



Early Childhood and Community Schools Linkages Project Interim Report—August 2011

Project Overview

Many educational research and reform efforts focus on the inequitable experiences and outcomes of elementary, middle, and high school students. However, recent research indicates that these disparities begin as early as nine months of age.¹ Therefore, it is imperative that we look at how early childhood experiences, the transition to kindergarten, and the kindergarten year are supporting the growth and development of children – particularly those children who are the least likely to have access to these high-quality programs and settings: children of color, children with very few economic resources, and children with parents/guardians with minimal education. Research demonstrates that strong collaboration and continuity across early childhood education (ECE) programs and elementary schools yields equitable and enhanced outcomes for young children and their families.² And yet, it remains a challenge to implement and sustain such high quality collaborations.

The Early Childhood and Community Schools Linkages Project (Linkages)³ addresses the lack of collaboration and continuity across ECE programs and elementary schools by linking ECE programs with community schools. This is a strategic partnership as Community Schools and ECE programs share a culture and a set of values regarding the needs of the whole child and their family, giving rise to a smooth and successful transition to elementary school.

Since 2009, three regions (Multnomah County, OR; Albuquerque, NM; and Tulsa, OK) have been developing models to demonstrate that community schools are effective vehicles for promoting continuity between ECE and elementary school. According to the Linkages logic model (Appendix 1), developing these exemplars requires each region to employ **four key strategies**:

1. Promote linkages to local and state agencies and community leaders
2. Partner with community schools, ECE programs, communities and families
3. Share and collaborate on governance
4. Engage in shared professional learning

¹ Halle, T., Forry, N., Hair, E., Perper, K., Wandner, L., Wessel, J., & Vick, J. (2009). *Disparities in Early Learning and Development: Lessons from the Early Childhood Longitudinal Study – Birth Cohort (ECLS-B)*. Washington, DC: Child Trends.

² Melaville, A., & Pearson, S. (2009) *The Early Childhood and Community Schools Linkage Project: A Framework for Action*. Washington, D.C.: Coalition for community schools.

³ Linkages is funded by the Kellogg Foundation and supported through the Institute for Educational Leadership; the Coalition for Community Schools; and the Children’s Aid Society.

These strategies are intended to lead to short, intermediate and long term outcomes (for more information, see Logic Model in Appendix 1), including facilitating sustainable and scalable conditions that promote linkages between ECE and community schools. This project aims to understand and refine this theory of action based on how it is playing out in practice.

Research questions

The John W. Gardner Center (JGC) at Stanford University joined Linkages in 2009 to perform implementation research and build capacity among regional Linkages leaders and their colleagues.⁴ The three-year implementation study documents each region's process in establishing ECE community schools linkages, with the goal of determining what conditions appear to facilitate and/or hinder the building of linkages.⁵ To do this, JGC looks at the extent to which each of the regions is making progress in the four key strategies listed above. The specific questions that drive our research follow:

Key Question:

What conditions appear to facilitate and/or hinder the building of sustainable Linkages?

Sub-questions:

- What work have the regions done to promote Linkages to local and state agencies, communities and families, and other leaders?
- How are the regions and the selected demonstration sites collaborating with and engaging each other, communities and families?
- What are the structures and agencies governing Linkages and to what extent are they positioned to support sustainable, institutionalized Linkages?
- To what extent are there opportunities for school and ECE demonstration site staff to collaborate on Linkages work by participating in shared professional learning?

In 2010-2011, JGC conducted site visits (winter 2010), attended cross-region convenings in Portland, OR (spring 2011) and Tulsa, OK (fall 2010), conducted surveys and interviews with each site (spring 2011), and reviewed documents relevant to this inquiry.

In this interim report, JGC describes the progress that each region has made along the four key strategies and presents the key themes and implications that emerged over the past year. Although the findings in this interim report are primarily based on JGC's fieldwork in 2010-2011, our observations and analyses are informed by our cumulative research since 2009.

Demonstration Site Overview

At the launch of Linkages in 2009, three regions were selected to serve as national models: Multnomah County, OR; Albuquerque, NM; and Tulsa, OK. Each of the regions selected two to four schools to serve as demonstration sites. Consistent with the Linkages goal to link ECE

⁴ JGC's capacity building work includes participating in cross-region convenings and conducting workshops for local evaluators and regional leaders to learn about evaluation methods and share evaluation strategies.

