

Together We're Better: A Story of Collaboration

RICHLAND SCHOOL DISTRICT, PARTNERS FOR EARLY LEARNING,
AND COMMUNITIES IN SCHOOLS OF BENTON-FRANKLIN COUNTIES

Presenters

Erich Bolz – Assistant Superintendent for Instructional Programs

Nicki Blake – Executive Director of Teaching, Learning, and Curriculum

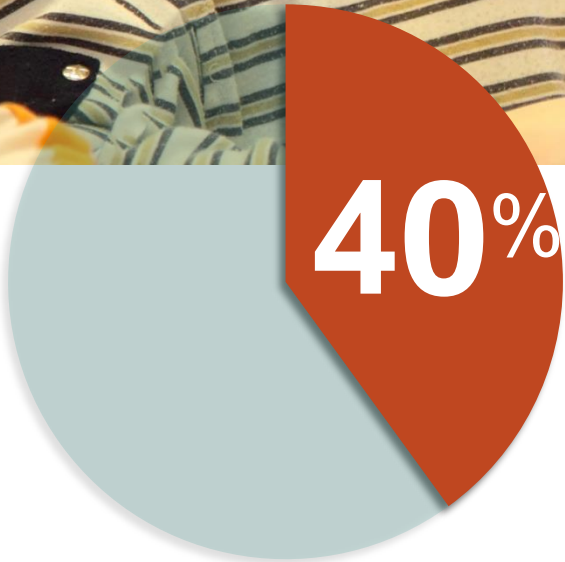
Sharon Bradley – Assistant Director of Special Programs

Karen Weakley – President of Partners for Early Learning

Robert Garza – Executive Director of Communities in Schools of Benton-Franklin Counties

Session Learning Targets:

- ❖ What community partnerships provide the biggest bang for your buck?
- ❖ What is the benefit of the partnerships for the district? Community? Children? Families?
- ❖ How has Richland School district been proactive in their approach to partnerships?
- ❖ How can you crack this nut in your district?



