

# **Evaluation of Orange County's Local School Readiness Initiative**

## **Final Report**

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Submitted to:

The Children and Families Commission of Orange County



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# Evaluation of Orange County’s Local School Readiness Initiative

## Executive Summary

*Five years ago you had to explain what school readiness was...  
you don’t need to do that now.*

Since 2000, the Children and Families Commission of Orange County (the Commission) has provided funding for the Local School Readiness Initiative. This initiative, which places School Readiness Coordinators in each of Orange County’s 24 elementary and unified school districts, builds on the concept that school readiness not only means that children are ready for school, but also that schools are ready for children. With this in mind, the goals of the initiative are to improve the school readiness of young children, facilitate the transfer of preschoolers to kindergarten, and improve the preparedness of schools to accept incoming kindergartners. To meet these goals, the 32 School Readiness Coordinators (SRCs) participate in a wide variety of activities and work with school staff, families, community stakeholders, and the early care and education community to identify service gaps and promote best practices. The specific activities of the SRCs are tailored to the needs of their districts. Among other differences, Orange County school districts range from a low of just 7% of students defined as socioeconomically disadvantaged in Irvine Unified to more than 86% in Santa Ana Unified. Even within districts, there are often large demographic differences between populations served by different schools.

The job description for School Readiness Coordinators calls for efforts in seven activity or strategy areas. The seven areas, their basic goals and example activities are listed below:

Activity	Brief Description of Goals	Sample Activities Reported by SRCs
1. Outreach efforts	Educate the community on best practices for early childhood care and education and district expectations	Presented at community forums and to community organizations
2. Parent education	Give parents information and training so they can better prepare their children to enter school healthy and ready to learn	Held monthly parent-child classes on topics such as literacy, motor development, arts
3. Provider education	Promote collaboration within the K-12 system and the ECE community	Set up visits for preschool teachers in kindergarten classes

4. Community linkages	Strengthen planning linkages among all relevant agencies providing ECE, health and social services to district population	Conducted a Community Planning Forum with reps from the district and CBOs
5. Information & referral	Coordinate distribution of resource information and school readiness materials	Helped families obtain resources for rent assistance, food, etc.
6. Capacity Building	Support increasing the number of school readiness programs serving the district	Started the Twilight Preschool Program.
7. Assessment Services	Develop strategies to assess the progress of children as they transition to school and identify quality in early care programs	Implemented questionnaire for preschool teachers to send to a child's kindergarten teacher

This evaluation of the Local School Readiness Initiative concentrates on the activities of the School Readiness Coordinators and the roles that they play in their school districts and communities. In particular, we address three interrelated research questions:

1. In what types of activities are the SRCs engaged?
2. How effective are these activities?
3. What is the value of these activities?

To answer these questions, the SPHERE Institute conducted surveys, focus groups, and conversations with the School Readiness Coordinators, Commission staff and consultants, school district personnel, early care and education providers, and parents of preschool-aged children in Orange County. In doing so, we not only heard about the value of the school readiness activities, but we also learned about the unique characteristics of the SRCs and their experiences in these new positions. Our key findings are provided below.

#### SRCs and SRC Position

- **The first generation of SRCs, in particular, embraced the challenges of the new positions.** The majority of the current SRCs have held their positions for more than four years. Collectively, SRCs are a highly educated group, with 64% holding advanced degrees and 46% holding both administrative and teaching credentials. Almost 90% are employees of the school district, and 57% worked for their current district directly before taking the SRC position.

*We were all people with passion and vision... we were willing to step into the abyss... we were all people who were willing to try anything. (SRC)*

*The job requires somebody who is multi-faceted and very flexible... they need to be comfortable with multiple roles and wearing multiple hats... [they must have a] willingness to learn constantly, a broad experience, and deal well with ambiguity. (SRC)*

- **More than half (54%) of the School Readiness Coordinators are funded through multiple grants, especially State School Readiness grants.** The vast majority of Commission funding is spent by districts on staff salaries and benefits.

*I have to be three people for three types of grants. (SRC)*

*[I] have to be funded through multiple grants because there is not enough money... it is a challenge to meet the needs of each program. (SRC)*

### SRC Activities

- **SRCs ranked parent education as the strategy area most important to their districts.** They reported spending the most time on this type of activity and listed an average of 3.29 activities in this area (ranking third in number).

*“As a former kindergarten teacher I have been on the other side; I used to see kids starting kindergarten who had never held a pencil... I want to let parents know that they can be the first teacher.” (SRC)*

- **Outreach activities were also ranked fairly important and, with parent education, accounted for the largest share of SRC time.** Outreach activities were the second most frequent activity type. Community linkages represented the largest number of activities, but did not absorb as much time per activity, nor were they ranked as that important. Along with outreach, SRCs also ranked provider education as fairly important.
- **Assessment services accounted for the least amount of SRCs time.** Thirteen of 28 SRCs ranked assessment services as the least important activity, and SRCs reported the fewest number of activities in this area.
- **School Readiness Coordinators from 11 districts indicated that their district’s school readiness activities had been the recipient of an award.** These awards include the California School Board Association’s Golden Bell Award, the Children and Families Commission of Orange County’s Peter A. Hartman Award, an Orange County Board of Supervisors’ Commendation, the National School Board Association’s Magna Award, and Head Start’s Devoted School Readiness Award.

### Effectiveness from the School District Perspective

- **46% of SRCs and 55% of district personnel believe that their school boards have become much more supportive of the idea of school readiness over the past five years.** Currently, 93% of surveyed SRCs and 81% of surveyed school district personnel

believe that their school board is very or somewhat supportive of the idea of school readiness.

*When the work started the general feeling was that preschool was not the district's responsibility and was a chore – more recently the board voted to spend money on preschool programming. (SRC)*

- **91% of surveyed school district personnel believe that the SRC in their district has been very effective at increasing the overall awareness of school readiness in the district.** Eight of the 11 Superintendents and Assistant Superintendents surveyed believe their districts would continue to fund the School Readiness Program even without the financial support of the Commission (4 believe their districts would fund the program at the same level, and 4 at a decreased level).
- **In addition to Local School Readiness Initiative funding from the Commission, SRCs report leveraging a combined total of \$39,135,875 in funds for their programs since 2000.** Almost three-fourths of these funds came from district sources. When asked to list their top three accomplishments, SRCs listed the greatest number in the area of capacity building. School district personnel were also most likely to list SRC accomplishments in capacity building, along with general outreach efforts.

*At my school, we now have a preschool class, we have a family literacy program, we have parent and child classes, and a day long kindergarten round-up event. We also have a summer pre-kindergarten program. Without the SRC's leadership and ability to find funding, we would not have any of these things. My kindergarten teachers tell me they can tell a difference in the students who have attended these programs. (Principal)*

#### Views of Parents and Early Care and Education (ECE) Providers

- **ECE providers were often skeptical of the school readiness activities at their local school district.** 53% of ECE providers surveyed answered either “no” or “not sure” to the question, “is your local school district effective in its work to increase the readiness of children to start kindergarten?”

*[It] is hard to work too closely together with the school district because they are kind of our competition. (ECE Provider)*

- **However, ECE providers were aware of SRCs, and most who attended sessions designed for them found them useful.** Over 70% of ECE providers in Orange County who responded to the ECE Survey indicated that they are “aware of personnel at [their] local school district who are charged with school readiness activities.” About the same share indicated that they have attended either a district sponsored meeting or training session on school readiness; 93% of those providers who had participated in trainings found them “helpful in their work” and 84% who attended trainings found them “useful.”

*[The district has] an ECE Coordinator who is a liaison between the district and the preschools in the area – she does a fabulous job and is always telling me*

*about programs I can go to and bringing flyers and information that I can copy and hand out to the parents. (ECE Provider)*

- **Surveyed parents also found the SRC's work valuable.** 84% of parents indicated on their survey that they have seen positive changes in their children and families as a result of things they learned during school readiness events.

*It's gotten my son ready for kindergarten to the point where I feel confident for him to start this fall. (Parent)*

*The programs have been really good... training for the children as well as the parents... not only the children learned, also the parents. (Parent)*

Given the multi-faceted aspect of the SRC position and the enormous number of school readiness activities that could be valuable to a district, SRCs commonly found challenges in the funding and staffing of the school readiness activities. For example, SRCs wanted to see funding increased to account for cost of living adjustments. Other funding concerns revolved around additional support for their work, where SRCs wanted to be able to hire support personnel and buy additional supplies. Not surprisingly, some SRCs also recommend changing the funding formula to take into account factors in addition to district size. In line with many Commission grantees, SRCs recommend decreasing reporting requirements and ensuring that work plans are available in OCERS on or before the contract start date. Several SRCs mentioned computer system problems hampering reporting. We understand that many of these issues are already being addressed.

Overall, we see that the School Readiness Coordinators have enabled their districts and communities to make great strides over the past five years. When the initiative started, the SRCs were “just given a title and a place... the door was wide open.” Since that time they have built their districts’ capacities to serve families with children under the age of five, gained respect within their districts while helping administrators to change their views about the population they serve, and collaborated with each other and community organizations to raise the level of commitment for school readiness in Orange County.



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## I. Introduction

Since 2000, the Children and Families Commission of Orange County (the Commission) has provided funding for the Local School Readiness Initiative. This initiative, which places School Readiness Coordinators in each of Orange County's elementary and unified school districts, builds on the concept that school readiness not only means that children are ready for school, but also that schools are ready for children. With this in mind, the goals of the initiative are to improve the school readiness of young children, facilitate the transfer of preschoolers to kindergarten, and improve the preparedness of schools to accept incoming kindergartners. To meet these goals, School Readiness Coordinators (SRCs) participate in a wide variety of activities and work with school staff, families, community stakeholders, and the early care and education community to identify service gaps and promote best practices.

The Commission has based the Local School Readiness Initiative on five core principles<sup>1</sup>:

- **Collaboration:** The Commission encourages new, strong connections and collaborations among numerous community agencies, school districts, health care providers, municipalities, the Commission, and the public.
- **Leveraging Funds:** The Commission places a priority on funding programs where the Commission funds can be leveraged to receive matching government or private funds.
- **District Uniqueness:** The Commission does not try to create a “one-size-fits-all” approach to school readiness, instead allowing each school district some flexibility to most effectively meet the needs of its communities.
- **Research-Based:** The Commission makes extensive and ongoing use of research, both external and internal.
- **Measured Outcomes/Evaluation:** The Commission places a very strong emphasis on measuring outcomes and conducting frequent evaluations. This monitoring not only increases accountability, it enables programs to make appropriate adjustments to meet the changing needs of their communities.

