Early Childhood Education and Indiana

An Honors Thesis (Honrs 499)

By

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ABSTRACT

The purpose of this study was to determine Indiana's progress and commitment to promoting quality early childhood education. The researcher used the recommendations found in *Right From the Start: The Report of the National Association of State Boards of Education Task Force on Early Childhood Education* to assess Indiana's early childhood educational system.

The report, *Right from the Start*, is the product of a year long study conducted by National Association of State Boards of Education (NASBE) task force on Early Childhood Education (NASBE, 1988). *Right from the Start* is targeted at how state policy makers and public school leaders can improve the critical first years of education for children.

The questions guiding this study were: (a) What does the state of Indiana do to promote quality early childhood education? (b) Now that *Right From the Start* has been in publication for seven years, what steps has the state of Indiana taken to implement the recommendations outlined in *Right From the Start*?

The researcher devised a questionnaire based on the recommendations given in *Right From the Start*. A pilot study for the questionnaire was conducted with the Superintendent of the Delaware Community School Corporation. Using the results from the pilot study, the researcher then revised the questionnaire and sent it to an early childhood education representative from the Indiana State Board of Education. The questionnaire was completed and returned in October, 1995.

The results of the questionnaire are presented and discussed. In addition, the implications of the study, pertaining to early childhood education in the state of Indiana, are also discussed.
INTRODUCTION

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This study is presented in the following manner:

A Review of Literature, including:

1) Early Childhood Education: Historical Perspective
2) Early Childhood Education: Current Perspective
   Developmentally Appropriate Practice
   Developmentally Appropriate Curriculum
EARLY CHILDHOOD EDUCATION: HISTORICAL PERSPECTIVE

Before considering our current philosophy of early childhood education, it is imperative that we review its sound theoretical foundation. It is only in light of this knowledge base that the current perspective of early childhood educators can be fully understood.

In the 1600's, children were thought of as miniature adults. Thus, they were taught in the same manner as adults. Locke's theory dispelled this popular belief. Locke believed children were not miniature adults, but rather were born as a blank slate, "tabula rasa". This placed a heavy responsibility on both parents and teachers to teach young children. Furthermore, Locke ascertained that children learned through their senses. This also fell on the shoulders of many teachers who, at the time, were using reading as the main teaching tool.

Rousseau followed Locke's footsteps in the idea that children were not miniature adults. Rousseau believed that children were valuable and important as children. He also believed children were different from adults and should be treated and taught as such. Rousseau influenced not only some popular beliefs on
childhood today, but he also influenced other prominent figures in the field of early childhood education, such as Froebel, Pestalozzi, Montessori and Piaget (Postman, 1982).

Dewey and Montessori believed children learn by being active. Children learn best by exploring and experimenting. This means they need the opportunity to interact with their environment and the world around them. This is the foundational theory on which much current educational philosophy is built (Heaston, 1991).

EARLY CHILDHOOD EDUCATION: CURRENT PERSPECTIVE

The principles presented by Locke, Rousseau, Froebel and Dewey provided the foundation for early childhood education today. Quality early childhood educators now take the experience and knowledge a child brings to school and build upon that previous knowledge to further the development of the child.

In addition, quality early education programs are moving toward being child-centered. Children's interests are taken into account when setting the environment for active, successful, experiential learning. Many activities are child-initiated. This not only gives the children a sense of control but also promotes high interest, responsibility and independence.

Although many activities are child-initiated, and learning occurs largely by active exploration on the part of the child, the teacher still plays an important role in education. Teachers are facilitators to learning. In addition to setting the environment, teachers also ask questions and guide the students into discovering and forming important concepts (Egerston, 1987).

Active exploration is an integral part of a quality early education program. It is also the foundation of the National Association for the Education of Young
Children’s position statement describing developmentally appropriate practice (Bredekamp, 1987).

**Developmentally Appropriate Practice:**

A developmentally appropriate curriculum is founded on the philosophy that children are active learners. They learn through experimentation and exploration. One job of the teacher is to act as a facilitator creating and enhancing an environment which is conducive to learning and success (Indiana Department of Education, 1989).

Developmentally appropriate practice can be divided into two main components: age appropriateness and individual appropriateness.

