risk of failure reach higher levels of school and adult job success and commit substantially fewer crimes. The economic returns to taxpayers on this investment are enormous. A simple response to these findings has been to add pre-kindergarten classes. A more complete response is to recognize in them a rationale for maintaining high quality in all early childhood education programs in schools and community agencies.

A decade ago, this Nation made its first national education goal that all children will enter school ready to learn, and this goal is just as important today. The National Education Goals Panel recognized not only that we need children to be ready for school, but also that we need schools that are ready for all children. The Panel established a study group, which included Robert Pianta who is speaking here today, to clarify the definition of ready schools. Subsequently, with funding from the W.K. Kellogg Foundation, HighScope developed and validated a ready school assessment tool, based on the study group's definition, to help school stakeholders measure the level of readiness in their school and stimulate discussion about ways to improve their school's readiness over time.

This afternoon I'd like to focus on two research-validated principles of ready schools that the new ESEA can support—interactive child development curriculum and regular educational checkups.

We need to have elementary schools train in and use an interactive child development curriculum. In such a curriculum, children not only follow teacher directions, but also initiate and take responsibility for their own learning activities. The goals of a child development curriculum extend to cognitive, socio-emotional, and physical development, not just literacy and mathematics as important as they are.

In addition, we need to require and support early childhood education programs to conduct regular checkups on their curriculum quality and its effect on children's developmental progress, not just by tests but also by classroom observations that give teachers the information they need to do their jobs well.

With ESEA reauthorization, we have a rare opportunity to kick off a national ready school movement, not just as the latest educational fad but as a well-defined program of educational reform. We have a rare opportunity to better recognize and treat highly effective early childhood programs in schools and community agencies as a genuine investment with enormous returns to taxpayers.

HIGHSCOPE

HighScope Educational Research Foundation, based in Ypsilanti, MI, is one of the world's leading early childhood research, development, training, and publishing organizations. We envision a world in which all educational settings use interactive education to support students' development so everyone has a chance to succeed in life and contribute to society. David Weikart, who died in 2003, established HighScope in 1970 to continue activities he initiated as an administrator in the Ypsilanti Public Schools. The name "HighScope" refers to the organization's high purposes and far-reaching mission.

HighScope is perhaps best known for its research on the lasting effects of early childhood education and its early childhood curriculum. The research has influenced public policy on early childhood education throughout the United States and around the world. The HighScope curriculum is used just as widely in programs throughout North America and in South America, Europe, Asia, and Africa.

HighScope receives funding from local, State, and Federal Government agencies, foundations, and individuals. From 1971 to 1993, HighScope was a model sponsor in the federally funded National Follow Through project of curriculum reform in cooperation with local schools. HighScope has long been a partner with the federally funded Head Start program, including being home to one of eight Head Start Quality Research Centers from 1995 to 2004.

EARLY CHILDHOOD EDUCATION INCLUDES EARLY ELEMENTARY GRADES

Early childhood is generally defined as the time of life when children are relatively young, from birth to age 8. It is a time of life, not a particular institution or setting. In the United States, almost all young children live at home with their families. By age 5, three-fifths of them have also spent time in one or more of a variety of other settings—family, friend, and neighbor care; child care homes and centers; public and private schools; and Head Start programs. From ages 5 to 8, virtually all of them spend time in public and private schools.

Young children experience some kind of early childhood education whether they stay at home all day or experience child care and education in other settings. Some of these settings provide children with early childhood education on purpose. But intentionally or unintentionally, all of them are providing young children with early childhood education because all of them are providing young children with experiences that affect them for the rest of their lives. These settings vary greatly in expectations for young children, parents, and teachers or caregivers; as well as in available resources, rules, governance, and organization. Some receive government funding, and others do not. Some are regulated by the government, and others are not.

When children reach 5 years of age, society's expectations for early childhood education become more uniform. Nearly all States require public schools to provide kindergarten and first through third-grade classes for 5- to 8-year-olds. But the difference in how we treat children before and after their fifth birthday is rooted more in adult expectations and traditions than it is in children's development.

The HighScope Perry Preschool Study reveals the promise of early childhood education. This study, which I direct, randomly assigned young children living in poverty to an early childhood education program or to no program and has followed them to age 40. By comparing the two groups, we have found evidence that the early childhood education program contributed a great deal to children's development. The program group had higher achievement test scores and greater commitment to school. The group had higher high school graduation and adult employment rates and committed only half as many crimes. The return on public investment was enormous, better than the stock market in the good years. But while this program focused on 3- and 4-year-olds, its findings apply generally to the potential of early childhood education for a wider age range of children up to 8 years of age. The Perry study is not only a reason to invest in Head Start and State pre-Kindergarten programs. It is also a reason to engage in early elementary school reform.

READY SCHOOLS

The idea of the ready school probably goes back to the annual task of preparing schools for the start of a new year. The increasingly important concept of the ready school is more recent. It grew out of President George H.W. Bush's 1989 Education Summit in Charlottesville, VA, with the National Governors Association. This meeting produced the National Education Goals and the appointment of a National Education Goals Panel consisting of State and Federal policymakers.

To the National Education Goals Panel, ensuring that children start school ready to learn was vitally important, but ensuring that schools were ready for children was equally important. We're talking about the opposite, in fact, the complement, of children getting ready for schools. We're talking about schools getting ready for children. For this reason, the Panel established the Ready Schools Resource Group, a group of early childhood education experts and leaders. The Resource Group's 1998 report sought to answer the questions: How can we prepare *schools* to receive our children? How can we make sure that schools are ready for the children and families who are counting on them?

The report identified 10 key features of ready schools, as follows. They:

1. Smooth the transition between home and school.
2. Strive for continuity between early care and education programs and elementary schools.
3. Help children learn and make sense of the complex and exciting world.
4. Are committed to the success of every child.
5. Are committed to the success of every teacher and every adult who interacts with children during the school day.
6. Introduce or expand various approaches that have been shown to raise achievement.
7. Are learning organizations that alter practices and programs if they do not benefit children.
8. Serve children in communities.
9. Take responsibility for results.
10. Have strong leadership.

These key features are further defined in the text of the report and capture well the concept of ready schools. But reports such as this one have a short shelf life. Concerned with this fact, and with funding from the W.K. Kellogg Foundation, HighScope developed and validated a Ready School Assessment tool to make the features listed above real for elementary school teachers, administrators, and other stakeholders. We have worked with elementary school staff around the country, especially in North Carolina and Mississippi, to help make their schools more ready for all the children they serve.

Participants must provide documentation to back up what they say about their school. They can't simply check off items from a list. This documentation makes the assessment evidence-based. It is a self-assessment, which is much more effective in motivating action than is having outsiders come in to rate schools. It brings school stakeholders together to build partnerships—such as a school administrator, a kindergarten teacher, a preschool teacher, a parent, and a community representative. In one State, these stakeholders met every quarter, for the first time in most communities. Then researchers work with staff to review results and focus on school districts' strengths and weaknesses in developing an improvement plan to address

and correct the area of need. The ready school focus fits right into school improvement plans.

I'd like to focus on two aspects of early childhood education—curriculum and assessment—that show up in many of these features of ready schools. Curriculum and assessment are also essential to highly effective early childhood education programs that lead to long-term effects and return on investment.

INTERACTIVE CHILD DEVELOPMENT CURRICULUM

We need to have elementary schools train in and use an interactive child development curriculum. Let's unpack all these ideas. In an interactive curriculum, children not only follow teacher directions, but also initiate and take responsibility for their own learning activities. In a non-interactive, directive curriculum children learn letters by copying A's, N's and so on using a practice sheet. In an interactive curriculum they learn letters by writing a note to a friend or a story about their dog. Which approach do you think gets children motivated to learn their letters?"

The goals of a child development curriculum extend to cognitive, socio-emotional, and physical development, not just literacy and mathematics as important as they are. The heart of cognitive development is that children learn how to think and solve problems for themselves. The heart of socio-emotional development is that children develop motivation to learn, commitment to school, a strong moral sense, and the ability to get along with other children and adults. The heart of physical development is that children learn how to keep themselves healthy and fit. We have been working with economist James Heckman and his colleagues to analyze just what factors affected by the Perry Preschool Program led to its long-term success. We found that the socio-emotional factors I mentioned above were even more important than cognitive skills.¹ Yet we direct all our attention to children's literacy, mathematics, and other academic skills rather than these socio-emotional factors.

Some of the evidence for using an interactive child development curriculum in early childhood education programs comes from a longitudinal study we conducted called the Preschool Curriculum Comparison Study. This study involved randomly assigning young children to three different curriculum models. In HighScope, young children learned actively in a plan-do-review process and group times. In Nursery School, young children learned primarily through play. In Direct Instruction, teachers followed a script in which children's lines were the right answers to rapid-fire questions. HighScope and Nursery School were interactive child development curricula, while Direct Instruction was not. We found that all three curricula improved children's cognitive ability quite a bit, an average of 27 points. This effect diminished over time, but was still 17 points higher at age 10. But group differences appeared in social development as time went on. In their school years, only 6 percent of the HighScope and Nursery School groups required treatment for emotional disturbance, as compared to 47 percent of the Direct Instruction group. Only 10 percent of the HighScope group and 17 percent of the Nursery School group committed felonies by age 23, as compared to 39 percent of the Direct Instruction group. Only 36 percent of the HighScope group said that people gave them a hard time, while over 60 percent of the other two groups. The interactive child development curricula contributed more to participants' social development than did the Direct Instruction curriculum.

This study illustrates that the long-term effectiveness of the curriculum models used in early childhood education should be validated by longitudinal research. While this is the case for the HighScope curriculum, we have not made the national investment needed to identify other early childhood curriculum models that can achieve similar success. We need a national program of early childhood curriculum development and longitudinal research. This program could serve as the linchpin of our investment in the future of our children.

Adequate in-service training is essential to the adoption of a validated interactive child development curriculum. The U.S. Department of Education recently invested in a program of Preschool Curriculum Evaluation Research, but no curriculum model required more than 6 days of initial training and follow-up coaching, and very few effects were found. HighScope offers and expects teachers to successfully complete 20 days of curriculum training and follow-up coaching. The Department of Education project may have seriously underestimated how much curriculum training is actually needed for it to effectively change teaching practices.

¹ Heckman, James J., Malofeeva, Lena, Pinto, Rodrigo and Savelyev, Peter A. (2010). "Understanding the Mechanisms Through which an Influential Early Childhood Program Boosted Adult Outcomes." Unpublished manuscript, University of Chicago, Department of Economics.

EARLY CHILDHOOD EDUCATIONAL CHECKUPS

We need to require and support early childhood education programs to conduct regular checkups on their curriculum quality and its effect on children's developmental progress. This dual focus on curriculum quality and children's progress is essential to highly effective early childhood education, but Head Start and child care programs emphasize meeting program regulations and program performance standards, while schools emphasize children's performance on tests of their progress. We need both in all early childhood education programs. Schools and Head Start and child care programs should conduct regular checkups on their curriculum quality and children's developmental progress.

To accomplish this dual-focus assessment program, we do not have to give young children more tests. We need to use observational assessment. To assess teaching practices, we should be using validated classroom observation systems, such as HighScope Program Quality Assessment and Pianta's Classroom Assessment Scoring System.

Similarly, to assess children's developmental progress, we should be using observational assessments, not more tests. Traditional testing constrains young children's behavior in ways they are not used to. Further, it requires young children to answer questions that have one right answer, each child alone without assistance. This procedure works for knowledge and some skills in literacy and mathematics. But it excludes much of children's development—social skills in working with others, creativity, collaborative problem-solving, taking initiative and responsibility, and so on. While it may be appropriate to administer tests to samples of children, our primary assessment procedure with young children should be to use validated observational assessments such as HighScope's Child Observation Record and the Work Sampling System developed by Sam Meisels.

With ESEA reauthorization, we have a rare opportunity to kick off a national ready school movement, not just as the latest educational fad but as a well-defined program of educational reform. We can call on all elementary school administrators, teachers, parents, and other adult stakeholders to make their schools into ready schools. We can provide them with the materials, training, and coaching to do so. In doing so, we can reap the rewards of children's greater educational success and subsequently greater success and responsibility in their lives. We can make ESEA a national investment in our young people that really pays off for everyone.

ATTACHMENT

HOW ESEA CAN GET LASTING RETURNS ON EARLY CHILDHOOD EDUCATION
INVESTMENT

Larry Schweinhart, Ph.D., President

HighScope Educational Research Foundation

HIGHSCOPE: MISSION AND VISION

Mission—To lift lives through education.

Vision—Widespread interactive education so everyone can succeed in life and contribute to society.

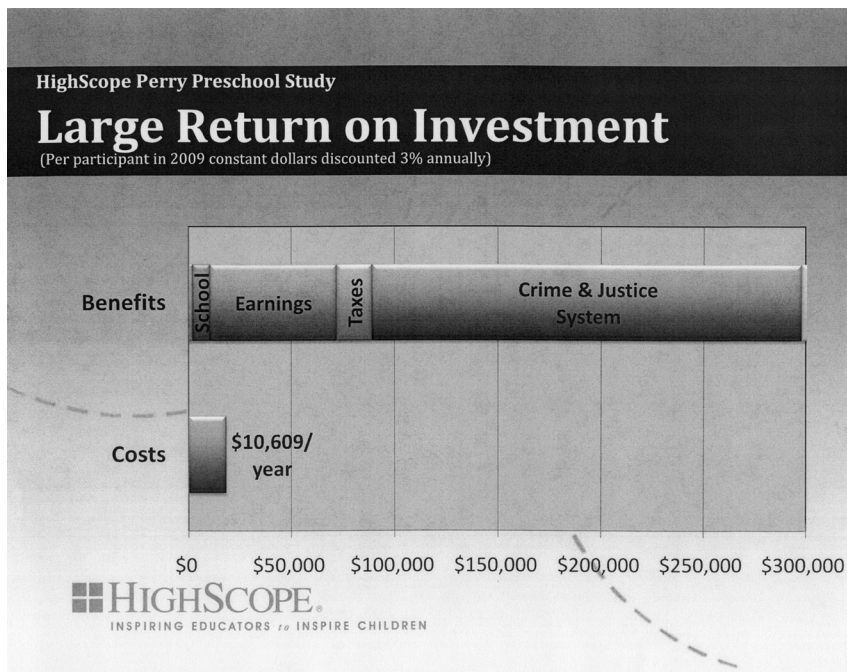
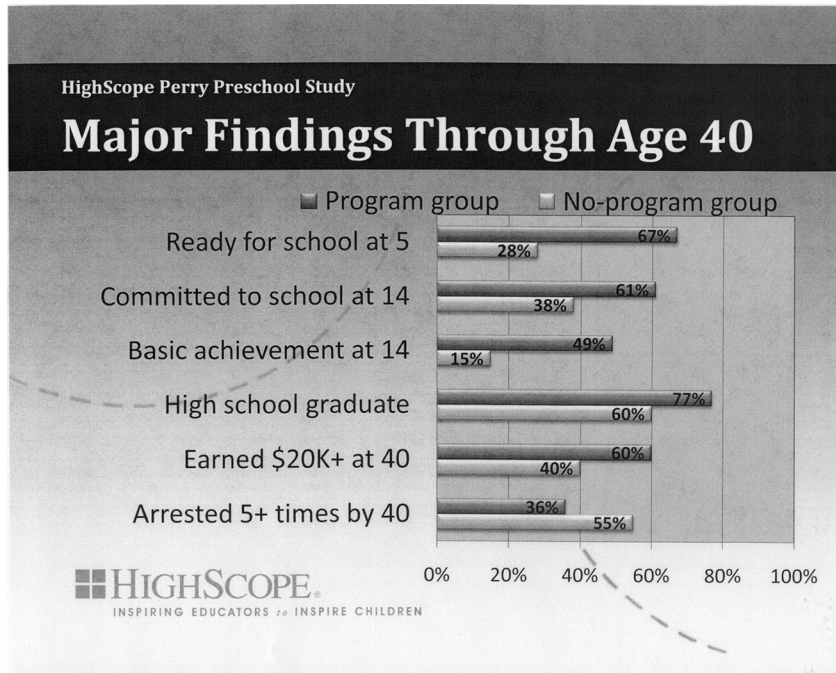
HIGHSCOPE: ACTIVITIES AND AUDIENCE

Activities

- Evaluative research
- Product and services development
- Publishing and training

Audience

- Teachers, caregivers, administrators and all concerned with programs serving young children.



EARLY CHILDHOOD EDUCATION EFFECTS FOUND IN THREE STUDIES

- Childhood intellectual performance
- Teen school achievement
- Fewer teen births
- Placements in regular classes
- High school graduation
- Adult earnings
- Fewer crimes
- Up to \$16 return on the dollar

(HighScope Perry Preschool Study, Abecedarian Child Care Study, Chicago Child-Parent Centers Study)

BUT OTHER STUDIES FIND ONLY MODEST EFFECTS

- Recent studies *find only modest short-term effects* on children's literacy and social skills, raising a question about whether they have long-term effects and return on investment.

(National Head Start Impact Study, Head Start FACES Study, Early Head Start Study, Even Start Evaluations, Five-State Prekindergarten Study)

IMPLICATION—TO GET WHAT WE GOT . . . DO WHAT WE DID THAT WORKED

Early childhood education takes place in schools and community agencies.

- Early childhood education includes early elementary, Head Start, Early Head Start, and child care programs for children up to age 8.
- All of them can be highly effective and contribute to long-term effects and strong return on investment.
- While the Perry program focused on 3- and 4-year-olds, its findings apply to all young children.

TWO MAJOR INGREDIENTS OF HIGHLY EFFECTIVE ECE PROGRAMS

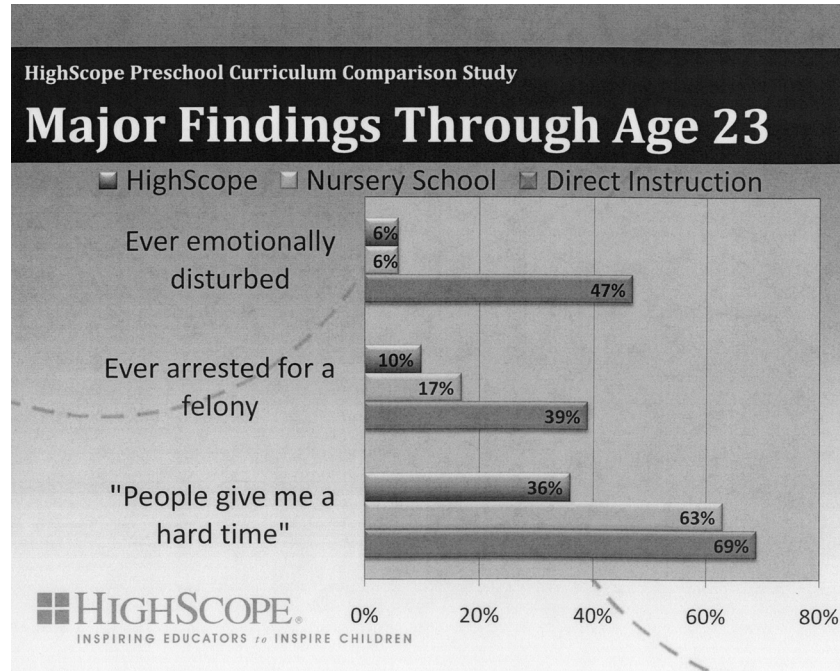
1. Learn and use a *validated, interactive child development curriculum*.
2. Continuously *check up* on program quality and child development.

1. *Learn and Use a Validated, Interactive Child Development Curriculum*

- **Learn:** Requires interactive training, study, and practice.
- **Validated:** Evidence of effectiveness with children to be served.
- **Interactive:** Children and teachers design learning activities.
- **Child Development:** All aspects of development.

HighScope Preschool Curriculum Comparison Study—Three Curriculum Models

- **HighScope**—Children learn actively through plan-do-review and group times.
- **Nursery School**—Children learn primarily through play.
- **Direct Instruction**—Teacher-directed script with children's lines focused on academics.



2. Continuously Check Up on Program Quality and Child Development

- Check on implementation of an effective program model.
- Check on all aspects of children's development.
- Attune teaching using these checkups.
- Keep program accountability local.

Implications for ESEA

- Support demonstrated quality/effectiveness in all early childhood education programs in schools and community agencies.
- Support schools working to meet the guidelines of the National Education Goals Panel for ready schools to make more schools ready for all children.

The CHAIRMAN. Now Mr. Pianta.

STATEMENT OF ROBERT C. PIANTA, PROFESSOR OF EDUCATION, UNIVERSITY OF VIRGINIA, CHARLOTTESVILLE, VA

Mr. PIANTA. Chairman Harkin, Ranking Member Burr, and members of the committee, thank you for this opportunity to speak with you today, and let me commend you on your interest in early childhood education in the context of reauthorization of the Elementary and Secondary Education Act.

It is sensible for you to seek ways of connecting early childhood education, which, for the purposes of my remarks, refers primarily to programs for 3- and 4-year-olds, but as has been noted, should also include birth to 3. Learning is, indeed, cumulative, and the skills and knowledge children acquire early are foundational underpinnings for later success. And with almost 80 percent of children age 3 and 4 in some form of early education setting, the time for policy work connecting early childhood programs in K-12 education is now.

It is abundantly clear that even the loosely organized collection of early education opportunities to which young children are exposed between the ages of birth and 8, including childcare, State-funded pre-K programs, Head Start programs, and K–3, are a point of leverage for addressing low levels of and gaps in achievement. We see in scaled-up programs, not even the best programs, the gap can close by almost a half in 1 year of exposure. The challenge is that those programs are very uneven in quality from time to time and very inconsistent over time.

