



THE OHIO STATE UNIVERSITY

CRANE CENTER FOR EARLY CHILDHOOD
RESEARCH AND POLICY

Kindergarten Transition:

Examples from the A. Sophie Rogers School for Early Learning

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Children’s transition to kindergarten can be a challenging adjustment. Researchers and practitioners have long worked to identify practices that can help ensure a successful transition. According to one prominent theoretical framework by Dr. Robert Pianta and Dr. Sara Rimm-Kaufmann, strong and positive connections among teachers, families, peers, neighborhoods, and the transitioning child are necessary for a successful transition. Such connections foster aligned expectations for children across both home and school environments; mitigate challenges or problems quickly because of increased communication between school and home; and lead to more positive interactions all around for children – whether with adults or peers.

Of course, establishing positive and sustained connections may sound simple, but it is easier said than done – and especially done well. This is especially true across the kindergarten transition, as both children and parents must navigate a new schooling environment and develop new patterns of connections. To illustrate how these bidirectional connections can improve the kindergarten transition experience for children, the A. Sophie Rogers School for Early Learning offers a great case study.

Implementing in Practice

The Crane Center's partner school, the A. Sophie Rogers School for Early Learning (ASR), has successfully implemented the best practices from this framework for over two decades. Here we highlight just a few of the ways that ASR staff and practitioners use this framework to facilitate the transition to kindergarten for children and their families.

Kindergarten transition practices for children

Each spring, teachers gather small groups for all kindergarten-bound children to ask questions. Teachers facilitate child-led discussions about what occurs during the transition. Since the children will go on to attend multiple schools in multiple districts, the answers to their questions can be varied and unique. Children also complete preparedness activities, like writing letters to current kindergarten students with questions they have about the upcoming year.

The school hosts a panel discussion featuring current kindergarten students, allowing kindergarten-bound children to ask them questions about kindergarten.



3. What do you have in your classroom?

Books, work, cubbies, playdoh, blocks, legos, coloring

4. Do you get to play?

Yes, we get to play outside @ recess and at Free choice (Fri).

(left) Example of questions preschoolers had for visiting kindergarteners.

Kindergarten-bound children work on writing their own picture books about kindergarten expectations, make a list of questions to mail to kindergarten teachers, and create collages of school year photos, as well as “what I want to be when I grow up” photos.

Pre-k teachers have brought kindergarten-eligible children to visit a district kindergarten classroom with kindergarteners and their teachers prior to the start of kindergarten.

(below) Kindergarteners lined up and ready to answer questions from preschoolers.



Kindergarten transition resources for families

ASR has also provided resources to families in several formats, to help guide them through the upcoming transition.

ASR's principal and assistant principal host a kindergarten-focused orientation for parents on kindergarten readiness where families exchange information with each other about schools, learn about transportation, and learn about how centralized enrollment for the Columbus City School district works.

These sessions have taken place via Zoom since the pandemic. Click [here](#) to see a recording for one of these sessions.

Kindergarten transition coordinator Timea Pap and principal Anneliese Johnson wrote a [brief for families](#) with tips on supporting children through the transition. In the brief, they recommend parent communication with the school and teacher for requests to tour classrooms and with questions about transportation, afterschool care, and kindergarten readiness.

ASR preschoolers visit Weinland Park Elementary School.





Finally, the school hosts an end-of-the-year celebration in May to celebrate the children transitioning to kindergarten in the fall, marking this milestone with graduation photos and pre-K diplomas. The school also provides backpacks for graduates with school supplies and children's story books about elementary school.

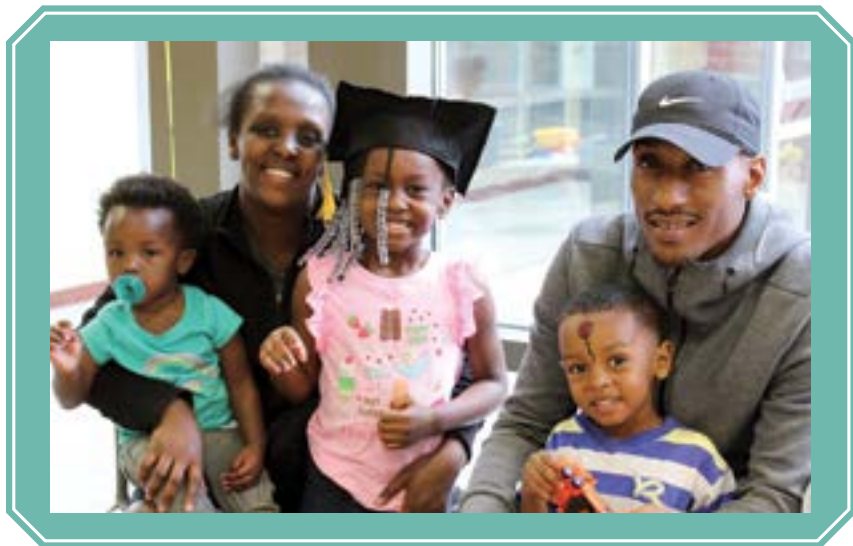
Staff and parents help children plant flowers at the celebration.



Conclusion

These are just a few examples of the extensive work by ASR teachers, administrators, and staff to support their kindergarten-bound children and families. The Rimm-Kaufman and Pianta model offers an effective framework for programs to use as a guide to create and maintain connections between all groups in the model as they prepare children and families for success during this important life transition. The kindergarten transition may be a pivotal period that can have an outsized influence on children's academic trajectories. By creatively adapting this model to support families during the transition, ASR teachers and staff are aiming to set children and families up for success in kindergarten and beyond.

An ASR family celebrates their kindergarten-bound child.





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Crane Center for Early Childhood Research & Policy

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