There are 32 School Readiness Coordinators in the 24 school districts in Orange County that receive funding from the Commission for this initiative (a list of participating districts and SRCs can be found in Appendix A). To better understand the contributions that SRCs and the Local School Readiness Initiative make to improving young children's readiness for school and schools' efforts to assist children in making a positive transition to kindergarten, the Commission requested that the SPHERE Institute undertake this evaluation.

This evaluation of the Local School Readiness Initiative concentrates on the activities of the School Readiness Coordinators and the roles that they play in their school districts and

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<sup>1</sup> From “School Readiness Initiative of Orange County Service Plan, Phase II: Implementation”

communities. The evaluation begins by setting the context for the work of the School Readiness Coordinators. We first look at demographic data and other basic information on the school districts and communities where the SRCs work; by looking at this data across districts and communities we can begin to understand the wide range of environments where school readiness efforts are taking place. Next, in order to more fully understand the work of the SRCs, we look at the structure of the SRC positions within the districts as well as the characteristics of the SRCs themselves.

Once we understand the context of the Local School Readiness Initiative, we continue our evaluation by asking and answering three interrelated research questions:

1. In what types of activities are the SRCs engaged?
2. How effective are these activities?
3. What is the value of these activities?

We conclude our evaluation by sharing with the Commission challenges that the SRCs face in their work as well as recommendations from the School Readiness Coordinators for the next contract round, and by presenting a summary analysis of the Local School Readiness Initiative at three levels – the activity level, the district level, and the initiative level.

### ***Methodology***

This evaluation was largely conducted through surveys and conversations with the School Readiness Coordinators, Commission staff and consultants, school district personnel, early care and education providers, and parents of preschool-aged children in Orange County. Our methodology included several informal conversations with the SRCs and Commission personnel, two more formal SRC focus groups<sup>2</sup>, interviews with several Commission consultants, and four distinct surveys:

- We surveyed SRCs through the School Readiness Coordinator Survey; this survey was sent by email to all 32 SRCs and completed by 28 SRCs and by at least one SRC in every district except Savanna Elementary.
- We contacted and surveyed (by phone or email) school district personnel who had been listed by the SRCs as “district or school staff most familiar with your work” as well as personnel listed by the SRCs as the person they report to and the person their supervisor reports to. In total, we contacted 118 school district personnel across 23 districts (every district except Savanna); we received completed surveys back from 53 personnel at 22

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<sup>2</sup> The initial SRC focus group was conducted at the SRC Meeting on November 23, 2005; a second focus group was conducted after the first draft of this evaluation report had been written – at the SRC meeting on February 22, 2006.

districts (every district surveyed except Fountain Valley) for a survey response rate of 45%.

- We surveyed (mainly by mail) early care and education providers throughout Orange County. We asked SRCs to provide us with lists of the early care and education providers that serve children in their districts, and based on these lists we contacted 422 providers (both home- and center-based); we received 73 replies for a survey response rate of 17%.
- Lastly, we surveyed parents of preschool-aged children throughout Orange County. The surveys were conducted by the School Readiness Coordinators themselves. Most were conducted at SRC parent events, but others were conducted at school district kindergarten registration events and city-wide events. A total of 893 parents were surveyed across 14 districts.

## II. District and Community Context

Before we take a closer look at the work that School Readiness Coordinators do, it is important that we understand the environments in which they are working. Population and school district characteristics can have a large affect on SRC activities - for instance, an SRC working in an area with many students and parents who do not speak English will have to translate her materials and presentations, an SRC in a unified school district with a high school population may have the opportunity to work with teen parents, and an SRC working in a district that serves a high income population may not be able to receive certain government grants but will be better able to fundraise instead.

Overall, the population of Orange County is fairly well educated and wealthy. When we compare some key demographic characteristics in Orange County to those in the state as a whole, we see that residents of Orange County are more likely to have a bachelor's degree (33% versus 29%) and less likely to live in poverty (6% versus 11%). While the 2004 median family income in the state of California was \$58,327, Orange County had a much higher median family income of \$71,489.<sup>3</sup>

This bright picture of Orange County as a whole is actually obscuring large differences among the districts and communities where School Readiness Coordinators work. For example, within the 24 elementary and unified school districts with SRCs, the percent of students who are considered socioeconomically disadvantaged ranges from just 7% to more than 86% and district enrollment ranges from over 61,000 to less than 3,000 (see Table 1).<sup>4</sup>

Recognizing this variety, the Commission has designated "district uniqueness" as one of their core principles for the Local School Readiness Initiative. The Commission "does not try to create a 'one-size-fits-all' approach to school readiness, instead allowing each school district some flexibility to most effectively meet the needs of its communities."<sup>5</sup>

Of course, even within their own districts, School Readiness Coordinators may need to tailor their programs to serve several distinct populations. For instance, we talked to one SRC who explained that about half of the schools in her district serve a low-income population; these

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<sup>3</sup> 2004 American Community Survey, U.S. Census Bureau

<sup>4</sup> Data Quest, California Department of Education (data on percent of students who are socioeconomically disadvantaged comes from the 2004 API Base Report). According to the definition adopted by the California State Board of Education, a student is socioeconomically disadvantaged if neither of the student's parents has received a high school diploma OR the student is eligible for the federal free- or reduced price lunch program.

<sup>5</sup> From "School Readiness Initiative of Orange County Service Plan, Phase II: Implementation"

**Table 1: School Districts Characteristics**

District	Commission Funding Level	2004-2005 Enrollment		Grades Served	Percent Socioeconomically Disadvantaged	Percent English Language Learners
		Kinder.	Total			
<b>Santa Ana Unified</b>	Large	5,170	61,693	K-12	86%	60%
<b>Garden Grove Unified</b>	Large	3,834	50,030	K-12	63%	47%
<b>Capistrano Unified</b>	Large	3,655	50,615	K-12	14%	12%
<b>Anaheim City Elementary</b>	Large	2,925	21,383	K-6	82%	61%
<b>Saddleback Valley Unified</b>	Large	2,344	34,901	K-12	15%	9%
<b>Orange Unified</b>	Large	2,175	31,351	K-12	37%	22%
<b>Placentia Yorba-Linda Unified</b>	Medium	1,707	26,725	K-12	25%	15%
<b>Newport-Mesa Unified</b>	Medium	1,678	22,487	K-12	41%	26%
<b>Tustin Unified</b>	Medium	1,566	19,736	K-12	37%	27%
<b>Irvine Unified</b>	Medium	1,402	25,158	K-12	7%	13%
<b>Fullerton Elementary</b>	Medium	1,366	13,874	K-8	41%	28%
<b>Ocean View Elementary</b>	Medium	1,156	10,012	K-8	33%	22%
<b>Westminster Elementary</b>	Medium	1,054	10,003	K-8	63%	47%
<b>Magnolia Elementary</b>	Medium	925	6,771	K-6	77%	56%
<b>Buena Park Elementary</b>	Medium	701	6,266	K-8	66%	45%
<b>La Habra City Elementary</b>	Medium	699	6,352	K-8	63%	44%
<b>Centralia Elementary</b>	Medium	641	5,056	K-6	46%	31%
<b>Huntington Beach City Elem.</b>	Medium	637	6,782	K-8	13%	8%
<b>Fountain Valley Elementary</b>	Small	618	6,250	K-8	13%	10%
<b>Los Alamitos Unified</b>	Small	611	9,100	K-12	9%	2%
<b>Cypress Elementary</b>	Small	526	4,439	K-6	23%	14%
<b>Brea Olinda Unified</b>	Small	367	6,220	K-12	17%	9%
<b>Savanna Elementary</b>	Small	353	2,524	K-6	67%	40%
<b>Laguna Beach Unified</b>	Small	147	2,770	K-12	9%	4%

Source: Column 2 – District Budgets; Columns 3 and 5 - Ed-Data Online; Column 4 – California Department of Education, Data Quest; Columns 6 and 7 - California Department of Education, Data Quest, from the 2004 API Base Report; Additional district data can be found in Appendix B.

schools have traditionally faced low pre-enrollment for kindergarten so this SRC has tailored parent-outreach programs in the neighborhoods around these schools to try to increase pre-enrollment. Other SRCs spoke more generally about working in a “very affluent small community with pockets of lower socioeconomics” and how this can be “really challenging,” as well as how having a “very diverse community” can lead to a need for “very different strategies.”

School-level demographic data confirms these School Readiness Coordinators’ observations. For example:

**Table 2: Within District Comparison of Demographic Data**

	Percent of Students who receive Free Lunch		Percent of Student who are English Language Learners	
	Elementary School with Lowest Percentage	Elementary School with Highest Percentage	Elementary School with Lowest Percentage	Elementary School with Highest Percentage
<b>Westminster Elementary</b>	12%	84%	10%	75%
<b>Placentia Yorba- Linda Unified</b>	0%	85%	1%	63%
<b>Irvine Unified</b>	1%	44%	8%	34%

Source: Ed-Data

### III. The School Readiness Coordinator Position

In order to deal with the issue of different sized school districts, the Commission distributes Local School Readiness Initiative funding according to district size: large districts receive funding for two full-time School Readiness Coordinators, medium districts receive funding for one full-time School Readiness Coordinator, and small districts receive funding for just one-half of a full-time School Readiness Coordinator. The Commission funds each full-time SRC for \$85,000 per year<sup>6</sup>, but it is actually up to the district to decide exactly how to use this money – some districts split the money to fund portions of many different full-time positions while others completely fund one full- or part-time SRC position or supplement the grant money with their own to increase salaries. Of the 24 districts, six are considered large (and funded with \$170,000 per year), twelve are considered medium (and funded with \$85,000 per year), and six are considered small (and funded with \$42,500 per year).<sup>7</sup> The number of Local School Readiness Coordinators actually employed by each district ranges from one to three (many districts have separate State School Readiness Coordinators as well). Some districts have also used their grant money to hire additional support personnel such as secretaries, parent liaisons, and resource teachers or to fund supplies and other project expenses.

According to the budgets that they submitted to the Commission, most districts spend more than 90% of their Commission grant money on staff salaries and benefits.<sup>8</sup> Overall, 92% of the funding from the Local School Readiness Initiative is spent on staff salaries and benefits and just 8% is spent on other expenses. These other expenses include:

- Parent and provider training materials
- Copying and printing
- Facility rent
- Transportation
- Conferences
- Indirect costs
- Other materials and supplies

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<sup>6</sup> Starting with the contract extension planned for October 2006, each district will receive a 3% cost of living adjustment increase in the amount of funding they receive from the Commission for the Local School Readiness Initiative.