So despite significant investments and benefits, the promise of early education as a scaled-up asset for fostering learning is not yet being fully realized for too many children and depends on a more complete integration of early education and care experiences for young children with the K–3 system. And it requires considerable reform of teacher quality and professional development.

For example, although preschool experiences can help close achievement gaps and have longer-term benefits, most evidence also suggests too many holes and misalignments in the system. In the same community, we see different approaches to teaching literacy to young children, depending on whether they are enrolled in Head Start, pre-K, kindergarten, or first grade. We see different tests, different teacher qualifications, different professional developments. Some kids are in full-day programs. Other kids are in part-day programs.

And this doesn't even touch the other challenges, such as summer program learning gaps that lead to loss of skills, or the lack of effective teaching in too many classrooms. I would argue that ESEA reauthorization should set in motion policies that design a new entry portal into public education, one that ensures effective, aligned educational experiences for children from 3 to 8.

And perhaps the biggest gap or hole in early education in the United States is the spotty nature of effective teaching. As you do this policy work, it is critical to understand the importance of the adults, the teachers, and the unique features of teaching young children. What matters for children in these younger grades and ages are the ways in which adults foster learning and development through careful, sensitive, stimulating interactions.

Proven effective teaching requires skillful combinations of explicit instruction, sensitive and emotionally warm interactions, responsive feedback, and verbal engagement and stimulation all intentionally directed to ensure children's learning and embedded in a classroom that is not overly regimented or structured and, hopefully, using a clear and educationally focused curriculum. I would like to say that these adults are strategic opportunists.

Of even more importance for policy work—this is critical—is that these features of teaching can be quantified. They can be observed in a standardized manner across thousands of classrooms and improved through effective professional development that, in turn, closes skill gaps. You have the opportunity to move the system.

The odds are, however, stacked against children getting the kind of early education experiences that close gaps. My team and others have observed several thousand teachers across the country, and these observations indicate that young children across the country are not exposed to the features of teacher-child interactions in their

preschool, in their pre-K, in their kindergarten, in their first grade, or in their third grade classrooms that produce learning regularly or close gaps.

Instructional interactions, those features that appear to matter most for children's achievement are particularly poor in quality. And in nearly every study that includes a large number of classrooms, the variability of features of teacher interactions that foster learning—variations from teacher to teacher, from classroom to classroom, from grade to grade—is exceptional.

This means that if you are a 3-year-old, a 5-year-old, or an 8-year-old in the United States, being exposed to the kind of teaching that has been shown to foster learning is, itself, a fairly rare event, occurring around roughly half the time. It rarely occurs in consecutive years and essentially seems like an accident. In short, educational opportunity for young children in the United States is not a guarantee, but a matter of luck.

The professional development of teachers, both practicing teachers and those in teacher preparation, to be effective in interacting with children to produce learning could not be a more important priority for policy. Such professional development has to be aligned and integrated across the age span.

That we now have proven effective approaches for improving teaching that also improve student learning—coursework, coaching, curricula—for these ages and grades is an opportunity for major reform of teacher preparation, certification, and professional development. Too many dollars, however, and too much teacher time is spent on garden-variety professional development that, in and of themselves, do not contribute to effective practice or learning.

Let me be clear again. Effective teaching can be measured, can be improved systematically, and will have benefits for children learning, but only if we are serious about measuring and holding teachers, school districts, programs, and higher education to higher standards based on our knowledge of child development and investing in the kind of professional development and training that really works. I will say it again. Garden-variety degrees will produce a lot of irrelevant coursework and time spent.

The conclusions for many sensible analyses of the extant data are fairly straightforward. First, early education opportunities in this country are a nonsystem. Publicly supported early education programs encompass such a wide range of funding streams, program models, staff qualifications, curriculum assessments, and teacher capacities that it cannot be understood as an organized aspect of the public support for children in this country.

But despite stunning variability and fragmentation, there is compelling evidence that these experiences do, indeed, boost development and learning that can close achievement gaps and have longer-term benefits to children and learning. That interactions and effective teaching can be assessed offers you an opportunity.

Finally, and perhaps most promisingly, teacher skills in children learning can be improved with specific and focused professional development and training. We need policies that incent and reward participation in effective, proven effective methods.

A policy that works, that demonstrably affects support for adults working with young children could pave the way for tremendous

positive change in outcomes for those teachers and for the young children and our society.

Thank you very much.

[The prepared statement of Mr. Pianta follows:]

PREPARED STATEMENT OF ROBERT C. PIANTA

SUMMARY

The loosely organized collection of educational opportunities to which young children are exposed between the ages of 3 and 8, including child care, State-funded pre-K programs, HeadStart programs, K-3, is a point of leverage for addressing low levels of, and gaps in achievement. The time for policy work connecting early childhood education with K-12 is now. Effective and efficient early education interventions targeted toward learning in the 3-3d period are essential, not only for children, but for the economic and social health of communities. But despite significant investments and benefits, the promise of early education as a scaled-up asset for fostering learning is not yet being fully realized for too many children and depends on a more complete integration of early education and care experiences for 3- and 4-year-olds with the K-3 system. ESEA reauthorization can set in motion policies that design a new entry portal into public education, one that ensures effective, aligned educational experiences for children from 3 to 8. Failing to take advantage of this opportunity only costs more downstream.

What matters for young children are the ways teacher foster learning and development through careful, sensitive, stimulating interactions. The odds are stacked against children getting the kind of early education experiences that close gaps. Observational studies including several thousand teachers, indicate that young children are not exposed to features of teacher-child interaction in their pre-school, Pre-K, K, 1st and 3d grade classrooms that produce learning or close gaps. Instructional interactions, features that appear to matter most for children's achievement, are particularly poor in quality. And in nearly every study that includes a large number of classrooms, the variability in the features of teacher-child interaction that foster learning—variation from teacher to teacher, classroom to classroom, grade to grade, is exceptional. The professional development of teachers, practicing teachers and in teacher preparation, to be effective in interacting with children to produce learning, could not be a more important priority for policy. And such professional development has to be aligned and integrated for teachers serving children across the age 3-3d grade span.

The conclusions from any sensible analysis of the extant data are fairly straightforward. First, early educational opportunities in this country are a non-system. Publicly supported early education programs (child care, Head Start, State-funded pre-kindergarten, K-3) encompass such a wide range of funding streams, program models, staff qualifications, curriculum, assessments, and teacher capacities that it cannot be understood as an organized aspect of the public system of support for children. Second, despite stunning variability and fragmentation, there is compelling evidence that early educational experiences can boost development and learning, can close achievement gaps in elementary school, and can have longer-term benefits to children and communities. Third, interactions between teachers and children can be observed and assessed using standardized and scalable approaches. Finally and perhaps most promisingly, teachers' skills and children's learning can be improved with specific and focused professional development training and support. The challenge for policy connecting ESEA and early childhood education is to incent construction and delivery of scalable and effective opportunities for teacher professional development and preparation, using new approaches to credentialing and certification and observational assessments of teachers' classroom performance. Recent statements by professional organizations reflect an openness to innovation that, paired with demonstrably effective supports for teachers, could pave the way for tremendous positive change in outcomes for teachers serving children from 3-8 and for those children and society.

Let me start by commending the committee on its interest in early childhood education as part of the approach to ESEA authorization. The loosely organized system of educational and developmental opportunities to which young children are exposed in child care, State-funded pre-K programs, Head Start programs, K-3 classrooms, and a host of other settings (including children's homes), increasingly is viewed as a point of leverage for addressing low levels of, and gaps in, K-12 achievement. This

is sensible policy: learning is cumulative and the skills and knowledge that children acquire early are foundational underpinnings of what they learn later—fall behind early and stay behind is the rule. The time for serious policy and program work connecting early childhood education with K–12 is now.

We now know that the long-term effects of early gaps in achievement and social functioning are so pronounced that effective and efficient early education interventions targeted toward these gaps in the pre-school period are essential, not only to the developmental success of children, but to the economic and social health of communities. Both small experimental studies and evaluations of large-scale programs show consistently the positive impacts of exposure to pre-school. The evidence comes from studies of child care, Head Start, and public school programs using a wide range of research methods including experiments. Lasting positive impacts have been found for large-scale public programs as well as for intensive programs implemented on a small scale, though even some of the intensive small-scale interventions were public school programs. Overall the positive long-term effects of pre-school education include: increased achievement test scores, decreased grade repetition and special education rates, increased educational attainment, higher adult earnings, and improvements in social and emotional development and behavior, including delinquency and crime. Obviously, if programs provide child care they also benefit parents and can increase earnings in both the short- and long-term. Increased income that results from providing families with free or subsidized child care also has positive benefits for young children's development, though these are likely small relative to the direct benefits of high-quality pre-school programs for children.

Who can benefit from educationally effective pre-school programs? All children have been found to benefit from high-quality pre-school education. Claims that pre-school programs only benefit boys or girls, or one particular ethnic group, or just children in poverty do not hold up across the research literature as a whole. Children from lower-income families do tend to gain more from good pre-school education than do more advantaged children. However, the educational achievement gains for non-disadvantaged children are substantial, perhaps 75 percent as large as the gains for low-income children. Some concerned with reducing the achievement gap between children in poverty and others might conclude that pre-school programs should target only children in poverty. Such an approach ignores evidence that disadvantaged children appear to learn more when they attend pre-school programs with more advantaged peers, and they also benefit from peer effects on learning in kindergarten and the early elementary grades when their classmates have attended quality pre-school programs.

But we must be very clear about the magnitude of effects, whether short- or long-term. Any of the evaluations cited above indicate pre-school programs produce *modest* effect sizes overall, somewhat greater effects for low-income children, with some evidence that gains last through early grades. Typical child care has considerably smaller short- and long-term effects than more educationally focused programs such as selected Head Start programs or higher-quality pre-school programs linked to public education. And across studies and program models/features effects range from near-zero to almost a standard-deviation on achievement tests (the size of the achievement gap for poor children). There is no evidence whatsoever that the average run-of-the-mill pre-school program produces benefits in line with what the best program produce. Thus on average, the non-system that is pre-school in the United States narrows the achievement gap by about 30 percent.

Thus despite significant investments and obvious benefits, 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 fully realized—too many children, particularly poor children, continue to enter kindergarten far behind their peers. Results from the first follow-up of the nationally representative Early Childhood Longitudinal Study-Birth Cohort (ECLS-B) show a gap of roughly one standard deviation on school readiness skills for children below the 20th percentile on family socioeconomic status. Because the wide-ranging and diverse set of experiences in pre-schools are not, in aggregate, producing the level and rate of skills gains required for children to enter school ready, it is 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. Rather there is a dire need for investments and attention (in research, program development, and policy initiatives) that *enhance the positive impacts* of existing and expanding educational offerings on the very child outcomes on which skills gaps are so evident.

How to construct delivery systems for the equitable distribution of such experiences, ensure the training and expertise necessary to support the value of early education, and evaluate the extent to which the delivery system produces desired out-

comes for children pose serious challenges for scientists and policymakers. K–12 education policy and practice is now grappling with, and relying on, early childhood education to an unprecedented extent, the strategic use of which is undoubtedly in the interest of America. It is quite clear that realizing the promise of early education in the United States depends on a more complete integration of early education and care experiences for 3- and 4-year-olds with the K–3 system. Your opportunity, in ESEA reauthorization, I believe, is the set in motion policies that design a new entry portal into public education in the United States, one that ensures effective, integrated, aligned educational experiences for children from 3 to 8. Failing to take advantage of this opportunity only costs more downstream.

THE LANDSCAPE OF EARLY EDUCATION—SCHOOL STARTS AT 3, SORT OF

One might ask,

“How can school start at 3? Kids are at home or in child care, and compulsory education doesn’t even start at age 5 in most States—and in some they don’t even have universal kindergarten!”

In some ways this perception is correct; from age 3 until whatever age enrollment in the K–12 system is mandatory, children spend time in a very loosely organized collection of settings that provide a mixed assortment of opportunities for learning. This could hardly be described as “school” if our referent point was the local elementary school. On the other hand, parents think child care is school—in the 2000 Current Population Survey, 52 percent of parents reported their 3- and 4-year-old children were “in school,” some 4,000,000 children overall. Many parents seek out child care that is advertised as “improving your child’s school readiness” and some purchase billions of dollars worth of educational materials to which they expose their children as early as the first months of life.

Early education and child care settings historically have viewed learning and achievement as by-products of enrollment or exposure—one could hardly describe that as a “school.” But in the last decade the early education and care system has systematically re-focused and re-organized into loose collection of opportunities to learn that are increasingly intentional, purposeful, and driven by education policy and standards—a virtual school distributed across various settings. State and Federal pressure on early education and care is revealed in voters’ expectations that investments in the increasing formalization of this system will produce “school readiness” in the children who enter kindergarten and the analyses of economists who present the financial benefits to a community of investment in early education. K–12 education is now paying attention to the early education and care pipeline.

Over the past four decades, the Federal Government and most States have invested heavily in providing public pre-school programs for 3- and 4-year-old children. The percentage of pre-schoolers in child care increased from 17 percent in 1965 to about 80 percent in 2008. A marked increase in publicly funded programs accompanied this overall increase; Head Start was established in 1965 and by 2007–2008 served nearly 900,000 children in this age range. State-funded public pre-kindergarten programs greatly expanded during the past 20 years. Now 38 States offer these programs, which served approximately 1.1 million children across the Nation in 2007–8. By 2008, about 80 percent of American children attended a center-based pre-school program the year prior to kindergarten, most in private programs. Just over half attended a center-based program the year before that (at age 3), with two out of three of these in a private program. The combination of increased enrollment, expansion of publicly funded pre-school programs, and recognition of the unique role of early education experiences in the establishment of education success has led to a current state in which school, for all intents and purposes, starts for the vast majority of children in the United States at age 4, and for many, at 3. However, despite this general pattern, the fragmentation of policy and programs is considerable.

A widely understood example of policy fragmentation and its impact on experience is the set of regulations regarding access to K–12 opportunities. The age for compulsory school attendance in the United States ranges from 5 to 8 (Education Commission of the States [ECS], 2000), while kindergarten attendance is mandatory in some States and optional in others. Kindergarten lasts 2½ hours in some States, and a full day (6–7 hours) in others and State-funded pre-K programs range from as short as 2.5 hours per day and as long as 10 hours per day.

The situation is far worse with regard to the balkanization and fragmentation of programs for younger children. The term “pre-school” encompasses a diverse array of programs under a variety of names and auspices for children who have not yet entered kindergarten. Again we focus here only on three broad types of programs serving children at ages 3 and 4 linked to largely separate public funding streams:

private child care centers, Head Start, and pre-K programs in public education. Yet the real landscape of pre-school is far broader and more complex.

Enrollment of 4-year-olds is split nearly 50-50 between public (including special education) and private programs. Private programs serve about 1.6 million 4-year-olds, including children receiving public supports such as subsidies to attend these private programs. Public programs include about 1 million children in pre-K (regular and special education) and 450,000 4-year-olds in Head Start. At age 3, private programs predominate, serving roughly 1.4 million children. State-funded pre-K (regular and special education) serves only about 250,000 children at age 3, while Head Start serves about 320,000 3-year-olds. The point here is that even if we focus only on a narrow “slice” of the age 3–3d grade span, in this case, opportunities for 3- and 4-year-olds, we see little to no evidence of consistency in policy or on programmatic initiatives that create the templates for local opportunities for children and families. In thousands of communities across the country, children, particularly the most vulnerable, are funneled into one program at 3 and then shuffled to another at 4, and yet another at 5—or worse they are among those who lack access to any of these opportunities. And most have some other sort of child care (subsidized or not) at some point in the day or week. To be concrete, if the public schools cannot manage to offer universal full-day kindergarten, then how does one go about conceptualizing and designing a system of early education and care that is aligned with it? I hope you can see the need for an age 3–3d grade approach to policy and program improvement.

For the considerable investments of time, money and effort in early education of 3- and 4-year-olds to pay off, a primary goal of policy and program development must now be the alignment of the learning opportunities, standards, assessments, and goals in early education with those in K–12.

THE WORKFORCE

Enrollment of 3- and 4-year-olds in early education programs is pressuring the supply chain for early childhood educators and for effective training of those educators. Universal pre-K programs for 4-year-olds will require at least 200,000 teachers, with estimates of 50,000 new, additional teachers needed by 2020. Ninety-five percent of the workforce currently staffing formal pre-school and early education programs comes from 4-year and 2-year early childhood training programs and certified teachers from the K–12 system, with some unknown number of adults with unknown credentials staffing family-based child care and informal care. Unlike K–12 in which the supply chain is regulated by a single State entity and typically requires a 4-year degree from an accredited institution (or equivalent), training of the early education and care workforce is widely distributed and loosely regulated. Even in State-funded pre-K programs, rapidly ramping-up has forced many States to rely on teachers with elementary grade certifications and teachers with 2-year degrees “grand fathered” into certification. Growing demand has created problems both in relation to supply of early educators who can staff expanding programs and in terms of providing new teachers with appropriate training, staff development, and support to ensure that they create learning opportunities that produce achievement.

The attributes and skills of the adults who staff elementary school and pre-school educational settings tend to be very different. At the kindergarten level, nearly all States require a Bachelor’s degree and some level of specialized training in education for adults to be certified to teach and over 95 percent of the teachers in kindergarten classrooms meet both criteria. Even though many have only sparse training in teaching your children.

In contrast, pre-school teachers vary widely in their level of training and, on average, receive less training and education than their elementary school counterparts. There are large differences even among teachers in State-funded pre-K programs. Minimum requirements range from a Child Development Associate (CDA) certificate to an Associate’s degree to a Bachelor’s degree. Furthermore, some States require that the 2- or 4-year degree be in early childhood education or child development, while others do not specify a field of study. Even in the fairly well-regulated domains of State-funded pre-kindergarten programs and kindergarten, there is substantial variance in the preparation and qualifications deemed necessary for the workforce, a reality that seems indefensible given the developmental needs of 4- and 5-year-olds. How could fostering early literacy for a 4-year-old require such a different preparation than fostering literacy in a 5-year-old?

Head Start has national standards for program structure, operation and teacher credentials, but does not require all teachers to have college degrees. Head Start is increasing their educational standards for teachers and educational coordinators,

with aims that all Head Start teachers will have at least an Associates (AA) degree specialized in early childhood, and all education coordinators have at least a BA degree specialized in early childhood by the 2011 school year. And at least 50 percent of the Lead teachers in Head Start must have at least a BA degree by 2013. As I will note later, there is no evidence that garden variety educational experiences—coursework—will lead these teachers to be more effective in the classroom.

For children enrolled in the less-regulated ecology of family- or center-based child care, exposure to credentialed or degreed staff is even lower. The 2007 child care licensing study was one of the more recent and comprehensive studies of the child care workforce. Drawing on data gathered from 49 States and the District of Columbia, in the vast majority of States (42) directors of child care centers are only required to have some occupational/vocational training, some higher education credit hours in early childhood education, or a Child Development Associate's credential. Only one State required that directors of child care centers hold a Bachelor's degree. Similarly, for individuals considered as teachers in licensed child care centers, 40 States required some combination of a high school degree and experience. Only 10 States required some vocational program, certificate or CDA, and 13 States had no requisite educational qualification for child care teachers.

Capable early education is a complex and challenging task—teachers need to know a lot about basic child development, far more than the typical course—and they need to know about how to teach and stimulate vocabulary, conversations, early literacy, knowledge of science and the community, and early mathematics—all the while handling sensitively the varied needs of 15–25 3–8-year-olds—and within a classroom of 3-year-olds the range of skills can go from 2 years to 5, while in a classroom of 8-year-olds it could range from 2–12. Imagine the training and support required to support the developmental and educational growth of all those children!

Clearly we have not settled on a set of minimal qualifications for adults serving in the role of teachers of young children, whether this teaching takes place in community child care, Head Start, public Pre-K or K–3 classrooms. And we have not even begun to address the need to be consistent in our regulation and training of those skills across the 3–3d grade span.

In short, to the extent that teachers play an essential role in fostering effective learning opportunities for young children, children passing through the pre-school–3d grade period can expect a stunning level of variation from year to year and setting to setting in even the most basic features (i.e., educational level) of these personnel.

And consistent with nearly every other form of teacher training, there is so little evidence linking pre-service or in-service training experiences or teacher credentials to child outcomes or to observed performance for teachers, that there is considerable debate about whether requiring a 4-year degree is the best way to ensure early education programs help children learn. Addressing workforce needs in this system will require a re-thinking and re-balancing of several factors, including incentives, the content and processes of training, and efforts to professionalize the workforce and integrate the early education system with K–3.

WHAT MAKES FOR AN EFFECTIVE TEACHER IN PRE-K–3?

Degrees are poor proxies for the instructional and social interactions teachers have with children in classrooms. Children's direct experiences with teachers, such as the ways teachers implement activities and lessons; whether a teacher is encouraging and able to assist the child if he/she is struggling; whether the teacher uses the opportunity to engage the child in conversation are the features of early education that are responsible for children's learning. The active ingredient for learning is what a teacher does, and how she does it, when interacting with a child.

Effective teaching in early education, including the elementary grades, requires skillful combinations of explicit instruction, sensitive and warm interactions, responsive feedback, and verbal engagement/stimulation intentionally directed to ensure children's learning while embedding these interactions in a classroom environment that is not overly structured or regimented. These aspects of instruction and interaction uniquely predict gains in young children's achievement, have been directly tied to closing gaps in performance, and are endorsed by those who advocate tougher standards and more instruction and by those who argue for child-centered approaches. But unlike for older children, to be effective, teachers of young children must intentionally and strategically weave instruction into activities that give children choices to explore and play, engage them through multiple input channels, and should be embedded in natural settings that are comfortable and predictable. The best teachers are opportunists—they know child development and exploit interests

and interactions to promote it—some of which may involve structured lessons and much of which may not.