Age appropriateness is based on the fact that children progress through different developmental levels as they mature. Just as their bodies grow enabling them to handle more physically challenging activities, their minds also develop which allows them to tackle more mentally challenging activities. Early childhood educators must keep this in mind. A two year old will not likely benefit from the same teaching style or instruction that may be appropriate for an eight-year old.

Individual appropriateness is founded on the belief that each child is unique. Therefore, each child will be at a different level developmentally. Early childhood educators must accommodate for this difference and take each child’s individuality into consideration. A child’s uniqueness can be an asset. Educators need only to find ways to access and utilize it to enhance the curriculum (Bredekamp, 1987).

**Developmentally Appropriate Curriculum:**

A developmentally appropriate curriculum should include a basic routine. Children need to have a predictable sequence of events to their day. While this
should be predictable, it should also be flowing, smooth and flexible. Children's needs should always predict the routine.

The curriculum should consider all aspects of the whole child: emotional, social, cognitive and physical. The emotional needs of the child must be addressed in order to foster positive self-esteem. In addition, children will learn to deal with emotions in a healthy manner. These are two of the beneficial outcomes when dealing with the emotional aspect of the child.

The social aspect should be considered in the curriculum to help the child function in our society. Children should be taught pro-social skills. They should be given many opportunities to interact with others. Children should also be exposed to many different ideas and cultures. This will help foster tolerance and respect for diversity.

The cognitive needs of the child should undoubtedly be addressed. Children should be encouraged to be independent thinkers. They should learn to reason, explore, experiment and be inquisitive.

The physical needs of the child should always be taken into consideration. The early education years are a time for developing and enhancing fine and gross motor skills. Because children are small and tire easily, there should be a balance of rest and active times to the day (Bredekamp, 1987).

In addition to addressing every aspect of the child, the activities presented should include those which are child-initiated. This gives children locus of control which will inherently keep interest levels and success rates high. Furthermore, by allowing the child to initiate the activity, the child will be likely to develop positive attitudes and feelings toward work and himself (Bredekamp, 1987).

The curriculum and activities chosen should be based on individual needs and interests. Again, children are individuals. Educators must respect and utilize
children's uniqueness. This will optimize learning on the part of the student and the teacher.

Evaluation is an integral part of every successful educational curriculum. Evaluation should be grounded in observation. Early childhood educators must observe the students in order to fairly assess their developmental level and progress. Observation will help the educator maintain a developmentally appropriate curriculum, as well as monitor child development.

The Role of the Teacher:

Educators are also a vital part of a quality early childhood curriculum. Hiam Ginott expressed this in the following paragraph.

I am the decisive element in the classroom. It is my personal approach that creates the climate. It is my daily mood that makes the weather. As a teacher I possess tremendous power to make a child’s life miserable or joyous. I can be a tool of torture or an instrument of inspiration. I can humiliate or humor, hurt or heal. In all situations it is my response that decides whether a crisis will be escalated or de-escalated, and a child humanized or dehumanized. (Ginott, as cited in Lock, 1991).

Educators must be cognizant that they have a dramatic impact on children. Educator-student interactions should be pleasant, nurturing and loving. Educators should be responsive and respective to all children and their needs. In addition to this, they must possess a deep understanding of developmentally appropriate practice and child development if it is to be implemented (Bredekamp, 1987).

Child-staff ratios directly affect quality education. Too many children with one teacher can be detrimental to student learning. It becomes virtually impossible to practice individual appropriateness in an over-crowded classroom. The National Association for the Education of Young Children (NAEYC) maintains that there
should be no more than 15 - 18 students with one adult, or 20-25 students with two adults (Bredekamp, 1987).

Teachers must also be well trained and educated themselves. Children are valuable assets. Trained staff directly affects the quality of education the children will receive. As previously mentioned, educators must be knowledgeable in child development. This will provide a deeper understanding of the children and their needs. Educators should know first aid. This is of utmost importance to the safety of children. Educators have made a commitment to education. Therefore, they should seek knowledge. They should keep abreast of the latest research and ideas which will be beneficial to them or their class. Teacher in-service training is one way to assure on going teacher education. Teacher in-service can be on such topics as child development, child abuse, communication, community services and child guidance/discipline (Bredekamp, 1987).