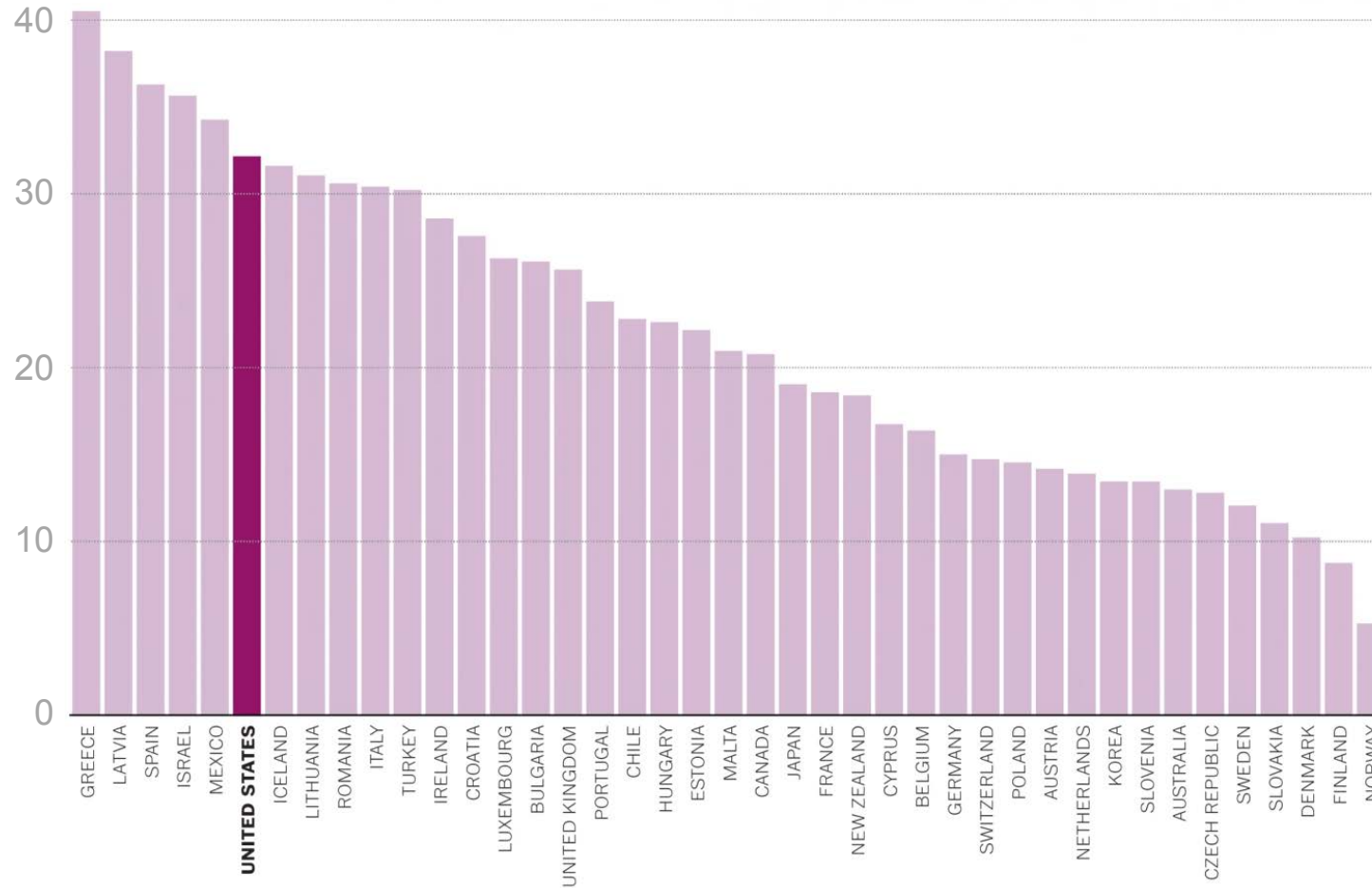
40%

Every year, **40%** of children walk into kindergarten one-to-three years behind.



One in Three U.S. Children Lives in Poverty

% of children living in households earning less than 60 percent of the median income