<sup>7</sup> District categorization as small, medium, or large has not changed over the life of the initiative. Kindergarten enrollment has changed over this time, although the ranking of districts by this variable has not changed substantially. Orange County kindergarten enrollment overall has decreased since the 2000-2001 school year by almost 6%; 17 of the districts with SRCs have also seen decreases in kindergarten enrollment (ranging from 1% to 16%), while 7 have seen increases in kindergarten enrollment (also ranging from 1% to 16%).

<sup>8</sup> We received two-year budgets from the Commission for 20 of the 24 school districts with SRCs.

- Consulting
- Project evaluation and data collection

Of course, allocation varies considerably by district:

**Table 3: District Budget Allocation**

	<b>Percent of Local School Readiness Budget Spent on Staff Salaries and Benefits</b>			
	<b>100%</b>	<b>90% - 99%</b>	<b>80% - 89%</b>	<b>Less than 80%</b>
<b>Number of Districts</b>	4	10	5	1

Although 23 of the 28 School Readiness Coordinators who completed the School Readiness Coordinator Survey indicated that they work full time, this work is not all dedicated to the Local School Readiness Initiative. Many SRCs are funded by more than one grant, so it is not surprising that their work would be split between different areas. While 10 SRCs (36%) indicated that their position is funded solely through the Local School Readiness Initiative Grant, 15 (54%) say their position is funded through multiple grants (with the remaining three not answering this question). In the SRC focus group and on the SRC survey, SRCs spoke about the need to be funded by more than one grant in order to survive, but also about the additional work load and reporting requirements that these multiple funding streams entail:

*“I have to work in State School Readiness because the Local School Readiness Grant is not enough to pay my salary.”*

*“[I] have to be funded through multiple grants because there is not enough money... it is a challenge to meet the needs of each program.”*

*“I have to be three people for three types of grants.”*

According to the survey, the average percent of time spent by School Readiness Coordinators on Local School Readiness Initiative activities is 54% (see Figure 1).<sup>9</sup> More than half of the SRCs spend at least some of their time on State School Readiness activities (16 out of the 28 surveyed), with some spending up to 90% of their time in this area.

One commission consultant commented specifically on the challenges that SRCs face when they have responsibility for both Local and State School Readiness activities. This

<sup>9</sup> One Commission consultant who works closely with the SRCs indicated to us that this 54% could be misleading; this consultant believes that SRCs answered this survey question in an inconsistent way depending on whether they work full- or part-time and whether they are full- or part-time SRCs.

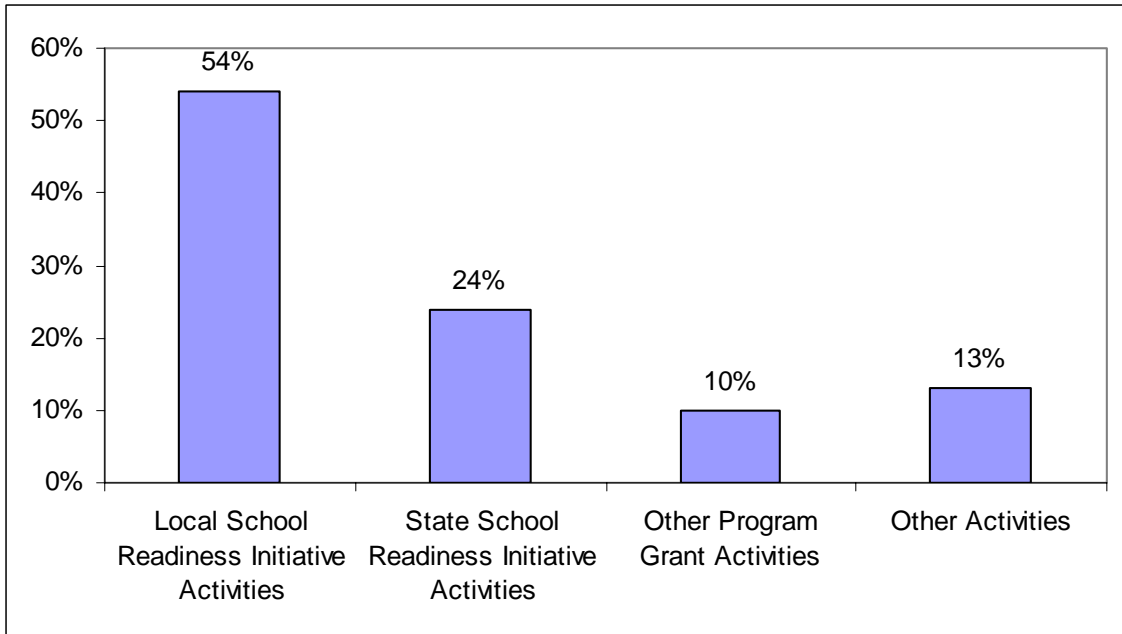
consultant believes that State School Readiness activities more often take time away from Local School Readiness activities than the other way around. This is likely because State School Readiness activities are often direct service activities such as running preschool programs; these activities have daily management demands and children and parents arriving everyday and expecting services. Many Local School Readiness activities, on the other hand, such as planning and organizing for future parent or provider workshops, are more easily put off for another day when programmatic management emergencies come up. For many of those districts with both programs (and a coordinator with responsibilities for both), State School Readiness evaluation and reporting rules also add to the duties of the coordinator, taking time away from program activities. This consultant further commented, “If we had understood how much the State School Readiness would take, we would have asked for a separate point person... many of the districts that took on the State School Readiness Funds had not run preschools before.”

SRCs who work part-time and those who work in small or medium districts spend a greater percent of their time on Local School Readiness Initiative activities. While only one full-time SRC spends 100% of her time on Local School Readiness Initiative activities, four of the five SRCs who work part-time spend 100% of their time on these activities.<sup>10</sup> On average, SRCs in large districts spend just 39% of their time on Local School Readiness Initiative activities, while those in small and medium districts spend 63% of their time on these activities.

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<sup>10</sup> These five SRCs who spend 100% of their time on Local School Readiness Initiative activities are funded solely through the Local School Readiness Initiative Grant. The remaining five SRCs who are funded solely through the Local School Readiness Initiative Grant spend between 10% and 80% of their time on Local School Readiness Initiative activities.

**Figure 1: Amount of Time Spent by SRCs on Different Activities**



It is interesting to note that almost all School Readiness Coordinators who completed the survey are school district employees (with only three serving as consultants).

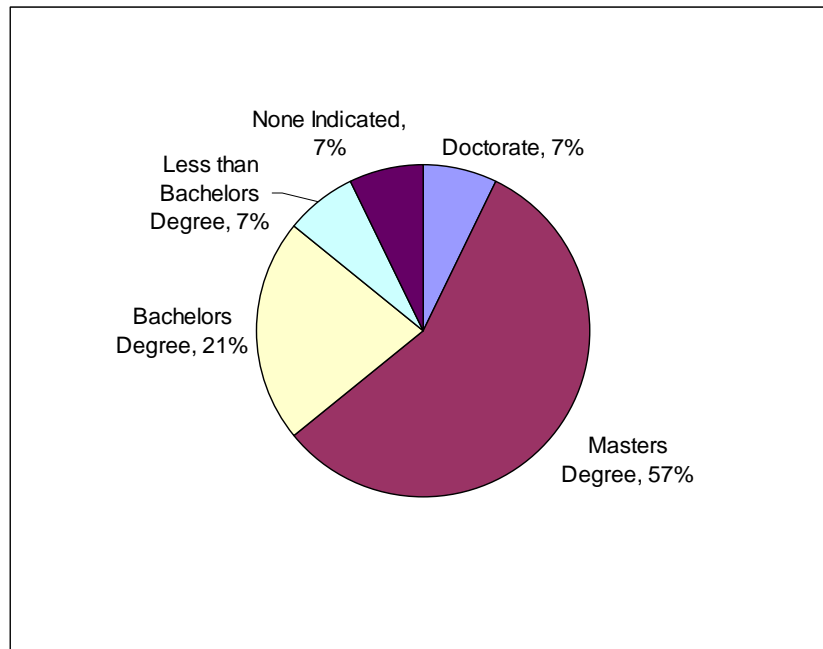
#### IV. The School Readiness Coordinators and Their Activities

##### *The Coordinators*

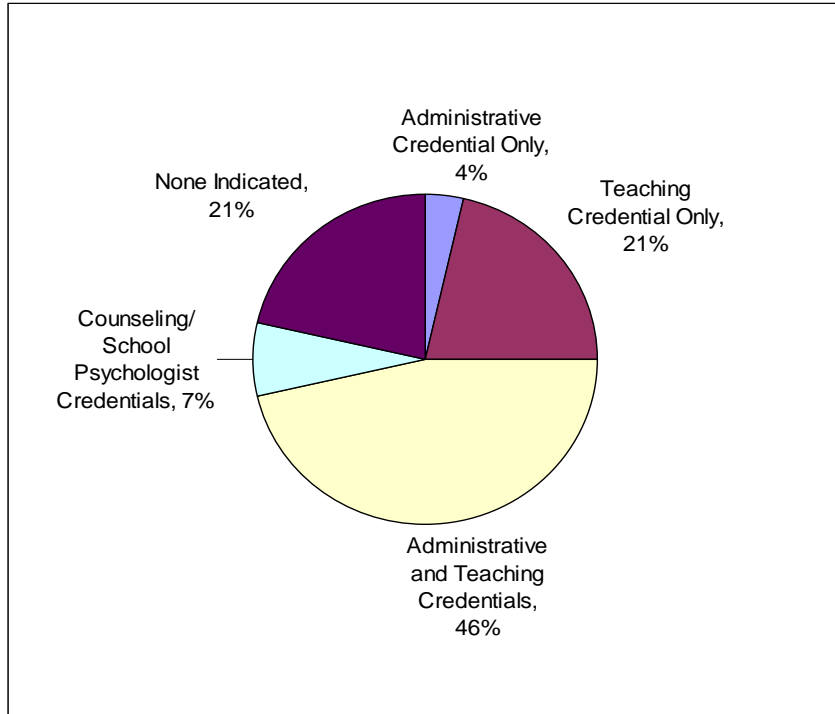
Those districts that participate in the Local School Readiness Initiative are not required to hire any specific type of employee to fill the School Readiness Coordinator position, as long as the person hired meets certain qualifications. According to the Commission, the Coordinator must be knowledgeable in the areas of early childhood education theory, kindergarten standards, developmentally appropriate practices, integrated service delivery, community resources, and teaching strategies for English language learners, with a strong emphasis in language and literacy development, and have a working knowledge of the kindergarten through 12 educational system and children with special needs. With this flexibility from the Commission, the districts advertised for and hired a wide range of School Readiness Coordinators – with different levels of education, work experiences, and areas of expertise.