Parental Involvement:

Educators and students make up much of the educational forum. However, parents also play a vital role in education. Parents have long been regarded as important first teachers. Johann Pestalozzi, who is considered the father of parent education, gave credit to parents, particularly mothers, for educating their children in the crucial early years of life. He authored How Gertrude Teaches Her Children in which he stresses the importance of parents as a child's first teachers and provided a basis for home instruction before formal schooling (Weimer, 1962).

Parents are primary caregivers and should be treated as such. Parents know their children better than anyone. Therefore, parents and teachers should collaborate and work together as partners to provide the best education possible for the child. Parents and teachers can become partners through communication and
mutual respect. They should establish good rapport early in the educational process. In addition, they must always hold the common goal, the education of the child, in the highest regard (Bredekamp, 1987).

Administrators:

Administrators also play an important role in the education of young children. Administrators must consider the needs of the children, staff and parents. They must also assure quality education by assessing and establishing goals yearly. This wide spectrum of responsibilities makes their job especially difficult. In addition to possessing sound knowledge of developmentally appropriate practice, they must also possess good interpersonal, communication and decision making skills in order to fulfill all responsibilities (Bredekamp, 1987).

Health and Safety:

The physical environment is also a factor in developmentally appropriate practice. The indoor and outdoor settings should be safe with no obstructions or possible hazards. The area should be clean, conducive to learning, stimulating and foster growth and development (Bredekamp, 1987).

Finally, health and safety is also regarded as an important aspect in education. Children's and adults' health and safety should be held in high regard. The physical and mental health and safety of everyone should be protected and enhanced. In order to do this, staff should have regular medical check-ups and TB tests. Medical, emergency, and immunization records for everyone are kept current. Mental and emotional health should also be considered and enhanced (Bredekamp, 1987).
According to the early childhood profession’s consensus, the definition of developmentally appropriate practice is “a quest for consistent quality programming and subsequent advocacy for the needs of young children” (Bredekamp, 1987, p. iv). Advocacy and developmentally appropriate practice go hand in hand. The definition of advocacy is standing up for, and bringing about beneficial change for children and their needs (Goffin & Lombardi, 1988).

There is a growing need for advocacy in America today. According to the Children's Defense Fund, every day in America: 2,685 babies are born into poverty; 7,433 children are reported abused or neglected; 100,000 children are homeless; 2,250 students drop out of school (Children's Defense Fund, Public Education Flyer). These children need help, but they do not have a political voice in America. Thus, adults must work together to ensure children have a safe, nurturing, loving environment in which they can grow, learn and develop. Collaboration is the key to successful child advocacy. A group of people working toward a common goal can generally accomplish much more than a lone person speaking up for a cause. Through collaborative efforts of early childhood professionals, parents and others who care, change can occur (Goffin & Lombardi, 1988). This is the foundational theory on which many powerful organizations are built.

EARLY CHILDHOOD ORGANIZATIONS

Organizations are prevalent in every occupation area. Some organizations that foster early childhood education are listed below.
The Association for Childhood Education International (ACEI) is one organization for early childhood education that has withstood the test of time. Founded in 1882, ACEI represents infancy and early childhood.

Head Start was founded in 1965. This is a federally funded educational program for low income, handicapped and at-risk children. Head Start was born out of President Johnson's "War On Poverty" and is still serving children nationwide today.

Children's Defense Fund (CDF) was founded in 1973. CDF plays a major role in child advocacy by launching nationwide campaigns such as "Leave No Child Behind". CDF also publishes informative reports, studies and brochures.

The National Association for the Education of Young Children (NAEYC) began in 1926. NAEYC plays a vital role in child advocacy. It publishes many informative documents, including their position statement on developmentally appropriate practice, which is central to quality early childhood education. Many early childhood programs use this position statement as a guideline to ensure quality education (Hymes, 1991).

The National Academy of Early Childhood Programs (NAECP) was founded in 1984 as an extension of NAEYC. NAECP is "a national, voluntary accreditation system for good quality early childhood centers and schools" (NAECP, 1984, p. 59).