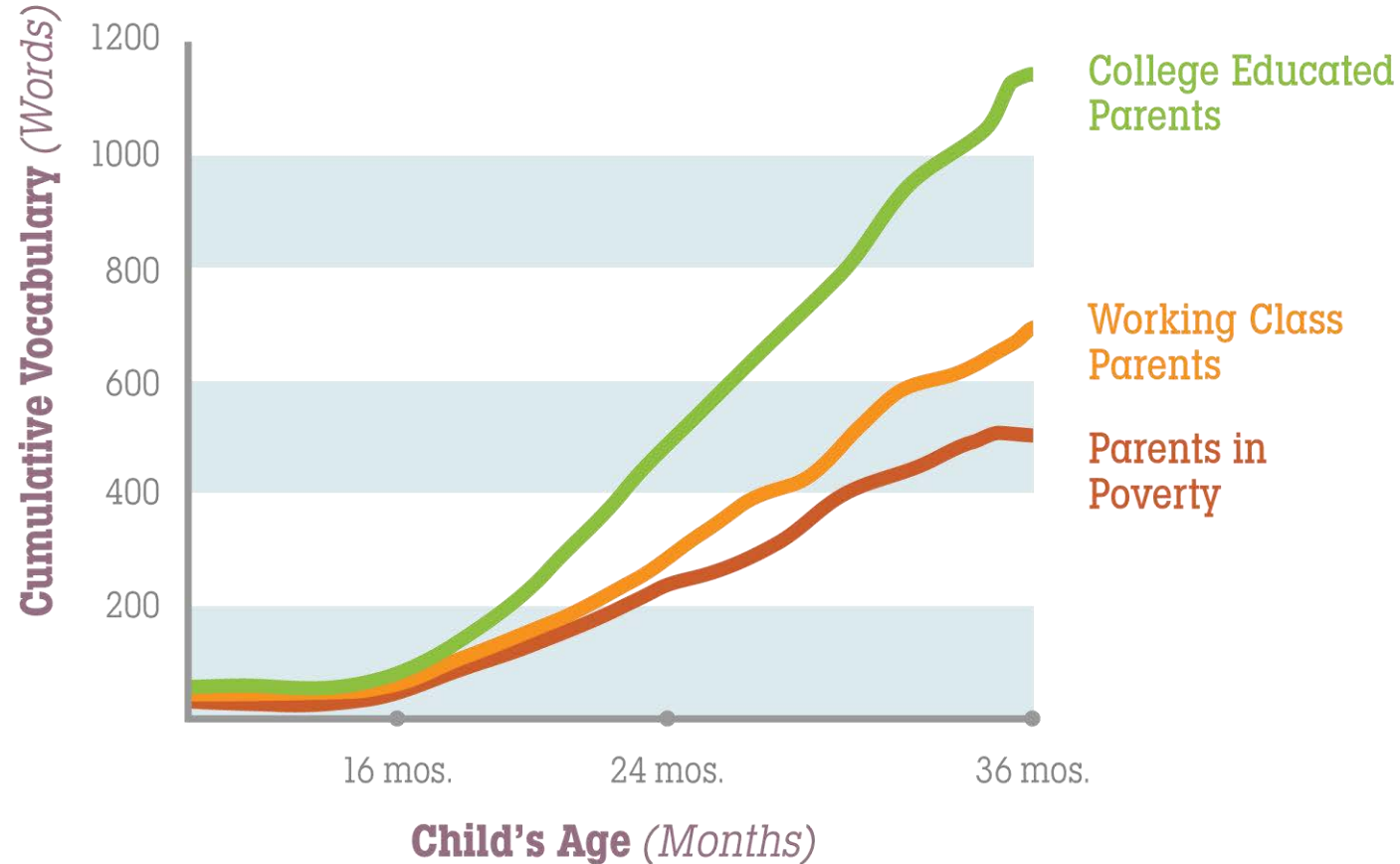


Source: *UNICEF*



Impact of Poverty on Achievement

The achievement gap emerges by age two



Source: Dr. Betty Hart and Dr. Todd Risley

Meaningful Differences in the Everyday Experience of Young American Children (1995)

