Supporting Early Childhood Environments for Success

TSR Summer Institute 2024

Your Presenter

Early Childhood Programs

Lauren Gomez

Curriculum & Instruction

- Parent
- Educator
- Coach, Volunteer

LEARN - TEACH - INSPIRE

Learning Objectives

We will discuss the connections between the home-school-community environment and its impact on early childhood development

We will explore developmentally appropriate practices that connect early literacy development between the home-school-community environment

We will create actionable steps to ensure the home-school-community connection is maintained in our learning environments

We will explore professional development opportunities and resources to support early childhood best practices

Core Competency Objectives

1. Child Development

1.1 Child Development: **Domains,** Stages, and Milestones

1.4 Influences on Development: Biology, **Families, Environment,** Culture, and Stress

1.5 **Development Through Play**

3. Learning Environments

3.1 Planning Framework: **Environmental Design,** Equipment, Materials, Routines, Schedules, and **Learning Formats**

4. Supporting Skill Development

4.2 **Language and Communication: Listening, Speaking, and Vocabulary**

4.3 **Emergent Literacy: Reading and Writing**
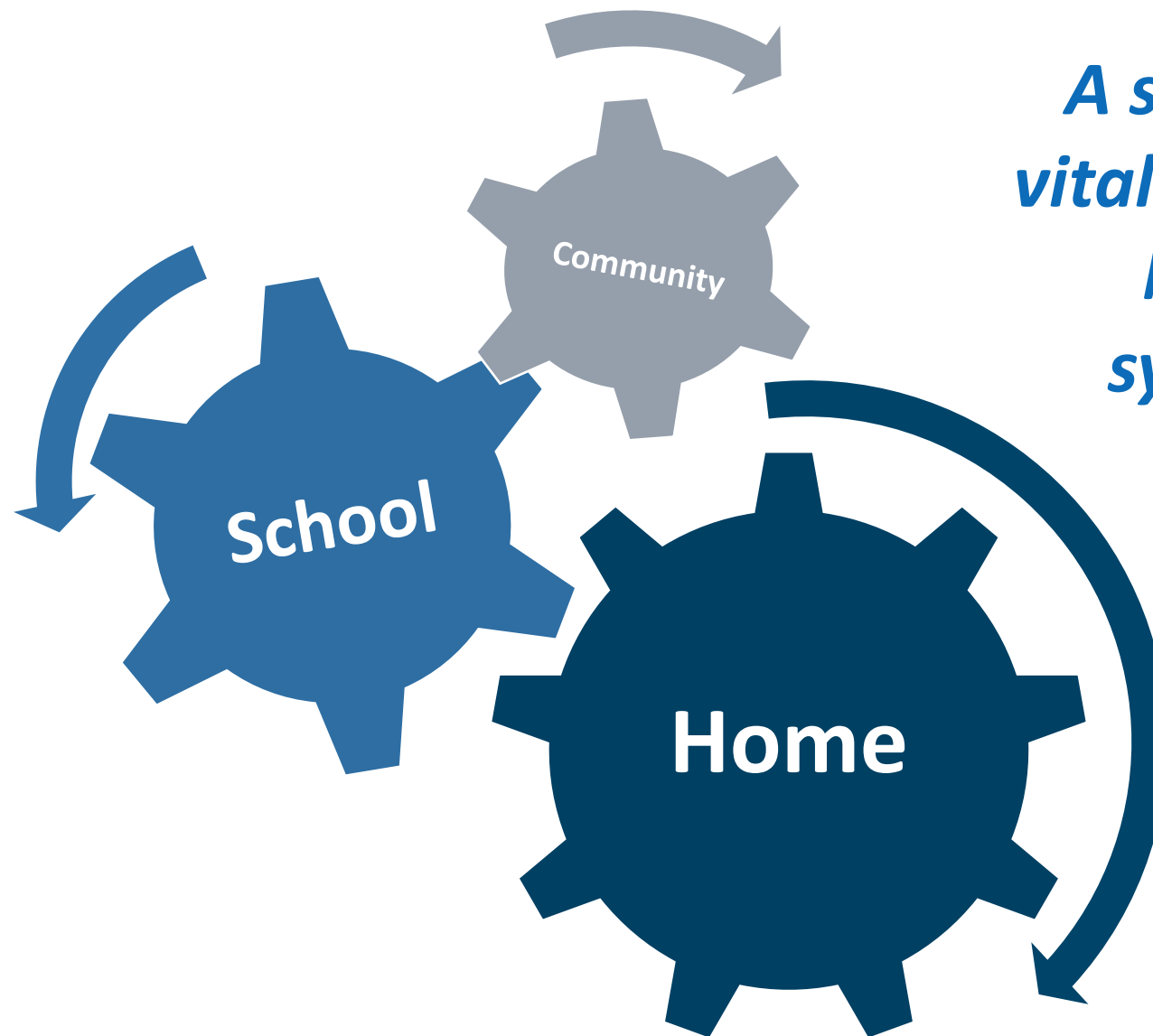
7. Family and Community Relationships