The National Association of State Boards of Education (NASBE) represents states across the nation. NASBE's objectives include: "strengthen state leadership in education policy making; promote excellence in the education of all students; advocate equality of access to educational opportunity; and assure responsible governance of public education" (NASBE, 1988, back cover).

Although kindergarten is not an organization per se, it does hold significant importance in early childhood education both historically and currently. The first
public kindergarten was founded in 1873 (Hymes, 1991). One purpose of kindergarten was to keep disadvantaged children off of the streets, as well as providing a start for a decent education. Kindergarten in many instances is still providing students with first experiences and giving them a good start to an increasingly important education (Weber, 1969).

RIGHT FROM THE START

The report, Right from the Start, is the product of a year long study conducted by NASBE task force on Early childhood Education (NASBE, 1988). Right from the Start is targeted at how state policy makers and public school leaders can improve the critical first years of education for children. As stated in Right From the Start, “We hope this report will stimulate reflection, debate, and positive changes in schools and communities” (NASBE, 1988, p. iii).

NASBE consulted with experts in the field of early childhood education; reviewed relevant position statements and papers; made visits to early childhood programs; and received input from many people including: legislators, teachers, administrators and parents.

The conclusions of this report can be summarized into two main recommendations. The first recommendation is: “We recommend that early childhood units be established in elementary schools to provide a new pedagogy for working with children ages 4-8 and a focal point for enhanced services to preschool children and their parents” (NASBE, 1988, p. vii). The second recommendation given by NASBE is: “Public schools should develop partnerships with early childhood programs and community agencies to build and improve services for young children and their parents” (NASBE, 1988, p.viii).
The First Recommendation:

According to NASBE, "The goals of establishing an early childhood unit are to improve existing programs for children preschool to grade 3, and to plan for new high-quality preschool programs" (NASBE, 1988, p. 9). As stated in Right From the Start, an early childhood unit should contain the following characteristics: developmentally appropriate curriculum; improved assessment; responsiveness to cultural and linguistic diversity; partnerships with parents; and training and support for staff and administrators. The characteristics of an early childhood unit as described by NASBE are aligned with developmentally appropriate practice as outlined in National Association for the Education of Young Children's Position Statement on Developmentally Appropriate Practice From Birth to Age 8 (Bredekamp, 1987).

NASBE saw a great need for an early childhood unit due to recent policy related to school reform, as well as a broader spectrum of knowledge available in the areas of developmentally appropriate practice and child development.

A Nation at Risk, published in 1983, sent many policy makers and school officials scrambling to better the education of American children. In an effort to better educate, a blanket remedy was prescribed for grades K-12. Higher standards were set. Students and teachers were expected to work harder and longer. The curriculum became more rigorous and academically centered. While this blanket remedy may be appropriate for older students, it disagrees with developmentally appropriate practice.

Another detrimental practice that is in the early childhood education arena is the influx of standardized tests used in early childhood classrooms. This is due largely to the school reform movement brought on by A Nation at Risk. Young
children generally do not possess the fine motor skills to hold and correctly use a pencil. Furthermore, their thinking skills are not highly developed at this young age. Yet, many educators still expect young students to take standardized tests (NASBE, 1988).

In addition to the standardized tests, school is becoming more competitive. Our global economy and competitive society has had an impact in our schools. According to the report, “If education is seen as a contest that pits children against their peers, or a race against our foreign competitors, we risk teaching very young children the wrong academic tasks in an inappropriate fashion before they are ready” (NASBE, 1988, p. 3). The previous mentioned practices obviously do not concur with the current philosophy on developmentally appropriate practice.

The Second Recommendation:

Under current conditions, many children’s and parents’ needs are going unmet. This is especially true for at-risk students who can greatly benefit from early childhood services. One of the obstacles keeping those needs from being met include attracting and keeping quality teachers. This is due partly to the lack of teacher education specifically in the area of early childhood education, as well as low salary rates and little, if any, benefits. Another obstacle blocking services to young children and their families include the fact that early childhood programs are plagued with “inconsistent regulations and separate funding streams” (NASBE, 1988, p. 7). Therefore, services are discontinuous and partial at best.