Interactions with teachers determine the value of enrollment in pre-school and contribute to closing performance gaps. As one example, we examined whether children at risk of early school failure exposed to high levels of observed instructional and emotional support from teachers would display higher achievement than at-risk peers not receiving these supports. Two groups of children were identified: those whose mothers had less than a 4-year college degree and those who had displayed significant behavioral, social and/or academic problems, who, on average, were behind their peers at age 4 and further behind by first grade. Yet if placed in classrooms in which teachers demonstrated the type of interactions described above these gaps were eliminated: children from low-education households achieved at the same level as those whose mothers had a college degree and children displaying prior problem behavior showed achievement and adjustment levels identical to children who had no history of problems.

These results are consistent with a cluster of experimental and well-designed natural history studies that show a return to achievement from observed classroom quality of between a half to a whole standard deviation on standardized achievement tests, with greater effects accruing to children with higher levels of risk and disadvantage. Experimental studies, although few and involving far fewer children, show similar effects. In fact, findings are almost uniform in demonstrating significant and meaningful benefits for enrollment in early education settings in which teacher-child interactions are supportive, instructive, and stimulating. Yet these “effects” studies do not provide information on the prevalence and distribution of such “gap closing” classrooms within the system of early education and care, or how to produce gap-closing settings.

QUALITY IS LESS AVAILABLE THAN YOU THINK

Unfortunately, the odds are stacked against children getting the kind of early education experiences that close gaps. Observational studies including several thousand settings, indicate that young children are exposed to moderate levels of social and emotional supports in their Pre-K, K, 1st and 3d grade classrooms and quite low levels of instructional support—levels that are not as high as those gap-closing, effective classrooms described above. The quality of instructional interactions, particularly the dimensions that appear to matter most for children’s achievement, is particularly low (the average levels hover around a “2” on a 7-point scale).

In addition to somewhat low levels of instructional support, in nearly every study that includes a large number of classrooms, there is also an exceptional degree of variability in the opportunities that appear to contribute to increased performance. Observations that include several thousand child care settings, pre-K, kindergarten and first grade classrooms show that some children spending most of their time engaged in productive instructional activities with caring and responsive adults who consistently provide feedback, challenges to think, and social supports. Yet for others, *even in the same program or grade*, most of their time is spent passively sitting around, having few if any interactions with an adult, watching the teacher deal with behavior problems, exposed to boring and rote instructional activities. In some programs, even in classrooms right next to one another that share the same materials and curriculum, the exposure of children to high quality learning and social supports is so dramatically different that one would conclude the difference was planned. Children in some classrooms may be exposed to few, if any, instances of any form of literacy-focused activities, whereas in others children received more than an hour of exposure to literacy-related activities, including narrative story-telling, practice with letters, rhyming games, and listening.

Drawing from the very large sample of State-funded pre-K classrooms in the NCEDL study, we used the statistical procedures of multi-stage cluster analysis to group similar classrooms together as a way of profiling this sector of American education (the NCEDL sample represents 80 percent of pre-K programs serving 4-year-olds in the United States). They show that only about 25 percent of pre-K classrooms show high levels of emotional and instructional support—the type of classroom setting almost universally described as high quality (this is not unique to pre-K; we find the same rates in first and third grade). Even further troubling is evidence that the pre-schooler lucky enough to experience a pre-K classroom likely to contribute to achievement is unlikely to be enrolled in a similarly high quality, gap-closing classroom in kindergarten or first grade. Rather it appears that exposure to gap-closing classroom quality, although highly desirable from nearly every perspective imaginable, is a somewhat random and low prevalence event that is even more unlikely for children in poverty.

These realities about the level and distribution of high quality early education classrooms in the United States probably reflect the convergence of at least three factors. First, teaching young children is uniquely challenging and is not easy. Second, many of the publicly funded early education programs that are included in large-scale studies (such as Head Start and State pre-K) are composed of a high percentage of children who live below the poverty line who can bring with them a collection of features that make teaching even more challenging, especially when concentrated in a classroom. Third, the system of early education operates on a shoestring of support and is not at all aligned with K-12—it is often less well-funded than K-12, classrooms are housed in trailers or makeshift locations, and teachers tend to not use the same curricula, assessments, or approaches to teaching across these years. There is no systematic approach to connecting pre-school—what takes place for 3- and 4-year-olds—with early elementary school—and so we lose much of the potential leverage for early education impacts on later learning and achievement simply by the way the system is (not) designed.

PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT TO IMPROVE TEACHER EFFECTIVENESS AND
EARLY EDUCATION IMPACTS 3-3D

Too few of the students who are in greatest need of effective teaching in their early education experiences receive them and the few that do are unlikely to receive them consistently, making it unlikely that the positive effects will be sustained for children who need consistent supports.

These findings should spark an interest in raising and leveling the quality of classroom supports available to young children across the ages of 3-8—this is truly a critical period for learning skills required later. One option is to focus on structural features of schools and classrooms such as teacher education and certification, class size, and curriculum and enact policies to ensure that these proxies for quality are uniformly in place. The available data do not provide compelling support for this option, although it should not necessarily be discarded altogether. Another option is to aim regulation and support at what teachers do in classrooms as they interact with children and find ways to more directly change and improve the dimensions of instructional and social interactions teachers have with children in large numbers of classrooms.

A first step in that direction would be more systematic, objective, standardized descriptions of such interactions and professional development and training systems for teachers that actually support them to interact more effectively with their students. Ultimately, such systems, if based on strong and valid metrics, may be a more cost-effective mechanism for effecting real change for teachers and children in part because rather than focusing personal and financial resources in the pursuit of *proxies* that show little relation to teacher quality and child outcomes, such a system could be organized around direct assessments of teacher/classroom quality shown to be related to children's outcomes. Increasingly there are tools to help facilitate progress toward this goal. Observational measures such as those we have developed—the Classroom Assessment Scoring System, or CLASS—and those used in other large-scale applications, that focus on standardized observation of instruction, are reliable and valid measures, directly linked to improvement in student outcomes. These tools, spanning the 3-3d period could form the basis of strategic scientifically based development of a new generation of professional development and policy initiatives aimed at increasing educational opportunity by forming a coherent and consistent view of teaching and learning across these ages, one predicated on an understanding of how young children learn through interactions with adults.

Others and we are innovating with technologies for conducting classroom observation at-scale. It may be quite feasible to imagine a system of program development and improvement teachers/classrooms can be observed on an annual basis using an instrument that assesses dimensions of classroom experience that contribute to child achievement.

More important than being able to observe and measure social and instructional interactions in classrooms is to design and test models for improving these opportunities to learn. What is emerging, through more systematic evaluations of professional development programs that are closely linked to classroom practice, such as mentorship and coaching, is that direct training and constructive feedback and support to teachers based on observation of their interactions with children in classrooms yield promising results for improving early education practice and children's performance. Challenges remain in how to further develop, validate, and scale-up such approaches, but the science of early education holds considerable promise for advancing these possibilities.

For the early childhood education system to move toward the goal of active and marked advancement of children's skills and competencies, the quality and impacts of programs must be improved through a vertically and horizontally integrated system of focused professional development and program designs/models that are educationally focused (as described earlier). In short, programs themselves need to realign around educational aims (in key developmental domains and appropriately articulated) and teachers must receive preparation and support to deliver classroom experiences that foster those aims more directly. Teaching would entail providing teacher-student interactions that promote the acquisition of new skills, delivers curricula effectively, and individualizes instruction/interaction based on children's current skill level, background, and behavior. Programs require (and policy should incent use of) proven-effective professional development supports through which teachers would acquire the skills in effective teacher-child interactions and implementation of curricula and assessment in developmentally synchronous ways.

Improvement of early education impacts rests on *aligning professional development and classroom practices with desired child outcomes*. In particular, the field needs a menu of professional development inputs to teachers (pre-service or in-service) that are proven to produce classroom practices (e.g., teacher-child interactions) that in turn result in the acquisition of desired skills among children (e.g., literacy skills). Efforts to develop such a system of aligned, focused, and effective professional development for the wide-ranging early childhood workforce are underway through the auspices of the Department of Education-funded National Center for Research on Early Childhood Education (NCRECE) and by several other investigators, which target children's early literacy and language development, and mathematics.

Targeted intervention to improve teacher interactions with children and instruction in academic skills such as the NCRECE My Teaching Partner approach does increase effective teaching and children's social and academic gains. Other research groups have demonstrated similar results—that coaching teachers in interactions that are linked to instructional supports for learning and good implementation of curriculum can have significant benefits for children. Mentoring and training are difficult to measure and to bring to scale, though relatively “easy” to prescribe as the professional development answer. One critical component of bringing mentoring to scale concerns the ability of systems to prepare and regulate mentors; yet only three States have defined core competencies for technical assistance providers.

Professional development approaches optimally should be designed for “high-priority” skill targets, such as pre-school language and literacy or math, and start with defining these targets and ensuring that there is a curriculum in place that reflects these targets. A high priority target for literacy or math instruction is one that (a) is consistently and at least moderately linked to school-age achievement, (b) is amenable to change through intervention, and (c) is likely to be under-developed among at-risk pupils. It is clear that increasing teachers' knowledge of developmentally relevant skill progressions can be a key aspect of improving their instruction and child outcomes yet teachers also require dedicated attention to implementing that knowledge through their interactions in the classroom.

AN INNOVATIVE WEB-BASED PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT TREATMENT FOR IMPROVING SCHOOL READINESS

Because effects of organized curricula on children's skills are mediated and/or moderated by teacher-child interactions, these interactions must be a *central focus* of PD interventions aiming to improve child outcomes. The average pre-K–3 child experiences teacher-child interactions of mediocre-low quality, but small increments produce skill gains.

MyTeachingPartner (MTP) Coaching focuses on improving teacher-child interactions defined and measured by the CLASS. Because the majority of teachers' interactions fall below the threshold levels *most pre-school classrooms do not operate in the “active range,”* small incremental improvements are associated with meaningful changes in children's skills. Importantly, MTP is capable of moving teacher-child interactions into (and through) the range in which they improve children's readiness.

For example, the improvements yielded from MTP were substantial. MTP coaching of teachers improved their interactions and instruction and closed the achievement gap in literacy and language development for poor children by almost a third. Coaching was delivered to teachers *entirely through the web*; this is perhaps one of the first completely web-based professional development approaches that is effective, individualized, and improves teacher-child interactions across any curriculum. And the use of the web in this and other novel and effective approaches to professional

development affords potential for scalability and cost-savings for travel, and location is not a pre-condition to individualized feedback to teachers. To illustrate, MTP is among the least expensive professional development for teachers for which cost has been documented with effects larger than those typically reported in the literature. And MTP and other web-mediated approaches can be aligned with training, certification, and degree requirements for teachers.

The best approaches to professional development focus on providing teachers with developmentally relevant information on skill targets and progressions and support for learning to skillfully use instructional interactions, and effectively implement curricula. These approaches *align* (conceptually and empirically) the requisite knowledge of desired skill targets and developmental skill progressions in a particular skill domain (e.g., language development or early literacy) with extensive opportunities for: (a) *observation* of high-quality instructional interaction through analysis and viewing of multiple video examples; (b) *skills training* in identifying in/appropriate instructional, linguistic, and social responses to children's cues, and how teacher responses can contribute to student literacy and language skill growth; and (c) repeated *opportunities for individualized feedback* and support for high-quality and effectiveness in one's own instruction, implementation, and interactions with children. This is a system of professional development supports that allow for a direct tracing of the path (and putative effects) of inputs to teachers, to inputs to children, to children's skill gains.

Again, evidence is very promising that when such targeted, aligned supports are available to teachers, children's skill gains can be considerable, on the order of a standard deviation. Unfortunately, pre-school-grade 3 teachers are rarely exposed to multiple field-based examples of objectively defined high quality practice and receive few if any opportunities to receive feedback about the extent to which their classroom interactions and instruction promote these skill domains. And at present, there is also very little evidence that the policy frameworks and resources that should guide and incent professional development and training of the early education workforce actually are aligned with the most promising, evidence-based forms of effective professional development. Thus there is little wonder that teachers with a 4-year degree or 2-year degree do not differ from one another substantially in either their practice or students' learning gains, or that investments in courses and professional development appear to return so little to children's learning. It truly does "depend" on the nature and type of professional development and future considerations for policy aimed to improve the quality and effects of pre-school must very clearly address this disconnect and make investments in professional development far more contingent on what we know is beneficial to teachers and children as opposed to convenient or beneficial to professional development providers.

SUMMARY AND CONCLUSIONS

The conclusions are fairly straightforward. First, early educational opportunities in this country are a non-system. Publicly supported early education programs (child care, Head Start, State-funded pre-kindergarten, K-3) encompass such a wide range of funding streams and targets, program models, staffing patterns and qualifications, curriculum, assessments, and teacher capacities that it cannot be understood as an organized aspect of the public system of support for children. This is unfortunate because evidence is so clear the opportunities to learn, and learning that takes place, in this age range are simply more important than at other ages, for the long-term well-being of individuals, families, and communities.

Second, despite this stunning variability and fragmentation, there is compelling evidence from well-controlled studies that early educational experiences can boost development and school readiness skills, can close achievement gaps in elementary school, and can have longer-term benefits to children and communities over time. Unfortunately, the effects of various program models are quite varied, with some rather weak and ineffective while other scaled-up programs narrowing the achievement gap by almost half. And it is quite clear that programs that are more educationally focused and well-defined produce larger effects on child development.

Third, for children enrolled in pre-school, features of their experience in those settings matter—particularly the ways in which teachers interact with them to deliver developmentally stimulating opportunities. The aspects most often discussed as features of program quality regulated by policy (such as teacher qualifications or curriculum) have much less influence on children than is desired and their influence pales in comparison to what teachers actually do with children. Critically important, interactions between teachers and children can be observed and assessed using standardized and scalable approaches (as is evident in the use of CLASS in Head Start and many school districts). Unfortunately, when assessed in this manner, it

is evident that most early education classrooms fall short on teachers' demonstrating gap-closing interactions. Finally and perhaps most promisingly, teachers' skills and children's learning can be improved with specific and focused professional development training and support.

If effective models of professional development can indeed change child outcomes, then the potential for scaling and building incentive and policy structures around these models becomes an important feature of systemic improvement and policy. The recent development and expansion of Quality Rating and Improvement Systems in early childhood are one such example of a set of policy initiatives that integrate measurement of inputs and outcomes with incentives and resources for teacher improvement.

Finally, one might also envision professional preparation and credentialing models based on what we are learning from studies of effective professional development and its evaluation. To the extent that these models of support and education for teachers can be demonstrated to produce gains in teacher competencies that produce child outcome gains, then it seems critical to build such opportunities for professional preparation "back" into the "pre-service" sector and to find methods for credentialing and certifying teachers on the basis of participation in effective professional development and demonstration of competence. In fact, new policy statements related to professional development and career development being suggested by the National Association for the Education of Young Children explicitly identify teachers' performance in classroom settings, specifically their interactions with children, as a dimension of career advancement that should be credentialed and tied to professional development. Such statements by professional organizations reflect openness to innovation that, paired with demonstrably effective supports for teachers, could pave the way for tremendous positive change in outcomes for teachers and children.

In an era of high-stakes testing in which even *young children* may be held to uniform, minimum performance standards, it is disconcerting to note that the system on which the Nation is relying to produce such outcomes provides exceptional variability in the nature and quality of actual *opportunities to learn*. It seems unreasonable to expect universal levels of minimal performance for students when the opportunities in early education are so unevenly distributed. As the system of early education serving children from 3–8 in the United States evolves as an integral component of the solution to a host of problems related to schooling and achievement, serious attention is needed to policies, particularly for teachers and their professional development and support, that help re-design this portal into public education in terms of aligned, effective experiences in classrooms that indeed foster children's learning and development.

The CHAIRMAN. Thank you very much, Mr. Pianta.

Now, Ms. Zalkind, welcome.

**STATEMENT OF HENRIETTA ZALKIND, EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR,
DOWN EAST PARTNERSHIP FOR CHILDREN, ROCKY MOUNT,
NC**

Ms. ZALKIND. Thank you.

Thank you for having me here today. Thank you, Senator Burr, for the wonderful introduction.

I am here today on behalf of the hundreds of people locally who have made this work possible over the last 16 years, who have committed themselves to not leaving any child behind.

The Down East Partnership for Children—we call it DEPC—is committed to successfully launching every child in our two counties as a healthy lifelong learner by the end of the third grade. DEPC believes that the developmental period for children 0 to 8 is critical to their long-term healthy growth and development. That is when they are learning to learn. It is also a critical period for parents, learning to parent and learning to engage in their child's education.

We were founded as a nonprofit in 1993 and work on a model of services that works in collaboration with two local school systems—Nash-Rocky Mount and the Edgecombe County Public Schools—early care providers, human service agencies, and other

community leaders. We have a 27-member board, representing the multiple stakeholders that you need for this work to work in concert to build a strong foundation for student achievement.

Annually, we bring in about \$7 million of different funding from the State, from the Federal Government, from private sources, to either do three programs directly—a childcare resource and referral program, a family resource program, and a coordinated subsidy program—and then we fund 20 total agencies, 20 programs in 10 other agencies, including the health department, the schools, the library, the Department of Social Services, and other area non-profits.

And all of these different programs have to go to support our three long-term goals—unique support for each child and family, high-quality early care and education environments, and access to coordinated community resources. Everything that we do directly or that we fund through the different agencies go through an annual bid process with annual outcomes that help us move towards those three long-term goals.

We work off an integrated multi-agency strategic plan that is on our Web site that has intermediate outcomes toward those long-term goals. My testimony today really focuses on a few major components of our system that I think bear on the reauthorization of the No Child Left Behind and the ESEA.

First, our Family First system that provides comprehensive services to families, including intake and assessment, referrals to a whole continuum of services ranging from early education subsidies to evidence-based parent education. We have a coordinated subsidy system that works in collaboration with the subsidy money, the CCBD—it is hard for everybody to say—the Department of Social Services, title I preschool programs, private childcare providers, and Head Start to maximize the use of all subsidy funds for children 0 to 12 by ensuring that children are served in the most appropriate early care and education program available.

It is also our single-biggest way that we control the quality by mandating that people who participate in that system operate at a certain level of quality and contracting with those people for that level of quality, that provides not only access to the care, but it provides access to high-quality care.

We have a system of home-school contacts that operate through both school systems that provide transition from home to childcare, to early education, to school—that is our outreach system to make sure that we know all of the children before they get to school and that we can follow them through the third grade and that they are successfully launched by the end of the third grade.

The thing that I will focus the most on today is our Ready Schools Initiative, really designed to build the capacity of the schools to meet the needs of all children so that children are not just ready for school when they get there, but that the schools are ready for them. And then, finally, our Ready Communities Initiative, which wraps community leadership—including business, faith, and community—around schools to support them in their effort to launch every child as a successful learner by the end of the third grade.

Five minutes goes fast.

[Laughter.]

The Ready School Initiative we launched about 5 years ago, really works off the HighScope Ready Schools Assessment that Dr. Schweinhart talked about. We build school-community teams that assess the school's capacity around the Ready School pathways, leader and leadership, transition, teacher supports, engaging environments, effective curriculum, family-school-community partnerships, respecting diversity, and assessing progress.

And to date, we have done 14 out of the 19 public elementary schools in our two districts. We have done a wide variety of things that have really improved the school capacity, the schools' capacity to both be ready for the children, but to utilize their title I funding to move from where they are in terms of being more ready for every single child. We have seen great results around improving leaders and leadership, transition, family-school-community partnerships, and diversity.

Eight of those 14 schools have now gone through the HighScope a second time with wonderful results, and that process of building the community team, seeding it with leaders and leadership that we have generated through our Ready Communities process is really the thing that has worked to move the process forward, and that is what I would really recommend in terms of embedding in the law as you move forward.

[The prepared statement of Ms. Zalkind follows:]

PREPARED STATEMENT OF HENRIETTA ZALKIND

SUMMARY

The Down East Partnership for Children (DEPC) is committed to successfully launching every child as a healthy, lifelong learner by the end of the 3rd grade. DEPC believes that the developmental period for children from 0 to age 8 is critical to their long-term healthy growth and development.

Founded as a nonprofit in 1993, DEPC has 16 years of experience with a model of services that works in collaboration with two local school systems (Nash-Rocky Mount Public Schools and Edgecombe County Public Schools), early care providers, human service agencies, and other community leaders and organizations. DEPC has 3 long-term goals: Unique Support for Each Child and Family, High Quality Early Care & Education Environments, and Access to Coordinated Community Resources.

The testimony will focus on the key components of the DEPC model, including:

- Supporting a Family First system to provide comprehensive services to families, including intake, assessment, referrals, and a continuum of services, ranging from early education subsidies to evidence-based parent education.
- A Coordinated Subsidy system in collaboration with Departments of Social Services, Title I Preschool Programs, private child care providers, and Head Start to maximize the use of subsidy funds for children 0–12 by ensuring that children are served by the most appropriate subsidized early care and education program available.
- Creating smooth transitions from home, early care settings, and throughout elementary school through a system of home-school contacts.
- Ready Schools Initiative designed to build schools' capacity to meet the needs of all children through assessment, planning, and coaching.
- Ready Communities Initiative designed to develop community-based leadership to support early care and education and connect them with their local elementary school.

Based on our lessons learned in implementing our model of early care and education, DEPC recommends:

- Increase investment in early care programs to promote prevention rather than intervention.
- Build infrastructure for *Ready Schools* that have the capacity and resources to be ready to meet the needs of *all* children.