7.2 **Relationships with Children and Families**

7.3 **Encouraging Parent Involvement**

7.5 **Community Resources to Support Families**

7.6 **Community Collaboration**

TEA

Connections between the home-school-community environment and its impact on early childhood development
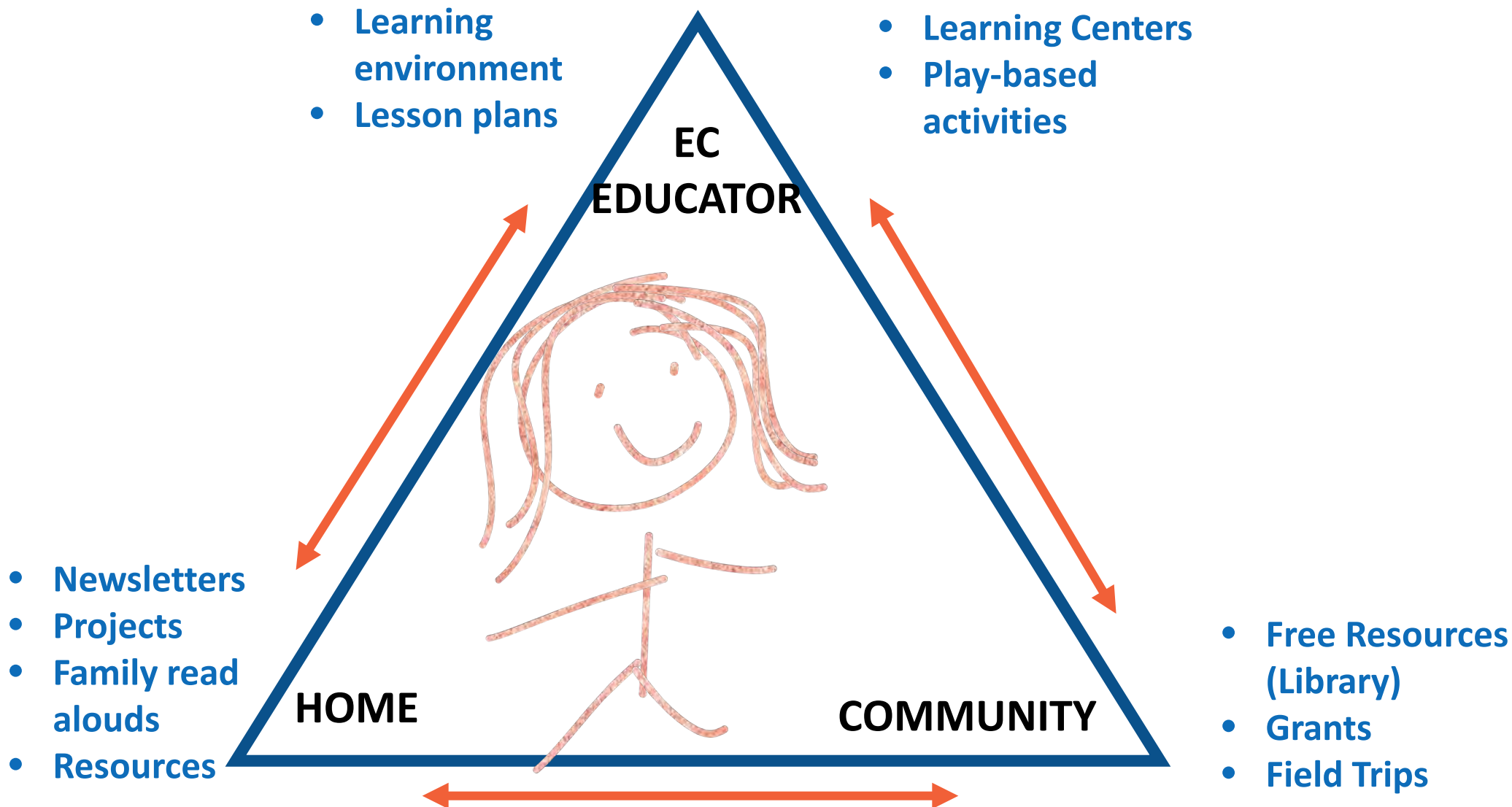
A small but vital piece of a bigger system…