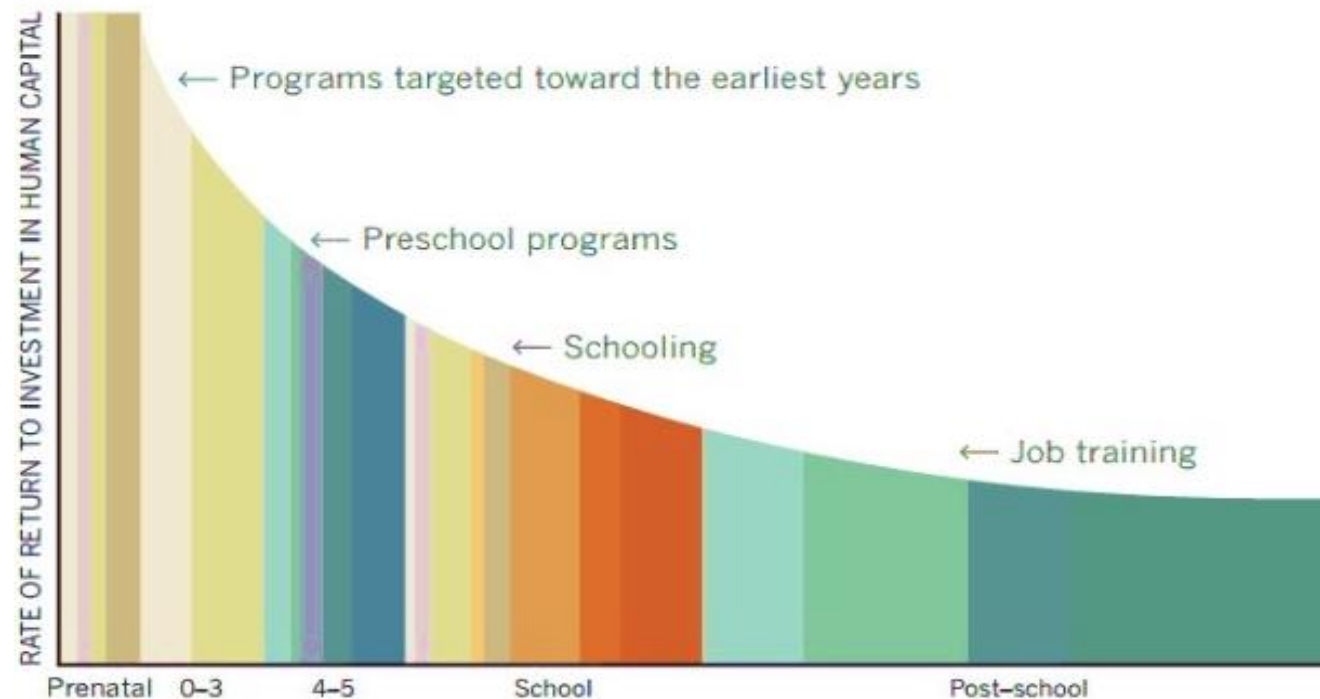


Summer Slide

Brian Williams Summer Slide Video



Early Learning Research



“Every dollar invested in early childhood education produces a **7-10%** per annum return in better education, health, social, and economic outcomes.”