What can be done to help deliver these services to the people who need them? Collaboration is the answer. Public schools, other early childhood programs and community agencies should work together to help bring comprehensive early childhood services to young children and their families. However, many early
childhood programs work against each other. This is due partially to a competitive market. Unfortunately, many early education centers are more concerned with enhancing their own program than enhancing quality education for all children.

Collaboration will not only enable the early childhood programs and elementary schools to provide comprehensive services but also help establish a central place to receive information and support. Some services provided to children and parents are: (a) parent education, (b) health services, (c) child care, (d) family support, and (e) mental health services. These include many aspects of the child and family, not just the educational arena (NASBE, 1988).

Right From the Start synthesized information on developmentally appropriate practice and child development, looked at our current educational system, and provided a guideline to convert all the early childhood and developmentally appropriate theory into practice. Right From the Start provided basic recommendations that, if followed, will benefit both young children and their families.

EARLY CHILDHOOD EDUCATION: INDIANA

Methods and procedures of study

The questions guiding this study were: (a) What does the state of Indiana do to promote quality early childhood education? and (b) Now that Right From the Start has been in publication for seven years, what steps has the state of Indiana taken to implement the recommendations outlined in Right From the Start?

To investigate these questions the researcher devised a questionnaire based on the recommendations given in Right From the Start. A pilot study was conducted with the Superintendent of the Delaware Community School Corporation. Using the responses form the pilot study, the researcher revised the
questionnaire. The format was changed from a five point scale to open-ended questions in order to allow more information to be given. The questions were also extended to encourage more in-depth answers.

Upon revision, the questionnaire was then sent to an Early Childhood Education Representative from the Indiana State Board of Education. The questionnaire was completed and returned in October, 1995. The responses to the questionnaire are given below.

**Results of the questionnaire posed to Indiana State Board of Education:**

**Preschool**

1. Q: What are the responsibilities of the State Board of Education related to early childhood education?

   A: Promulgate rules related to K-3 curriculum. Promulgate rules related to PRIME TIME assistants. State Board's function differs from Department of Education.

2. Q: Are there specific programs initiated state wide for early childhood education? If so, what are they?

   A: Legislated funding for reducing child/teacher in K-3; Step Ahead program - county based system for integrating services for children and families.

3. Q: Are there any mandated services for preschool children?

   A: Only the federal piece for preschool children with special needs.

   Q: Are these services incorporated into the elementary schools?

   A: Yes, these children are usually served in 1 building, which may or may not be their home school.

   Q: Are these only for at-risk children?

   A: Special needs by law- some local school corporations have chosen to include "regular" kids as well.
4. Q: Are there curriculum guides for preschool?
   
   A: Only as related to special needs
   
   Q: Where does this guide come from?
   
   A: Dept. of Ed. - Special Ed division.

5. Q: Are there any state policies regarding preschool licensing?
   
   A: No. If the preschool is part of a public or an accredited private school, the teacher must be licensed in early childhood.

6. Q: Are there any state policies regarding preschool staff's (Directors: Teachers) qualifications

   A: See # 5

7. Q: Are there any state policies regarding preschool staff's salaries?
   
   A: No

8. Q: Does the state of Indiana offer a teacher's license/certification for preschool teachers?

   A: Early childhood - this area is currently undergoing changes.

   Q: If so, is this license a requirement to work in the public preschools?
   
   (this question may already be answered in question #6)

   A: You could contact the professional standards board for details.

9. Q: How often are policies regarding early childhood education reviewed?

   A: None given

   Elementary School

10. Q: I understand kindergarten is not mandatory in Indiana, what is the philosophy behind this?
The legislature seems to feel that because 92% of our age-eligible children attend kindergarten, there is no need to mandate attendance. It is mandatory for school corporations to provide kindergarten.

11. Q: Are there state funded full-day public kindergartens?
   A: Only if schools use Title I or "At Risk" money to support the additional 1/2 day.
   Q: If so, are these full-day programs open to all kindergarten children?
   A: None given

12. Q: Is the entrance date for children to begin kindergarten state mandated?
    A: Yes
    Q: If so, what is that date?
    A: 5 on or before June 1
    Q: Who decided upon that date?
    A: See attached

13. Q: Are the entrance requirements for kindergarten a state or local decision?
    A: State
    Q: If state decision, what are the requirements?
    A: 5 on or before June 1

14. Q: Are the standardized tests given at the end of kindergarten a state or local decision?
    A: Local
    Q: If state, what tests are given?
    A: None given
    Q: Who decided upon these tests?
Q: What is the philosophy behind these tests?
A: At the state level, we strongly discourage testing at the K level.