Our Home-School-Community connections Vision Board

- **Learning environment**
- **Lesson plans**

- **Learning Centers**
- **Play-based activities**

EC EDUCATOR

- **Newsletters**
- **Projects**
- **Family read alouds**
- **Resources**

HOME

COMMUNITY

- **Free Resources (Library)**
- **Grants**
- **Field Trips**

- The **first 3 years of life are a period of rapid brain development** where the structures of the brain are established through dynamic interactions between the child's neurons and the psychosocial environment of their early years[4]

- Features of the **home literacy environment** are associated with children's early development[1]

- Children internalize language via **social interactions**[5] where the family and school environments have a crucial influence[2]

- **Early print-related knowledge**, oral language proficiency, and nonverbal and visual abilities are related to later reading achievement. Reading achievement has a direct effect on college, career and overall life skills.[3]

Language

Traditions

Beliefs

Skills

Outcomes

Goals

Resources

Support

IMPACT

DEVELOPMENT – INTERACTIONS - EXPERIENCES

What do the connections between Home-School-Community environments look like at the program level?

EARLY INTERVENTION SERVICES

Texas Home Visiting

LEA/SCHOOL SITE PARTNERSHIPS (Child care, Head Start)

COMMUNITY BASED PROGRAMS (After school programs, libraries, free resources)

IMPACT
DEVELOPMENT – INTERACTIONS - EXPERIENCES

School to Home Connection

- **IN ACTION:**
  - **Academic based**
    - Home-based projects/activities
    - Unit/lesson information
    - **TEA-ECE Parent Guides**
    - **CLI Parent Guides**
    - **HIPPY**
  - **Relationship building**
    - Family engagement events
    - Family conferences
  - **Communication**
    - Newsletters/ Digital platform
    - Communication log

TEA — Texas Education Agency

Family Resources

School to Community Partnerships

- **IN ACTION:**
  - **Student level**
    - Specialist collaboration
    - Community classroom visitors (e.g., first responders)
  - **Classroom/program level**
    - **LEA/CC partnerships**
  - **Community level**
    - Local resources (library. Field trips)
    - Community grants (e.g., community garden)
    - Local events (e.g., performances)

HEAD START | ECLKC
Early Childhood Learning & Knowledge Center

TEXAS
Health and Human Services
Early Childhood Intervention

TEXAS
Child Care Connection

TEA
Texas Education Agency

Early Learning Public-Private Partnerships

Home to Community Connection

- **IN ACTION**
  - **Child Care**
    - **Early Childhood Texas**
    - **CLI- 5 steps for choosing child care**
    - **Parents as Teachers (PAT)**
  - **Family Resources (federal, state, local)**
    - After school programs
    - Free lunch programs
    - **211 Texas**
  - **Community based**
    - Libraries
   - Parks and Recreation
    - Local events

