

WEBINAR

Fostering Integration in Early Childhood Settings: Implications for Policy

@LPI_Learning



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Opening Remarks



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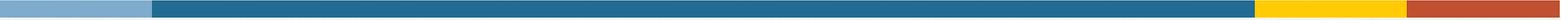
Research Briefing



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Why Integration in ECE Settings Matters

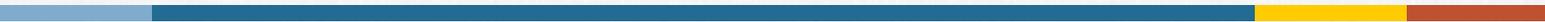
Why Integration Matters

Academic Benefits

- ▷ Reading growth
- ▷ Language development
- ▷ Math outcomes

Social Benefits

- ▷ Increases cross-cultural friendships
- ▷ Reduces prejudice



Segregation in ECE



Nearly half of Black and Latino/a children

are taught in racially isolated schools where 90% of students are students of color

ECE is More Racially and Ethnically Segregated Than K-12 Schools

 **20% more segregated than high schools**

Public Policy Exacerbates Socioeconomic Segregation

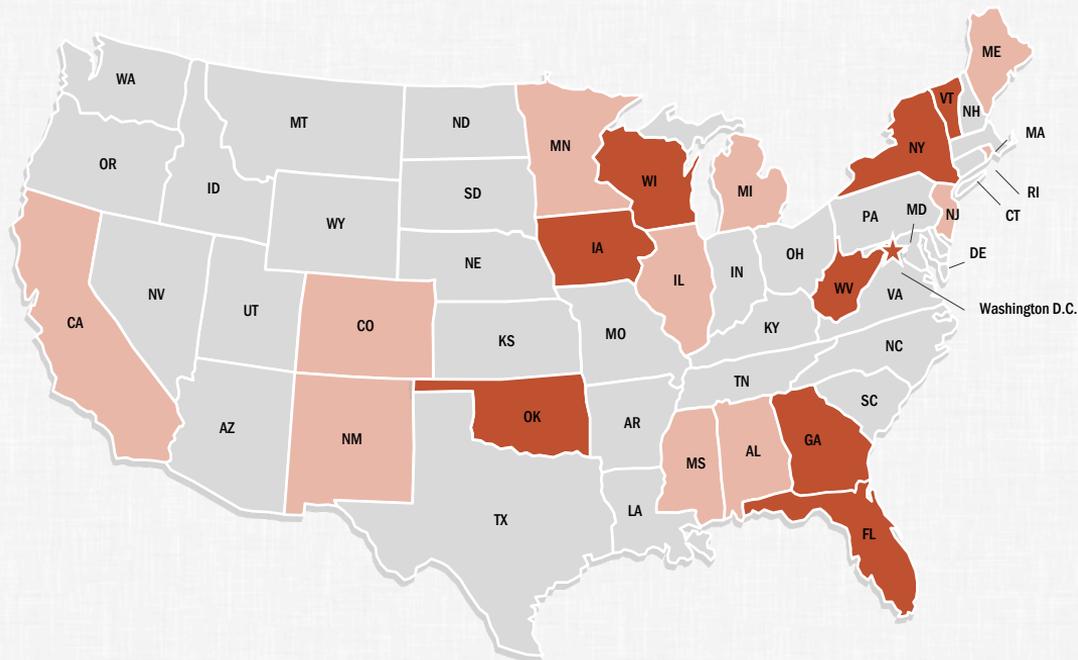
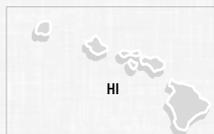
Eligibility Requirements in Publicly Funded Programs

Program	Income requirements
Early Head Start/Head Start	Below federal poverty level or \$27,750 per year for a family of four
Child Care Development Fund	Below 85% of state median income (U.S. median income is \$80,527 per year for a family of four)
State-Funded Preschool	Often limited to children from families with low-incomes, varies by state
Special Education Preschool	No income requirement

Strategies for Fostering Integration

- ▷ Establishing universal programs
- ▷ Braiding public funding
- ▷ Allowing tuition-paying families to enroll in public programs
- ▷ Attracting families across neighborhoods or boundaries
- ▷ Creating two-way dual language immersion programs