- Promote flexible funding that will encourage innovation, developmentally appropriate classrooms Pre-K–3, connections and alignment with early care providers, and family engagement.
- Build the capacity of teachers and administrators to individualize instruction to meet the varying needs of children in their classrooms.
- Utilize family-school-community partnerships as a cornerstone of the school improvement process.
- Fund leadership development at all levels to support early care and education for children birth to age 8.

BACKGROUND

The Down East Partnership for Children (DEPC) is committed to successfully launching every child as a lifelong learner by the end of the 3rd grade. Located in Rocky Mount, NC, DEPC serves Nash and Edgecombe counties with nearly 18,000 children under the age of 8. The majority of these children face risk factors for success; including poverty, low high school graduation levels of their parents, and high percentage of single parent households.

Founded as a nonprofit in 1993, DEPC has 16 years of experience with a model of services that works in collaboration with two local school systems (Nash-Rocky Mount Public Schools and Edgecombe County Public Schools), early care providers, human service agencies, and other community leaders and organizations. The DEPC Model of Family & Child Services (See Appendix A) is a continuum designed to serve children ages 0–8 and their families. The model incorporates multiple components to meet families' diverse needs so that services are available "For Every Child."

DEPC's model is intended to lead to long-term success on indicators for child and family well-being and community success. DEPC's work is driven by a comprehensive strategic plan developed to support the healthy growth and development of children 0–8 in all domains of child development.

DEPC operates 3 programs directly through its Family Resource Center: Child Care Resource & Referral, Family Resource, and Coordinated Subsidy. Research & Evaluation and Community Collaborative initiatives, including Ready Schools, Ready Communities, Healthy Kids Collaborative are also a part of DEPC's organizational model (see Appendix B). Annually DEPC strategically invests more than \$7 million into the local economy to support 20 programs at DEPC and in 10 other agencies and organizations, including health department, school systems, library, departments of social services, and other area non-profits. These programs are supported through a combination of local, State, and private funds. All programs are funded through an annual bid process and must demonstrate annual outcomes and how they will move DEPC toward its three long-term goals.

DEPC is one of North Carolina's local Smart Start Partnerships and the local administrator for the State's More at Four pre-kindergarten program. DEPC was also one of the local demonstration sites for the national Supporting Partnerships to Assure Ready Kids (SPARK) Initiative funded by W.K. Kellogg Foundation to align early care and education systems to support Ready Kids, Ready Families, Ready Schools, and Ready Communities. As a result, DEPC has been a leader in Ready Schools in North Carolina over the past 5 years.

The following are DEPC's long-term goals used to guide the organizational and community efforts.

UNIQUE SUPPORT FOR EACH CHILD AND FAMILY

DEPC values and respects that each child and family is unique and, as such, has unique strengths and needs.

- Children will have access to resources that support their growth and development in the 5 domains of child development (cognition, language and communication, approaches to learning, social and emotional, and health and physical).
- Families will have increased knowledge and access to resources to support their child's growth and development from prenatal through age 8.

To achieve this goal, parents gain access to information, referrals, and services through the Family First system, including parent education classes, support groups, child care subsidies and other parenting resources.

HIGH QUALITY EARLY CARE AND EDUCATION ENVIRONMENTS

DEPC believes that the developmental period for children from 0 to age 8 is critical to launching them as lifelong learners. During this time, children are exposed

to a variety of environments. Each of these environments (home, child care, and school) must be of high quality for children to be successful.

- Families will have the skills and knowledge to be their child's first teacher by creating a high quality learning environment at home.
- Child care facilities will have formally educated staff that can nurture and stimulate the growth and development of individual children utilizing developmentally appropriate practices.
- Schools will be able to model ready school best practices to transition children effectively into engaging and developmentally appropriate environments that continue to nurture and develop each individual child's growth.
- Families, child care providers, and schools will collaborate to create effective transition strategies between environments.

Strategies to achieve this goal focus on improving the quality of early care and education environments across the 0–8 spectrum, including training and technical assistance to child care providers, parent-child playgroups to model developmentally appropriate practice for the home environment, and the Ready Schools Initiative.

ACCESS TO COORDINATED COMMUNITY RESOURCES

DEPC has been built on collaboration and the role it plays in coordinating resources to increase availability and access to services that meet the needs of the community.

- Individuals will have the leadership skills and knowledge to effectively advocate for resources in their community.
- Service systems will be aligned to increase access to resources based on ongoing assessments of community needs.

To achieve this goal, DEPC facilitates leadership development through its Community Fellows program, connecting leaders and organizations with the DEPC mission through the Ready Communities Initiative, and supporting communication and advocacy strategies.

THE KEY COMPONENTS OF THE DEPC MODEL OF SERVICES

To achieve its mission, DEPC engages on various fronts to make system-wide change:

- Ensuring **availability** of and **access** to high quality early childhood care and education;
- **Supporting families** to effectively parent and meet the needs of their individual children;
- Facilitating a positive **transition to school**; and
- Building “**ready schools**” and “**ready communities**” that can successfully launch all children as learners.

BUILDING ACCESS TO QUALITY EARLY CHILDHOOD CARE AND EDUCATION

DEPC works on both the supply and demand side of early care and education. DEPC educates parents, businesses, and the community about the importance of quality child care and provides referrals for parents looking for child care. Through training, technical assistance, salary supplements, and other support to child care centers and homes, DEPC has increased the availability of quality child care in our two counties.

DEPC facilitates a Coordinated Subsidy system in collaboration with Departments of Social Services, Title I Preschool Programs, private child care providers, and Head Start to maximize the use of subsidy funds for children 0–12 by ensuring that children are served by the most appropriate subsidized early care and education program available. Subsidy providers utilize a combined early care and referral form and a coordinated waiting list.

This system includes access to a Smart Start Scholarship program that focuses on serving 0–3 year olds. This not only provides at-risk children and their families with access to high quality care during the most critical time in their development, it also serves as intake into a system that will then connect them with additional services throughout the rest of their early childhood period of development (or through 3rd grade).

DEPC also administers the More at Four Pre-Kindergarten program to provide high quality care to at-risk 4-year olds through classrooms in public schools, Head Start, and private child care centers.

- The percentage of children in high quality child care has increased from 6 and 7 percent in 1993 in the highest quality settings to 69 percent and 70 percent in Nash and Edgecombe counties, respectively.
- Annually, over 1,000 children access high quality care by receiving Smart Start Scholarships (0–3 year olds) and preschool slots through the More at Four program.
- 83 percent of Nash County and 81 percent of Edgecombe County children receiving any form of early childhood education subsidies are in 4- or 5-star (highest rated) care.

FAMILY FIRST

DEPC recognizes that a parent is a child's first teacher and plays a critical role in a child's development during the early years and throughout his/her life. Throughout this phase in a child's development, the needs of both the child and the family may vary greatly. DEPC seeks to address this by offering a continuum of evidence-based strategies and programs.

Trained *Family First* counselors conduct needs assessments with families to determine the resources that will best address their needs. Families may receive information on child development and parenting issues, referrals to community resources, or access to subsidized child care.

Families are connected with a variety of services including parent-child playgroups that model appropriate interactions; support groups for parents of children with special needs or teen parents; parent education through evidence-based curricula including Parenting Wisely, Strategic Training for Effective Parenting (STEP), or Incredible years; additional information through a Parent Information Center or workshops on topics such as money management, healthy eating, helping your child have a smooth transition to Kindergarten, or effective communication at parent-teacher conferences.

SMOOTH TRANSITIONS

DEPC has worked with both school systems to create a system of home-school contacts that facilitate a variety of transition strategies for children and families. Funded through title I, More at Four, and Smart Start, these contacts provide home visits for entering Kindergartners, coordinate with parents and child care providers to facilitate school visits for children to spend time in a Kindergarten classroom, and provide workshops for parents to learn strategies to support their child's transition and healthy growth and development.

These contacts help to identify children early for Kindergarten (over 90 percent of children are identified before the first day of school) that not only allows for the opportunity to participate in transition activities (65 percent of Kindergarten families participated in three or more transition activities), but also allows the school more planning time for student placement.

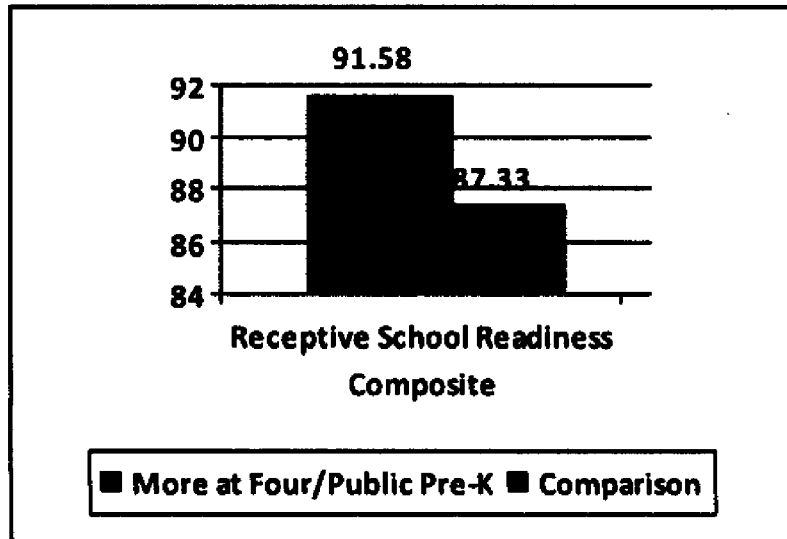
Finally, districts also invite child care providers to professional development opportunities with school staff to promote alignment between early care and elementary school.

By blending the funding for these contacts, they are able to not only ensure smooth transitions into Kindergarten, which is linked with increased school readiness, but then provide continued support throughout Kindergarten and into the older grades. These contacts have also been key members of the school-community teams for the Ready Schools assessment and planning process.

IMPACT OF QUALITY PRESCHOOL PROGRAMS

Through data collected on 250 children that entered Kindergarten in fall 2009, DEPC knows that this system of early care and education is having an impact on children's having the skills and behaviors needed to be successful in school.

- 85.6 percent of these children had some type of early care experience (More at Four, Head Start, Public Pre-Kindergarten, center-based child care, family home) the year before Kindergarten.
- Children with early care experience rated higher on the teacher-completed Hawaii School Readiness Assessment than those with no experience in overall readiness and in each sub-dimension (Approaches to Learning, Literacy, Math, School Behavior & Skills, Social Emotional Behaviors, and Physical Well Being).
- Children with early care experience, including those in More at Four or Public Pre-Kindergarten programs the year before Kindergarten had fewer problem behaviors based on parent-completion of the Preschool and Kindergarten Behavior Scales.



The Bracken Basic Concept Scales includes a school readiness composite, which measures children's abilities on concepts traditionally needed to be prepared for early formal education, including colors, letter recognition, number recognition and counting, sizes/comparisons, and recognizing 1-, 2-, and 3-dimensional shapes. It also measures children's abilities on 5 additional sub-tests (direction/position, self-social awareness, texture/material, quantity, and time/sequence).

Children who attended More at Four or Public Pre-Kindergarten the year before Kindergarten outperformed comparison children on the Bracken Basic Concept Scales School Readiness Composite.

READY SCHOOLS

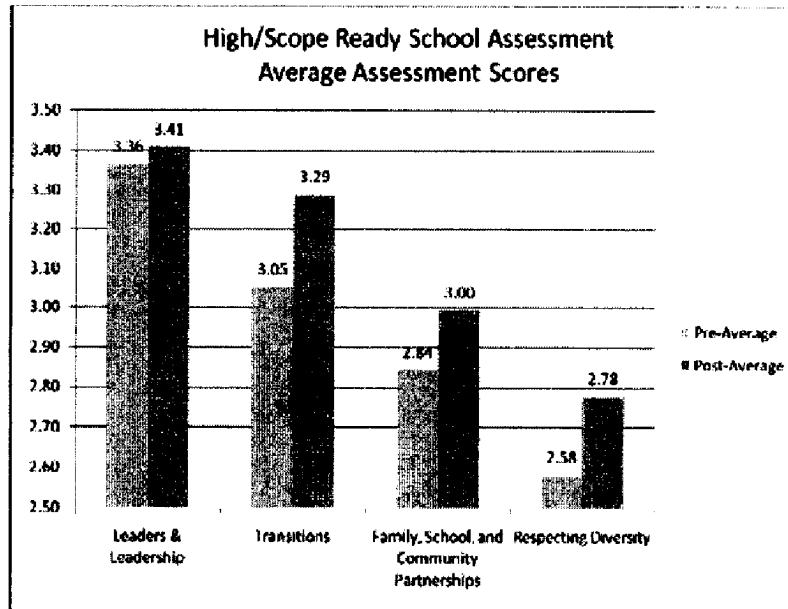
Early childhood research and DEPC's own data have clearly shown that access to quality child care has significant impacts on children's readiness for Kindergarten and in many cases long-term success. However, often these effects begin to "fade out" without continued intervention in the early elementary grades K-3.

To build on the success of getting children ready for Kindergarten and help ensure that by the end of 3rd grade children are launched as learners, DEPC started its Ready Schools Initiative to increase the capacity of elementary schools to be ready for all children. In 2007, the NC State Board of Education endorsed the definition and Pathways to a Ready School. Included in this recommendation was direction that schools develop a "ready school plan". Ready Schools is now in 42 of 100 counties throughout North Carolina. Most recently, the Office of Early Learning was created by DPI to strategically focus on the early years and reform education for all NC children, pre-kindergarten through third grade. (See *Appendix C for the NC Definition of Ready Schools, Map of Ready Schools*)

In 2005, DEPC developed the Ready Schools Innovation Awards (RSIA) process that includes an assessment, development and implementation of a workplan, and coaching and technical assistance from one of DEPC's Ready Schools Coordinators. To participate in the RSIA process, interested schools bring together a school-community team that includes Pre-K-3 teachers, administrators, early care providers, parents, business, and other community representatives to assess their practices in eight dimensions of Ready Schools' practices (Leaders and Leadership, Transitions, Teacher Supports, Engaging Environments, Effective Curricula, Family, School, and Community Partnerships, Respecting Diversity, and Assessing Progress) using the nationally validated, research-based High/Scope Ready Schools Assessment (RSA).

The school-community team then creates a workplan to implement strategies based on areas of need identified. These workplans have often focused on professional development needed for teachers and administrators, such as Ruby Payne's Framework of Poverty training; building effective transition strategies between early care, home, and school and between grades; establishing family resource cen-

ters within the school to promote a welcoming atmosphere to families to prompt better home-school communication and family involvement; and materials and training to increase the use of developmentally appropriate practices and active learning centers within K-2 classrooms. Innovative strategies have been tested using privately funded grants, but then enhanced and/or sustained with title I funds, such as a family resource center at Winstead Avenue elementary, in-school transition support for K-1 children at Red Oak elementary.



To date, 14 of the 19 area public elementary schools in our two districts have participated in this process.

Following implementation of their workplan, schools completed the High/Scope assessment a second time. Schools showed improvement in four dimensions: Leaders and Leadership, Transitions, Family, School, and Community Partnerships and Respecting Diversity.

All schools noted the strength of this process, including coaching as key elements of success.

READY COMMUNITIES

DEPC has worked with local stakeholders, including child care providers, businesses, faith-based organizations, and community leaders to create champions who can provide and advocate for positive change in their community.

- DEPC has a network of over 75 community leaders that have completed either Community Fellows (a 2-year leadership development program) or Community Voices (a 15-session leadership training series). As a result of these learning experiences, these individuals have the skills to be collaborative community leaders.

- Investment in early childhood education, including child care, not only helps prepare future generations of the workforce, it is also a critical component of supporting the current economy. DEPC has built the economic engine of small businesses by training nearly every child care provider/owner in the two counties.

- DEPC is strengthening relationships with both the faith-based community and the Latino/Hispanic community in the two counties. Over 50 faith-based leaders have attended recent education forums to learn more about how to be engaged in their local schools, with the Healthy Kids Collaborative, or on advocacy-related issues in their community.

- Healthy Kids Collaborative launched in 2008 and has over 50 partners working together to increase access to healthy foods, opportunities for physical activity, and

increasing awareness and education on ways to address the issue with parents, child care providers, medical providers, and the broader community.

DEPC connects leaders and resources with each area elementary school in order to achieve the following outcomes: increased student achievement as well as less student behavior problems; access to resources to support students and families; increased family engagement, including PTO membership, better attendance at school functions, and more effective parent-teacher communication; increased support and resources for teachers; decreased teacher turnover; and enhanced positive regard for schools.

To establish these partnerships, DEPC has developed an intensive process, the Ready² Initiative, to wrap a network of engaged parents, community leaders, and community resources around each participating school.

- Over 60 people are participating in the Ready² Initiative with 2 elementary schools.
- This process has created new community-school connections, resulted in increased availability of family involvement opportunities, such as mentoring for children, parent engagement workshops on behavior and parent-teacher conferences, experiences for children provided by community members, such as tours of museums and community locations.
- Schools are discussing and clarifying the definition of family engagement for their school.
- Next Steps: Build district-level capacity/infrastructure for family and community engagement. DEPC has created a plan with Nash-Rocky Mount Public Schools and Edgecombe County Public schools to continue its Ready Schools and Ready Communities work with an increased focus on family engagement, including implementation of evidence-based options for K–2 family support.

RECOMMENDATIONS

Based on our own lessons learned in implementing a model of early care and education for children birth to age 8, DEPC makes the following recommendations as you work on the reauthorization of the Elementary and Secondary Education Act.

ENCOURAGE INVESTMENT IN EARLY CARE PROGRAMS

- Promote access to high quality care from birth, including community-based providers and public pre-kindergarten classrooms. Early care should be seen as a component of the education system and resources should be in place to ensure all children may access this care, as well as support quality improvement of these environments.
- Support joint professional development among community-based and school-based early care providers to promote consistent standards and alignment among Pre-K–3 classrooms.
- Promote strategies that focus on prevention and early intervention to ensure children enter school ready to succeed and have the support they need during early grades when they are setting their foundation for lifelong learning.

SUPPORT THE CREATION OF READY SCHOOLS THAT HAVE THE CAPACITY AND RESOURCES FOR SCHOOLS TO BE READY TO MEET THE NEEDS OF ALL CHILDREN

- Encourage schools to assess their capacity to model Ready Schools best practices to meet the needs of all children with a tool such as the High/Scope Ready School Assessment. Provide coaching to schools on implementing Ready Schools process and best practices.
- Promote use of title I funding to create infrastructure and support staff to provide coaching and technical assistance on Ready Schools.
- Encourage other States to adopt Ready Schools definition, pathways, and Pre-K–3 State and local infrastructure.
- Support the creation of innovative strategies that will promote developmentally appropriate classrooms Pre-K–3, connections and alignment with early care providers, family engagement, and build the capacity of teachers and administrators to individualize instruction to meet the varying needs of children in their classrooms.
- Establish data systems to track developmentally appropriate assessment data on children Pre-K–3 and provide professional development to teachers on ways to effectively use assessment data to individualize instruction. Measure schools based on growth toward high standards and alternate outcomes, not only on end-of-grade testing.
- Increase flexibility in funding for schools to implement strategies based on local student need for all children Pre-K–3, not strictly economic status.

INVEST IN SUPPORT FOR FAMILY-SCHOOL-COMMUNITY PARTNERSHIPS

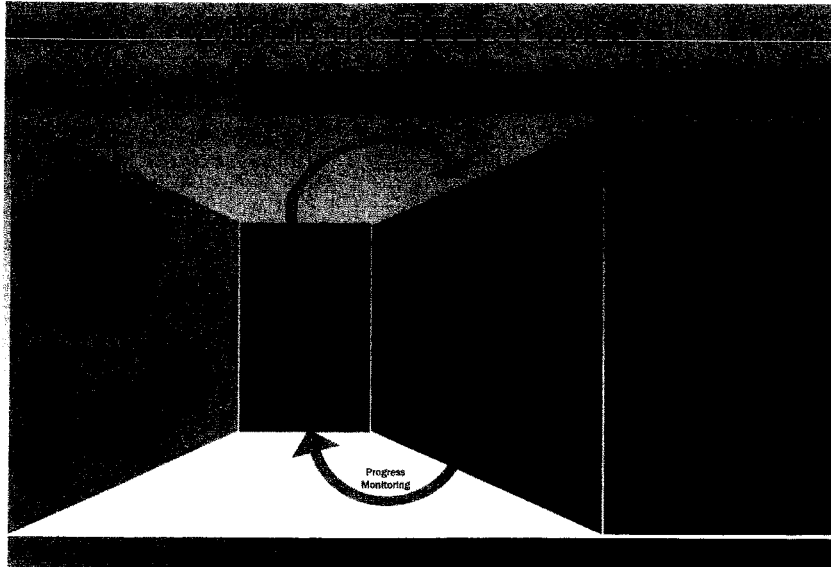
- Invest in coaching and infrastructure to support development and implementation of effective and meaningful family involvement plans.
- Encourage active partnerships between schools, early care providers, and other community resources to meet all needs of children, including access to services for health and family support.