James Heckman, PhD

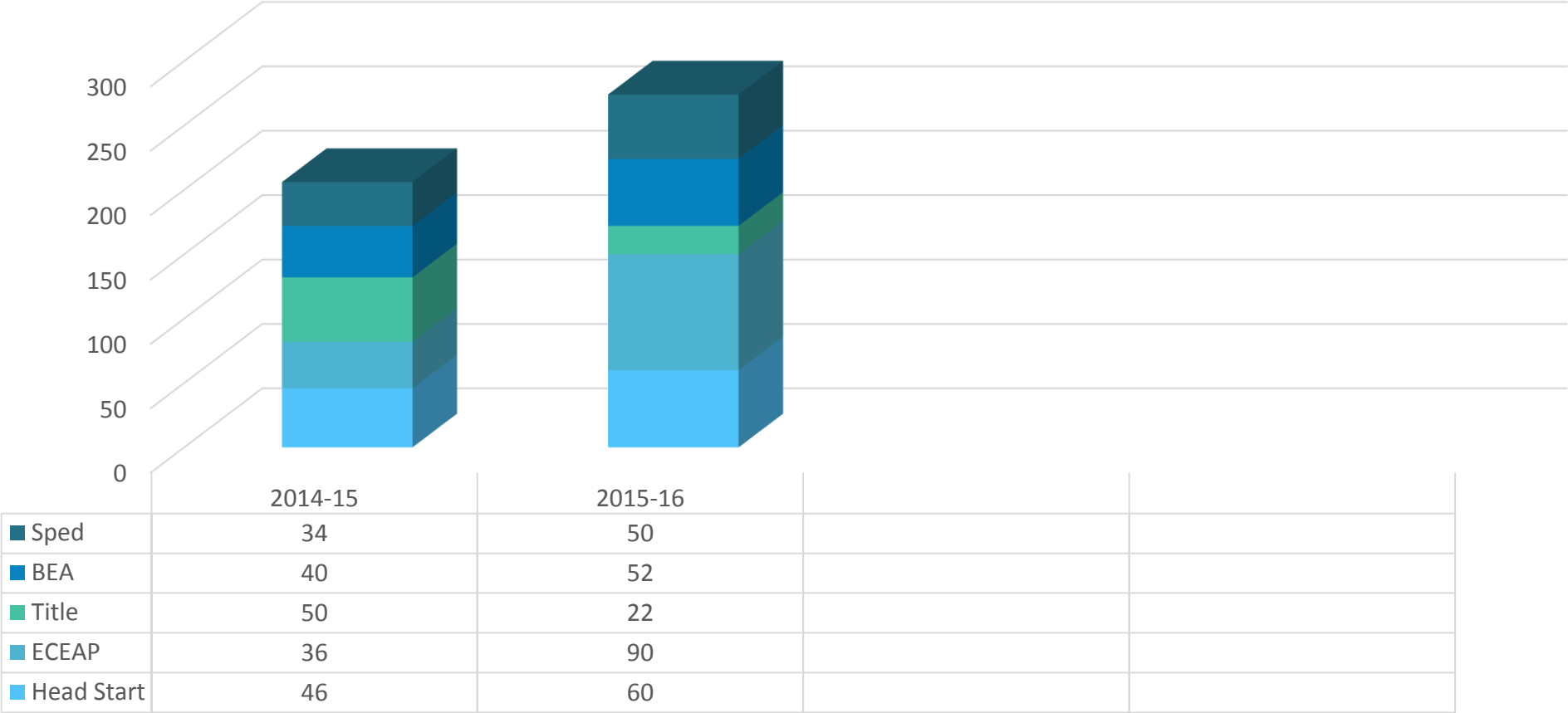
Nobel Laureate in Economics, 2000



Responding to changing demographics

- ❖ RSD has increased preschool opportunities in the district through a variety of funding sources since 2007-2008
- ❖ The target population has been students from low income families, and students who score in an at-risk range on a developmental screener (DIAL 3/ DIAL 4).
- ❖ RSD currently has preschool sessions on every campus.
- ❖ Preschools are funded by BEA, Title I, Head Start, ECEAP, and Special Education dollars.

Inclusive Preschool 2014-15 to 2015-16



Response to RSD's Changing Demographics Partner's for Early Learning Emerges

- ❖ RSD invited the community to be a part of the solution
- ❖ A group of volunteers gathered to focus their energies alongside RSD and formed an independent non-profit organization called Partners for Early Learning (PFEL)

Discuss at your table

What actions are occurring in your district/community to change school entry outcomes? Where do you want to be one year from now? Three years from now? Five years from now?

*Facilitated Table Talk

*Share time

PFEL's Mission and Direction

- ❖ To ensure that all young children come to school with the skills and resources needed to succeed
- ❖ To be responsive to the needs of early care and education professionals served by Richland schools



Partners for Early Learning Work




Educating Community Partners

Strong Foundations for School: *About Me, and My Family, and Culture*, Ages 3-4 years

I Did It Myself!

Learning to do things independently will help your child:

- Have pride in his own abilities
- Improve decision making skills
- Become an active part of family routines



Ideas to try with your child:

- Have your child pick out his own clothes when getting dressed in the morning. Give two to three options to choose from, and make sure options are easy to put on. Start with items like elastic-waist shorts, slip on shoes, or shirts without buttons.
- Create simple jobs for your child that he can do by himself. Tasks like sorting or folding socks, carrying laundry to his room, setting out napkins at the table, and picking up toys in the living room are good ones to start with.
- Comment on his growing abilities: "I'm so proud of the way you picked up your toys." Or, "Thank you for putting the cups on the table for dinner. You're a great helper."

If your child is struggling:

- Practice simple tasks, like picking up toys, with your child and show him exactly how to do it. Slowly remove your help, until your child is doing it by himself.
- Praise your child as he shows independence in tasks like taking off his shoes, wiping his feet at the door, or drying himself off after a bath.

Going further:

- Create a chore chart for your child. Add stickers to the chart every day for chores completed and give a small prize, like extra time at the park or an extra bed time story, when the chart is complete at the end of the week.
- Give your child more complex tasks as he is able to do more independently. Examples: emptying bathroom garbage into the large garbage, wiping off tables, or setting out silverware for meals.
- Books to check out:
I Can Do It MYSELF! by Stephen Krensky; *All By Myself* by Mercer Mayer; and *All By Myself!* by Aiki.

Washington State Department of
Early Learning

RICHLAND
SCHOOL DISTRICT

The WA State Department of Early Learning and the Richland School District believes that parents, families, and caregivers are young children's best teachers. This resource guide, part of *Strong Foundations for School: Resource Guides for Parents of Young Children*, highlights a key developmental skill for children Ages 3-4 years that parents can help improve at home.

Adapted from WA State Early Learning and Development Guidelines, 2012: "Express delight in own abilities" About Me, My Family, and Culture, Ages 3-4 years, pg. 58

Supporting Families



Offering Community Sponsored Professional Development

A Closer Look at PFEL Activities

- ❖ Provides monthly meetings for early care and education professionals funded by community partners at no cost to participants