Establishing Universal PreK



*States with universal PreK programs that serve MORE than 50% of 4-year-olds

*States with universal PreK programs that serve LESS than 50% of 4-year-olds

Establishing Universal PreK

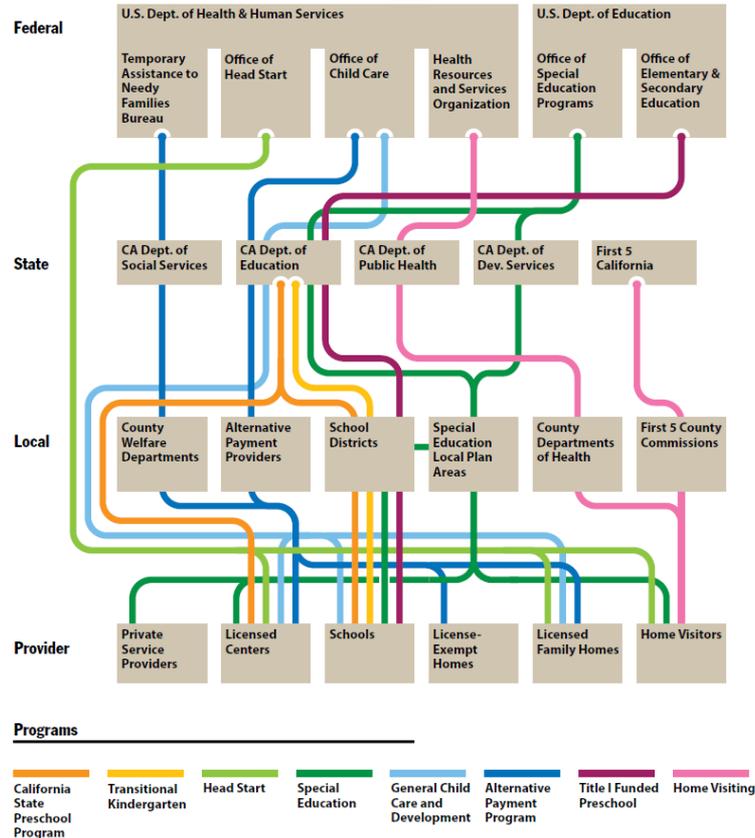
Why is this a promising strategy?

- Can produce larger gains than targeted programs
- Increase diversity of some settings

What should policymakers consider?

- Not enough to create fully integrated settings
- Equitable access to quality

Braiding Public Funding



Note: This chart was designed to show administrative complexity in the state of California. Some organizational changes have been made at the federal and state levels since its initial design.

Source: Melnick, H., Ali, T. T., Gardner, M., Maier, A., & Wechsler, M. (2017). *Understanding California's early care and education system*. Learning Policy Institute.

Braiding Public Funding

Why is this a promising strategy?

- Children can learn together, regardless of their family's socioeconomic status
- Several programs already do this work

What should policymakers consider?

- Braiding funding can be administratively burdensome
- Meeting higher standards can be costly

Allowing Tuition-Paying Families to Enroll in Public Programs

Why is this a promising strategy?

- Avoids "income cliff"
- In some instances, this is already allowable

What should policymakers consider?

- It can be challenging to determine how much families should pay

Attracting Families Across Neighborhoods or District Boundaries

Why is this a promising strategy?

- Addresses long-standing impacts of residential segregation

What should policymakers consider?

- Additional resources may be required to implement innovative programs and expand capacity to meet demand

Creating Two-Way Dual Language Immersion Programs

Why is this a promising strategy?

- Promotes linguistic integration
- Develops children's native language and honors their cultural assets
- Benefits of bilingualism

What should policymakers consider?

- Maintaining the balance of children who are dual language learners and children who are native English speakers
- Shortage of bilingual educators

Considerations to Foster Inclusive Learning Environments

- ▷ Fostering culturally responsive learning environments supported by professional development for teachers
- ▷ Recruiting and retaining a diverse staff who can work effectively with diverse children and families
- ▷ Engaging families in a way that meets their needs

Policy Recommendations

1. Establish universal ECE programs so that a child's family income does not determine where they are enrolled.
2. Braid public funding to enable children from different socioeconomic backgrounds to learn in the same classroom.
3. Build a coherent system of ECE governance and administration.
4. Allow providers to enroll families of all incomes in publicly funded programs, while reserving seats for families with low incomes.
5. Support local strategies that draw families from different neighborhoods or district boundaries, including strategically locating programs and offering two-way dual language immersion schools.
6. Use inclusive enrollment practices and clearly communicate ECE options to all families.
7. Collect enrollment data, disaggregated by race, ethnicity, language, and socioeconomic status, to understand the extent to which children are learning in diverse classrooms.



Panel Discussion

Panel Discussion



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A high-angle photograph of a teacher and five children sitting in a circle on a colorful, abstract rug in a classroom. The teacher, a woman with long dark hair and glasses wearing a yellow sweater, is in the center, looking down at her hands. The children, of diverse backgrounds, are also looking towards the center, with their hands raised or touching. The rug has sections of blue, green, and yellow with black outlines. In the background, there are wooden shelves with red storage bins and a table with art supplies like paint containers and brushes. The floor is light-colored wood.

Thank You!