In general, the SRCs are a highly educated group – of the 28 SRCs who completed the School Readiness Coordinator Survey, the majority hold advanced education degrees (see Figure 2) and nearly half hold both administrative and teaching credentials (see Figure 3).

**Figure 2: School Readiness Coordinators' Highest Level of Education**

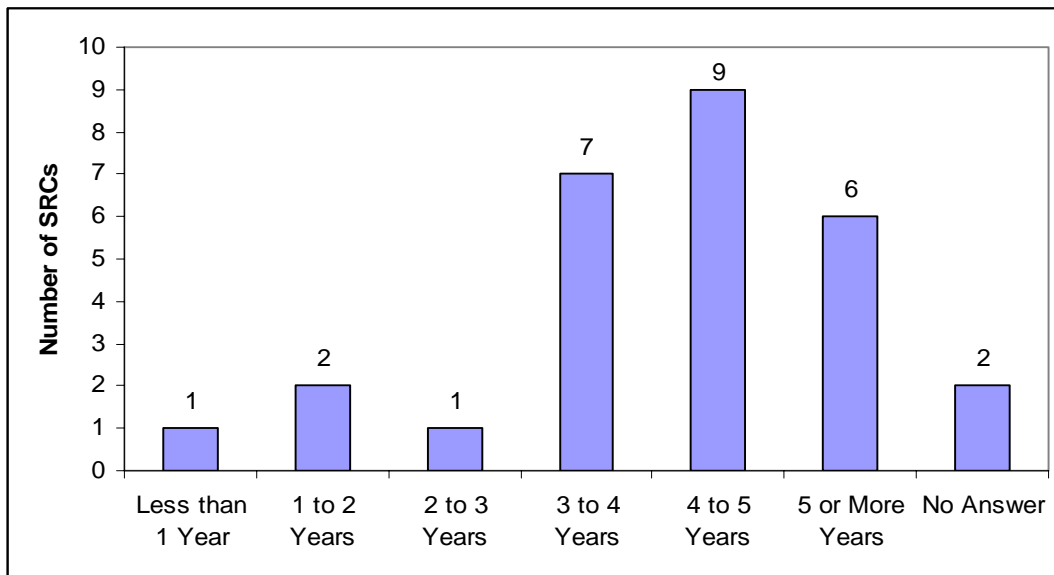


**Figure 3: Credentials Held by School Readiness Coordinators**



Many of the current SRCs have been in their positions since the beginning or nearly the beginning of the Local School Readiness Initiative; six of the 28 SRCs who completed the survey have been at their positions for five or more years and only one has been an SRC for less than one year (see Figure 4).

**Figure 4: Length of Time at SRC Position**



To get a better idea of the background and skills that School Readiness Coordinators bring to their jobs, we also asked them about their previous work experience. A large majority of the School Readiness Coordinators had been working at a school district before becoming an SRC (22 out of the 28 who completed the survey). Out of these 22, 16 SRCs, or 57% of survey respondents, had worked for their current district directly before taking the SRC position – this indicates that many school districts hired from within in order to fill the newly formed SRC position or to replace an exiting SRC. Of the remaining six survey respondents who had not worked for a school district directly before taking the SRC position, four had come from positions in the early care and education community and two had come from social service positions.

Most of the 22 School Readiness Coordinators who came to their positions directly from a school district had been principals or teachers – six were formerly principals or assistant principals, eight were previously teachers, one was a school psychologist, one was a community liaison, and six had previous school readiness or child care coordinator positions. A few of the SRCs actually still hold other school district positions even as they work as School Readiness Coordinators – for instance, one SRC is also serving as a school psychologist and another serves as a principal.

Different backgrounds bring with them different challenges for the SRCs, as well as providing them with different areas of expertise. One of the School Readiness Coordinators who came from the field of early care and education mentioned in a conversation that she had at first found it challenging to learn how the school district worked from the inside; this was probably not as much of a challenge for those who had moved from other positions inside of the district. The SRCs' areas of expertise also depend in part on their educational backgrounds and previous professional experiences. For instance, as we can see in the table below, the SRC who is also a school psychologist listed one of her areas of expertise as assessment, SRCs who listed elementary or early childhood education as an area of expertise are most likely to be former teachers, and those SRCs who listed management or administration as areas of expertise had for the most part held management positions previously (either positions as school principals or administrative positions in the ECE community).

**Table 4: School Readiness Coordinators’ Self-Reported Areas of Expertise by Previous Position**

<b>Most Commonly Listed Areas of Expertise</b>	<b>Principal (or Assistant)</b>	<b>Teacher</b>	<b>SR or Child Care Coordinator</b>	<b>School Psychiatrist</b>	<b>Community Liaison</b>	<b>ECE Community</b>	<b>Social Service Community</b>	<b>TOTAL</b>
Literacy or Early/ Family Literacy	2	3	3			2	1	11
Parent Involvement/Education	2	2	2			2	2	10
Elementary/Early Childhood Education/Child Development	1	4				1	1	7
Curriculum/Curriculum Development	1	2	3			1		7
Community Development/Outreach			3		1	1		5
Leadership	1	2	1			1		5
Management/ Administration	2					2	1	5
Staff Development		1	1			1		3
Event/Program Planning			3					3
Special Education/Inclusion		2	1					3
Assessment		1		1		1		3
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>9</b>	<b>17</b>	<b>17</b>	<b>1</b>	<b>1</b>	<b>12</b>	<b>5</b>	

Commission staff who work closely with the SRCs say that despite these different backgrounds they see a similarity in SRC enthusiasm on the topic of school readiness. SRCs also seem to see this similarity, and describe themselves as “a group of women who have a passion” and “as being part of the same project” even though they are “all doing it differently.”

We also see a similarity in the way that SRCs describe what they enjoy about their positions; in their conversations with us, SRCs consistently depicted their positions as giving them the chance to create something new and work on the cutting edge. For instance, one SRC described her position as an “entrepreneurial opportunity,” another as a position with “the door wide open,” and another as “a chance for people to create a place of their own in a system that is

so established and set in its ways.” This attitude has no doubt helped many of the SRCs to thrive in a new position without much structure or guidance.

It may be that the lure of a new position and a new initiative attracted a certain type of person to the job of School Readiness Coordinator; not just anybody gets excited about a job that will just give them “a title and a place” and then ask them the question “what are you going to do with it?” It may also be the case that districts, having a new position to fill, but not being completely clear on what the job would entail, simply looked for somebody enthusiastic to hire.

According to Commission consultant and SRC comments:

*“We were all people with passion and vision... we were willing to step into the abyss... we were all people who were willing to try anything.”* (From an SRC)

*“We went into the districts without a workplan... districts only knew there would be money... the districts picked people who would represent the district well – generally pretty good at what they do, self-starters.”* (From a Commission Consultant)

*“Back in June 2000, my supervisor called me into her office and said there is going to be a new job, they don’t know what it will be but they want somebody good to do it.”* (From an SRC)

In conversations and focus groups we asked Commission consultants and SRCs whether they thought that the next generation of SRCs, who would be coming into a more structured position, would be likely to have the same enthusiasm and willingness to “step into the abyss” and “try anything” as the first generation of School Readiness Coordinators. One Commission consultant believes that even though the initiative is now “better defined” it will still attract independent thinkers and workers because the work that the SRCs have done so far has just “reinforced the fact that the role is really independent.” She also noted that departing SRCs often have a part in hiring new people and that county-wide meetings and collaborations with SRCs from other districts “have allowed for mentoring” of new SRCs. Finally, this consultant observed that in the past SRCs who did not fit in with the enthusiasm and energy of the current group “left the job” and she believes that this may well continue to be the case as the initiative progresses.

Some SRCs feel that the current SRC job requires a slightly different skill set than the job of five years ago, but that it still requires people with the same enthusiasm and passion as the original group of SRCs. As one SRC commented, “We may need a different type of person as the job turns over... a program manager instead of a program developer... somebody to do day-

to-day management, but we still need people with the same passion... we must keep the momentum going and make sure that everybody who comes in has the same sense of excitement.”

Another SRC summed up the requirements for a successful SRC by commenting, “The job requires somebody who is multi-faceted and very flexible... they need to be comfortable with multiple roles and wearing multiple hats... [they must have a] willingness to learn constantly, a broad experience, and deal well with ambiguity.”

### ***SRC Activities***

School Readiness Coordinators are involved in an incredible array of activities – from running parent education classes, to writing grants, to collaborating with community health and social service providers. In general though, SRC activities can be broken down into seven strategy areas. These strategy areas are:

- **Outreach Efforts:** Coordinate outreach efforts to educate the community regarding best practices for early care, early childhood development issues, available programs and services, district readiness expectations, and Kindergarten Content Standards.
- **Parent Education:** Emphasize the participation of consumers and families in all planning forums. Provide information and training to parents of young children so that they may better prepare them to enter school healthy and ready to succeed.
- **Provider Education:** Promote collaboration within the kindergarten through grade 12 educational system and the early care and education community to increase awareness of district expectations, develop a common mechanism for measurement and support the development of optimum transitions from one provider system to the other.
- **Community Linkages:** Strengthen planning linkages, communication, learning and referrals among Commission-funded programs, community agencies, and county-wide networks. Propose and implement community planning forums that include all relevant agencies providing early care and education, health, and social services to the district population.
- **Information and Referral:** Coordinate the exchange and distribution of resource information and school readiness materials between the district and local community agencies, the Commission, and Commission grantees, to better educate parents regarding the available resources that may help them better prepare their children to enter school healthy and ready to succeed.
- **Capacity Building:** Research the feasibility of increasing the number of school readiness programs serving the district. Work to connect early care and education programs with other community agencies and Commission grantees providing health and social services to young children.
- **Assessment Services:** Develop recommendations for a process within the district to assess the progress of children as they transition to the kindergarten through grade 12 education system. Develop criteria and consensus recommendations for the use of a

recognized standard assessment tool and process for identifying quality in early care and education programs, practices, and research-based strategies.