⁵ Each site has its own local evaluator. JGC's research addressed the Linkages initiative across all regions.

programs with community schools, the selected demonstration sites share the following characteristics:

- Each site is either an established or developing community school.
- Each site has an ECE program on, adjacent to, or in close proximity to it.
- The selected sites serve students considered to be traditionally underserved.

Regional Strategy Effort Highlights

STRATEGY 1: PROMOTE LINKAGES TO LOCAL AND STATE AGENCIES AND COMMUNITY LEADERS

Promoting Linkages to local and state agencies and community leaders is a key strategy for regions to garner local and state policy level support. In the past year, regions have made significant progress in developing policy level support and engaging key stakeholders in Linkages. For example, Multnomah and Tulsa have built relationships with local and state leaders and engaged them in Linkages planning work. Albuquerque has also engaged local and state leaders in their efforts to promote their community school and Linkages model.

MULTNOMAH LINKAGES PROJECT (MULTNOMAH)

In Multnomah, Linkages is an initiative of Multnomah County Schools Uniting Neighborhoods (SUN) Service System, a well-established community school system with schools from six of the county's seven school districts. The SUN Service System works with dozens of public agencies and local branches of national organizations and many of the agencies that partner with SUN Schools now serve on the Multnomah Linkages Steering Committee. This Steering Committee supports demonstration sites by identifying and addressing implementation issues that impact the Linkages effort and institutionalizing successful practices across SUN community schools and ECE programs. Committee members demonstrate dedication and investment in Linkages and prioritize Steering Committee Meetings. They also express appreciation for the rare opportunity to collaborate with other agencies – especially about linkages.

TULSA LINKAGES PROJECT (TULSA)

The Tulsa Linkages Project has a well-organized and diverse Linkages Leadership Team, with about 15 members who represent agencies such as the Community Service Council, Community Action Project, Tulsa Public Schools, Union Public Schools, JumpStart Tulsa, Department of Human Services- Childcare Licensing, Family & Children Services, Tulsa Educare, Inc., and the Tulsa Area Community Schools Initiative. While these organizations operate at a local level, many of them are the local branch of state level agencies (e.g. JumpStart is the local affiliate of SmartStart). The diversity and institutional knowledge of these partners is impressive and their involvement signals that these policy level organizations view the Linkages work as valuable.

ALBUQUERQUE LINKAGES PROJECT (ALBUQUERQUE)

The Albuquerque Linkages Project has been actively promoting the Linkages and community schools model to local and state agencies and community leaders through the ABC (Albuquerque Public Schools, Bernalillo County and City of Albuquerque) Community Schools Partnership (ABC-CSP⁶). ABC-CSP was established in 2008 as a governing body to advocate for and financially

⁶ Formerly known as the ABC Partnership.

support community schools. Since then, the ABC-CSP Partnership has been advancing the community school model. For example, in late 2010, ABC-CSP hosted a dinner for Albuquerque Public Schools' principals to promote the community schools model to various stakeholders, including principals and ECE administrators. The dinner's keynote speakers, Albuquerque Mayor Richard J. Berry and Jane Quinn of the Children's Aid Society National Technical Assistance Center for Community Schools, indicates the commitment among top level leadership to community schools and Linkages. In spring 2011, the ABC-CSP went further by laying out a vision for every Albuquerque public school to become a community school. ABC-CSP has made subsequent efforts to involve families and other community members in the creation of community schools with an early childhood focus. However, the Albuquerque Linkages Project has found that simultaneously working on the ECE Linkages and the community schools initiatives challenges capacity and organizational attention. Specifically, various stakeholders expressed that concentrating on two initiatives has created some confusion regarding the goals of the Linkages Project. Additionally, generating focus and resources to build two reforms requires enormous capacity from staff and community that has sometimes been challenging to marshal.

STRATEGY 2: PARTNER WITH COMMUNITY SCHOOLS, ECE PROGRAMS, COMMUNITIES AND FAMILIES

Developing and nurturing partnerships between community schools and ECE programs enables Linkages to occur at the local level and improve outcomes for communities and families. Over the past year, Multnomah and Tulsa have cultivated these partnerships through planning teams and committees. In Albuquerque, the demonstration sites have forged partnerships with early education specialists to facilitate various Linkages activities for school staff and families. Partnerships between community schools and ECE programs allow these traditionally siloed entities to share expertise about students and develop strategies and programs to make their transition from ECE to elementary school smoother. In each region, these partnerships are translating into tangible Linkages activities that support children and families.