Actionable S.M.A.R.T. steps to ensure Home-School-Community connections are made in our learning environments

What **specific** practice(s) do you want to add, change, delete, or modify to improve or maintain home-school-community practices? *(e.g., home-based projects)*

What are the **actionable** steps you would need to take to ensure implementation? What are the **realistic** expectations or barriers of implementing this practice? *(e.g., align to cur. units; anticipate non-participants)*
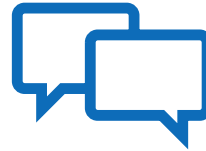
How will you **measure** the successful implementation of this practice?

(e.g., goal is to have 50% of my families participate)

What is a realistic **timeline** for the implementation of this practice?

(e.g., every other unit= 4x/year)

TEA

TEA

Developmentally appropriate practices that connect early literacy development between the home-school-community environment

Early literacy research

Research has determined that early literacy skills developed from birth to five have a strong correlation to later development of conventional literacy skills (NELP, 2008). These literacy skills focus on the use of **spoken and written language** that help us communicate with others and learn about the **world around us**. The processes of literacy (e.g., **thinking, speaking, listening, reading, and writing**) should be integrated by educators through evidence-based literacy instruction.

National Early Literacy Panel (2008). Developing early literacy: Report of the National Early Literacy Panel. Washington, DC: National Institute for Literacy.

Early literacy practices and Texas Guidelines (Infant-Toddler-Three-year-old and TX Pre-k Guidelines)

Language and Communication Development

Language and Under-standing	Communica-tion and Speaking	Emergent Literacy

ITELG ⟷ TXPKG

Language

Reading

Writing
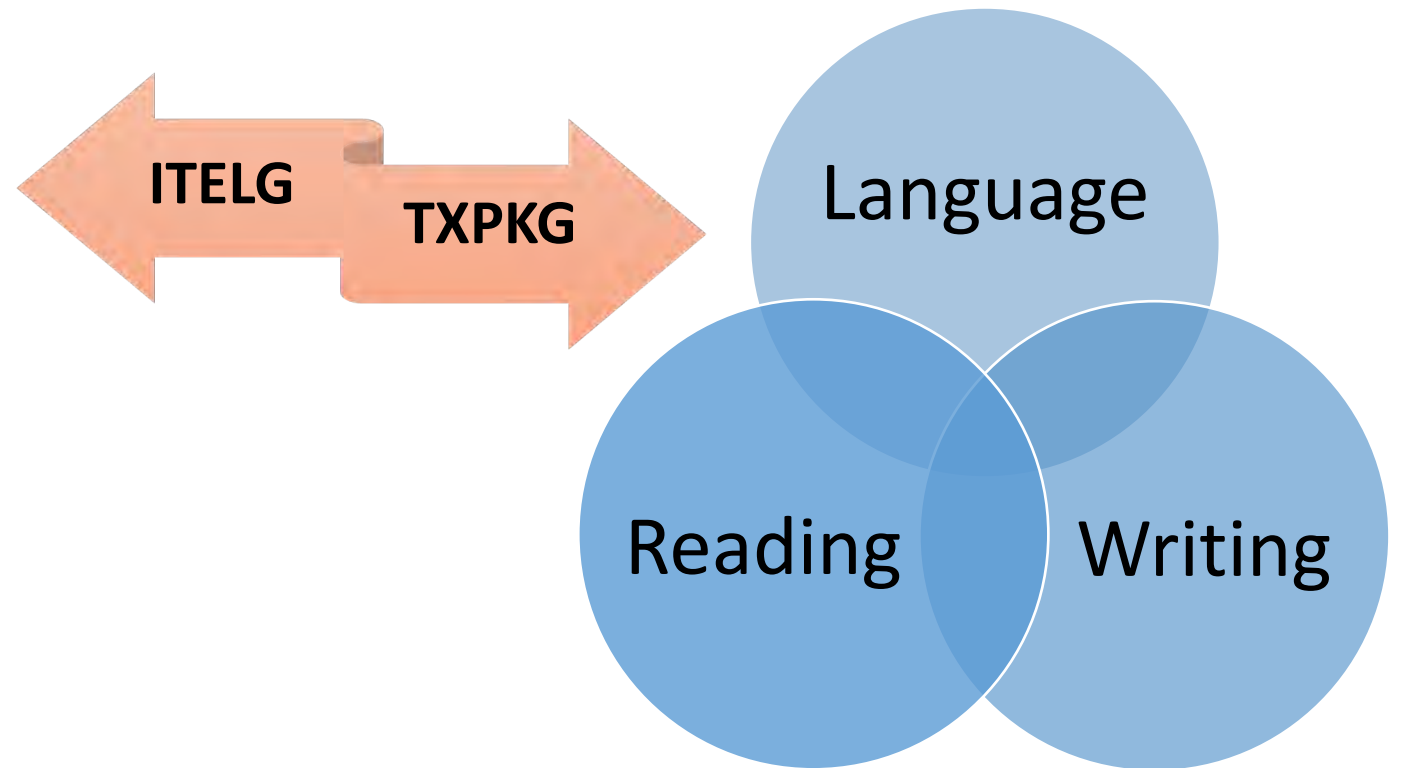
Early literacy practices and Texas Guidelines (Infant-Toddler-Three-year-old, TX Pre-k Guidelines, and TEKS)