By thinking about SRC activities as they fall into these seven categories we can develop a more structured assessment of where the School Readiness Coordinators are focusing their efforts. The table below shows examples of activities that were categorized by SRCs as falling under each area; a more detailed list of SRC activities broken down by district and strategy area can be found in Appendix C.<sup>11</sup>

**Table 5: Examples of SRC Activities by Strategy Area**

<p><b>Outreach Efforts</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• School Board Presentation.</li> <li>• Conducted School Readiness presentations for the Kiwanis Club of San Clemente, South Orange County Community Services Council, and the Jr. Women's League.</li> <li>• Coordinate production/write article for quarterly newsletter.</li> <li>• The School Readiness team has made numerous presentations at community forums, conferences, and other events to inform groups of the importance of school readiness for future success.</li> </ul>
<p><b>Parent Education</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Provide school readiness workshops to parents at elementary school sites.</li> <li>• Monthly parent-child classes on topics such as literacy, motor development, science, math, and creative arts.</li> <li>• Partner with CUIDAR to host parent education classes.</li> <li>• Annual parent meeting with kindergarten teachers that covers how to help preschoolers make a successful transition.</li> </ul>
<p><b>Provider Education</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Train caregivers on how to provide children with developmentally appropriate activities that will promote academic and social development.</li> <li>• Set up visitation/observations for preschool teachers in kindergarten classes.</li> <li>• Provide training and implement a language and literacy continuum aligned with the state kindergarten standards.</li> <li>• Becoming a certified trainer in Guided Language Acquisition and Design (GLAD) to help ensure teachers are providing adequate instruction/strategies to English Learners.</li> </ul>
<p><b>Community Linkages</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Conducted a Community Planning Forum with representatives from the district and community-based agencies.</li> <li>• Facilitate or attend meetings with community organizations, early childhood education providers, kindergarten teachers and district personnel. Attendees are developing contacts and successfully building bridges to collaborate and serve the local community.</li> <li>• Head Start children and their teachers visiting the kindergarten classes.</li> </ul>

<sup>11</sup> Both in the following table and in Appendix C, activities which were categorized by SRCs as falling under more than one strategy area are listed under what we believe is the activity's primary area.

- Provide ways for kindergarten and preschool teachers to come together to talk about expectations, routines, and curriculum.

### **Information and Referral**

- Established and maintained a School Readiness Resource Library.
- Help at-risk families obtain resources for rent assistance, clothing, food, medical insurance, family counseling and access to medical services.
- The Weaver CDC Office continued to be an ongoing resource center for families requesting information on dental clinics and other low cost health care resources.
- The program newsletter, “Shining Bright,” is distributed quarterly to all district preschool and kindergarten staff, local preschool providers, and community partners to share information related to school readiness.

### **Capacity Building**

- Research and apply for grants to help sustain programs, including expanding State Preschool programs - currently working on a Gerber Foundation grant for 0-3.
- Start the Twilight Preschool Program.
- Opened a district preschool program at one of our elementary school sites. This program was designed to address the needs of our special education students aged 3-5.
- Open Harper HOPE School Readiness Resource Center to provide space for professional development, materials check-out and preparation, parent education workshops, adult education classes, and the future Preschool Children’s Library.

### **Assessment Services**

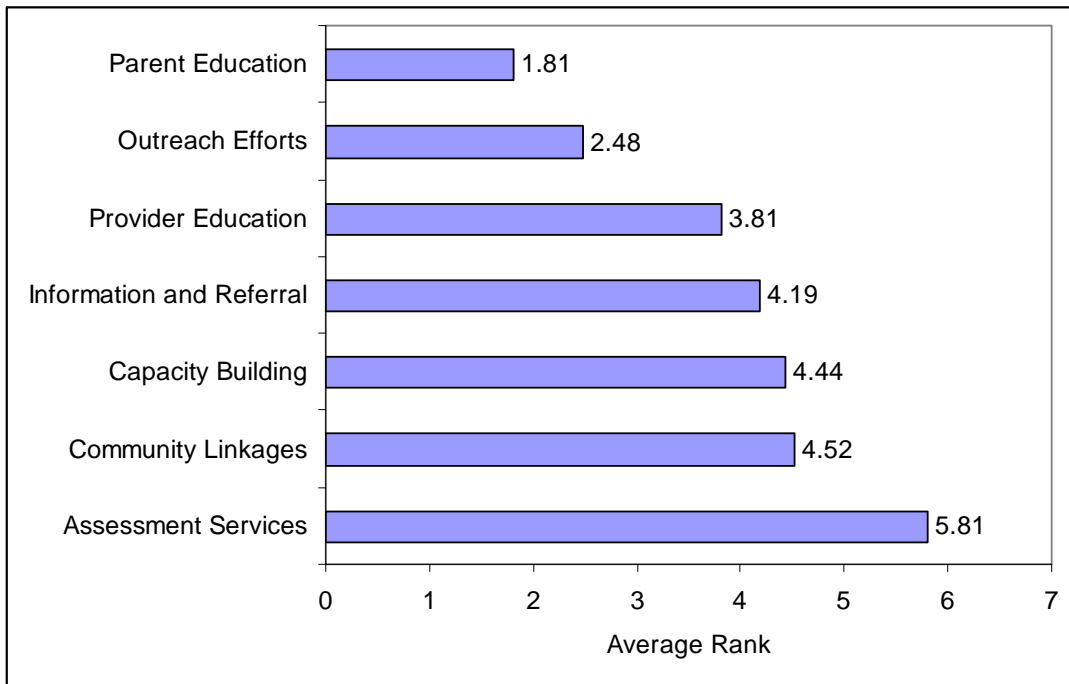
- Developed an assessment grid and identified tools for pre-kindergarten teachers to use - the assessments include teacher observations and anecdotal records, California Desired Results, teacher checklists aligned with district primary assessment tasks, and portfolio items.
- Participate in workgroups on School Readiness Developmental Profile and ECE Assessment Tool.
- Implemented the Preschool Teacher Questionnaire for preschool teachers to complete and send directly to a child’s kindergarten teacher to share the child’s current developmental progress.
- Developed district system to track entering kindergarten students by the early care program they attended.

As part of the School Readiness Coordinator Survey, SRCs were asked to rank the importance of each strategy area to their district, estimate the percentage of their time they spend working in each area, and list their current activities catalogued by strategy area and core principle.<sup>12</sup> There was no clear consensus among SRCs as to which strategy area is most important. At least one SRC ranked each of the seven strategy areas as the *most* important for her district. Overall though, parent education was rated as most important for the greatest number of SRCs (parent education was rated as most important by 17 out of the 28 SRCs who completed

<sup>12</sup> SRCs catalogued some of their activities as falling under more than one strategy area or core principle; when this was the case we counted these activities under each strategy area and each core principle for statistical purposes. When SRCs did not assign an activity to a strategy area, we assigned it one for them; activities not assigned a core principle were not assigned one.

the survey). The strategy area that was most consistently ranked as least important by the School Readiness Coordinators was assessment services (assessment services was ranked as least important by 13 of the 28 survey respondents).<sup>13</sup>

**Figure 5: Average Rank, Importance of Strategy Areas**



\*1= Most Important, 7 = Least Important

Consistent with these importance rankings, SRCs reported spending the greatest amount of their time on parent education (along with outreach efforts) and the least amount of their time on assessment services. SRCs were asked to report the percent of their time they spend on each area during the beginning of the year (August through October) and during the remainder of the year, but most SRCs reported nearly the same numbers for both of these time periods. On average, School Readiness Coordinators reported spending 21% of their time on parent education activities during the beginning of the year (22% during the remainder of the year), 22% of their time on outreach efforts during the beginning of the year (20% during the remainder of the year), and just 9% of their time during the beginning of the year on assessment services (10% during the remainder of the year). Of course, there is actually a great variety in the amount of time that individual SRCs spend on each of these seven strategy areas. For instance, one SRC

<sup>13</sup> During the second SRC focus group several SRCs commented that despite what our survey results may suggest, they do not think of assessment services as unimportant. These SRCs noted that they believe all seven strategy areas are important and that in this case they were forced by the survey to rate one area as least important.

reported spending only 5% of her time in the remainder of the year in the area of parent education, while another SRC reported spending 40% of her time in this area; several SRCs reported spending none of their time in the area of assessment services, while one SRC reported spending 50% of her time during the remainder of the year in this area.

**Table 6: Self-Reported SRC Time Allocation by Strategy Area (Beginning of Year versus Remainder)**

Strategy Area	Average Percent of Time		Smallest Percent of Time (Min.)		Greatest Percent of Time (Max.)	
	Beginning of Year	Remainder of Year	Beginning of Year	Remainder of Year	Beginning of Year	Remainder of Year
Parent Education	21%	22%	0%	5%	50%	40%
Outreach Efforts	22%	20%	0%	10%	60%	35%
Provider Education	15%	13%	5%	5%	50%	25%
Information and Referral	14%	13%	0%	5%	50%	30%
Capacity Building	9%	12%	0%	0%	45%	30%
Community Linkages	11%	11%	0%	5%	25%	25%
Assessment Services	9%	10%	0%	0%	50%	50%

During the first focus group session, many SRCs commented on differences in the activities they participate in during different times of the year. SRCs talked about the beginning of the year as a time for planning and reconnecting and spring as an especially busy part of the year:

*“In the fall [we] reconnect with principals and teachers.”*

*“Fall is the time to figure out what we’re going to do.”*

*“[During the fall there is a] great deal of planning for events that will happen later in the year... calendaring and working out schedules with 14 schools.”*

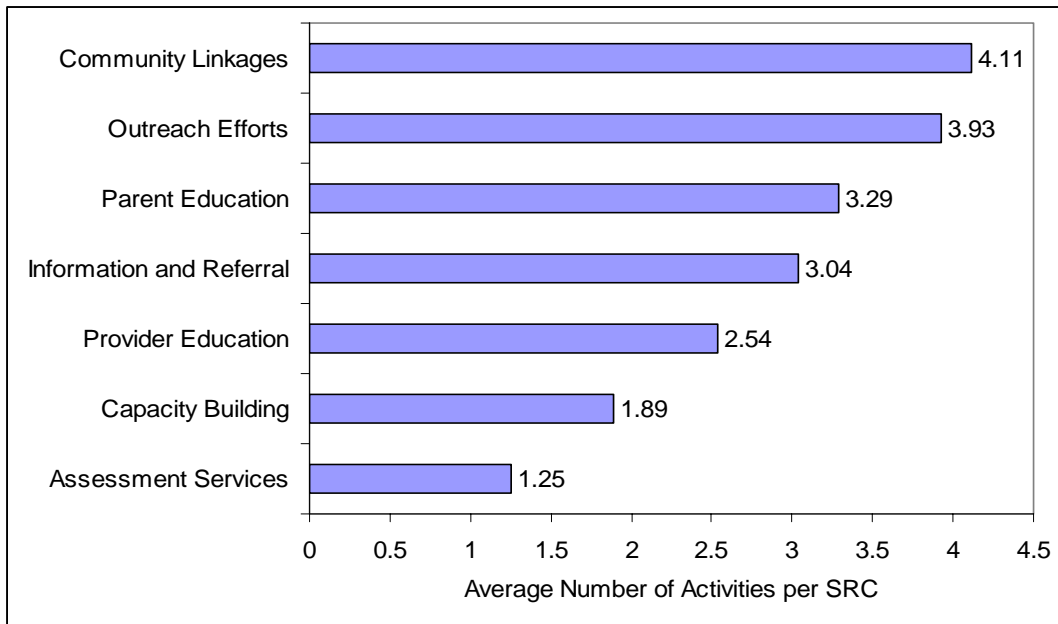
*“Spring is huge – push for Welcome to Kindergarten and Kindergarten Registration... there is a push to get all the information out.”*

*“Most of the transition training and partnering with ECE happens in the spring.”*

*“In the spring [we are] really planning for funding cycles.”*

The 28 SRCs who responded to the survey listed an average of 16 activities each (for a total of 445 activities).<sup>14</sup> Not surprisingly, outreach efforts and parent education were among the strategy areas with the most activities listed. The strategy area with the fewest number of activities listed was assessment services; this is also not surprising given that this area was the one ranked by SRCs as least important and the area where they reported spending the smallest proportion of their time.