MULTNOMAH LINKAGES PROJECT

Multnomah's Kindergarten Transition Teams are a prime example of collaborative bodies formed between community schools and ECE programs. The Multnomah Linkages Project initiated these teams at each demonstration site to create linkages that ease students' transition to kindergarten. The teams consist of principals, site managers, ECE representatives, parents, and kindergarten teachers. At one school, the team has used information provided by Head Start to identify specific challenges and develop solutions. In another school, the team has served as a place to keep everyone informed of the array of early childhood resources that are now available at the school.

In addition, the Multnomah Linkages Project has supported a pilot Kindergarten Transition Program. The Kindergarten Transition Program, primarily funded by Portland Public Schools, was in the early development phase when the Linkage Steering Committee was formed and key staff associated with it became members of the Steering Committee. Linkages helped facilitate the partnership between the district and the SUN Community Schools, which led to the piloting of the program. The transition program is due to expand from its initial two sites to an additional three sites in that district; all are SUN Community Schools. As a result of Linkages, some schools are also beginning to implement Parent/Child Summer Kindergarten Transition Programs this year.

Multnomah's pilot Kindergarten Transition Program

Key Components:

- Targets families with the greatest need of services
- Occurs during the summer before elementary school
- Teaches students routines, separating from parents, school rules, and expectations
- Provides parents with information on school, district and social services, school expectations
- Allows parents to connect with other parents

Early Observations of Impact:

- Students demonstrate increased confidence, greater leadership, and better academic results
- Parents demonstrate stronger connection to school and increased likelihood of volunteering with school/class

TULSA LINKAGES PROJECT

The Tulsa Linkages Project has established a Linkages Transition Planning Team at each of the four demonstration sites. The planning meetings include the principal, school staff, community school coordinator, parents, community leaders and staff from the neighboring ECE centers. So far, the Planning Teams' accomplishments include:

- Ensuring that Linkages activities address the specific concerns of both demonstration sites and neighboring ECE centers;
- Facilitating shared professional development opportunities around curriculum and social services alignment with their adjacent ECE centers;
- Ensuring that the work of creating seamless transitions continues uninterrupted through "Project Schoolhouse"⁷ and through the recent loss of a Linkages Transition Specialist⁸;
- Planning communication strategies for new principals to educate them about Linkages goals and efforts and engage them in the work; and
- Collaborating with Department of Human Services, Childcare Licensing to bring more of a childcare voice into the Linkages work by connecting and engaging childcare providers that are not necessarily pre-schools.

The Linkages Transition Planning Teams have also conducted surveys with families and staff in the Community Schools and ECE programs to assess needs and inform planning efforts. The data suggested that schools need to make classrooms more welcoming to families and more developmentally appropriate for children. During the 2010-2011 school year, the Transition Specialists worked with the Linkages Transition Planning Teams at each demonstration site to develop plans to address these concerns.

⁷ In May 2011, Tulsa Public School District passed "Project Schoolhouse," an initiative to consolidate fourteen schools in an effort to obtain greater fiscal solvency.

⁸ Two transition specialists have been working on the Linkages project since the beginning. However, in summer 2011, the Linkages Transition Specialist who was funded by the district lost her position due to American Recovery and Reinvestment Act (ARRA) cuts.

ALBUQUERQUE LINKAGES PROJECT

ABC-CSP's relationship with both the Family Development Program (FDP) at the University of New Mexico and the City of Albuquerque Division of Child and Family Development, an ECE provider, has bolstered Albuquerque's efforts to develop local partnerships. FDP has provided support and technical assistance, including professional development to community care providers, families and educators working with ABC-CSP, including the staff and families at both Linkages demonstration sites. In addition, the City of Albuquerque Division of Child and Family Development has implemented early childhood workshops catered to families at one of the two sites.

STRATEGY 3: SHARE AND COLLABORATE ON GOVERNANCE

The actions of governing agencies lend meaning and shape to any given project. As such, a long-term goal of Linkages is for ECE programs and community schools to share and collaborate on governance at both the site and system level.⁹ However, this strategy takes a significant amount of time to develop and often depends on the extent to which regions have made progress in promoting policy level support and developing partnerships between ECE programs and community schools. Consequently, regions with more mature community schools models have been more successful than regions with nascent community schools models at moving towards sharing governance. Across the regions, there are isolated examples of shared governance at the site level although collaboration on governance at the system level is at an infancy stage.