15. Q: Who determines the curriculum guide for kindergarten?
A: Indiana Dept. of Ed. issued the K guide in 1990. A committee of local, state and university educators put the guide together.

Q: How do they determine what the curriculum guide consists of?
A: It is aligned with the NAEYC Developmentally Appropriate Practices document.

16. Q: Who determines the curriculum guide for first grade?
A: Each content area has developed proficiency guides for K-12. Content area (sic) consultants do this with the assistance of an advisory committee from the field.

Q: How do they determine what the curriculum guide consists of?
A: Primary sources include national documents/standards etc. from their content areas (Ex. Mathematics proficiencies for Indiana are based on NCTM standards).

17. Q: Who determines the curriculum guide for second grade?
A: See 16

Q: How do they determine what the curriculum guide consists of?
A: See 16

18. Q: Who determines the curriculum guide for third grade?
A: See 16

Q: How do they determine what the curriculum guide consists of?
A: See 16
19. Q: What are the requirements of elementary school principals in terms of early childhood education? (any special classes/training?) (If this is a local decision, omit questions 20-21)

A: Please contact the Professional Standards Board.

20. Q: What are the requirements for an early childhood teacher?

A: See 19

21. Q: What are the requirements of a school psychologist in terms of early education?

A: See 19

22. Q: Are you familiar with Right from the Start, a report by the NASBE?

A: Yes.

23. Q: Do you have any early childhood education reports you would like to share?

A: I'm enclosing K Guide
PRIME TIME overview
K Entrance Issues Paper

Summary of Results:

As stated, the questions guiding this study were: (a) What does the state of Indiana do to promote quality early childhood education?; and (b) Now that Right From the Start has been in publication for seven years, what steps has the state of Indiana taken to implement the recommendations outlined in Right From the Start?

Indiana is moving toward providing quality education for its young children. As shown in the answer to question one, the Indiana State Board of Education does
implement and publicly announce rules related to K-3 curriculum and rules related to PRIME TIME, which is funding to hire teachers or assistants in order to lower teacher/child ratios. In addition to implementing these rules, Indiana can also be proud of the fact that it offers an early childhood certification for teachers as referenced by the answer to question eight.

Kindergarten enrollment is not mandatory. However, by law kindergarten must be available and provided to all age-eligible children. A child is eligible for kindergarten if he/she turns 5 on or before June 1. As stated in the response to question ten, most children eligible for kindergarten do attend (92%). There is also a state curriculum guide for kindergarten that is based on developmentally appropriate practice.

In answer to the second question posed in this study, Indiana is taking steps to move toward meeting the recommendations given in Right From the Start. The Indiana State Board of Education is familiar with Right From the Start. This is an essential first step to early educational school reform. The recommendations given in Right From the Start can not be implemented until they are known and understood.

The fact that some preschool children are being served in the elementary schools can be construed as a move toward establishing an early childhood unit. Although many of these services are for special needs children, some school corporations have opened the services to children who do not meet special needs criteria.

Developmentally appropriate practice and collaboration is strongly encouraged by issuing a kindergarten guide which was a collaborative effort on the part of some local, state, and university educators. The kindergarten guide follows the Position Statement on Developmentally Appropriate Practice (Indiana State
Board of Education, 1989). In addition, the curriculum guides for all grades consists of separate content area guides. The development of these guides were a collaborative effort on the part of the area consultants and an organization/committee in that particular area.

Although standardized tests are sometimes given, it is recognized as being against developmentally appropriate practice. The state strongly discourages standardized testing in kindergarten. However, this is a local decision.

Conclusions:

Although Indiana's early childhood education forum is far from perfect, it is moving toward improvement. As shown by current legislation, young children in Indiana are receiving more of the attention they warrant. The Indiana State Board of Education is aware of current literature pertaining to early childhood education. In addition, steps are being taken to improve the quality of education for young children.