**Figure 6: Average Number of Activities by Strategy Area**



Interestingly, the strategy area with the most activities listed by SRCs was community linkages (with an average of 4.11 activities per SRC) – this area was ranked as one of the least important by SRCs and also as an area where they reported spending only 11% of their time. This discrepancy may be because community linkage activities are often not as time consuming as activities in other areas. As one Commission consultant explained, “Community linkages are not that time intensive... the call is quick compared to the actual work of a workshop, etc.... we try to facilitate that linkage.” Another explanation for the discrepancy is that many community linkages take place during other activities (such as making linkages with the early care and education community and then providing training or making linkages with community groups

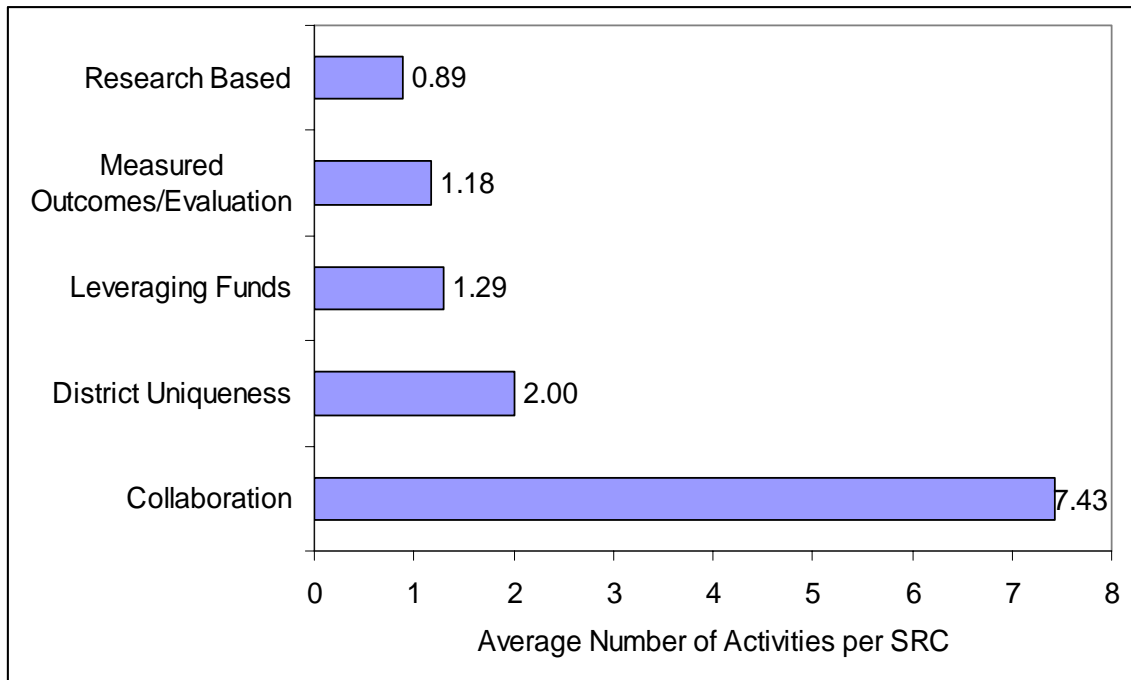
<sup>14</sup> When there is more than one SRC in a district some of these activities are duplicated.

and then using these linkages for information and referral); as one SRC commented, “[community linkages are a] byproduct of other activities.”

In addition to participating in many activities that fall under the strategy area of community linkages, SRCs participate in many activities that involve collaboration. Of the Commission’s five core principles (research based, measured outcomes/evaluation, leveraging funds, district uniqueness, and collaboration),<sup>15</sup> SRCs have been most active in the area of collaboration. On average, each SRC listed 7.43 activities under this area.

As we look at how many activities SRCs listed under each core principle it is important to remember that this data is self-reported. If School Readiness Coordinators do not think about the work that they do in terms of these five principles, they may not realize which activities could actually be categorized in this way.

**Figure 7: Average Number of Activities by Core Principle**



<sup>15</sup> These core principles are described more fully in the introduction to this report.

## **V. Effectiveness of School Readiness Activities**

In addition to knowing which types of activities the School Readiness Coordinators are involved in, we would like to know how effective these activities have been. While it is beyond the scope of this report to determine the effect that these activities have had on measures such as school achievement or child health, we can look at the question of effectiveness by using more qualitative measures; these measures include:

- The number of awards received by school readiness programs,
- The type of activities listed by SRCs and school district personnel as SRC top accomplishments,
- The amount of funds that SRCs have been able to leverage for school readiness activities from their districts and outside sources, and
- Changes in administration and school board support for the idea of school readiness over the past five years.

### ***Awards***

One way that we can measure the effectiveness of the Local School Readiness Initiative is by looking at the awards that districts have received for their school readiness efforts. School Readiness Coordinators from almost half of the districts (11 districts) indicated in their surveys that their district's school readiness program had been the recipient of an award. These awards include:

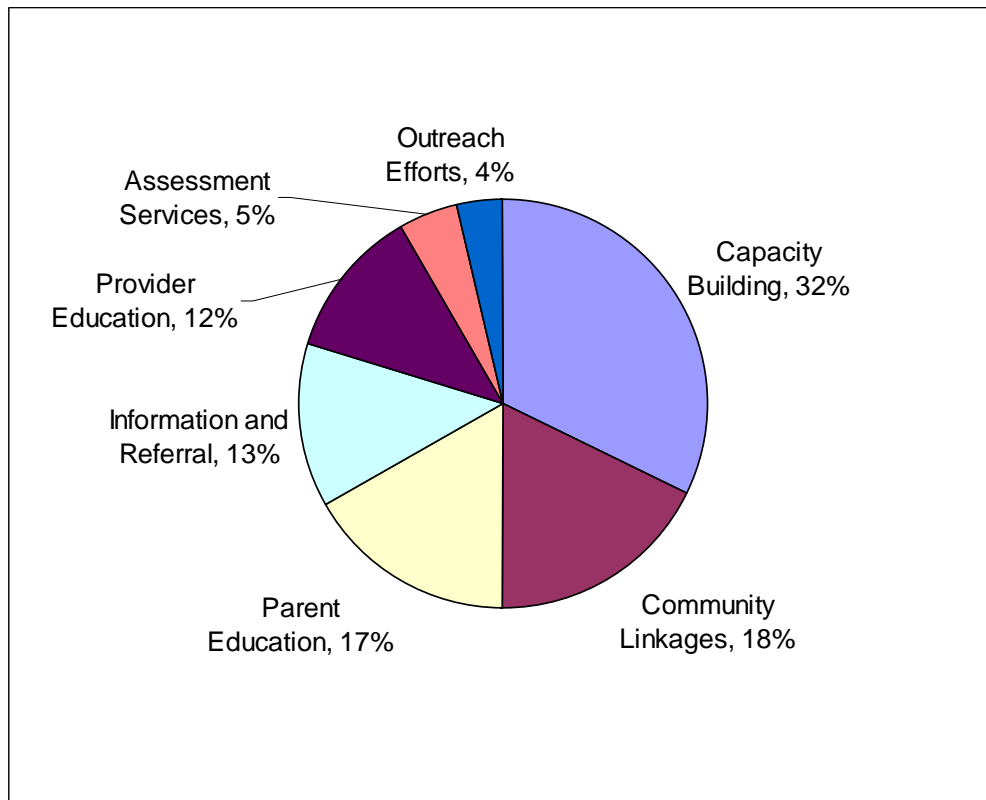
- California School Board Association's Golden Bell Award
- Children and Families Commission of Orange County's Peter A. Hartman Award
- Orange County Board of Supervisors' Commendation
- National School Board Association's Magna Award
- Head Start's Devoted School Readiness Award

### ***Accomplishments and Successes***

We can attempt to determine which of their activities the School Readiness Coordinators consider to be the most effective by looking at which activities they listed as their three top accomplishments on the SRC survey and which activities they mentioned as recent successes during the SRC focus group. Out of the 84 accomplishments listed (3 each for the 28 SRCs who completed the survey), the greatest number fall under the strategy area of capacity building (27 accomplishments can be categorized as capacity building). This indicates that many SRCs feel that they have been most effective in expanding the ability of their districts to serve young

children and ease their transition to kindergarten.<sup>16</sup> The area with the fewest number of accomplishments listed was outreach efforts, although many, if not most, activities that are listed under other areas could also be counted in this area.<sup>17</sup> The area with the second fewest number of accomplishments listed was assessment services; this is once again not surprising given that this is the area with the fewest number of activities listed and the area where SRCs reported spending the least amount of their time.

**Figure 8: Percentage of SRC Accomplishments by Strategy Area**



<sup>16</sup> This is an interesting finding considering that SRCs listed fewer activities under the capacity building area and ranked it as only the 5<sup>th</sup> most important for their districts. This discrepancy may be due to the fact that while the SRCs themselves categorized their activities, the SPHERE Institute categorized the SRCs' accomplishments. It may also be due to the fact that SRCs were asked to list current activities, whereas accomplishments could have been completed anytime – this could indicate that SRCs spent more of their energy in the area of capacity building in the first few years of the initiative and are now in the process of completing additional accomplishments in the other strategy areas. Additionally, capacity building activities may be of a type more likely to be listed as an accomplishment, whereas activities such as parent education which are ongoing may be less likely to be listed as such.

<sup>17</sup> Therefore, it is not that SRCs did not make accomplishments in the area of outreach efforts, instead it is that outreach efforts were largely made on the way to other accomplishments that can be (and were) categorized in other areas.