A particular challenge to the intended shared governance structure at both the site and system level has been inconsistency and unpredictability of funding along with leadership churn in all regions. For example, during the winter of 2010, two Multnomah demonstration sites experienced community school coordinator transitions. In addition, the principal at the third demonstration site retired at the end of this school year. Meanwhile, in Tulsa, Tulsa Public School District passed "Project Schoolhouse", an initiative to consolidate fourteen schools in an effort to obtain greater fiscal solvency. During summer 2011, Project Schoolhouse will reconfigure existing prek-5 schools into prek-6 sites. As a result of the project, one of the four Tulsa demonstration sites that had previously been a K-5 school is becoming a K-6 school. Many of the schools, including two of the Linkages demonstration sites, will now have new principals. Further impacting the Linkages work is Oklahoma's loss of federal stimulus money, which led to the loss of one of the two Tulsa Linkages Transition Specialists for the 2011-2012 school year. The investment of time and resources into regional efforts to adapt to changing funding and staffing has limited the extent to which ECE and community schools can move towards meaningful collaboration and shared governance.

MULTNOMAH LINKAGES PROJECT

Establishing the Linkages Project Steering Committee in 2009 provided a framework for shared responsibility for the project. Made up of representatives from early childhood, school, and community agencies, the Committee continues to navigate Multnomah County's network of

⁹ Site level governance focuses on the norms, policies, structures and practices at Linkages demonstration sites, inclusive of the elementary schools and ECE programs. System level governance focuses on specific actions or arrangements that support Linkages in policy and practice at the regional level: formal commitments to Linkages, sustainability of an initiative or policy agenda, incentives to encourage Linkages at the setting level, accountability for outcomes and provision of essential supports at system and setting levels.

providers and services to create strategies for building Linkages. While this collaborative initially provided the Linkages demonstration sites with broad direction, its recent attention to chronic absenteeism has influenced activities at the district and demonstration site levels. This includes a revamp of data collection systems in two Multnomah districts to facilitate more effective information gathering on chronic absenteeism. In addition, the Multnomah Linkages Steering Committee launched a strategic messaging campaign, creating materials and tools accessible in libraries and over the Internet that targets families and equips direct service providers (including ECE programs and elementary schools) with information around chronic absence. The Linkages Steering Committee represents valuable cross-agency work, and to date, their activities demonstrate the potential for this entity to support sustainable, institutionalized Linkages.

TULSA LINKAGES PROJECT

Moving towards shared governance has been difficult in light of Tulsa's school consolidation effort (Project Schoolhouse), and the loss of one of the Linkages Transition Specialists. However, one factor that has helped facilitate shared governance is the fact that the Linkages Transition Specialist is housed in the same building as many of the social services agencies (e.g. JumpStart). As such collaborations deepen, they will help ensure that the Linkages goals and activities will endure beyond the three year life of the formal Linkages Project.

ALBUQUERQUE LINKAGES PROJECT

The Albuquerque Linkages Project is beginning to create structures and agencies both within and outside of ABC-CSP to support collaborative governance. For example, the Parent Liaison who stewards the Linkages work at one of the demonstration sites regularly reaches out to the families and teachers of the neighboring Even Start Pre-kindergarten program. The other demonstration site has also benefited from a coordinator who, up until summer 2011, has worked on a voluntary basis on Linkages efforts. Using rollover Linkages money, in the fall of 2011 the coordinator will become a contract employee tasked with building a community schools infrastructure at this site to support Linkages activities.

STRATEGY 4: ENGAGE IN SHARED PROFESSIONAL LEARNING

Shared professional learning is geared towards providing community school and ECE demonstration site staff and leaders a chance to collaborate on Linkages work. All regions have created learning opportunities aimed at increasing staff understanding and capacity to engage in Linkages work.

MULTNOMAH LINKAGES PROJECT

One example of Multnomah's efforts to engage in shared professional learning is the Positive Behavior Intervention Support system at one of the demonstration sites. As part of this initiative, the school had joint trainings with Head Start (located on its campus) so that students and families would have consistent behavioral expectations as they transition from Head Start to elementary school.

In addition, with the support of the Children's Aid Society and IEL/Coalition for Community Schools, the Multnomah Steering Committee invited multiple community schools and ECE providers to participate in a professional development workshop around chronic absenteeism. This learning opportunity sparked attendees' desire to learn about how this issue impacts Multnomah

schools. In response, the Multnomah Linkages Steering Committee, in collaboration with Attendance Counts, Coalition for Community Schools and The Children's Aid Society National Center for Community Schools, began assessing chronic absenteeism in Multnomah schools. Their analysis showed that almost one in four kindergarteners and first graders in Multnomah County miss a month or more of school each year or are chronically absent. This alarming finding prompted subsequent workshops and webinars, as well as a revamp of data collection systems in two Multnomah districts to facilitate more effective information gathering on chronic absenteeism.