CONCEPTS OF PRINT

Infant, Toddler, and Three Year Old Listening and Understanding (LU) Emergent Literacy (EL) *Exploration and Discovery (ED)	Prekindergarten-PK3/PK4 *III. Emergent Literacy: Reading Domain* A. Motivation to Read E. Concepts of Print	Kindergarten K(2) Developing and sustaining foundational language skills: listening, speaking, reading, writing, and thinking--beginning reading and writing. The student demonstrates print awareness by:
LU.1. Listens with interest to language of others. EL.1. Shows interest in songs, rhymes, and stories. EL.2. Develops interest in and involvement with books and other print materials. ED.3. Shows interest in colors, shapes, patterns, and pictures.	PK3.III.A.1 Child demonstrates an interest in pictures, text, and stories read aloud. PK4.III.A.1 Child engages in story-related pre-reading activities.	K(2)(D)(i) identifying the front cover, back cover, and title page of a book.

Literacy Vertical Alignment Birth Through Grade 2 (texas.gov)

Building early literacy skills through developmentally appropriate practices

In Action…

Using ITELG and TPG Domains and Outcomes to determine **play-based** learning opportunities that are related to listening, speaking, reading and writing

Referencing ITELG and TPG Outcomes and Child Behaviors with a **curriculum** or activity plan to determine lesson plan outcomes for culturally, linguistically, and ability-based literacy experiences

High-quality classrooms and academic environments to continuously **progress monitor** in order to adjust instructional practices that meet every child's literacy-based needs

Building **partnerships** with key stakeholders to build a literacy-based network of support for the classroom
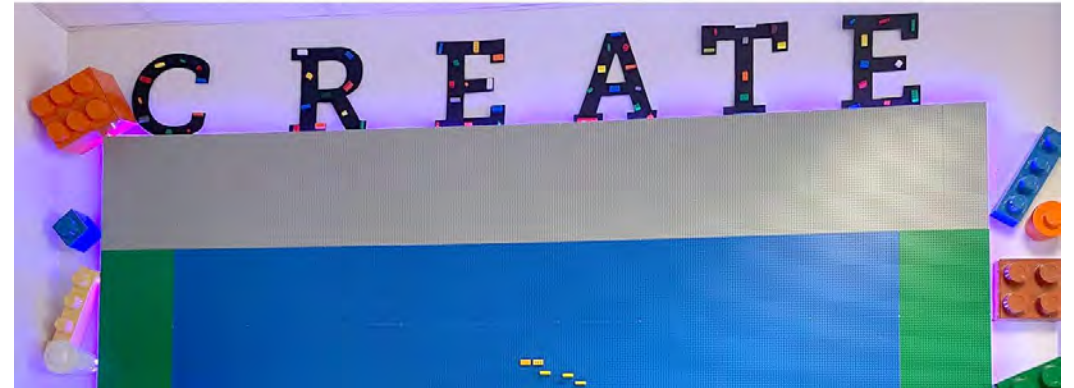
Best Practices in ECE resources to support early literacy practices