School district personnel, including teachers, principals, administrators, and superintendents, were also asked what they consider to be the top accomplishment of the School Readiness Coordinators in their district.<sup>18</sup> If we categorize these accomplishments according to the seven strategy areas, we find that district personnel feel that most of the SRCs' top accomplishments have been in the areas of capacity building (with 29% of accomplishments listed) and general outreach efforts (with 31% of accomplishments listed).

A complete list of the accomplishments listed by the SRCs, separated by strategy area, can be found in Appendix D. The remainder of this section will concentrate on highlighting several successes (as mentioned during the SRC focus group) and accomplishments (as listed on the SRC and school district personnel surveys) that demonstrate the effectiveness of School Readiness Coordinators in preparing children to start kindergarten, preparing schools to accept kindergartners, and facilitating the transfer of students from the early care and education to the formal educational system.

### Preparing Children to Start Kindergarten

The School Readiness Coordinators have prepared preschool aged children to start kindergarten through a wide variety of services and programs; they have prepared children to start school by educating parents and preschool providers on the best ways to equip children with the skills they will need to thrive in kindergarten, connecting families to social and health services so that children will start school healthy and with food on the table, and making it easier for families to find preschool programs (both inside and outside of the district) that will prepare their children for kindergarten.

Both SRCs and district personnel listed SRC accomplishments and successes in educating parents and preschool providers:

- Developed school readiness parent education workshops (from SRC Survey).
- Had monthly parent education meetings open to all families with preschool aged children (from SRC Survey).
- Piloted the Kid Builders program to provide trainings and support for nannies in the park (from SRC Focus Group).
- Communicated information about child development and kindergarten readiness to parents of preschoolers (from District Personnel Survey).

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<sup>18</sup> For more information on the School District Personnel Survey see the section of this report titled "School District Perspectives"

- Became a certified CIRCLE Trainer and delivered CIRCLE training to all pre-k teachers in the district (from SRC Survey).
- Ensured that all district preschool programs and local child care providers were educated in using the best practices in early childhood education (from SRC Survey).
- Developed and implemented a preschool curriculum in the district that is age-appropriate and provides excellent preschool skills (from District Personnel Survey).
- Improved the level of preschool instruction in the district by coordinating all of the sites to ensure a consistent curriculum (from District Personnel Survey).

SRCs and district personnel also listed SRC accomplishments and successes in preparing children to start school by connecting families to social and health services:

- Developed a strong network of community partners who have been available for a variety of programs and services including food banks, clothing, dental screenings, and health insurance enrollment (from SRC Survey).
- Created print resources including a Dental Directory (from SRC Survey).
- Collaborated with nurses to inform the community about health services available (from SRC Survey).
- Arranged to have the Neighborhood Resource Center manned with a pediatric nurse practitioner who can do immunizations (from SRC Survey).
- Partnered with an Eagle Scout and local PTAs to have a Health Fair with information on WIC services, a doctor giving flu shots, and other informational booths (from SRC Focus Group).
- Identified services and community agencies such as WIC and medical resources that provide services for children 0-5 (from District Personnel Survey).
- Collaborated with community-based organizations to provide information and support to families (from District Personnel Survey).

SRCs are able to make it easier for families to find preschool programs to prepare their children for kindergarten both by referring families to community preschools and by expanding the capacity of the district to offer preschool programs:

- Created a brochure for families that lists childcare and preschool providers in the area (from SRC Survey).
- Increased district preschool capacity from 384 to 1009 (from SRC Survey).
- Expanded the ages of children served at the district Twilight Preschool to now serve infants from six weeks to two years (from SRC Survey).
- Started a district full-inclusion preschool (from SRC Survey).
- Increased district preschool enrollment and capacity from 18 classes in 2004-05 to 42 classes in 2005-06 (from District Personnel Survey).

### Preparing Schools to Accept Kindergartners

A second area where SRCs have made accomplishments is in preparing schools to accept kindergartners. School Readiness Coordinators have prepared schools to accept their new students by making systemic changes in how districts are run, forming district-wide planning teams, and implementing procedures for assessing and tracking students before they enter kindergarten.

By making systemic changes and forming planning teams, SRCs can make sure that schools and districts consider an early care and education perspective when making important decisions:

- Oversaw a systemic change in the district organization and convinced the district of the importance of a position that would direct early childhood education programs and have equal representation in management and decision making at the district level (from SRC Survey).
- Established and refined a Pre-K to K Articulation Team which has been instrumental in increasing communication between the two service systems and has created an at-risk transition document (from SRC Survey).
- Created the Early Learners Task Force (from SRC Survey).

By assessing and tracking incoming kindergarten students, SRCs can help districts to be ready with any needed programs or supports for new students:

- Distributed student assessment materials for entering kindergarten children (from SRC Survey).
- Provided school readiness information to kindergarten teachers through a district “student information link” system (from SRC Survey).
- Worked with the School Readiness Nurse to coordinate a large developmental screening time (from SRC Focus Group).
- Assisted with the assessment of preschool students in order for the district to be prepared to provide appropriate services as needed (from District Personnel Survey).

### Facilitating the Transfer of Preschoolers to Kindergarten

Lastly, SRCs have made accomplishments in facilitating the smooth transfer of preschoolers to kindergarten. SRC accomplishments in this area include aligning preschool and kindergarten curriculums as well as easing the transition for preschoolers and their families:

- Developed trainings for district preschool staff and community partners to focus on a preschool curriculum that is aligned to district standards (from SRC Survey).
- Aligned Boys & Girls Club pre-k curriculum to the district kindergarten curriculum (from SRC Survey).

- Aligned district preschool program with the kindergarten program (from District Personnel Survey).
- Distributed a Welcome to Kindergarten Handbook to parents (from SRC Survey).
- Organized preschool visits to kindergarten classrooms (from SRC Survey).
- Invited preschool children to attend the district summer pre-kindergarten program as well as Operation Good Start session in the week before school begins (from District Personnel Survey).
- Created a Kinder Camp program for English Learners who are entering kindergarten (from District Personnel Survey).
- Started the School Readiness Summer School Program for entering kindergartners without preschool (from District Personnel Survey).

### ***Leveraging Funds***

Another clear indicator of the effectiveness of the School Readiness Coordinators is the amount of funds they have been able to leverage from government, district, and private sources. According to one Commission consultant, SRCs in general have been very successful at leveraging funds from outside sources such as private companies and foundations and are “always looking for opportunities to bring in resources to the district.”

In order to determine the amount of funds that School Readiness Coordinators have been able to leverage over the past five years, we asked each SRC to submit to us an estimate of their leveraged funds (both cash and in-kind) broken down by source.<sup>19</sup> SRCs reported district, state, and federal funds that they had leveraged from their districts (including State Preschool, Head Start, Even Start, Title I, and CBET Funds), funds they had leveraged from the Commission (including program grants and capacity building grants)<sup>20</sup>, and funds they had leveraged from private sources (such as foundations, community organizations, and private companies).

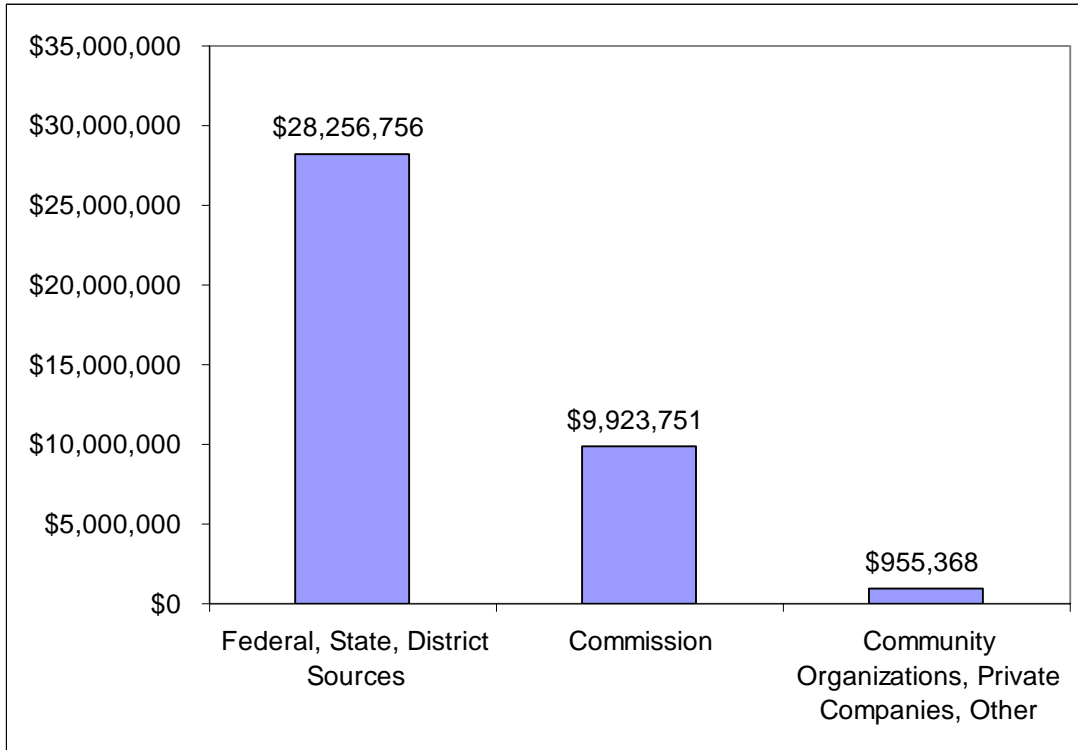
In total, School Readiness Coordinators report that they have leveraged nearly \$40 million in funds since 2000 (\$39,135,875); the great majority of these funds (72%) came from federal, state, and district sources, with only about 2% coming from outside or private sources.

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<sup>19</sup> We received estimates from SRCs in 22 districts (every district except Savanna and La Habra).

<sup>20</sup> Our calculations of Commission funds do not include Local School Readiness Initiative Funds, State School Readiness Initiative Funds, or School Readiness Nurse Funds.