CONCLUSION

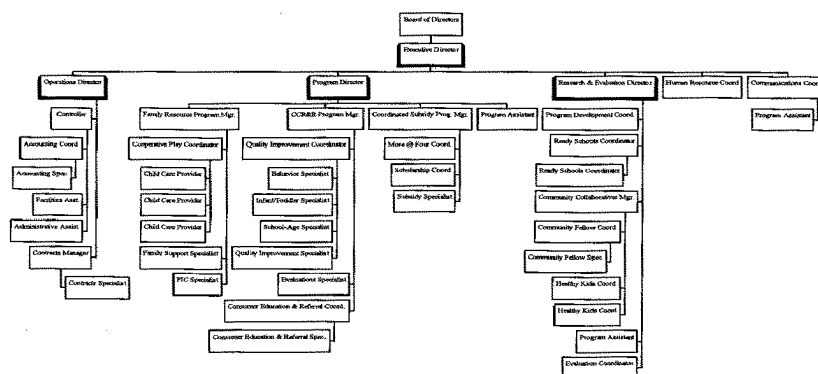
Throughout our history, DEPC has learned that to create long-term, sustainable change, there must both be the public and political will to support the work. We need to build capacity and leadership at all levels to implement a comprehensive early care and education system of services for children birth to age 8, to ensure that all children will be successfully launched as healthy, lifelong learners.

For more information on DEPC, please visit us at www.depc.org or call 252-985-4300.

APPENDIX A



APPENDIX B

Down East Partnership for Children
Organizational Chart

APPENDIX C

NC DEFINITION & PATHWAYS TO A READY SCHOOL

Listed below is the definition and pathways to a ready school as approved by both the NC Ready Schools Task force and the NC State Board of Education.

DEFINITION

A ready elementary school provides an inviting atmosphere, values and respects all children and their families, and is a place where children succeed. It is committed to high quality in all domains of learning and teaching and has deep connections with parents and its community. It prepares children for success in work and life in the 21st century.

PATHWAYS TO READY ELEMENTARY SCHOOLS

1. **Children succeed in school.** The school sets high expectations for all students and facilitates healthy growth and development in five domains suggested by the National Educational Goals Panel: physical well-being; social relationships and emotional development; learning approaches that incorporate cultural aspects of learning styles; use of language; and cognition, general knowledge, and problem solving. Children acquire culturally relevant knowledge and skill sets necessary and valuable to the functioning of a modern economy.

2. **A welcoming atmosphere.** The school projects an open, child-focused, welcoming atmosphere characterized by friendliness, respect, high teacher and staff morale, and the use of appropriate discipline. The building and grounds are inviting and developmentally appropriate. Children's work is prominently displayed and bulletin boards contain family-oriented material.

3. **Leadership.** School leaders believe that all children can learn, teachers and staff can develop professionally, and all schools can meet or exceed State performance standards. The principal possesses the skill sets necessary for leading effectively and creating a learning community. The school connects with and garners support from the superintendent, school board, and the NC Department of Public Instruction. In turn, the superintendent, school board, and the NC Department of Public Instruction provide a coherent and appropriate set of policies and regulations.

4. **Connections to early care and education and across grades.** There is ongoing communication and coordination between early care and education (ECE) and elementary school teachers for quality assurance from Pre-K through grade 3. Standards and curriculum are aligned between ECE and the school at the local, district, and State levels. The school participates in or provides a number of transition

experiences for children entering Pre-K or kindergarten such as school and home visits, staggered entry, and orientation sessions for children and families. Assessment data are obtained from ECE providers in order to plan and individualize children's learning. In addition, curriculum, instruction, and assessment are aligned and integrated within a classroom, within a grade level, and across grade levels.

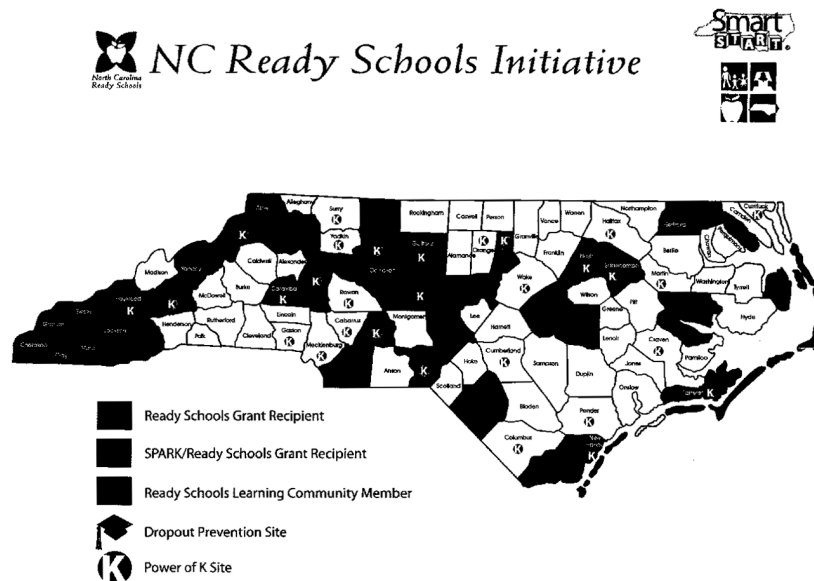
5. **Connects culturally and linguistically with children and families.** The school seeks to help children from all circumstances and backgrounds succeed. The school uses a culturally appropriate curriculum to enhance learning. Children and families are encouraged to share their backgrounds and experiences with other children and families.

6. **Partners with Families.** The school communicates and partners with all families in a wide range of activities from providing information to engaging parents in policy and decisionmaking. Outreach strategies are implemented to ensure that families of diverse populations are welcome to participate in all school-related activities.

7. **Partners with the community.** The school functions as a community center drawing children and families from surrounding neighborhoods for multiple activities and purposes. It partners with the community to provide opportunities and services to children and families such as health screening and health services, courses in the English language, courses in other languages, and instruction in GED preparation, computers, and parenting.

8. **Uses assessment results.** The school uses assessments, both formal and informal (daily interactions with the child, communications with parents), to plan and tailor instruction to individual needs. There are strategies in place to improve test scores and reduce achievement gaps. The school ensures that assessments are reliable, valid, individual and developmentally and culturally appropriate.

9. **Quality Assurance.** The school strives to grow by following a written improvement plan that includes a strategy for maintaining its mission and goals over time. It supports staff in professional development and consults with educational and non-educational experts for staff training and quality assurance. Leadership uses data and research on effective practices for decisionmaking.



The CHAIRMAN. Thank you very much, Ms. Zalkind.

Thank you all for excellent testimony.

I will start off a 5-minute round of questioning with a question I want you all to roll around in your heads.

We are under a lot of budget constraints around here, and we have got to get our budget priorities in order to improve our economy. But everything depends upon priorities. So if you have \$1 to spend on early childhood education, that is prior to kindergarten, or elementary education or high school, all those three, how would you spend it? How would you divide up that \$1?

Think about it. We will come back to that when I have my next round of questions.

It seems to me that we all recognize the importance of investing in early childhood education. We have recognized for some time, you all have attested to it, and we have had studies like the one conducted by the Committee on Economic Development to underscore the fact. Mr. Griswell mentioned another study conducted in 2003. We keep hearing about the importance of investing early, over and over again. We have got to focus more on early childhood. Yet we just have a potpourri of different investments out there.

There are people doing wonderful things to improve the quality of and access to early childhood education in some places. In other places they are not doing very much. Even if a Federal level were investing in multiple ways. We have prenatal care programs. We have the Childcare Development Block Grant that is Senator Dodd's child. That is the one that he has been champion of for so long. We also have Head Start, Early Head Start, and Title I Pre-school.

This committee provided \$2 billion in funding for the Childcare Assistance Block Grant and also \$2.1 billion for Head Start and Early Head Start, \$4.1 billion. But I am not certain that collectively these investments are resulting in optimizing the provision of high quality, early learning services. I am saying I don't know if there is a sufficient educational component to these programs. That is something for us to wrestle with. How much of the reauthorization should include early childhood education reforms that focus on strengthening too.

And since we are not dealing with those bills right now, should we deal with that in ESEA? I am not afraid of breaking new ground. I asked similar questions when the Childcare Development Block Grant was last reauthorized in 1996. So a lot of things have changed since then.

So I guess, for all of you, my basic question is: Should we, in this reauthorization of ESEA, break new ground and really move ahead forcefully in an area of early childhood education and focus more on investigating early learning? Rather than just focusing on elementary and secondary education, should we focus more on pre-school education in this bill?

And if so, how? We will just go left to right. Barry.

Mr. GRISWELL. Oh, that is a tough one. It is a big one. You know, I do think that somebody, somewhere has to take a holistic view of how we are delivering education, and I think that view has to start at birth. And I am not sure exactly how you do it, whether it is through this committee or through others.

But I think if we fail to look at education as starting at birth, we will always be fragmented. And we need leadership. We need somebody to stand up and say this is the view of what education looks like. Here is how we are going to try to get organized to ac-

comply with it. It is complicated because States are involved, childcare deliverers are involved. But somebody has got to create a vision that we can all rally behind.

And maybe if it is just principles, I, for one, am of the view that the Race to the Top, some of the innovative things that have been going on in some of the other parts of the education system in the United States are positive. I think the charter school movement is positive.

We need to have some of that very same focus on early childhood, and we need to stay with it for a long period of time. So I think I have answered your question. Yes, I think it should be zero, and I would spend my \$1—50 cents on early childhood, probably 25 to 30 cents on elementary, and what is left on secondary.

The CHAIRMAN. Well, thank you. That is interesting.

Mr. Schweinhart.

Mr. SCHWEINHART. We are kind of handed a lot of institutions that started a long time ago. Schools pretty clearly started at age 5 or 6 in order to take advantage of the fact that kids were starting to learn how to read and manipulate symbols and that sort of thing. We have come a long way since those days, and we understand the way children develop a whole lot better today than we did back when we institutionalized schooling.

So we know that rather than a tight focus on reading and mathematics, children are developing cognitively, socially, and physically. And because that is the way they are developing, that is the way our institutions ought to be focusing.

I am no expert in policy tools. That is what you guys do, and it seems to me how we put those policy tools together is largely the purvey of this committee. Whether it is Head Start or Childcare Development Block Grant or ESEA, those are balancing acts. I think, generally speaking, our society needs to invest more in children's development in order to be as healthy and powerful as it can be in the future.

Now, how we get there is a question of balancing one thing against the other, but I think—I remember a quote from Urie Bronfenbrenner some years ago. They asked him what age was the most important. He said birth is the most important, and 1 is the most important, 2 is the most important, 3 is the most important, and 5 and 6 and 7 and 8. Every age of a child is the most important, and that is what we have got to do.

The CHAIRMAN. OK. Mr. Pianta, should we address early childhood education in the reauthorization?

Mr. PIANTA. Yes. Break ground. I think it is time to do that. My remarks were pretty consistent with that.

I think, Senator Harkin, you raised the issue of whether there should be an educational component to many of the investments that you are currently making? I would say, yes, there should be an educational component. That we could argue about what the nature of that component would be—there would be a difference of opinion about that—but these environments are—you are paying for environments that are too passive right now.

You need environments that are actively engaging kids and intentionally engaging kids in learning, however we would appro-

priately define that for 2-year-olds or for 7-year-olds. And I think that is the key leverage point that you have.

I think right now whether you spend \$1 or \$10, you are paying for a lot of activities. You are paying for a lot of adults. You are paying for a lot of space. And my point would be a lot of that could be better utilized if focused more intentionally and the goals and methods defined a little more clearly. So those would be my points. Yes.

The CHAIRMAN. Back to that dollar.

Mr. PANTA. OK.

The CHAIRMAN. Ms. Zalkind, please, I am way over my time. Should we address that in this bill?

Ms. ZALKIND. We certainly should address that in that bill, and I would spend my whole dollar on early childhood education, obviously, because I think that is where you get the most bang for the buck. That if kids are failing by the end of the third grade, you are going to keep spending money to remediate. So if we invest early, we get more bang for that dollar than anywhere else.

The CHAIRMAN. Thank you very much.

Senator Burr.

Senator BURR. Henrietta, North Carolina—More at Four, Head Start, Smart Start, CCDBG. If I made the statement that I don't think we are as successful as we could be and I were to blame that on the lack of coordination, what would you say?

Ms. ZALKIND. I would say the coordination is something that we work on every day at the local level. I think that is something that this reauthorization could address. I think that if we promote a paradigm that uses a framework like Ready Schools to coordinate all the different opportunities and funding sources toward common ends that communities can build on their strengths and coordinate and leverage all different opportunities, depending on families' diverse needs.

Senator BURR. I think I heard Mr. Griswell say, we have all these things out there, and there is nobody really driving the train here. We are not using the assets that are in the system as effectively, and what works for one might not work for another. What works in this community might not necessarily be the optimal thing.

So this is not necessarily about replicating success. It is taking the tools that we know work and applying them effectively, and coordination is an absolute key.

Many of you in your testimony today talked about the need to ensure better transition between early childhood education and elementary schools so that the positive effects of that quality early childhood education don't fade. So let me ask anybody that would like to talk, to expand on that just a little bit more.

But also I would say since many low-income children enter elementary school from a federally supported program like Head Start or CCDBG programs, what policy recommendations do you have for us for those two programs specifically that we need to address in this legislation? I will let anybody who would like to take it on.

Mr. PANTA. You could start requiring that there would be articulation of the curriculum used across Head Start programs and the local school system. That would be one thing. You could start by

requiring that those teachers, the adults who are working with kids in Head Start programs, were exposed to the same form of professional development so that professional development occurred jointly from those Head Start-funded programs and elementary age.

I would argue don't stop with Head Start. Try to extend into the other kinds of settings and programs that are serving young kids, too, so that a coherent approach to educating young kids exists in a community.

Mr. GRISWELL. Senator, if I might? First of all, I would like to thank North Carolina for being a role model in so many ways. I know when a lot of States set out to try to figure out what to do in early childhood, North Carolina is often brought up as a State that is doing it better than most. So I congratulate you on that.

I think one of the things that I would point out is this enormous need for quality rating systems, whether it be in the Government program or in the private sector. And it is amazing to me how much resistance you get to quality rating systems. People don't really want to be held accountable for having a childcare center that meets certain standards, and you will get a lot of pushback, well, if you did that, there will be fewer facilities. And I think we have got to hold the line and make sure that quality, above all else, is included in all the efforts, whether it be Government programs or private programs.

Business is stepping up. My company, 2 years ago, developed its own childcare center in conjunction with our company. So we partnered with Bright Horizons. And so, we now have, as part of the experience of working for the Principal Financial Group, we have a 5-week to 5-year-old childcare facility right in our complex.

So we are going to make sure that we are doing our part to make sure that employees of the Principal—but it shouldn't be just employees of Principal. It ought to be every child ought to have that kind of quality experience.

Senator BURR. Tremendous. Tremendous.

In the counties of Nash and Edgecombe County, where Ms. Zalkind is from, nearly one-third of the children between the ages of 2 and 4 are either overweight or at risk for obesity. These numbers represent a health crisis in my estimation.

The Down East Partnership, Ms. Zalkind, has recently launched a wellness and prevention strategy in those counties, in those schools aimed at instilling good ideas and healthy lifestyles in children at a very, very young age. Let me just ask, do you have any recommendations on how we might better attend to the health and physical domain of children's development across various Federal programs—school lunch, other food programs, CCDBG, Head Start?

And as a side note, from a standpoint of the free and reduced school meals, should we—the Federal Government—since we fund them, set a nutritional value that might have an influence on everything else that is served in a cafeteria? To whoever would like to take it.

Mr. SCHWEINHART. Yes.

[Laughter.]

Mr. PIANTA. Is there any question?

Mr. SCHWEINHART. But I would like to speak to the thrust of your questioning, too. It seems to me that what could be really helpful is clarity of objectives. The objective that I think is particularly important here is contributing to children's development—cognitive, socio-emotional, and physical. If we keep a clear focus on that, a lot of stuff will flow from that and certain kinds of policies that we have now that are not clearly serving that end would be sort of identified as such.

A lot of our early childhood programs operate with a confused agenda. You go back to Head Start, it was a part of the civil rights movement as well as the child development movement, and there are conflicts within it because of that dual heritage. Childcare Development Block Grant clearly was very much focused on helping families to get more people into the workforce. And to the extent that that was the case, we are not contributing to children's development as much as we could with that law.

And it seems to me that Elementary and Secondary Education Act has had various kinds of more tight focus over the years when, in fact, a general focus on children's development across those three laws, I think, in particular could help to clarify what we are trying to do.

Senator BURR. Anybody else?

Mr. Chairman, thank you.

The CHAIRMAN. Thank you, Senator Burr.

And in order of appearance on this side anyway, it is Senators Brown, Sanders, Franken, Murray, Bennet, Casey, Dodd, and Merkley.

Senator Brown.

STATEMENT OF SENATOR BROWN

Senator BROWN. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Thank you for the insight all of you showed. I first want to make an observation that all of you made such compelling cases for early childhood education and what we need to do.

My State of Ohio, the legislature just recently passed, required full-day kindergarten. It had been half day until 2 or 3 years ago. That is the good news. The bad news is that schools right now are asking for waivers to scale back to a half a day, and in some cases, where school districts had half-day kindergarten prior to the new law and half-day early childhood, they are petitioning to eliminate—or I guess they are not even petitioning in this case. They are eliminating early childhood programs because of space and cost to make room for the full-day kindergarten.

I hope that in light of the case you made—and I wish there were more Senators at this hearing—this brings us to real consensus on not what we do programmatically, but also on spending the money we need on early childhood education. We are all seeing terrible budget cuts in our States, almost every State here, on education and on everything else.

I know that every dollar, as the chairman's question suggests, that we spend or don't spend or cut on early childhood education inflicts so much damage and, as Mr. Griswell said, more time in prison, more mental health dollars, more dropout dollars, more dropouts, all of that. That is my observation.

But I hope, as we move on this budget coming up, as we move on particularly Chairman Harkin's idea with spending money directly on teachers that we will see the kind of consensus in this Senate that we ought to see on these kinds of issues.

Question of Ms. Zalkind, if I could? The kind of collaboration you have is what we would like to replicate in Ohio and I think so many States, so many people, so many of us would all over the country. I am working on legislation that will help communities in developing better ways to coordinate and integrate and provide services to strengthen student achievement, ranging from early education to tutoring and extended learning time to healthcare and social support.

Schools clearly are the best vehicle to connect children and families to the support they need to be successful on a whole range of issues. Tell us more about how Down East Partnership built that collaboration. And how we can use that and replicate that other places, if you would?

Ms. ZALKIND. Well, it has been a 16-year process, and when I ever talk about how we built it, we built it one activity at a time where we had consensus, where we had strength, where we had something to build on. Senator Burr is looking at our Healthy Kids collaborative map, and we have just launched that.

But if you start where you have consensus, and that is one of the things that I think I feel so strongly about—the Ready Schools process—that if you bring a group of people together and you use a validated instrument to look at where are we strong, where can we build our capacity? And start where people agree and build out from there, that every dollar does have to count.

Sometimes, what you really need is the plan, and giving people the time and the space and the process to plan where are they? How can they move from this place to this place to this place? To move at intermediate steps toward long-term goals.

That is another thing I think that could be integrated into the law, that certainly we want every child doing well on the third grade end-of-year test, but there are intermediate outcomes to getting to everyone launched at the end of the third grade. And doing the HighScope or any other kind of assessment like that lets people see the visible progress working together and also lets them see what it is that they need that they may not have to spend money on, that they may be able to get a church to donate, that they may be able to get a business to sponsor.

So, really giving people the space and the time to plan across those stakeholder groups where they can find those consensus points and move forward and then build out from there because everything leads back. All of the issues are interconnected.

Senator BROWN. For any of you, how do we write ESEA to foster that kind of collaboration? Any thoughts that any of you have on that?

Mr. Schweinhart.

Mr. SCHWEINHART. It is important for school folks to recognize that there are communities beyond the schools. To the extent that you simply make it clear that when there is community collaboration, it involves the whole community with representation beyond the schools, that would help a lot.

Ms. ZALKIND. And to have aligned standards and joint professional development and a curriculum that operates at a high quality that recognizes that there are a variety of providers at all levels from 0 to 8, from Early Head Start to private providers, to the schools, and to State-funded programs so that if you put the money that is coming from the Federal Government and No Child Left Behind and title I into a context, into a system.

We have been blessed in North Carolina to really be working off a joint system. Now we are always working to make that system better, but you have to keep all of those balls in the air at the same time in terms of teacher wages and quality standards and school articulation agreements. But you have to envision that paradigm as a prevention paradigm and align those standards.

And I think Dr. Schweinhart's point about there is life outside the school, and life outside the school can help. But schools are afraid because they have been penalized if they don't meet those standards. So they are very focused on teaching to the test. And so, breaking down and giving them some other ways to show success and letting people try some things and try some innovation and try some new ways of reaching out, I think that dollar will go farther.

Mr. PIANTA. I would add a couple points to that. So you have the opportunity to extend data systems into the younger ages. So the longitudinal data systems that you are investing in from K on the way up should be extended down lower so that the kids in programs in those lower age programs are connected to those data systems.

Qualifications and training would be the same way. The mention of quality grading and improvement systems, this idea that you go in and rate and give stars to incent improved quality in early childhood, why not do that in K-3? So I think there are lots of opportunities in the bill.

The CHAIRMAN. Senator Sanders.

STATEMENT OF SENATOR SANDERS

Senator SANDERS. Thank you, Mr. Chairman. And Mr. Chairman, thank you very much for holding this hearing on an issue which in no way gets the kind of attention that it deserves.

Let us be very clear, and let me not mince words. The way we treat children in this country is an international embarrassment, and the way we do childcare is a national disgrace, which, as Mr. Griswell and some of the others indicated, impacts every aspect of our lives, from our economy to the number of kids that we have in jail.

We have, at 18 percent, the highest rate of childhood poverty in the industrialized world, and we are all very shocked that we end up having more people in jail than China, a country much larger than ours, communist, authoritarian society. We have more people behind bars than they do at \$50,000 a head.