Website for Families and Caregivers



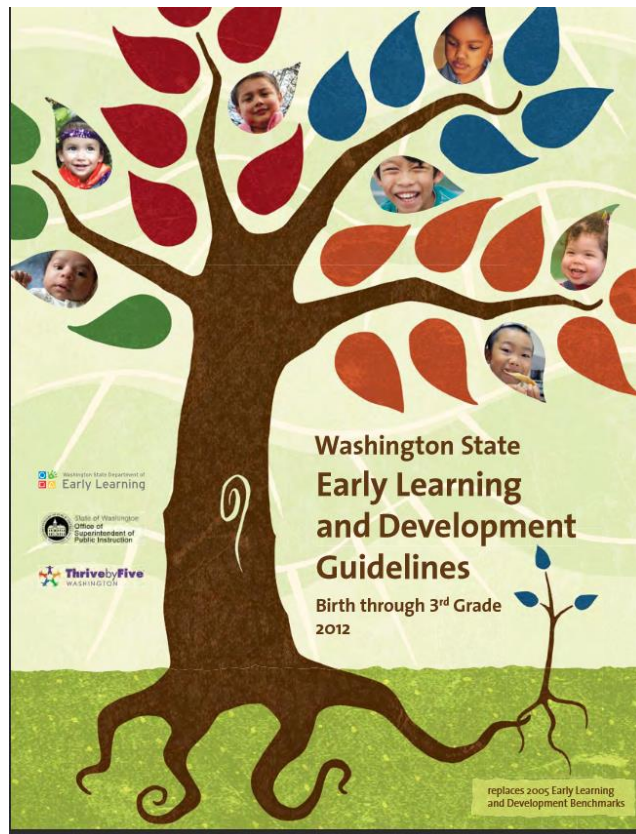
The screenshot shows the homepage of the Richland Schools website, specifically the section for families and caregivers. The header features three images: a young girl smiling, the Richland Schools logo (a triangle with 'Community', 'Children', and 'Parents' inside, and 'Richland Schools Partners for Early Learning' below), and two boys in a grocery store. Below the header is a navigation menu with links: Parent's Page, FAQ, News, Contacts, Resources, Early Learning Professionals, About, and Home. The main content area is divided into several sections:

- Welcome:** A paragraph explaining that learning begins long before kindergarten and that the greatest brain growth occurs in the earliest years of life. It offers to help find information about the child's birth to kindergarten, listing topics like Healthy Brain Development, Learning Activities, Community Activities, Child Care information, Helping Your Child Get Ready for Kindergarten, and Where to Find Community Services.
- Your Baby's Hearing:** A section discussing how a baby's brain grows rapidly in the first years of life, focusing on senses like vision, hearing, and touch. It explains how a baby responds to sounds and how language develops through listening and responding. It includes a small image of a baby and a link to 'Read more: What if you're concerned'.
- Longer Days of Learning: Full Day Kindergarten:** A section discussing how kindergarten has changed and how expectations for young children have increased. It mentions the use of terms like 'more rigorous' and 'higher expectations' and notes that the real 'work' of kindergarten remains the same. It includes a small image of a child and a link to 'Read full article'.
- Thanks to our Partners:** A section expressing gratitude to community partners who have contributed to projects. It lists 'Partners for Early Learning - Investing in Every Child' and 'Community Partners' including Rick & Deb Donahoe, Erich Bolz, and Nicole Blake.

The left sidebar contains a green box with the text 'Dedicated to helping young children enter school with the academic and social skills to be successful.' and 'Powered by the Richland School District's early learning initiative'. Below that is a Facebook link and a search bar. At the bottom of the sidebar is a language selection dropdown menu.

Parent Materials

Created parent materials aligned with WA State Early Learning and Development Guidelines



Strong Foundations for School: *Building Relationships, Ages 3-4 years*

I Can Share and Take Turns!

Learning to share and take turns helps your child:

- Understand her role in getting along with peers and siblings
- Develop cooperation skills
- Increase her ability to make new friends and interact with others

Ideas to try with your child:

- Play simple card games such as *Memory, Go Fish* or *Old Maid*. These games provide a fun way to learn how to take turns. Card games can be bought at dollar stores.
- Take your child to a playground where other kids are playing. This gives her a chance to practice waiting and taking turns going on the swings or down the slide.
- Invite a friend/neighbor over for a play-date. This gives your child an opportunity to develop friendships and learn how to share her toys in a familiar environment.

If your child is struggling:

- Attend a story time at your local library or bookstore. This will allow a shy child to begin interacting with peers while still feeling secure with mom or dad close by.
- It is hard to share toys with a sibling. Say: "I am setting the timer for 6 minutes. You can play with the teddy bear now. When the timer goes off after 6 minutes, it will be your brother's turn to play with it."