Developmentally Appropriate Practices (DAP) in the Prekindergarten Classroom

Research-Based Best Practices for School Readiness in Prekindergarten Classrooms

Physical Arrangement in the Prekindergarten Classroom

Prekindergarten Best Practices | Texas Education Agency

Building school-to-home literacy connections through developmentally appropriate practices

TEA Texas Education Agency®

Print-Rich Environments

School: Books/writing tools in every center, labels of class items and child's name ⟷ Home: Label common items in the home, provide favorite books

Daily Read Alouds

School: Shared reading, storytelling w/ open-ended questioning (see dialogical reading) ⟷ Home: Encourage multiple modalities of reading (live, audio, digital, w/ props)

Literacy based activities

School: Songs, rhymes, letter/sound games ⟷ Home: family projects, favorite books/stories

Evidence-based practice:
Dialogical reading - An opportunity for children to interact with literacy as they develop oral language, increase vocabulary, and deepen their relationship and understanding of print, all while having an interactive and entertaining [reading] learning experience with an adult (Whitehurst, 2002).

Whitehurst, Grover J. "Dialogic Reading: An Effective Way to Read Aloud with Young Children." Reading Rockets, 2002. https://www.readingrockets.org/article/dialogic-reading-effective-way-read-aloud-young-children.

Building school-to-community literacy connections through developmentally appropriate practices

Language

Cultural and linguistic support (e.g., non-fiction bilingual books)

Reading

Community volunteers to read a book in class/school

Create class/school-based events that include the community (e.g., a play from a local performing arts group)

Writing

Writing activities for the community (e.g., making cards for a local convalescent home)

Opportunity for Partnerships:
Public-private prekindergarten partnerships are encouraged because of the collaborative opportunities and benefits they foster, and are required by Texas Education Code 29.1533 in some situations. This extends out the literacy support from setting to setting.

Building home-to-community literacy connections through developmentally appropriate practices

TEA Texas Education Agency

Language

Cultural and linguistic support (e.g., events in the community)

Reading

Reading opportunities outside the home (e.g., library, book fairs, calling out letters/common words in the environment)
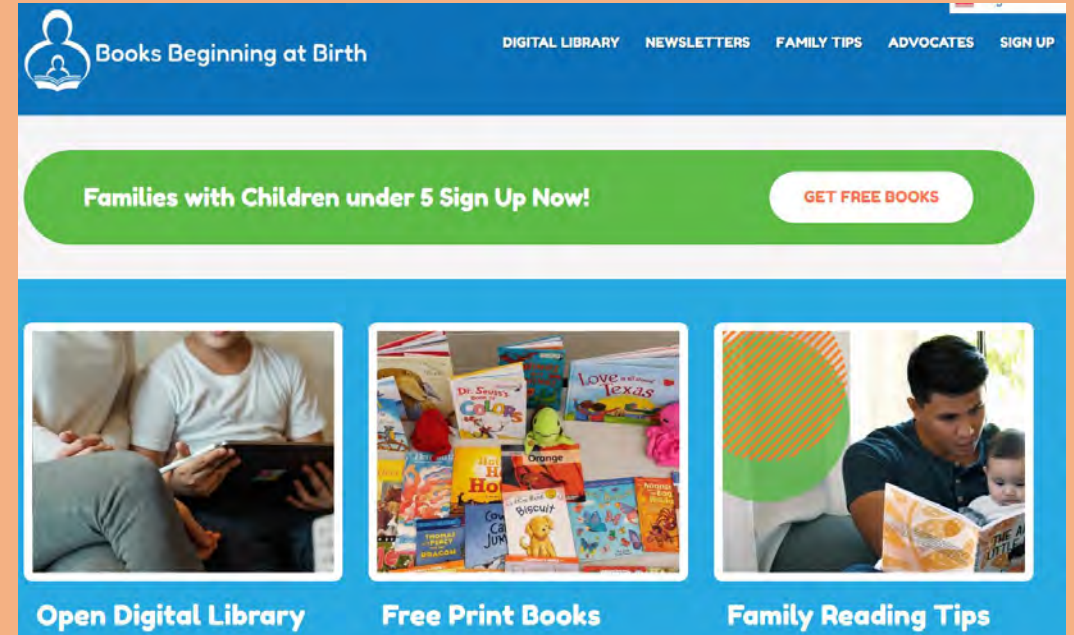
Writing