However, state policy makers must make these recommendations available and known to teachers. Teachers spend the most time with children. Thus, they would be the best sources for implementing new practices. Administrators and state policy makers should support the teachers and provide teacher education. Many people are reluctant to change. However, with the proper training and understanding of why change is fundamental, it need not be rejected.

All early childhood professionals: state policy-makers, administrators, teachers and parents should launch a collaborative effort to improve education for young children. This will provide an extensive view of early childhood education by examining the perspectives of all adults involved.
The goals of developing early childhood units and partnerships between schools and other early childhood programs in Indiana are: (a) to provide a perfect opportunity for collaboration on the part of early childhood professionals and parents; (b) to establish continuity between preschool and early elementary school; (c) to decrease the incidence of "push down" academics, less testing, less worksheets; (d) to increase developmentally appropriate practice and developmentally appropriate curriculums; (e) to increase the number of teachers and staff who specialize in early childhood education and child development; (f) to increase parental involvement. These six goals are central to a child's school success. Implementation of an early childhood unit will extend much needed services to young children and their families living in Indiana.
APPENDIX A
March 23, 1995

Dr. Marlin Creasy
7821 State Road 3 North
Muncie, IN 47303

Dear Dr. Creasy:

Enclosed, you will find a copy of my survey on school reform which is the foundation of my upcoming Honor's Thesis.

As you recall, I would like to use your response to this survey as a pilot in preparation for the final draft which will be sent to Suelyn Reed, State Superintendent of Public Schools. This survey should not take more than 15 - 20 minutes to complete.

If you would, please return the survey by April 24, 1995 to my attention at the following address: 605 E Oak St # 18, Albany, IN 47320. I would also appreciate any additional comments or feedback that you wish to include in your response.

Thank you for your time and input to this project. I appreciate all your help.

Sincerely,

Jennifer L. Johns
School Reform Survey

Please circle all responses that best answer the question.

Preschool

1. Please circle any services offered to preschool students or their parents through the public school system.
   None 1/2 day school Full day school Referral for psychological services
   Referral for financial services Referral for medical services
   Programs for special needs students Other

2. If you do offer 1/2 or full day preschool:

   What is the average yearly salary range a beginning teacher with no experience?
   Above $25,000 $20,000-$15,000 $15,000-$9,000 Below $9,000

   What qualifications are required of your lead teachers?
   M.A. B.S./B.A. C.D.A. High school diploma/G.E.D. Other

   Are the directors of the preschools exclusively for the preschools?
   Yes No Other

   What are the qualifications required of directors?
   Ph.D. M.A. B.S./B.A. C.D.A. Other

   What type of enrollment is in the preschools?
   Open At-Risk Other

   What age children do you serve?
   2 years old 3 years old 4 years old 5 years old Other

   Do you collaborate with mental health consultant to help teachers in planning for children with special emotional needs or families under stress in preschool?
   Often Sometimes Seldom None Other

3. Have your early childhood programs and policies been reviewed:
   Never More than 5 years ago Less than 5 years ago
   Less than 3 years ago Less than 1 year ago

4. Do you have a statement of philosophy, objectives and principles for your preschool programs?
   Yes No Other

   If so, are the parents aware of your statement?
   Yes No Other

   If possible, please enclose a copy of your statement.
Elementary School

5. Does your staff collaborate with mental health consultants to help teachers in planning for elementary children with special emotional needs or families under stress?
   Often  Sometimes  Seldom  None  Other

6. Have your early elementary programs and policies been reviewed:
   Never  More than 5 years ago  Less than 5 years ago
   Less than 3 years ago  Less than 1 year ago

7. Do you have a statement of philosophy, objectives and principles for your elementary programs?
   Yes  No  Other__________________________
   If so, are the parents aware of this statement?
   Yes  No  Other__________________________
   If possible, please enclose a copy of your statement.