TULSA LINKAGES PROJECT

In Tulsa, the Early Childhood Teacher Cohort provides a useful example of a shared learning strategy. Through this initiative, select teachers receive ongoing professional development that meets standards set forth by the National Association for the Education of Young Children. The goal is for professionally groomed "master" teachers to be positioned to provide professional development to new teachers and carry the message of creating seamless transitions for children entering kindergarten and Pre-K.

In addition, the Tulsa Linkages Project supported a Summer Leadership Institute for school administrators to learn about ECE, including appropriate developmental practices and curriculum. The idea for this summer academy arose from Tulsa Linkages Leadership Team meetings, where participants recognized the general lack of early childhood professional development provided to administrators through traditional administrative education tracks; ECE experts who serve on the Leadership Team helped to facilitate the summer session. Plans are underway to continue implementing these academies in the future.

Finally, the district is planning joint professional development to be held in Summer/Fall 2011 for all district Pre-K teachers and their assistants, along with ECE staff. This will be the first time that such a district wide shared opportunity will occur.

ALBUQUERQUE LINKAGES PROJECT

The Albuquerque Linkages Project has capitalized on professional learning opportunities afforded to them through the Linkages Project by sending their school and ECE demonstration site staff and leaders to the Institute for Educational Leadership, Coalition for Community Schools Linkages Project cross-site visits. There, they have learned about the Linkages activities and strategies employed at other sites and to refine their work plans.

In addition, collaboration and shared learning exists between sites. For example, the staff at one of the demonstration sites visited the other site to learn about its community school efforts. Since both demonstration sites are relatively new at developing a community school model and linking the model to early childhood, they will benefit from collaborating and learning from one another.

Cross Region Themes and Considerations

In our work so far, three important cross-region themes have emerged. In this section of the report, we point out these cross-region themes as well as key questions for future consideration.

JGC's 2010 report noted that Linkages stakeholders were concerned about the professional silos that exist in elementary schools and ECE programs, and how these silos hinder relationship building. During the past year, stakeholders indicated that these *silos were beginning to break down*. In part, they attributed this to the opportunity to work in partnership around a shared purpose. In addition to the dissolution of these silos amongst ECE and community schools, there is increased interaction across organizations representing different agencies that have joined the Linkages effort. For example, in Multnomah, members of the Linkages Steering Committee appreciate the opportunity to work with organizations and individuals from outside their field and address shared concerns. As stakeholders have pooled their expertise and resources around Linkages, their partnerships have deepened and their work has become more cohesive. Breaking down these professional silos is an essential step towards building sustainable linkages. As Linkages moves into its final year, a key question is "How is each region working to institutionalize these relationships and ensure that these deepening partnerships become the standard practice?"

In the second year of Linkages, it has become evident that *an existing system, infrastructure and culture around community schools* makes Linkages work significantly smoother. That is, established community schools are a fundamental building block for establishing linkages. The variation between where regions are in their community school implementation has impacted the Linkages work. For example, Multnomah's deep history of community schools has paved the way for their Linkages work—there is a shared language and understanding around the logistics and benefits of community schools that is a necessary building block for the Linkages component. In contrast, Albuquerque has an added challenge to its Linkages work because building a community school culture and infrastructure takes a long time to develop. As such, a key question moving forward is "How will each region forge thriving and enduring community schools models?"

We have found that *continuity in resources, includes staffing and funding*, are a key condition facilitating the successful implementation of each of the Linkages strategies. However, the economic climate has created an environment where leadership positions, as well as crucial funding, are being eliminated. Turnover in significant positions and uncertain or reduced funding has interrupted and impacted regional planning efforts. Although regions have taken steps to overcome these challenges, such as creating transition planning teams in Tulsa, shifting resources will likely have implications for future Linkages work. Going forward, a key question is "What strategies might each region implement to mitigate the inevitable shifting of resources?"