Writing opportunities outside of the home (e.g., writing "letters" to family members, writing in the sand at the park)

Resource: About - Books Beginning at Birth (b3tx.org)

Actionable S.M.A.R.T. steps to connect early literacy development between the home-school-community environment

SPECIFIC ACTIVITY

Family reading workshop

ATTAINABLE AND REALISTIC GOALS

Hands-on, make and take approach

SUHUPU

MEASURABLE EFFECTIVENESS

Fall and Spring

TIMELINE

BOY/EOY data, parent survey

TEA

TEA

Professional development opportunities and resources to support early childhood best practices

Connections to HQPK

	PROGRAM EVALUATION	TEACHER QUALIFICATIONS	CURRICULUM	FAMILY ENGAGEMENT	PROGRESS MONITORING
SCHOOL/ PARTNER- SHIPS	Select and implement appropriate methods for evaluating the district's/charter's HQPK program	Each teacher of record for an eligible PK4 class must be appropriately certified **and** have an additional qualification	Curriculum used in an eligible classroom must be aligned with the Texas Prekindergarten Guidelines	Develop, implement, and make available a family engagement plan	Measure the 5 primary domains at BOY and EOY using a tool from the Commissioner's list
Home	Ensure all HQPK components are implemented including family engagement	Utilize PD/courses on family engagement/ community resources	• Unit/lesson newsletters • Family-embedded lessons/projects	• FE Rubric: e.g., Family-to-family support • Parent Guides	• Goal setting • Family conferences • Family surveys/ questionnaires
Community	Actively seeking opportunities to collaborate with the community	• Local certification programs • Community courses	• Field trips • Local resources (e.g., libraries)	FE Rubric: e.g., Establish a network of community resources	Access to resources as aligned to goals (e.g., park events, free books, STEM camps)

Current resources are available on our

Educator Resources

page

Professional Development

Texas Education Agency

The Early Childhood Education regularly provides webinars to support professionals in the field. For upcoming webinars and recordings of previous webinars, please visit the ECE Resources Page.

TEA Vetted Professional Development Resources

TEA	NON-TEA
Effective Schools Framework	CLI Engage
Texas Gateway	Texas School Ready
TEALearn	eCIRCLE Professional Development
English Learner Portal-Professional Development (txel.org)	The Child Development Associate
Texas SPED Support learning library	Texas A&M Agrilife Extension website
Project Restore	

TEA Recorded Professional Development Webinars

Recordings of TEA-ECE webinars are available as professional development resources on our **ECE Resources** page