Now the good news is, Mr. Chairman, you have assembled an excellent panel. The bad news is that, in all due respect, my guess is that in the last 30 years, we have had people sitting right where you are sitting saying exactly the same thing. It is not rocket science.

If you ignore the needs of little children, you know what? They are going to fail in school. And if they fail in school, you know what? They are going to do crime, and they are going to end up in jail, and they are not going to be good employees. It has probably been said here 800 times, and yet we have not bitten the bullet on this issue.

So the first issue that—and then you have got absurdity right now, as we speak, millions of kids whose parents are working. You know, we have forgotten that this is not the 1950s, where daddy goes to work and mommy stays home and takes care of the kids. Guess what? That is not the case anymore.

In Vermont, something like 70 percent of the children in the State have working parents. Mom and dad are both working. What do we do with the kids? Well, if maybe we are lucky, their grandma can take care of them, or maybe the neighbor down the street can take care of them who doesn't have any background at all, or maybe we can hire somebody at \$9 an hour without any benefits.

We have got to ask some very basic questions. The chairman talked about priorities, and he is right. And we have screwed this up royally, and it is time that we rethought it, and it is going to cost us money. But at the end of the day, I think we save money.

So let me start off. There are countries around the world which do things like say, you know what, a childcare worker is as important as a college professor. At the very least, we are going to train that employee, make it a dignified profession, and pay them the same wages as other teachers get.

No. 2, the simple question—all right, we have done a whole lot of talking here. Let us get to the root of it. Should every child in this country, because of Federal law, have the right to quality childcare from birth to kindergarten? That is the \$64 question. I believe that we should. Is it expensive? Absolutely. Especially for little kids, you have to have a high ratio of employees for the kids. It is expensive.

I think you save money down the road, as Mr. Griswell indicated, by having kids do better in school, become better workers, fewer people in jail. That is my first question, and it is an expensive proposition.

We are in the midst of a recession. We have a huge national debt. Mr. Griswell, should every kid in the—and I would like all of you to answer. Should every kid in this country, as a right of citizenship, be entitled to good-quality childcare? Yes, no, maybe?

Mr. GRISWELL. I believe they should. I believe children of wealthy and middle-income people get it anyway. This is about poverty. This is about income. This is about socio-economics. I believe they should. I believe it is a crime that they are not.

Senator SANDERS. Thank you.

Mr. Schweinhart.

Mr. SCHWEINHART. I was just thinking about welfare reform and how we saved money, but we didn't make any. And it is harder to do investment because there is a delay in getting the returns. But if we don't—in any business, if you don't make investments, you can't cut your way to a successful business, and it is completely analogous to the situation we have got here.

If we don't invest as much as we possibly can in our children—

Senator SANDERS. Should every child, by right, have access to high quality child care? Right now in the State of Vermont—I guess each State does it differently—every kid has got to be in school in the first grade. They get free education through high school. Should that same opportunity be available for kids when they are born in terms of childcare?

Mr. SCHWEINHART. Of course, every child deserves a good early childhood education. The only question—

Senator SANDERS. And it is the Government's responsibility to make sure it happens?

Mr. SCHWEINHART. It is a question of where Government comes in and how we balance that.

Senator SANDERS. OK.

Mr. SCHWEINHART. I don't want to say Government has to do it all, but we have to do it all.

Senator SANDERS. Well, I am not sure who else is going to do it.

Mr. Pianta.

Mr. Pianta. I think it is the Government's job to make sure it happens. I am not sure it is the Government's job to provide it for all children. I agree with Mr. Griswell. So I think we should be absolutely paying attention to whether every kid in this country is exposed to the kind of learning opportunities that help them be successful.

Senator SANDERS. Now I am not saying that every program has got to be run by the Government, but there has to be the funding there in the same way kids go to the first grade, somebody is poor, they are going to walk into that public school. Right now, if they are poor, they don't walk into quality childcare. Should the Government make sure that that happens?

Mr. Pianta. The Government should make sure that the playing field is equal in childcare as a way of doing that.

Senator SANDERS. Ms. Zalkind.

Ms. ZALKIND. I would agree. Where we have come down in terms of our planning is to make sure that every child has high-quality early care and education environment. And to make sure that every environment, whether that is home, whether that is a family home childcare, whether that is a childcare center, whether that is Head Start, whether that is a public school, that all of those environments have adequate funds and adequate supports to make it high quality.

So I think you have to build parent choice into the equation, but that the Government should provide adequate funding to make sure that all of those environments are high quality and that every child gets a chance to succeed.

Senator SANDERS. Thank you.

Mr. Chairman, I would just conclude, and it is an issue that has not come up, and maybe Mr. Griswell wants to say a word on this. It is not only for the children. It is not only for their parents. It is for the economy as well.

If I am a single mom going to work, how do I do my job if I don't know that my kid has good quality care? And I have got to tell you in Vermont, it is very hard to find—my daughter's middle-class baby, hard to find affordable, good-quality childcare.

But it affects people's jobs, right?

Mr. GRISWELL. Absolutely. I mean, I did say in my remarks that in a competitive global economy, we are not going to compete if we don't solve this problem. We are wasting 25 to 30 percent of our human capital. There is no way we are going to compete if we don't solve this problem, I believe.

Senator SANDERS. Thank you all very much.

Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

The CHAIRMAN. Thank you, Senator Sanders.

Senator Franken.

STATEMENT OF SENATOR FRANKEN

Senator FRANKEN. I am going to echo what some of my colleagues have talked about, which is the return on investment, and I am echoing what you have talked about. And as a Congress, we are all concerned about the deficit, but we are most concerned about long-term deficit. And I agree with colleagues on both sides of the aisle that it is wrong to saddle our children with debt by allowing our long-term deficit to spiral out of control.

But as you have all testified, quality early childhood education programs produce high returns on investment, and we have had Art Rolnick from the Federal Reserve in Minnesota and James Heckman talk about the returns ranging from, I don't know, I have heard anywhere from \$3 to \$17 for every \$1 spent. So if you are talking about long-term deficits, I think we are being penny-wise and pound-foolish by not spending now on early childhood.

I want to talk about a program in Minnesota because I think this has to start prenatally and go through the rest of school. In Minnesota, we have this great home visiting program called Dakota Healthy Families. And basically, pediatricians and social workers and obstetrician/gynecologists identify at-risk parents. This is all voluntary.

The obstetrician/gynecologists make sure that the mom has good prenatal care, and then they make sure that they give the parents parenting training, which Ms. Zalkind talked about, and then they do home visits. And they do home visits until the child goes to preschool. They have learned this program pays for itself simply in the number of children—in the reduced number of child abuse case-workers that need to be hired.

Now my daughter taught third grade in the Bronx for 3 years, the first 3 years out of college. She is now working in the DC elementary schools. Her experience was there would be two or three disruptive kids in the class. You can imagine that kids who have been abused are just more disruptive than kids who haven't been abused.

So this isn't just affecting those kids. It is affecting every kid in the class, and it is affecting every teacher. I guess my question is, have you looked at these kind of early visitation programs, this kind of program like Dakota Healthy Families, and why aren't we doing it everywhere? Anybody?

Mr. GRISWELL. I would just point out in Minnesota, you have something else. You have the first early childhood program of United Way that is called Success by 6. And indeed, I think United Way and other organizations like that are taking a leadership role. One of their national priorities, called Born Learning, is to raise

awareness and to share best practices on programs like you are talking.

So I think there are a lot of those. Certainly, I would point out United Way has been one that is doing similar programs to what you just mentioned.

Ms. ZALKIND. And clearly, home visiting is one of the things that there are many good evidence-based—not many, but there are good evidence-based models behind. They show great returns on investment. And focusing on young children, 0- to 3-year-olds is where you are going to get the most return on the investment.

So I think that that goes back to Senator Harkin's comment, where does Early Head Start fit into this?

Senator FRANKEN. What the chairman was talking about was where do we put our dollars? He had that question for you all. And every witness we have, the ones who are talking about adolescents said we don't spend enough in eighth grade.

And what this is, is about return on investment. And if we are really serious, I am talking really serious about not saddling our kids with debt—and I say this to my colleagues on both sides of the aisle. If we are really serious about that, we have to focus on what kind of resources we are devoting. And we don't want to waste money, and we want to coordinate right, and we want to do that right.

I guess we are going to do another round, but I want to talk to Mr. Pianta about teaching, about preparing teachers, about teaching assessment because I know that you might have some kind of, I don't know, regime that works for assessing early childhood teachers. Do you know of one?

Yes, just as a 10-second question.

Mr. Pianta. Yes. Yes. So we have—

Senator FRANKEN. What is it called?

Mr. Pianta. Classroom Assessment Scoring System, that is the one we developed. That is one of them. There is one called the Early Childhood Environment Rating System. That is another one. There are others.

Senator FRANKEN. And I have run out of time. So I will respect that.

Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

The CHAIRMAN. Thank you, Senator Franken.

I just might point out to my friend from Minnesota that in the healthcare reform bill, there is a \$1.5 billion mandatory program over 10 years for home visiting that will in part, provide additional support for expectant mothers' prenatal care.

Senator FRANKEN. Yes. I am also talking about once the child has been born and continuing that visitation until the child is actually going to preschool.

The CHAIRMAN. That money can be used for that, too.

Senator FRANKEN. Yes. OK.

The CHAIRMAN. Senator Murray.

STATEMENT OF SENATOR MURRAY

Senator MURRAY. Mr. Chairman, thank you so much for having this hearing.

I have to say that after our 10th hearing on the Elementary and Secondary Education Act, it is wonderful to see so much passion about an issue that I think we all care about. I come to this not just as a U.S. Senator, but as a mom who put my kids through school, a PTA member, a school board president, but probably most importantly, the only preschool teacher up here on this panel.

This is a real passion of mine, and I think we know the research and know how important it is. And as Senator Sanders said, we keep talking about it and haven't done it. So I see this as a tremendous opportunity for us to really make some progress on this.

My home State of Washington has really embraced investments in early childhood education. Back in 2006, our Governor and the legislature, in partnership, created the State Department of Early Learning. I think it is the first cabinet-level agency in the country focused on this and really looking at how we can bring together all the partners, which many of you alluded to. You can't just do it with one agency. You need your State, your local governments, businesses, parents, tribes, and teachers. Everybody has to be involved in this, and I appreciate that.

My question to all of you is, every one of you talked about high-quality early learning, and I can tell you, as a preschool teacher, I knew the first day of class which kids came into my classroom with some kind of high-quality childcare or education before and which ones had not. It is essential, but we throw that term around very loosely.

I wanted to ask all of you what do you mean by "high quality?" Is it a teacher, or a curriculum, or are you talking about parental involvement? What is it that defines "high quality" for you?

Mr. GRISWELL. Well, I think the answer to that is, yes. One of the programs I was involved with was we took a lot of the inner-city daycare centers and we put a 4-year effort to try to improve quality. In fact, everything you just mentioned, you start with a teacher and elevating the professionalism of the teacher and give them opportunity for development.

You look at the curriculum and make sure you have nationally accredited curriculum. You look at the facilities. You look at outreach to the parents to make sure that they are engaged in the learning process. And if you change those things dramatically and if you track the progress of the kids coming into a system like that, you will see 60 to 70 percent improvement over 4 or 5 years, something you already know.

Mr. SCHWEINHART. I actually spoke about what I think is the heart of quality, which is good interactive child development curriculum and regular checkups or generally making sure you are doing the job. A couple of other things that I would have said if I had a little more time was that we really need qualified teachers. You all have heard of those.

And we need, what "qualified" means, quite simply, is teachers who know what they are doing. There has been some discussion about whether Bachelor's degrees are real indicators of quality or not. The real point is that you need people who know what they are doing. And that means you need clarity of goals of what early childhood education is all about, and I have tried to speak to that.

Then I want to echo what was just said, that we also need to have strong outreach to parents so that parents are really seen as partners with the teachers in raising the kids.

Another point I want to say in response to what you are asking and kind of echo something that came from Senator Franken earlier, we have really got to focus on quality control of programs that are known to work and make sure that they are really being the programs that work. We need to invest what it takes into the programs themselves to make sure that those programs are really doing what needs to be done to get the long-term return on investment.

You can't build a luxury hotel at cut rate and expect it to have the same kind of drawing power as if you put all the money into it. We need to have really good programs that have solid investments in order to get the return on investment.

Senator MURRAY. Mr. Pianta.

Mr. PIANTA. Well, I think you already know the answer to your question, Senator Murray, because quality is what the adults do with kids. So it is all about the engagement of adults in interactions that are tuned in ways to push kids' development, whether those are conversations and language development, whether it is comforting a kid when the kid is upset, or whether it is pointing out to a kid the conceptual nature of something rather than just memorization.

Those features of interactions between kids and adults can be assessed. They can be quantified. They can even be put into regulations. Head Start is using our measure, the Classroom Assessment Scoring System, and has used others as assessments monitoring tools for a large-scale program. The quality rating and improvement systems that Mr. Griswell mentioned are also those.

So quality is about what teachers do with children, and I would argue, with all due respect to Mr. Sanders, that 10 years ago, we would not have drawn that conclusion as clearly. I think we have moved the needle. The question is whether policy can catch up with that.

Senator MURRAY. Ms. Zalkind.

Ms. ZALKIND. I would agree with everything that has been said. In North Carolina, we have a five-star rating system that focuses on teacher interactions, but also focuses on facilities, focuses on making sure that children are progressing in all five domains of child development. And so, that is a standardized measure of quality, but we use the environmental rating scale as a way to measure that.

But again, there are other factors that go into that in terms of parent interaction. You can have a four or five star, but if you still don't interact with the parents and still don't deal with all five domains of child development, don't do transitions and have a working relationship with the school so that we can keep building out, we miss the mark. But you have got to have some minimum standards so people are working off the same set of benchmarks.

Senator MURRAY. OK. I appreciate that, and I am out of time.

I just want to make one other comment. Whenever we have this discussion about assessments, we get back to are we going to have a test that we hand these kids, and if they pass, then the teacher

is doing well? I just have to tell everybody, if you put 24 4-year-olds in front of me, and you show them a picture of a pig, they may or may not answer that day, dependent on their day, not yours. So we have to be really careful of how we implement assessments.

Thank you.

The CHAIRMAN. Thank you for that lesson, teacher.

[Laughter.]

Senator Bennet.

STATEMENT OF SENATOR BENNET

Senator BENNET. Thank you, Mr. Chairman. Thanks for all of the hearings, including this one.

And to the panel, thank you very much for your testimony.

We had some experience with this in Denver, where we passed a sales tax, which is not the ordinary source of funding for schools. And what we said was the revenue from that is available to everybody, to all providers, public and nonprofit and private providers. And that families would get more, depending on how poor they were or what their income level was and the quality of the program they went to.

So the higher the poverty, the better quality of the program, the more the subsidy that you got, which I thought was a clever way of trying to deal with the quality issue as well as the issue of access.

I was looking at some numbers here that show that there are roughly 19 million children served by title I dollars in this country. And of that 19 million, there are roughly half a million that are age 0 to 5 getting preschool services. Do you have any idea why if it is so blindingly obvious to everybody here that we should be investing in early childhood that only 3 percent of the children served by title I are the kids that we are all talking about today?

Does anybody have a view on that?

Ms. ZALKIND. I think we don't have a prevention paradigm in the title I law. I think we have an intervention and a remedial paradigm that we have to shift, and I think the time to shift is now.

And in our local communities, that paradigm has shifted, and they spend a significant portion of their title I money on early education because it is worth it to them. They wanted to know the kids who came to kindergarten before they came to kindergarten so they spent money on the system of home-school contacts. They spent money on staff that would staff preschool 4-year-old programs.

Senator BENNET. Dr. Pianta, do you have a view on that? You have been seeing a lot of districts. Why aren't they spending their money on early childhood?

Mr. PIANTA. I just think there are structural issues that prevent that from flowing. So very oftentimes, those dollars are flowing into a K-12 system that organizes itself as a K-12 system, defines itself as a K-12 system, and early education sits outside of that system.

Senator BENNET. So you and I, we didn't practice this, but that is exactly where I was headed.

[Laughter.]

I think the question that I have is if you look at title I, you look at the way ESEA works, you look at Head Start, you look at the Childcare Development Block Grant, you can see that these aren't

even administered by the same agencies in Washington. Even within the bureaucracies, they are administered by a couple of places.

And I guess the question that I have is from the vantage point of people serving kids, does that make a lot of sense, or should we be figuring out how to drive and incentivize the kind of cooperation and collaboration that might actually make these dollars go a much longer way with a much more sensible set of priorities than the ones that we seem to be chasing right now?

Doctor, I will start with you again.

Mr. PIANTA. I just think that is a sensible approach, and I think it is echoed in Senator Murray's statement about what Washington State is doing to integrate at the State level. We need to incent that kind of integration at all levels.

Mr. SCHWEINHART. I would just like to add to that. I don't know every line in the current ESEA, but it seems to me there are pretty clearly incentives for K to 12. We are telling them where to put the money, and we are not incentivizing kids younger than that. So it would be really good to take a look at that and see if there would be a way to incentivize kids so that we can get the biggest bang for the buck rather than whether they are in the system or not.

Mr. GRISWELL. A mentor of mine one time said, you know, we have kids being thrown in the river, and people downstream are picking them out of the river and saving them one person at a time. And everybody is focused on that, and it is important. But nobody has thought yet to go back upstream and see who it is that is throwing these kids in the river and how we can stop them from being thrown in.

I don't think you stop it until we get organized and coordinated. And quite frankly, I don't want to be disparaging toward the Government, but I worry whether you have the ability to connect all the dots because you have so many things in so many different places.

Senator BENNET. Well, I think the question maybe is a slightly different one because it is sort of a balance between how prescriptive we want to be from here versus how much flexibility we want to give people to make the right decisions and how we make sure we don't create a set of incentives and disincentives that don't lead people in the wrong direction or spend their time fighting for what, no matter what we all say, fighting for whatever very, very scarce resources rather than beginning to focus on the child and working backwards from there.

Mr. GRISWELL. I was trying to agree with you. Perhaps not so. But I think having all of your work spread out between so many different committees and departments, I mean, it would seem to me you would want to have all things related to child development and family development somehow at least coordinated so that these programs—I mean, it is a patchwork of things that you, that the Government—we put out there. I don't want to blame it on you.

All well intended, but what is out there right now is a patchwork, and I don't know how you make your way through a cohesive view of child development when you have to go so many places. I think States and businesses and others have to take the lead locally, but I hope that we can somehow reach into our taxpayer dol-

lars that go through you to find ways to have them better coordinated.

Senator BENNET. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

The CHAIRMAN. I think, Mr. Griswell, aligning these programs and systems is one of the things we really have to focus on. The current system is a patchwork. There is nothing really pulling them together, this is one of our challenges.

Mr. GRISWELL. And I will just say this, as a business person who walked into this field, there are more acronyms, there are more people, there are more things going on in this. You think it should be pretty straightforward, and you start stirring around in this pot, and you will find the Abecedarian and all of these research. And all of a sudden, you find there are so many ways to go at it, and every State is going at it differently.

In some ways, you have got to hold up the North Carolinas and, to some extent, Georgias and other States. I think it is the University of Vermont that has this enormous study that they do that lists, State by State, who is doing the best job of solving this problem, who is the most efficient. And we ought to be learning the lessons from those.

Colorado is doing a great job with Colorado Care. We ought to really learn from the States that are doing it right and try to model those, I think.

The CHAIRMAN. I just asked my staff to get that study. What is it, a Vermont study?

Mr. GRISWELL. I will locate it for you. I believe it is the University of Vermont that does it. It is in Connecticut or Vermont, Maine. But they are looked at—I am sorry—

[Laughter.]

You know, Iowa, Ohio, Idaho?

[Laughter.]

They are renowned for their annual study. Maybe some of the colleagues know which one it is.

Senator FRANKEN. Not that renowned.

Mr. GRISWELL. Apparently.

[Laughter.]

The CHAIRMAN. Senator Casey.

STATEMENT OF SENATOR CASEY

Senator CASEY. Thank you very much, Mr. Chairman.

I want to thank our panelists for your testimony and for the work you are doing in this area.

The way I approach this issue I think is the way that everybody in this room does in one way or the other. There are at least two good reasons to move forward with a strategy on early education. One, of course, is I think the obligation that all of us feel about children, no matter whose child they are.

We believe, as a country, that every child who is born in this country has a light inside them. And for some children because of their circumstances, because of advantages or who their parents are or where they were born, that light will be incandescent. The reach of it will be blinding. But for other children, the light will be a lot more limited. And whatever the reach of that light or

whatever the potential, we believe we should make sure that every child realizes that potential.

In some areas, we are doing a pretty good job as a country. In some areas, we are not. We finally moved forward with an investment in children with regard to their healthcare a couple of years ago. It is rather recent. In the last 15 years, we have made progress there.

On the issue of early childhood education, we have made very little progress if you set aside what we have done in a very positive way with Head Start. But on a national commitment to early education, we are a long way from getting there. Nutrition is one way that we can have a tremendous impact on children, and other than healthcare and early learning and nutrition, safety or protecting our kids is probably the fourth.

But I think the second reason that we are here is because we believe that an investment in a child in the dawn of his or her life, as Hubert Humphrey talked about a long time ago, not only has positive benefits for the child and their family, but long term for our workforce. Whether it is making sure that the bright light in a child is realized, the potential of it is realized, or whether we are worried about our workforce, I think that is why we are here.

And we have a number of people on this committee who, for many years, have been fighting this battle one way or the other. Chris Dodd, chairman of the Banking Committee, a longtime member of this committee. Tom Harkin, Patty Murray, who have been here long before I got here on these issues.