Conclusion

Although Linkages is based on a common framework, its implementation looks different across the regions. Variation in where regions are in their own ECE and community school model development is one reason for these implementation differences. Regardless, all regions are making significant strides towards creating linkages and thereby enhancing opportunities for children to succeed in school. As mentioned in the introduction, gaps in growth and development begin as early as nine months and become more pronounced as children get older. Transitioning between academic environments is an especially critical time in a child's developmental trajectory. Streamlining these transitions at the site and system level is a complicated and lengthy process. However, after just two years, all regions have demonstrated that creating linkages between ECE programs and community schools is viable and promising. Regions' progress is particularly

commendable in light of the economic challenges that have forced them to shift strategies and resources. Although understanding the long-term effect of the Linkages project requires looking beyond early implementation successes and failures, these formative findings provide an opportunity for all project partners to reflect on what is working well and make any necessary changes to maximize the impact of Linkages resources.

Appendix 1: National ECE Linkages Logic Model

The John W. Gardner Center crafted a National ECE Linkages Logic Model in conjunction with IEL and our colleagues in the three regions. The logic model describes the components required to bring about the initiative's goals and outcomes. It takes into consideration both what is happening at the national level as well as the work on the ground in each region. It is a living document that has evolved as the national and regional projects refine their work.

The National ECE Linkages Logic Model reflects the following problem statement driving the project: Young children are typically most vulnerable during transitions. As described above, the lack of connections between ECE programs and elementary schools results in children who may not be ready to learn when they enter school. Further, the conventional challenges faced by schools increase as large numbers of families, especially those traditionally underserved, miss opportunities for high quality ECE programs. Without stronger collaboration across ECE and elementary schools inequities will be perpetuated and poor outcomes for youth and families will continue.

The logic model describes the goals of the initiative as: 1) supporting all children to be prepared for success in school and life and 2) demonstrating that community schools are effective vehicles for promoting continuity between ECE and early elementary school. Community schools share a culture and set of values with ECE programs, including addressing the needs of the whole child and his or her family, that lend themselves to more seamless transitions than would be achieved through transitions to traditional elementary schools.

Next, the logic model describes various resources, both national and local, that support the initiative. These include experts and funding at the national and regional levels, regional pilot sites that are able to tap into local expertise in community schools and ECE programs, and strong evaluation work for accountability and continuous learning. Additionally, Linkages forged locally will include multiple stakeholders in each community that provide essential services to youth and families including social services, health, mental health and other programs.

Once in place, these resources are expected to support national and local activities designed to move regions forward with their Linkages. At the national level, activities include the observation and documentation of each region's process, technical assistance on community schools, planning and evaluation, and the creation of a shared learning community to discuss ideas and strategies. At the regional level, activities include developing and nurturing relationships between ECE programs, community schools and the community, advocacy with local and state agencies and policy makers, and the thoughtful selection of demonstration sites and early childhood sites that will model best practices. At the school and ECE site level, these activities differ across the regions and even across demonstration sites, and are dependent on local context and strategy. Activities may focus on all or some of the following issues, among others: shared space between ECE and community schools, increased or shared professional development opportunities for ECE and community schools staff, shared or collaborative governance structures, and community and parental involvement.

Where successful, these activities are expected to lead to a number of field- and practice-building outputs such as:

- increased national and cross-region understanding of and capacity for building Linkages;
- regional leadership teams that reflect diverse partnerships and commitments from local and state agencies;
- demonstration site sites that serve as models for other local schools;
- shared space and professional development in ECE and community schools;
- sustainable ECE and community school partnerships and funding;
- families who access and use available services.

These outputs may be direct products of the activities enacted by the initiative participants. Broader outcomes may result over time from the collective actions of the participants as the activities and outputs work in concert. For example, short term outcomes might include linked curricula and improved relationships. Intermediate term outcomes might include sustainable regional initiatives, institutionalized support locally and nationally for Linkages. A long term hoped for outcome could be the national recognition of community schools as natural systems for transitioning children from ECE programs into kindergarten. With sustainable systems the initiative can expect to see families receiving needed services, schools ready to support young children and their families, and children prepared for success in elementary school.

Problem Statement

Schools/ECEs do not provide continuity across programs and quality programs are not available to all families. As a result, some children are not prepared to enter school and end up under performing.

Goal

Ensure that all children are prepared for success in school and life and all schools are prepared for the youngest children. Demonstrate that CSs are effective vehicles for promoting access to and continuity of quality programming across ECE programs and the early grades.

Logic Model: ECE Linkages Project (National)

Long-Term Outcomes

CSs recognized nationally as mechanism for linking ECE to the grades. All children prepared for the grades and for success in school and life.