Actionable professional development steps

What do I already **know**?	What do I **want** to know more about?	What did I **learn** that could lead to my next action steps?
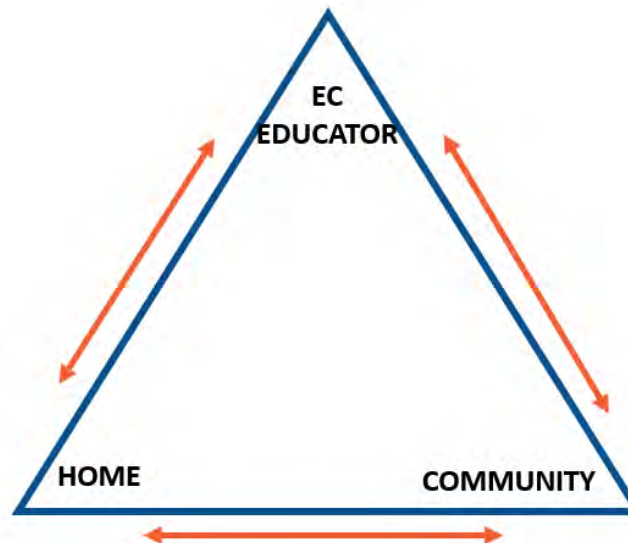
Social Media Campaign

TEA

The Texas Education Agency (TEA) oversees free public prekindergarten for eligible children in school districts and charter schools.

Benefits

At TEA, our goal is for all Texas children to enter school with the foundational knowledge and skills to be curious, confident and successful learners. Learn more about public prekindergarten eligibility below.

Eligibility Requirements

A child is eligible for enrollment in free prekindergarten if the child is at least three (if a prekindergarten 3 program is available) or at least four years of age on or before September 1st and meets at least one of the following criteria:

- Is unable to speak or comprehend the English language
- Is eligible to participate in the national free or reduced-price lunch program
- Is homeless
- Is the child of an active-duty member of the armed forces of the United States, including the state military forces or the reserves
- Is the child of a member of the armed forces of the United States, including the state military forces or the reserves, who was injured or killed while serving on active duty
- Is or ever has been in foster care
- Is the child of a peace officer, firefighter, or emergency medical responder seriously injured or killed in the line of duty and received the Star of Texas Award.

Once determined eligible, the student remains eligible for the entire school year. Verification of eligibility cannot be determined until on or after April 1st of the prior school year when planning for the upcoming school year. Parents of students who are ineligible for free public prekindergarten can inquire about tuition-based prekindergarten or visit www.EarlyChildhood.Texas.gov for information on other programs and options in Texas.

Registration

Registration processes vary among individual school districts and charter schools. To learn more, contact the Early Childhood Education Division via the Support Portal. We can assist you with questions and connect you to the school district or charter school in your area. Other ways to get support:

- Visit your local school district or charter school website or contact their office for enrollment information.
- Gather required documentation (birth certificate, proof of residency, parent id, immunization records, and other eligibility documents)

Supporting curious, confident, and successful learners!
Need assistance? Contact the Early Childhood team via our Support Portal

Prekindergarten Registration and Enrollment

Texas public school prekindergarten enrollment is now open!

REGISTER TODAY

Contact your local school district for more information.

@TexasEducationAgency

Questions and technical support

Any Questions?

Contact us:

TEA - Early Childhood Education Division

ECE Support Portal

Survey access

Let us know how we can support you better!

References

Altun, D., Erden, F. T., & Snow, C. E. (2018). A multilevel analysis of home and classroom literacy environments in relation to preschoolers' early literacy development. *Psychology in the Schools, 55*(9), 1098-1120. https://doi.org/10.1002/pits.2215.

Bronfenbrenner, U. (1979). *The ecology of human development: Experiments by nature and design*. Cambridge: Harvard University Press.

Scarborough, H. S. (2009). Connecting early language and literacy to later reading (dis)abilities: Evidence, theory, and practice. In F. F. Campbell, J. Soler, & G. Reid (Eds.), *Approaching difficulties in literacy development: Assessment, pedagogy, and programmes* (pp. 23–39). London, England: Sage.

Shonkoff, J. P. & Phillips, D. A. (2000) From neurons to neighborhoods: The science of early childhood development. Washington, DC: National Academies Press.

Vygotsky, L. S. (1978). Mind in society: The development of higher psychological processes. Cambridge, Massachusetts: Harvard University Press.