Going further:

- Enjoy stories with your child about sharing such as: *Llama, Llama Time to Share* by Anna Dewdney, *The Rainbow Fish* by Mark Pfister or *It's Mine* by Leo Lionni. These books are available at most libraries and bookstores.

The WA State Department of Early Learning and the Richland School District believes that parents, families, and caregivers are young children's best teachers. This resource guide, part of *Strong Foundations for School: Resource Guides for Parents of Young Children*, highlights a key developmental skill for children ages 3-4 years that parents can help improve at home.

Adapted from *WA State Early Learning and Development Guidelines, 2012: "Share and take turns with other children." Building Relationships, Ages-3-4 years, pg. 59*

Washington State Department of Early Learning
RICHLAND SCHOOL DISTRICT

PARTNERSFOREARLYLEARNING.ORG

Readiness Data Takes a Dip

- ❖ RSD data this year indicated more students coming to K with low skills
- ❖ Families of Kindergarten students with low skills are being contacted individually to find out about their participation in early care and education programs
- ❖ Data was collected and analyzed in partnership with WSU Tri-Cities to discover how RSD “missed” those children

Creating a District Wide Model

Month	Topics
September	Explain rationale for change, announce adoption of Creative Curriculum and Handwriting Without Tears
October	An Overview of the Early Achievers Process (EA) Preschool teachers attend WAEYC conference October 29-31 st
November	Introduction to the Early Childhood Environmental Rating Scale, (ECERS), BEA teachers visit ECEAP classrooms
January	Introduction to the Classroom Assessment Scoring System (CLASS)
February	Overview of Teaching Strategies GOLD
March	Training on Observation and Documentation
April	Ordering additional classroom materials to meet EA
May	TBD

School Readiness in Your District

Discuss at your table groups:

- ❖ What percentage of your kinders come to school ready?
- ❖ What is your district doing about it?

<http://makingadifferenceprek3.com/about.html>

<http://www.betterhighschools.org/default.asp>

<http://www.earlywarningsystems.org/>

<http://www.earlywarningsystems.org/resources-tools>

Strengthening Schools Through Partnership

Partners for Early Learning
Action Team for Partnership
Communities In Schools

Action Team for Partnership Bridge between the initiatives

THE KEYS TO SUCCESSFUL SCHOOL-FAMILY-COMMUNITY PARTNERSHIPS EPSTEIN'S SIX TYPES OF INVOLVEMENT



PARENTING: Assist families in understanding child and adolescent development, and in setting home conditions that support children as students at each age and grade level. Assist schools in understanding families.



COMMUNICATING: Communicate with families about school programs and student progress through effective school-to-home and home-to-school communications.



VOLUNTEERING: Improve recruitment, training, work, and schedules to involve families as volunteers and audiences at school or in other locations to support students and school programs.



LEARNING AT HOME: Involve families with their children in learning activities at home, including homework, other curriculum-related activities, and individual course and program decisions.



DECISION MAKING: Include families as participants in school decisions, governance, and advocacy through PTA/PTO, school councils, committees, action teams, and other parent organizations.



COLLABORATING WITH COMMUNITY: Coordinate resources and services for students, families, and the school with businesses, agencies, and other groups, and provide services to the community.

RSD Reaches Out

- ❖ Last fall, RSD reached out to Communities In Schools (CIS) to provide additional supports for students at risk of school failure
- ❖ Communities In Schools is a highly successful drop-out prevention program, providing students with academic and non-academic supports to ensure school success and prepare them for college and career.

CIS Website/Video

The screenshot shows the homepage of the Communities In Schools Benton-Franklin Counties website. At the top left is the logo with the text "Communities In Schools Benton-Franklin Counties". To the right are social media icons for Facebook, Twitter, and YouTube, and a dropdown menu for "Benton-Franklin". Below this is a search bar and navigation links for "Contact" and "Site Map". A main navigation bar includes "Home", "What We Do", "Successful Students", "Our Community", "Help Out", "News", and "Events".

The main content area features a purple banner with the text: "We are part of the nation's leading dropout prevention organization, working in public schools to surround students with a community of support, empowering them to stay in school and achieve in life." To the right of this text is a photo of a young girl reading a book.