But we have to take action. We have talked about it too much or talked about it enough at least, and we haven't made progress. One way to do it this year is to take advantage of this opportunity, and I think that is one of the reasons we are here.

I have a bill that gets to a lot of it. It is S.839, the Prepare All Kids Act. It has the elements of a research-based curriculum, making sure the quality is there with regard to teachers, but also making sure that if we are going to help States do this, and a lot of them need the incentive to do it, that they have a monitor. And it can't just be any commitment. It has to be a commitment to quality.

And we have to measure results. We have to make sure that we are making a full investment.

The question I have is: How do we get there in terms of implementing this on a national scale? We have a lot of good models. You mentioned a number of States. I would add Pennsylvania to the list, but I know you were getting to that.

[Laughter.]

But some States need more incentives, and some States, frankly, just need help. They have expended a lot of money and had to fight battles. In our State a couple of years ago, Governor Rendell had to fight long and hard to get \$75 million in a big State like that, but it was a tough fight.

So, I would ask you: What is the best way to get there? Some would say just passing a bill like the bill we have, and I would certainly favor that. Some would say, no, let us work it into title I. Others would say, no, the President has an initiative. There is a way to get it done there.

I would ask you, it is both a policy and a strategic question, but what do you think is the best way to get there in terms of not just getting anything done or something done, but doing it in a way that will have an impact that will be consistent with what States are doing already? And we have 33 seconds.

Mind if we go left to right?

[The prepared statement of Senator Casey follows:]

PREPARED STATEMENT OF SENATOR ROBERT P. CASEY, JR.

Mr. Chairman, I'd like to thank you for holding this hearing today to discuss what, in my opinion, is one of the most critical issues affecting our Nation's children, our continued prosperity and our position as a world leader.

As Hubert Humphrey once said,

"The moral test of a government is how it treats those who are at the dawn of life, the children; those who are in the twilight of life, the aged; and those who are in the shadow of life, the sick, the needy, and the handicapped."

As to our children, we are not doing enough. By not providing every American child equal educational opportunities, we are failing to allow them to seize every opportunity to succeed.

I believe that every child is born with a bright light inside of him or her. We can help to make sure this light shines as brightly as possible—and, in turn, illuminates people and places around them—by providing him or her with the right tools and resources to shine.

High-quality education early in life will prepare all American children—not just some, but all—for success in academics, career, community, and beyond.

As we discuss reauthorization of the Elementary and Secondary Education Act—and how to make sure that our Nation's children graduate "career-" or "college-ready"—we need to recognize that if we want our children to end up on the right path, we need to start them off on the right foot.

The opportunity to educate a child, and prepare them for success in life, does not begin when a child first walks through the door the first day of kindergarten. It begins at birth.

Public education is a long-standing American commitment that provides great value for our children. The time has come, however, to reconsider the strengths of the investments we are making in our children and whether our current system is adequately serving our Nation's needs in the twenty-first century.

Many say that in light of current economic and fiscal concerns, our hands are tied—we don't have the resources to invest in all the things that merit consideration. I would say that when it comes to our children—the very future of this country—we cannot afford not to. An investment in children and high-quality education for all is an investment in our Nation's long-term economic and fiscal stability that will pay dividends down the road.

The research on return on investment in early childhood education is irrefutable. Investing in our children in their earliest years greatly improves their life outcomes. Conservative estimates put the savings to our economy at about \$7 for every \$1 we invest.

This is really about two things. It is certainly about our obligation to our children. But it also is about our obligation to our economy and our ability to deliver skilled workers to compete in a world economy.

Early childhood education offers the greatest opportunity to ensure that every American child reaches their potential. We know that for some American children, starting in kindergarten is already too late. For some of the most disadvantaged children, there is an achievement gap between them and their more privileged peers that sometimes never closes. One study showed that before entering kindergarten, the average cognitive scores of preschool-age children in the highest socioeconomic group were 60 percent above the average scores of children in the lowest socioeconomic group.

To make early childhood education a priority, I've introduced the *Prepare All Kids Act*. The *Prepare All Kids Act* is about investing in and preparing all kids. Not just some but all. The *Prepare All Kids Act* will assist States in providing at least 1 year of high quality pre-kindergarten to children, focusing on those who need help the most. Pre-kindergarten will be free for low-income children who are ready to learn, if only given the opportunity.

As we have heard from our panelists today, it is absolutely imperative that we don't see children in "pieces"—that we not create silos as we begin to focus on the kinds of investments our children really need. The *Prepare All Kids Act* would make sure that early childhood education is of high-quality, with lasting results, by ensuring that teachers are adequately trained and that pre-kindergarten programs utilize a research-based curriculum that supports children's cognitive, social, emotional and physical development and individual learning styles.

Critically, under the *Prepare All Kids Act*, States will not be able to divert designated funding for other early childhood programs into pre-kindergarten. We want pre-kindergarten to build upon and support other early childhood programs like Head Start and child care. We do not want pre-kindergarten to replace these programs in any way.

It is my deep conviction that as elected public servants, we have a sacred responsibility to ensure that all children in this country have the opportunity to grow in a manner where each child reaches their potential, to live the lives they were born to live. The *Prepare All Kids Act* is a big step in that direction and I ask my colleagues to join me in supporting this bill within the context of ESEA Reauthorization.

Our children are our future. With high-quality early education for all, we will let them shine their brightest and our future will be brighter for it.

Mr. Griswell.

Mr. GRISWELL. I am not sure why I get to go first every time. But I think what Senator Brown said, that at the end of the day, I think you need to take a holistic view that the education in this country starts at birth, and you need to build systems that address that. We need to get away from this thinking that it is somebody else's responsibility until they are age 5, and then it is the public's or the Government's responsibility.

That is backward thinking. It ought to go down to zero, and whatever it takes to get us to think about it that way. When it comes to local States, I am a big proponent in getting the business community involved, getting government involved, getting the providers involved. And I think that is what they have done in North Carolina and other States, but particularly, as she said there on the panel, is you have got to get a consensus and a collaboration going among all the people who benefit from having quality early childhood.

Mr. SCHWEINHART. I think I would suggest we build from the basis that we have already started to build. We have Head Start, which has a whole lot of unmet potential that can do a whole lot more than it has done.

I think with childcare, we need to get our priorities straight. We need to be clear what we are trying to do, and the fact that we haven't had a reauthorization since 1996 makes that even more clear. Things have changed so much since then. And the commitment, though, is still the same. How do we have a national policy of quality childcare, and what do we have to do to make that happen?

And I think the other thing, which is right before you right now, is elementary schools and the fact that elementary schools have invested more into early childhood education both what they have always done with first, second, third grade, and then kindergarten and then pre-K is a growing phenomenon.

Let us recognize the realities of elementary schools and do what we can to help them become a part of this great early childhood education movement.

Mr. Pianta. So I have mentioned a couple of things, but I think the extension, the inclusion of early childhood policies; and structurally, within discussion of title I, how you spend title I money; title II, focusing on the adults and the qualifications and the standards for the adults that are going to work with kids is very important.

I keep coming back to whatever you can do to push information that helps people drive decisions and policy. So these, you know, Race to the Top with longitudinal data systems, whatever you do—and I am sensitive to Senator Murray's comment about not testing a lot of kids. We don't even know where kids are right now.

The kinds of settings that kids are spending time in, the numbers of settings, the qualities of those settings, we are not attending to those in ways that you can make sensible policy on the basis of that. So I think there is just a whole lot of information investment that could go a long way.

Ms. Zalkind. I would say take every opportunity you can and don't try to put it all in one place. So, right now, you have an opportunity to embed the Ready Schools process in the No Child Left Behind Act. You took an opportunity that was before you to put home visiting in the healthcare reform. You can reauthorize the Childcare Development Block Grant with higher quality standards and State systems that align pre-K to 3. So I don't think that you should miss any opportunity to shift the paradigm, to focus and to start early and get the most bang for the buck because they will

all lead to the other eventually. That is how you build momentum, and that is how you build success.

It is all the same people at the local and the State level who are looking at how to feed kids nutritious meals in childcare and schools. They are all the same people looking at making sure that kids have good healthcare. So take every opportunity that you can.

Senator CASEY. Thanks.

The CHAIRMAN. Senator Dodd.

STATEMENT OF SENATOR DODD

Senator DODD. Well, thank you, Mr. Chairman.

There are so many things to talk to you about on all of this. First of all, it was 20 years ago that Orrin Hatch and I wrote in 1990 the Child Care and Development Block Grant. This year is the 20th anniversary of when he and I wrote that bill. And then, of course, you are right. We haven't reauthorized it since 1996.

I would be remiss if I didn't point out that Helen Blank is in the audience, and Helen Blank helped me write that legislation 20 years ago. I thank you, Helen. Stand up. Be recognized. Helen Blank.

[Applause.]

And in 1996, we did welfare reform, and there were 21 of us here in the U.S. Senate that voted against that bill at the time. It was a very popular idea because this was going to end welfare as we knew it. It was going to cut off cash payments within 5 years. And of course, the promise was that we were going to make sure that every child after that 5 years would get all the protection they would need and nutrition and childcare, and of course, it didn't happen.

Today, only one in seven children who are eligible are receiving any kind of assistance under the Child Care and Development Block Grant program. And I say that respectfully. We were going to end welfare as we know it. The overwhelming majority of cash welfare recipients are children. We always think the recipients are the families, but in fact, it is children who depend upon it.

And the idea that you are going to eliminate the ability of children to get the kind of assistance that they needed was always breath-taking to me when we fail to understand that it isn't just jobs, as I said, Mr. Schweinhart, it was also about education. It was about providing a safe, nurturing place where that child has a chance to develop the skill sets they need to be ready to learn.

The achievement gap is defined by age 3. By age 3, that is when the achievement gap is defined. So 36 months into a child's life, that achievement gap is defined. So this notion of waiting until they get into school or even 5 or 6 is beyond me in many ways.

And of course, we know that every dollar we invest in early childhood development saves \$10, \$1 for \$10. There is no debate about that. So just in simple math numbers, the investments we make up front make a huge financial difference. I always say if we weren't impressed by the ethics and the morality of it or the decency of it, just the sheer economics of it ought to compel you to understand what we are talking about.

So it has been a passion of mine over the 30 years I have been in this body and sitting on this committee. And the point that Ber-

nie Sanders was making and others have made is that this is the basic program. Obviously, I am a strong advocate and have been of Early Head Start and Head Start and pre-K programs. Again, Tom has done a great job with these hearings including this one over the last number of months.

I apologize for not being at all of them, but we have had other matters that I have had to attend to. But we are going to start, with the chairman's permission, we have organized between now and October a series of four or five hearings—I was telling Senator Casey about it a little while ago—on the status of the American child. And I would like, either through the Casey Foundation or Save The Children, to start a report card on child well-being, so we can start really making determinations on how we're doing for children.

Only 4 percent of title I money, goes to early childhood education, and that is an estimate because there is no data collected on it by the Federal Government. It is an approximate number we have. So we don't have a real number. So 96 percent of those resources are going to elementary and secondary, which are vitally important. But only 4 percent is going to early childhood education, and yet we know statistically how important those years are in people's development along the way.

Of course, the article I read on cuts to subsidized child care programs, I thought, was very, very good. Peter Goodman wrote a rather lengthy piece that appeared in the *New York Times* on May 23rd, which I thought was a very compelling piece. I strongly recommend it for people to get a sense of actually what happened with States cutting back the number of children they cover with child care subsidies.

California's governor has proposed eliminating child care assistance altogether. It would leave a million children without any support. Eleven thousand children in the State of Arizona are on the State's waiting list for child care assistance. And you can get your numbers State by State, and a lot of the States may surprise you as the ones that are cutting way back, some of the States we normally associate and think of as being a bit more progressive when it comes to caring for children's needs.

And I understand. I am not unmindful of the budget problems that States are facing. But I think Al Franken mentioned it. I think everyone on this committee at one point or another in their comments and questions have raised the issue about how penny-wise, pound-foolish it is when we are talking about once again recovery, getting on our feet and cutting off people.

So I guess this isn't a lot of questions, except that we have listed a number of things here, and having been the chairman of a committee and listening to all my colleagues with various amendment ideas, I know Tom Harkin will be delighted to hear about my amendment ideas.

[Laughter.]

But there are any number of them on title I data collection, the professional development piece. Memorandums of Understanding—Head Start is required to get it, but the elementary and secondary schools are not. So you have no comparative assessment as to how this is working. So I am hopeful we can include the memorandum

of understanding language in this legislation as well and that we really do get the data that we need to understand it.

The parental aspects of this. Again, going back to childcare, as well as we know that Head Start requires programs to encourage parental involvement. In the first grade parental participation is at 33 percent, it drops down to less than 8 percent participation by seventh grade. And there is nothing better, in my view, than linking up parents and children in the educational process and, obviously, parents and children in the childcare development programs.

Actually, Orrin Hatch and I went back even earlier, started with the childcare ideas of the early 1980s, when it wasn't terribly popular—we had magnificent childcare in this country in World War II. I invite people who like history to go back and look at what we did during the war years between 1941 and 1945. It was stunning, the quality of childcare.

I mean the availability of it, the cost were always major factors. But the quality of it was remarkable. And we all understood with the young men, most of the young men fighting in the European and Pacific theaters, women involved in war production, in these automobile plants and so on, turning out airplanes and tanks. We had to have childcare. It was a national security issue.

So we understood it, and we did it almost 70 years ago. And yet here we are in the 21st century, and there is a disconnect between what our parents and grandparents did, understanding it, and we just haven't picked up on it. We dropped it. Instead of picking up the models used where they had great healthcare providers, good education opportunities, great ratios, and the like.

Jerry, it is good to see you again. We saw each other when I spent a lovely time in Iowa.

[Laughter.]

Mr. GRISWELL. We miss you as a resident, sir.

Senator DODD. It was very brief. Appreciated the 99 counties, too, Jerry, and actually going by and meeting the folks at Principal when I was there.

But if you would, again, coming to the business standpoint in all of this, why is it we have had such difficulty? I mean, there was incredible opposition to the Childcare Development Block Grant program when Orrin Hatch and I wrote it. And the business community's opposition to this was—how do you explain that?

Mr. GRISWELL. I really do believe the last decade has been a decade of enlightenment for business leaders, and I would encourage you to take another look. As I mentioned earlier, the Business Roundtable is onboard with this. It is one of their primary initiatives. In Iowa, the Iowa Business Council, one of its primary priorities is early childhood. Rockwell Collins in our State has wonderful childcare right on their facilities.

I believe the mood has changed. I believe business now gets it, and I would encourage all of you to re-engage business. I believe they are ready to be engaged. I think, like me, many of them were oblivious, I am afraid, just not paying attention to the research and the wonderful data that is out there to connect the dots for us. I have become a believer, and I believe many of my colleagues have.

Senator DODD. I hope you are. Kit Bond, who is retiring this year, and Dan Coats, who sat on this committee and is running for

the Senate again, were my partners when I wrote the Family and Medical Leave Act. Took us 7 years, went through 2 vetoes. Sixty million Americans have been able to take advantage without pay of being able to be with a sick child or parent during a crisis.

We are now trying to get paid leave because, obviously, that is a burden. And yet, again, just as we had tremendous opposition to that basic concept—I mean, we applaud our colleagues here who leave the Senate, miss votes for weeks on end to take care of a spouse or a child. In fact, they would be in deep political trouble if they didn't do it, I would suggest to you, and yet that same concept of it being possible for parents and children to have that time together during these critical issues and periods is—again, we are facing Herculean opposition to this concept.

Yet we are only one of four countries left that I can identify in the world that doesn't provide that basic right, it seems to me. And again, I say to Jerry, I applaud what you are doing, and I admire it. But kind of the same mindless opposition at a time when productivity rates, retention rates, loyalty, and so forth are critically important to business. Again, completely lost on an audience, it seems to me.

Any explanation?

Mr. GRISWELL. No, sir.

[Laughter.]

I am telling you, we are becoming enlightened.

Senator DODD. I am retiring. I hope you get enlightenment. Bob Casey of this crowd takes over and moves up the table here.

Thank you.

The CHAIRMAN. Thank you, Senator Dodd.

But I would point out again, as I keep holding this book up, as I have for many years, that the business community in the 1980s identified the need to and benefit of investing in quality early learning programs. This group included CEOs of major corporations in America. Jim Renier, the CEO of Honeywell chaired the effort. The Freeman Company, Aetna Life, Sun Company, Pacific Mutual Life, Ciba-Geigy, Texas Instruments, and so many other companies were involved.

This Commission, in the 1990s, said we have to rethink education, that education begins at birth and the preparation for education begins before birth. So if we have fallen back or moved away from this, I don't know why.

You say that they made another attempt to communicate the importance of investing in early learning in 2003. Is that right?

Mr. GRISWELL. That is when the Business Roundtable did its full study, which came out with its economic view that every dollar invested in early childhood gave \$4 to \$7, which is a very modest—I mean, we know some studies show \$17. It depends on what you add into that.

And there are a lot of business-education alliances out there. There is a Business Higher Education Forum. I think you really need to try to engage the right business leaders. I think maybe something is askew here. Everybody I talk to understands the importance of this.

Senator DODD. Tom, in 1995, 9.1 million children on a yearly average were getting assistance through the welfare system.

The CHAIRMAN. 9.1 million.

Senator DODD. 9.1 million, 60 percent of children in poverty at that time. Today, it is 3.3 million children, 20 percent of children in poverty. And so, you are getting—these are not with any kind of assistance at all or very little kind of assistance. And here we are 15 years later, the number of children in poverty obviously have gone up.

The CHAIRMAN. Daunting, yes.

Senator Merkley.

STATEMENT OF SENATOR MERKLEY

Senator MERKLEY. Thank you very much, Mr. Chair.

A couple of decades ago, I was listening to a radio program where a childhood expert said that the thing you should keep in mind is that in the first year of childhood, you should hold your child as much as possible and talk to them as much as possible. And after that, you should spend 15 minutes an evening reading books and that the impact has a huge effect on their social skills, their sense of bonding, and they almost universally end up loving to read, which has all sorts of educational benefits.

And I thought, boy, that is such a simple, straightforward, and inexpensive approach. But now I have all of you here. Is that right? And if so, should we also be talking about investment in parents, more investment in parent education or a national reading hour from 7 p.m. to 7:30 p.m., where parents are encouraged to do that nightly reading, more education about the impact of holding, talking to, and interacting with children?

I know we are talking a lot about quality childcare, but should this be a component equally well emphasized?

Ms. ZALKIND. I would clearly say yes, and the money for family support and family preservation is very, very hard to come by. But those dollars spent, especially if they are spent in concert with high-quality childcare, that maximizes the investment. So what we have found is that when childcare providers and parents and schools work together on a common agenda, and they all are trained to work with the others so that teachers have professional development about working with parents and parents have training around how to productively work with their schools, that is where you really see the synergy and children thrive.

Senator MERKLEY. Go ahead, please.

Mr. Pianta. I guess I would just add that I couldn't agree more that capturing those connections across the family and childcare settings are really very important in terms of what adults are doing with kids. But it is also important to recognize that teaching a kid to learn how to read also requires a fair amount of technical skill, that people involved in those interactions have to know quite a bit about how reading develops, how language develops.

If you begin to talk about, we haven't mentioned it at all here, math and science. I suspect you will be worried about that when you talk about high school, but when you talk about promoting math skills and science skills with young kids, that requires a fair amount of skill and technical capacity that teachers should be trained to exercise. We would love it for adults in the home to be able to do that, too.

So I think you are right on capitalizing on both of those settings, but I would argue that it is not as—sometimes it is just not as easy as sitting a kid on your knee and reading for 15 minutes every evening.

Senator MERKLEY. Thank you.

Mr. Schweinhart, I appreciate the work of the HighScope, and I believe it is the Perry Preschool Study that has the 17-to-1 statistic, if I recall right? I didn't see that in your testimony. But wasn't it your study that had that 17-fold return?

Mr. SCHWEINHART. What I think is maybe the most important thing to say about all those dollars is that it is enormous. That is actually what I said. But I found using numbers seems to get people's attention better.

A \$1 return on investment is enough to justify an investment, a \$1 return. And we are talking about many times that, and I think whether it is \$5 or \$10 or \$15, gosh, it is a lot. It is so much that it is just really worth doing, no matter what.

We have been doing some work with Jim Heckman to try to identify exactly what it is, and we have come up with 150 different estimates and all that sort of thing. And that is what makes me kind of fall back on a simpler way of saying it, except that if people want the precision, we sure do have the precision.

Senator MERKLEY. There is a piece of your study I wanted to draw attention to, and that is what you found was that it wasn't simply the development of cognitive skills, but the development of socio-emotional factors. And it goes back to what that childhood expert said about bonding with the amount you hold your child and talk to them, and that this has a big impact on whether people end up in prison, whether they can function in a work environment, whether they are interested in education, a whole series of things.

So this isn't just about training the little brains to learn to read or count. It is also about how to interact with others, and I know that this is where the quality childcare comes in.

I must say every time I encounter a family where little children are being parented primarily by sitting in front of videos, my heart drops because I suspect that does not produce the type of interaction that is necessary either for the cognitive development or for the socio-emotional side.

Mr. SCHWEINHART. Everything about education is developing relationships, and particularly with young children, it is all about developing relationships. With parent education, you can't really talk about the kind of transfer from knowledgeable people to less knowledgeable people the kinds of things they need to know unless you are doing it in the context of solid relationships. So the question is always about how to develop those relationships.

One of the things that we found with respect to the specific prevention of crime is the developing of a strong moral sense. And that is done in the context of learning how to get along with other children and getting along with adults. It is coming from what it looks like. It looks like that.