8. Do you use pilot schools to test new methods of:
   Staffing  Grouping children  Implementing curriculum  Assessment
   Implementing new curriculum: None  Other__________________________

9. Do you follow any procedures to facilitate a smooth transition from preschool to pubic school?
   Yes  No  Other__________________________

10. Circle all of the following that you believe represents the cultural and linguistic diversity of your students:
    Curriculum  Resources  Materials  Parent materials  Staff
    Administrators  Other__________________________

11. Does your elementary program enhance growth and development in the following areas?
    Social  Physical  Emotional  Cognitive

12. Does your elementary program provide full day kindergarten?
    Yes  No  Other__________________________

13. Does your elementary program provide before or after school programs?
    Before  After  None  Other__________________________

14. Does your elementary program provide transportation to before or after school facilities?
    Before  After  None  Other__________________________
15. In which grades do your schools practice inclusion (including a spectrum of mental and physical abilities in one classroom)?
   (K 1 2 3) None Other_____.

16. The kindergarten classrooms are:
   Teacher-centered Child-centered Balanced Other_____

17. The first grade classrooms are:
   Teacher-centered Child-centered Balanced Other_____

18. The second grade classrooms are:
   Teacher-centered Child-centered Balanced Other_____

19. The third grade classrooms are:
   Teacher-centered Child-centered Balanced Other_____

20. Do you believe the classrooms contain a myriad of:
   Activities Manipulatives Books Materials None Other_____

21. In which grades are there separate programs, classrooms and activities for gifted students?
   Programs: K 1 2 3 Classrooms: K 1 2 3 Activities: K 1 2 3 None Other_____

22. What types of assessment do your teachers use in which grades?
   Graded work/tests: K 1 2 3 Portfolio: K 1 2 3
   Anecdotal records: K 1 2 3 Based on improvement: K 1 2 3
   Other_____

23. Are the parents informed/educated on the type of assessment used?
   (Yes: K 1 2 3 No: K 1 2 3 Other_____

24. In which grades are standardized tests administered to early elementary students:
   (K 1 2 3) None Other_____

25. If you do use standardized tests, what are these tests used for?
   (Reading) Screening Placement Other_____

26. Are the teachers and administrators trained on how to:
   Select tests Administer tests Score tests Interpret tests Other_____

27. What is your child to staff ratio in kindergarten?
28. What is your child to staff ratio in first grade?

29. What is your child to staff ratio in second grade?

30. What is your child to staff ratio in third grade?

31. Please circle all that your elementary program provides during in-service training for staff:
   Integration of subjects  Integration of healthy habits into the curriculum
   Detecting child abuse/neglect  Reporting child abuse/neglect
   Child guidance/discipline  Classroom management  Multicultural education
   Parental involvement  Child development  Other ____________________________

32. What qualifications are required of your beginning kindergarten teachers?
   Ph.D.  M.A.  B.S./B.A. in elementary education  B.S./B.A. in early childhood
   Kindergarten endorsement  Other ____________________________

33. Do you believe your teachers and administrators are knowledgeable in child development?
   Very  Somewhat  Undecided  Hardly  Not at all  Other ________

34. Do your teachers have any career development opportunities?
   Higher degrees  Research publishing  Title upgrades  Salary upgrades
   None  Other ____________________________

35. Do you collect data regarding public school teachers on:
   Salaries  Staff turn-over rate  Level of training  Level of experience
   Other ____________________________

   If so, are the results of this data open to:
   Anyone  Teachers  Parents  None  Other ____________________________

36. How involved are teachers when important decisions are made about their classroom?
   Very  Somewhat  Undecided  Hardly  Not at all  Other ________

37. How supportive of staff do you perceive your administrators to be?
   Very  Somewhat  Undecided  Hardly  Not at all  Other ________

38. Do any of your administrators have training in:
   Early childhood development  Curriculum  Teaching
   Developmentally appropriate practice  Other ____________________________
39. Do you perceive your school systems to be "parent friendly"?
   (Very) 5 3 2 1 (Not at all) Other _________

40. Do you encourage parent education classes, seminars or meetings?
   Often Sometimes Undecided Seldom Never

41. Do parents have a voice in important decisions?
   Often Sometimes Undecided Seldom Never

42. Do you make efforts to inform the community on the benefits and characteristics of high-quality education?
   Often Sometimes Undecided Seldom Never

   Yes No Other _____________
REFERENCES