Below the banner are two columns of text:

- Our Model: A Unique Approach** - "Our evidence-based approach, adapted to meet each community's unique needs, is the basis for our success. [Learn More...](#)"
- Our Impact: Making a Difference** - "We are working to change the picture for students like Jamal and Katherine. [Continue...](#)"

Further down is a "Stay Up-to-Date" section with "Recent News" including links to "Study Shows \$11 Benefit to Community for Every \$1 Invested", "Annual Report Now Available", and "Wall Street Journal: More Schools Open Their Doors to the Whole Community". It also features a "Twitter" feed and a "Facebook" post from Communities In Schools of Benton-Franklin.

At the bottom is a "Get Involved" section with the text "Join our community and help keep kids in school." and three buttons: "Donate", "News Signup", and "Volunteer".



ABOUT US

Communities In Schools, the nation's largest dropout prevention program, has been working with students across the country from kindergarten to high school for more than 35 years providing school based supports and linkages to community resources to help ensure academic success. Last year in Washington State, our network provided services to over 63,000 students with 4,412 receiving individual supports. This year we have expanded to work with 15 school districts across 6 counties to serve even more students with our evidence based model.

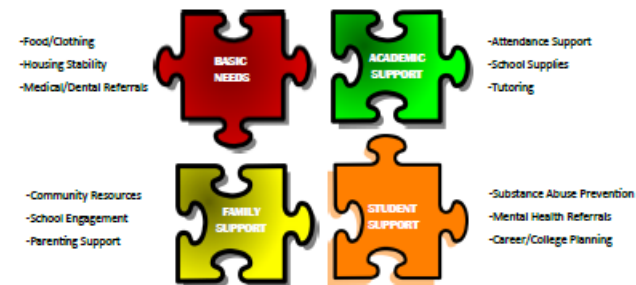
COMMUNITIES IN SCHOOLS OF BENTON-FRANKLIN COUNTIES

The 12th affiliate in Washington, Communities In Schools of Benton-Franklin Counties, is locally operated with the flexibility to build upon our proven school-based site coordinator model and meet the unique needs of students and families in districts and schools across the region. Richland School District implemented site coordination in late 2014 at 10 high needs schools, our first step in building partnerships with schools and communities interested in addressing student needs with this coordinated regional strategy.

SITE COORDINATION

Site coordinators work in schools to address the rising numbers and needs of students at risk of school failure. Often their families are in poverty and many have English as their second language. Students often lack many of the basics and families are dealing with health, social, or substance abuse issues. Site Coordinators work in partnership with principals, counselors, teachers and staff to identify those in need of support and help them access existing community services to avoid duplication and leverage limited resources.

Coordinating Services to Meet Each Student's Unique Needs



How does CIS help young children?

- ❖ CIS focuses on supporting families of P-5 students to ensure basic needs are met including food, clothing, shelter, access to medical care, mental health and behavioral support
- ❖ They act as “connectors” between children/families and needed community resources

Communities in Schools (CIS) Marcus and Jefferson - Highlights



**Mustang Market -
Marcus Whitman Elementary**



**RSD Site Coordinators Collaborating on a Communities
in Schools Project for River's Edge**

Family Engagement in Your District

- ❖ To what extent do your needy families see school as their first choice for linkage to other supportive organizations?

<http://www.csos.jhu.edu/p2000/>

http://www.csos.jhu.edu/p2000/PPP/2010/samplers_index.htm

<http://www.communitiesinschools.org/>

Additional RSD Partnerships

- ❖ Reading Foundation - Ready for Kindergarten!
- ❖ Reach Out and Read
- ❖ ESD123
- ❖ Benton Franklin Early Learning Alliance
- ❖ Community-Minded Enterprises
- ❖ Department of Early Learning

Additional Community Partnerships

To what extent are you partnering with organizations in your community and nationally to create augmentative opportunities for your kinds who need it most?

<http://www.readyforkindergarten.org/>

<http://www.reachoutandread.org/>

<http://www.esd123.org/>

A Continuum of Services

With PFEL to support early learning,
RSD to provide high quality education to all students,
ATP to support parent engagement,
and CIS to facilitate student success,
we are demonstrating to our community
WE ARE BETTER TOGETHER!