Now the cognitive stuff is important because I think, ultimately, one of the really great purposes of early childhood education is to teach kids how to be good students in the best sense of that term.

Not “sit down and shut up,” but really becoming actively engaged in their learning.

And to the extent that they learn that, that is going to be with them all of their lives, and it is going to lead to all this kind of success that we have been talking about.

Senator MERKLEY. Thank you all very much.

Thank you.

The CHAIRMAN. Thank you, Senator Merkley.

Senator Hagan.

STATEMENT OF SENATOR HAGAN

Senator HAGAN. Thank you, Chairman Harkin, and thanks for holding this hearing today.

I tell you, as a mother of three children, I know personally how important it is to have early childhood education. And as Senator Dodd said, the first 3 years of life are critical.

I especially wanted to say thank you to Henrietta Zalkind for being here today. I know the Down East Partnership is doing a fabulous job. And Down East in North Carolina is a wonderful word for a special place in our great State. So I appreciate your being here.

I think a lot of you here know that I spent 10 years in the State Senate, and that I was particularly involved in the appropriations committee and, co-chairman of the budget committee. And just so that you all here know, in 2005, we had about \$51 million going to one of the early childhood education programs, and we ended up combining Smart Start with another program, More at Four. And last year, that funding in our State was about \$171 million.

Mr. Griswell, we haven't met, but I particularly appreciated your comments about North Carolina. We are certainly doing some great things. It is certainly not that we have it all right, but I just think we have got to be cognizant of the impact that States and the Federal Government needs to have on children from 0 to 3, 0 to 5, and obviously, 0 to 8. It is just absolutely critical.

One of the things that we are trying to do is be sure that when children go to school, they are healthy and ready to learn. We also know that just providing a place for children to hang out doesn't mean that they are going to have the best quality childcare. We have got to be focused on the types of childcare programs we offer and the education of the people who are staffing the childcare programs also bring a lot to bear.

In North Carolina, we have implemented a star rating program to help parents be better informed when choosing a childcare and early education program for their children. In our State, the programs are monitored by State officials on three basic components—the education of the staff, the program standards, and quality.

We actually have a five-star rating, where five is the highest, with one the lowest. We also use some of our funding from the State to actually help the childcare facilities improve their star ratings, and improve the education of their staff. We must examine ways in which childhood education can be included in the reauthorization of the Elementary and Secondary Education Act, to that end. I was wondering what thoughts you might have on ways that

we can encourage all States to adopt a quality rating system similar to the one that we have.

Ms. Zalkind, do you want to start?

Ms. ZALKIND. Thank you, and thank you for those nice comments.

I think that that quality rating system has been a key to aligning systems across funding streams. This spring, the North Carolina Department of Public Instruction created a new Office of Early Learning, and all of the different programs, regardless of where the money comes from, whether it is the State or title I or the subsidy program, everyone is working off that same standard.

Different States have different systems, but ours, I think, applies to all of the different folks who are providers. It applies to Head Start. Gives you a way to hold folks to the same quality standards, and it focuses across the board.

Now, quality costs. And so, I think that that is one of the things that we need to make sure that there is enough money to make sure that people are not edged out of the system.

Mr. Pianta. They are terrific ideas. The quality rating and improvement systems are terrific policy tools. So to the extent that you can encourage them in all States, I think they are great. I think you have to be very careful about what a star means, and what you put in those systems will be what the system produces, OK? That is the incentive structure.

So people will spend their money on those things. And if what you put in those systems don't matter for kids' learning, they are not going to help. So I think you have to be very rigorous in what those standards mean and the evidence for them.

Mr. SCHWEINHART. Obviously, States require response to incentives and that is something to think about. The one thing I would like to add to what my colleagues here have said is that a lot of childcare takes place in homes, not in centers. And it is important to be thinking about how to support caregivers in homes, as well as in centers.

I think that what they need a whole lot more than rating is support, and the question is how to give them the kinds of educational relationships that is going to give them the support they need to move forward.

Senator HAGAN. You are talking about the parents now?

Mr. SCHWEINHART. Actually, I am talking about home caregivers.

Senator HAGAN. Home caregivers.

Mr. SCHWEINHART. There are parents at home taking care of kids, but I am talking about people who are taking care of other people's kids. And there is a whole lot of them, particularly for birth to 3, and there is very little support for them. The pay is less than even center care.

And one of the things we have done in southeast Michigan that I want to mention is we have tried to form early learning communities with hubs in the middle of those communities where there are people who provide support, develop relationships with all the caregivers in a given geographic area. And I think that may be the kind of complement that we need to the quality rating and improvement system, which is primarily center-based and school-based.

Senator HAGAN. Great.

Mr. GRISWELL. I agree with everything that has been said, really not much to add.

Senator HAGAN. North Carolina is one of a few States that does use a portion of our title I dollars to fund early childhood education, and I know that our title I preschool programs serve 4-year-olds and is designed to prepare young children before they enter kindergarten. What can be done to increase flexibility at the State level to promote the use of title I and other funding for children before they enter school? Any thoughts?

Ms. ZALKIND. Well, I think there are several things, and I would give an example of the school as one of the hubs, that you can use title I money for staff that then goes and works with the teachers in the childcare centers to help them develop professionally on activities that will lead to better outcomes on EOGs, better outcomes on math scores, better outcomes on reading scores.

And so, how you strategically use your title I money not just for slots, not just for children going to 4-year-old programs, but how you use it to build a system so that the school does become the instructional hub and that people are working off of the same system of quality. I think that that is really important and our Office of Early Learning has been behind—and really, the whole Ready Schools movement in North Carolina, I gave as part of my testimony the map of the places where Ready Schools was happening in North Carolina.

We were one of the pilot sites for Kellogg's SPARK Project, but it is now happening in almost 40 of the 100 counties in North Carolina, and that is really exciting. So trying to embed those kind of processes, give people the flexibility to move out and try some different opportunities I think has really been a key for us.

Senator HAGAN. We have a great panel.

Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

The CHAIRMAN. Thank you, Senator Hagan.

Mr. Griswell, he just hit the ball right away. When I asked about the dollar, he was like 50 early, and then 25 and 25. Now, of course, Ms. Zalkind said invest the whole dollar. Would you like to revisit that, maybe 90 cents?

Ms. ZALKIND. OK.

[Laughter.]

Until third grade. Maybe I will go to fifth grade.

The CHAIRMAN. We have to have resources to invest in secondary education, you know?

Mr. Schweinhart, you have a dollar. We have early learning. We have elementary education, and we have high schools, too. How do you divide it up?

Mr. SCHWEINHART. Well, we are talking about the Federal Government's component, not the whole system. There is State and local spending.

The CHAIRMAN. I am only talking about the Federal Government because—

Mr. SCHWEINHART. The Federal Government ought to incentivize what works.

The CHAIRMAN. We contribute roughly 9 percent of all the funding for elementary and secondary education.

Mr. SCHWEINHART. Right. So incentivize what works. Early childhood education works.

The CHAIRMAN. But tell me. We have a dollar. How much should we invest in early learning? Nothing? Nothing much——

Mr. SCHWEINHART. You really want me to give you a number, don't you?

The CHAIRMAN. Yes, I really——

[Laughter.]

The CHAIRMAN [continuing]. I want to know what your priorities are, how do you prioritize?

Mr. SCHWEINHART. Half.

The CHAIRMAN. Pardon?

Mr. SCHWEINHART. Half. Let me give you a longer answer because I think it is a better answer. It seems to me that right now our funding formulas are focused on the kids that are in the schools. Suppose we were to get our funding formulas to focus on the kids who are in the communities from birth, and we tracked the money not to the kid as much as we are tracking it now because I have a feeling what is happening is people are saying we have got this much money for this kid, and so we have to give the service to this kid.

But if instead, we said what is the best way to serve this child throughout the child's life? Then you maybe could get freed up from that grade-by-grade focus, and I think maybe that is a better way to come up with a way of spending ESEA so that it works really well and is not so tied to serving kids.

You know, it is like there is different interest groups—5th graders, 6th graders, 9th graders, 12th graders. Your question sort of assumes that. But they are all the same kids. It is just a year of age. So if a child gets funding at 3 and 4 that works better than funding at 9 and 10, of course, you should spend the money at 3 and 4. Why would you wait until 9 and 10?

The CHAIRMAN. That is a nice discourse; however, I don't know that it really gets to the heart of investing and prioritizing.

Mr. SCHWEINHART. I already said half.

The CHAIRMAN. Sometimes when we vote around here, I mean, we have got to say how much money we invest, being clear about how we focus our efforts? This committee and the Appropriations Committee, I chair, don't focus very much on early childhood education. We make some investments, like in Head Start, but I am really talking about investing more in the educational component of early childhood.

Head Start, that is under Health and Human Services, not the Department of Education. So, from an educational standpoint of the dollars we spend, what would be the priority because I assume you would say 0 to 1. I am just talking about preschool, elementary, and secondary education.

Mr. Pianta.

Mr. PIANTA. Put the dollar in preschool.

The CHAIRMAN. Pardon?

Mr. PIANTA. Put the dollar in preschool. I mean, you already know that you are going to get the dollar back later on. Put the whole thing in.

The CHAIRMAN. You are with Ms. Zalkind, but that is kind of impossible.

[Laughter.]

Mr. Pianta. Well, it is—you know?

The CHAIRMAN. Well, because we have other things we must also invest in terms of teacher quality and a lot of other things that we are doing in ESEA.

Ms. Zalkind. Well, I still would say put the dollar in preschool. But I think if you flip the paradigm around and spend a larger majority on early education and then as you go up, in middle school and high school, graduate those percentages down, not up as the way it is currently configured.

The CHAIRMAN. Well, I think I got the answer I was seeking and that is that the vast majority of you believe that most of the money ought to go into early childhood education. Right now, it is not, of course.

Mr. Griswell. I think it is a system—

The CHAIRMAN. It is, what, 2.8 percent? Now Senator Dodd said 4 percent. That is the number of kids. Four percent of the kids being served by title I preschool, but of the money, it is only 2.8 percent of the title I? Yes, 2.8 percent of kids. That is right. That is what I said are served.

Did you have something to say?

Mr. Griswell. No, I was just going to make the point we are upside down. We are spending the most money at the most inefficient time, and the next most money at the next. It is absolutely upside down.

The CHAIRMAN. Yes. Aside from the money thing, the other thing that you have all spoken about and I thought about as I read your testimonies yesterday, almost all of you kind of hit on this one way or the other, and that was aligning the preschool programs with the elementary programs.

Now we are going to make some changes in the elementary program. We are going to change No Child Left Behind. I think we have a consensus among all of us here to change it. So give me a little bit deeper answer on how to align the programs and—in other words, we have got to make sure that whatever education programs we use, early childhood fits into so that these kids can go right into kindergarten prepared to succeed. Is that what you are telling me? Yes?

Ms. Zalkind. That there are smooth transitions from home to childcare, from childcare to school, and that there is a vertical alignment that people are working off of curriculums that are developmentally appropriate for each different age and stage of a child's healthy growth and development.

And these experts know far more than I about how that happens, but there is a natural progression of how children learn, and right now, it is not synched.

Mr. Schweinhart. We almost have a cultural collision between early childhood education and the schools, and what we need to do is recognize that that is coming from us adults and not from the children's needs. And so, we need to minimize the most discrepant areas of that culture so that kids are—just having childcare and Head Start and other early childhood educators meeting with kin-

dergarten, first grade teachers would be a really great thing to do, and it doesn't happen very often.

Mr. Pianta. You have got the mechanism of standards. You have got the mechanisms of assessments. You have got the mechanisms of teacher qualifications. All those are points of contact that I suspect you can point people in the right direction to get themselves aligned.

The CHAIRMAN. Right. Right. I believe that is a very important aspect of what we are going to do.

The second thing has to do with qualifications. Now we are dealing a lot with that in elementary and secondary education. But as Mr. Pianta said, only one State requires that directors of childcare centers hold a Bachelor's degree. And you pointed out here, that at least 50 percent of the lead teachers in Head Start must have a B.A. degree by 2013 and then you said only 10 States required some vocational program certificate or CDA, and 13 States had no requisite educational qualification for childcare teachers.

Quoting you further, you said capable early education is a complex and challenging task. Teachers need to know a lot about basic child development, far more than the typical course, and they need to know about how to teach and stimulate vocabulary, conversations, early literacy, knowledge of science, the community, all the while handling sensitively the varied needs of these kids.

So have we done enough to, again, try to promote, provoke, prod States to develop better criteria, qualifications? We need to do more of that is what you are telling me?

Mr. Pianta. Yes. And I think we need to do more in a couple of different ways. So I would not—I don't think it is going to be sensible to send everybody off to get degrees and coursework unless we know that is going to help those kids that they are teaching. So I think we need to do a much better job of articulating the behaviors, what are the behaviors we want to see teachers demonstrating in classrooms, and what are the kinds of knowledge base that they need to do what I just described that you quoted?

I think we have a lot of evidence in place now to be able to make fairly clear statements about those features of qualification. Then the issue is how do we create policy that incents participation in the kind of professional development that gets teachers to those places? Whether that occurs in a university, whether that occurs in a local community kind of training, or whether the State does it, I think we can be agnostic about that. We just need to incent people to be participating in things that we know are effective.

I think this is something we know now that we didn't know 10 or 15 years ago.

Ms. ZALKIND. And tying the funding to that is a way to incentivize that. So, for instance, our State More at Four program, which is our public pre-K program for 4-year-olds, you have to be B-K certified by a certain time. You can teach in that classroom, but you have to take 6 semester hours a year toward your B-K, and I think it is by the end of the third year, you have to be B-K certified or else you have got to get a waiver.

It is hard, but it is also, I think, one of the recognitions that childcare—the childcare industry itself is an economy, and there are people working and employed in childcare that you don't want

to push out. You want to add value and add skills to that knowledge base, but there are things that happen in formal education that are necessary to do a good job, especially when you are dealing with 4-year-olds, many of whom who have not been in childcare before. So that takes a skill level that you learn at school.

Mr. GRISWELL. I would like to just agree 100 percent with what Bob Pianta just said because—and be clear that I was certainly strongly in favor of seeing more teachers with Bachelor's degrees in Head Start. But what I am more concerned with is having teachers in Head Start and other early childhood programs who know exactly what they are supposed to do and do it.

And to the extent that we have dollars that are difficult to decide priorities on, we need to focus on making sure they know how to be good teachers.

The CHAIRMAN. Well, this has been stimulating. I can't tell you how much I appreciate it.

I really wanted this panel.

[Laughter.]

I really am determined to do something in this ESEA on early childhood education, and we are talking about that here. I think what you have done here today in your testimony and your written testimony has added a lot to, again, giving us the wisdom you have gained through your work in this area.

I would just ask each of you if you would—we will keep the record open for 10 days if somebody has any questions. But beyond that, I just hope that you will also continue to be available to us and to our staff for any kind of questions, suggestions, or advice. As we move ahead in this, I would certainly appreciate that.

And if there is anyone else in the audience who has any ideas on this, we are open for that. We have a specific e-mail address. It is called *eseacomment@help.senate.gov*.

So *eseacomment@help.senate.gov*, and we invite you to submit suggestions.

Well, again, thank you all very much, and the committee will stand adjourned.

[Additional material follows.]

ADDITIONAL MATERIAL

PREPARED STATEMENT OF RICHARD (RICK) STEPHENS, SENIOR VICE PRESIDENT,
HUMAN RESOURCES AND ADMINISTRATION, THE BOEING COMPANY

Chairman Harkin, Ranking Member Enzi, members of the committee, thank you for the opportunity to provide this statement to the record in support of the reauthorization of the Early and Secondary Education Act that you are currently considering.

I know you have already heard from a number of others on this matter, but it is important to me both personally and as a representative of Boeing, one of the Nation's largest exporters and employer of many thousands of technologically gifted Americans, that our Nation take all necessary steps to maintain the technological lead that we have enjoyed for many years. Reauthorizing this legislation is an important step in that direction.

Before I explain why—at least from our perspective—let me take a moment to talk about Boeing's long-standing commitment to improving education. The Boeing Company was founded in 1916 and made its first education-related investment outside the company in 1917—to the University of Washington's engineering department.

In the years since, we have expanded our investments into K–12 programs. Back in 2000, the company reviewed the results of its K–12 investments and discovered that we weren't seeing the results we wanted. It wasn't that the kids weren't intelligent, and it wasn't that the teachers weren't trying. Unfortunately, we discovered that children were showing up at kindergarten up to 3 years behind their peers who had access to quality early learning experiences.

So in 2001, Boeing launched a number of investments in early learning—primarily from birth to 5 years old. We focused on social, emotional and cognitive readiness, and we reached out both to parents—the child's first and most important teachers—and to formal caregivers like childcare workers, as well as informal caregivers like families, friends and neighbors to provide them with tools and strategies to aid children's educational readiness.

As you know, Mr. Chairman, the lack of readiness is a big deal. You have reviewed the same research we have—all of which indicates that kids who start kindergarten behind their peers tend to stay behind them, and that nearly all schools lack the considerable resources required to catch those kids up with their peers. It isn't impossible for them to catch up, but it requires a substantial investment to compensate for not capitalizing on the profound learning that occurs early in life.

Authorities across the country recognize the importance of investing in early childhood development. The Federal Reserve Bank in Minnesota, for instance, found that early learning is one of the best economic development engines out there—providing up to a 17 percent return on every dollar invested. They note that quality early learning experiences result in lower remediation, reduced incarceration, more stable employment, lower teen pregnancies, higher educational attainment, higher salaries and the higher income tax revenues they bring, and other benefits.

Nobel Laureate James Heckman also studied the rates of return on investments made at various points in the education system. His conclusion was similar to the Federal Reserve's—that the highest investment returns are on funds invested in the early years of education.

There is, of course, a clear and compelling business case for Boeing's efforts on this front. We need to help develop and prepare the future technological workforce that will help Boeing, our industry and our Nation remain competitive in our increasingly global economy. To do that, we need students who are excited about and engaged in learning, and that attitude has to be formed early.

It won't surprise you, Mr. Chairman, to hear that companies like Boeing are having trouble filling all the positions we have that require people with skills and experience in science, technology, engineering and mathematics.

We view the deficit as a **skills** shortage, not a **people** shortage. Simply put, there aren't enough people graduating with the right skills to meet the needs of our economy.

While the numbers of U.S. graduates in engineering and the sciences are flat or declining, emerging nations like China and India are intentionally funneling many of their best and brightest into those areas—by some accounts doubling their output of technologically advanced graduates in recent years.

We in the United States need the same commitment to our children, but it is often too late to reach them in junior high or high school, because apathy towards education or poor study habits are already deeply ingrained in students by then.

Students who start in the system behind their peers remain behind and that contributes to their apathy.

From our perspective, reaching children at the earliest stages helps not only Boeing, but all our Nation's industries, because getting kids fully engaged in education allows them to dream big dreams and achieve them, but it also allows our Nation to benefit from the amazing innovations that those dreams fuel. It would be a shame to lose, for instance, the one idea that would revolutionize air travel just because we didn't catch the kid who had that idea early enough to keep her engaged in the sciences long enough to pursue it.

We're not just asking the Federal Government to assume full responsibility for this effort. Companies like Boeing are part of the solution too. Here are some of the things we're doing to support early childhood education as part of our broad approach:

1. We challenge parents of young children to take an active role in creating an environment that nurtures creativity and learning, because we know that parents are the key to helping children reach their full potential. And we provide parents and caregivers with resources to strengthen their roles as children's first teachers.

2. We work to ensure that U.S. colleges and universities produce enough qualified teachers. When teachers at any level are neither proficient nor inspiring, too many of our young people miss foundational instruction, fall hopelessly behind and lose interest in school. The price our Nation pays in that scenario is a steep one.

3. We believe that improving education isn't just about fixing schools. It's not that some schools don't need work—they do—but we must take a broader look at solutions. We must establish a symbiotic relationship between educators, students, business and industry, and the media.

One way we're doing that is by bringing together what I call a coalition of coalitions—a diverse group of organizations from the public, private and non-profit sectors, all of whom are either specifically focused on, or have a vested interest in, improving our educational system. The Business and Industry Science, Technology, Engineering and Math Education Coalition (BISEC), consisting of nearly 30 business and industry associations representing 20 million employees, has three main goals:

- a. Identifying activities that work to improve student outcomes and understanding how to scale those efforts that make a difference.
- b. Aligning and leveraging information and resources so others can learn about successful efforts and deploy them more broadly.
- c. Partnering with main stream media to change the predominant negative view parents and students have about science, technology, engineering and mathematics.

BISEC's effort is focused specifically on science, technology, engineering and mathematics, but the model it represents is an entirely appropriate one for improving early childhood education too. This approach is a natural extension of the aerospace industry's systems engineering expertise—the ability to view large, complex systems as integrated wholes—to bring people together, particularly those who fund complimentary efforts, to enhance public/private partnerships and expand the reach of the most effective programs.

Boeing has a long and strong commitment to improving education. It's one of the reasons we feel it is so important for us as a company to weigh in on early childhood education matters like this.

This effort is critical to our Nation's future, and it requires the best ideas from the public and private sectors. It requires us to cooperate with and support each other. In short, it requires the best of each of us. Our children and our Nation deserve nothing less than that.

As you noted in your opening statement, Mr. Chairman, "ESEA reauthorization offers an important opportunity to help States and school districts ensure that more young children are prepared to succeed in school." We at Boeing strongly agree with that statement, and we strongly support your committee's efforts to reauthorize this important legislation.

Thank you again for the opportunity to express that support.

[Whereupon, at 4:17 p.m., the hearing was adjourned.]