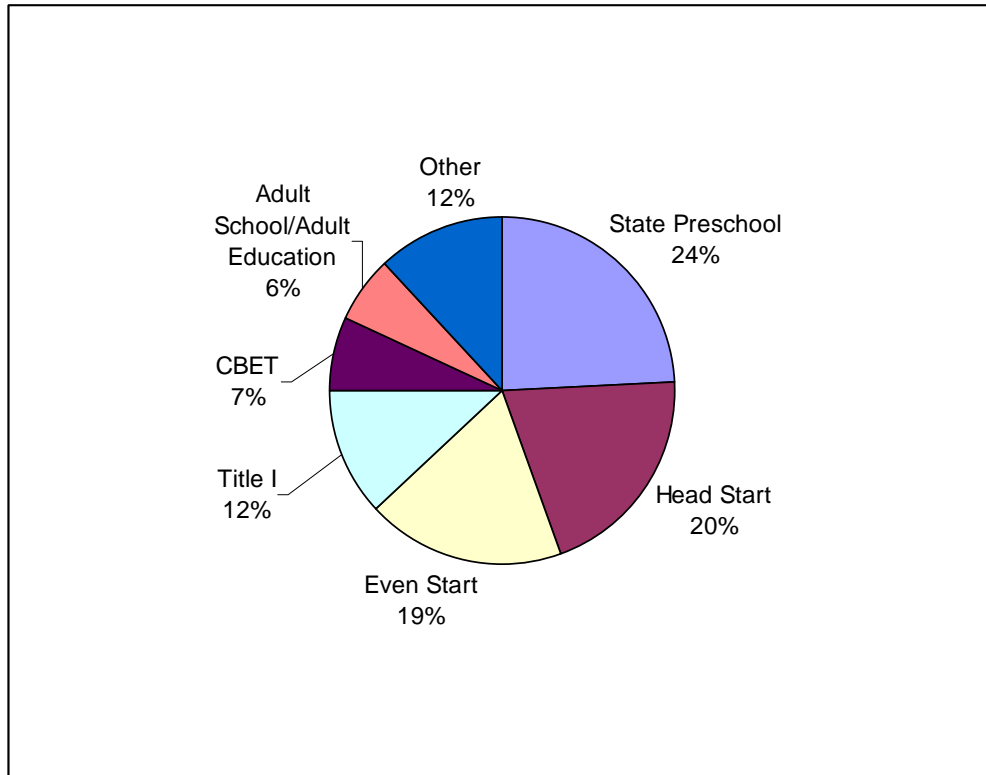
**Figure 9: Leveraged Funds, By Source**



SRCs have been able to acquire funds through their districts from a wide range of sources (including state and federal money). The largest sources of these funds for SRCs are:

- State Preschool (state source) - \$6,859,914
- Head Start (federal source) - \$5,682,863
- Even Start (federal source) - \$5,310,200
- Title I (federal source) - \$3,303,387
- CBET (state source) - \$1,977,910
- Adult School/Adult Education (mixed sources) - \$1,762,139

**Figure 10: Sources of Federal, State, and District Funds**



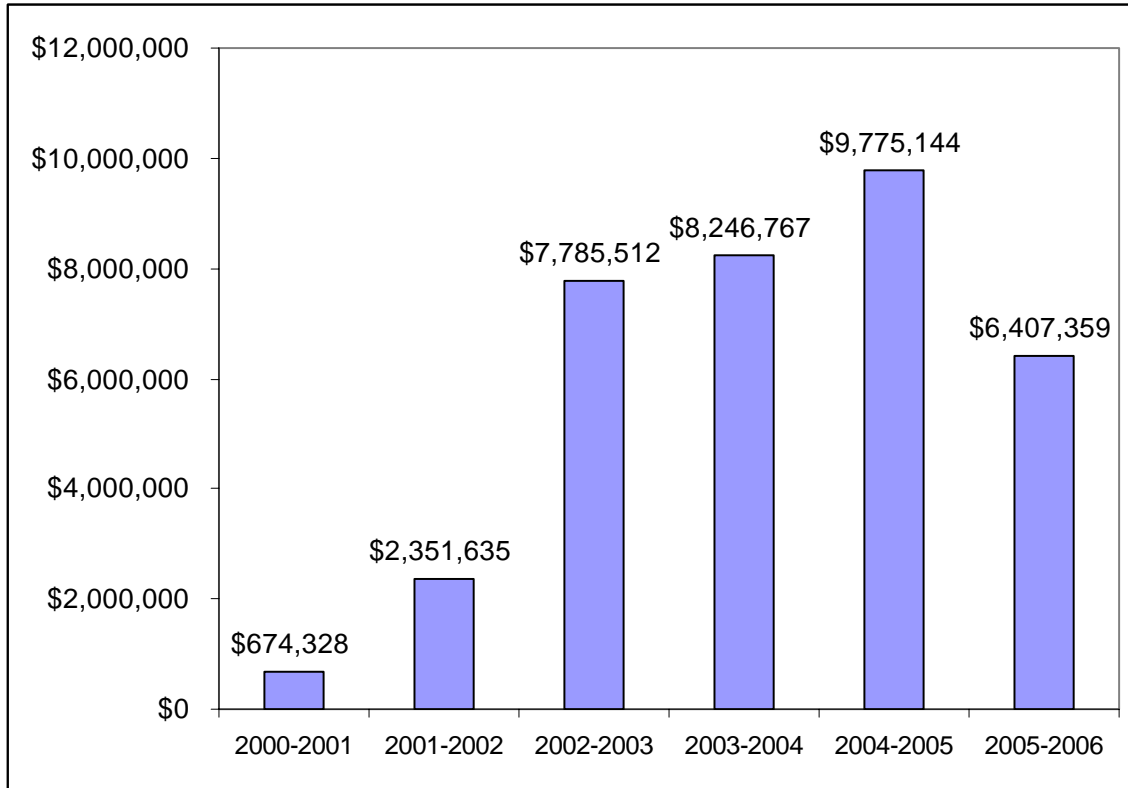
The nearly \$10 million in funds leveraged from the Commission are largely program grants that the SRCs have been able to acquire for their districts. The funds from outside sources are, for the most part, small grants and donations from private companies and community organizations. Some examples of outside funds that SRCs have been able to leverage include:

- \$780 from the Rotary Club
- \$1,500 from Kiwanis
- \$500 from Knott Avenue Church
- \$5,000 from the Anaheim Angels

Two larger sources of outside funds include Boys and Girls Clubs (which have contributed \$240,000 across two districts) and the California Nutrition Network (which has contributed nearly \$300,000 over several districts).

Based on their reports, SRCs seem to have become more effective at leveraging funds as the initiative has progressed and from 2000 to 2005 they leveraged an increasing number of funds each year. Although leveraged funds seem to have decreased in the current year, this is likely because the year is not yet completed.

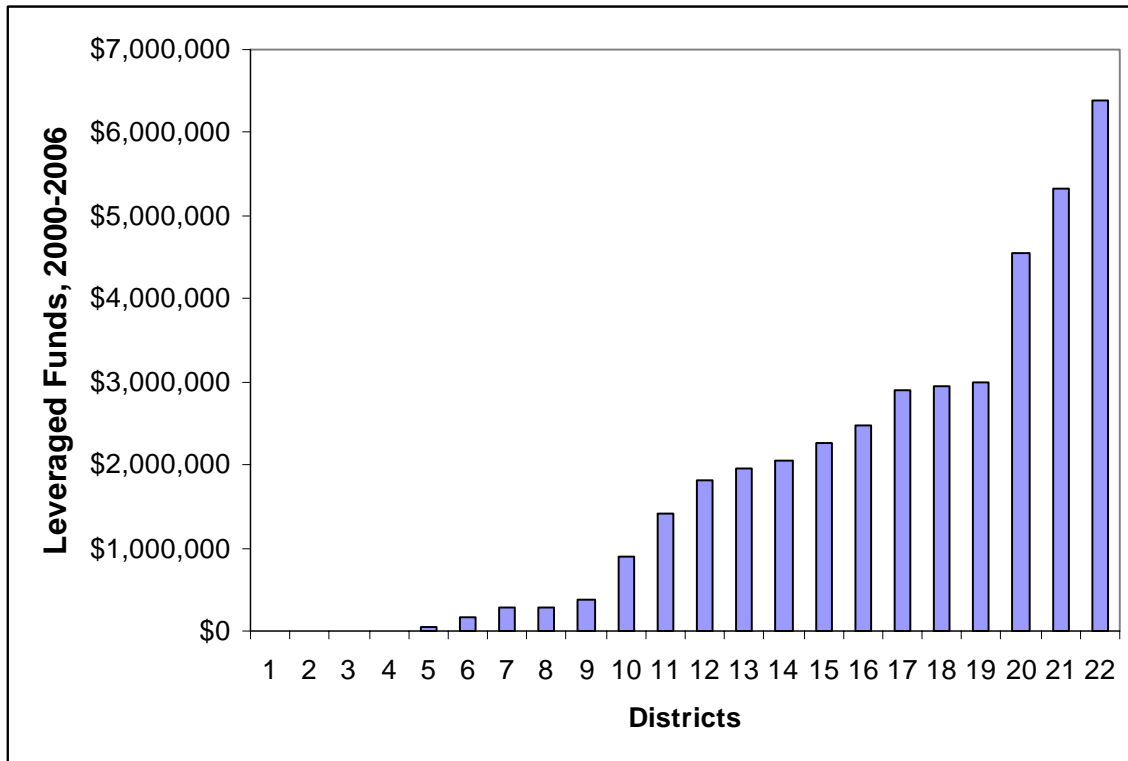
**Figure 11: Leveraged Funds, By Year**



Note: These numbers do not add up to the total leveraged funds (\$39,135,875) because some SRCs submitted the total of their leveraged funds and did not separate their leveraged funds by year.

There is also a wide range in the amount of funds that SRCs in different districts have been able to leverage. For instance, one SRC reported leveraging over \$6 million in funds since 2000, while three SRCs reported that they have not leveraged any funds at all. The graph below shows the range of leveraged funds reported by the 22 districts.

**Figure 12: Leveraged Funds, By District**



In general, SRCs in larger districts and in districts that serve a poorer student body have been able to leverage funds more successfully. The districts categorized as large by the Commission have leveraged an average of \$2.1 million per district since 2000. On the other hand, the districts categorized by the Commission as small districts have leveraged only about \$10,000 per district over the same time period. SRCs in the eight wealthiest districts in Orange County (as determined by percentage of students with low socioeconomic status) leveraged an average of \$600,000 per district, while SRCs in the eight poorest districts leveraged an average of \$2.6 million per district.

It is not surprising that the SRCs in the wealthiest districts have been less able to leverage funds because many private grants and government programs are only offered to districts with many poor students. According to one SRC who comes from one of the wealthiest districts in Orange County, “Other than the monies received from the Commission, I can state that we do not leverage funds from any other source... we do not even have Even Start/Head Start or State Preschool [in our district] so those are not options.” A Commission consultant also noted this problem by saying, “higher income districts are frustrated because they write a lot of grants and get turned down again and again... lower income districts are more successful in getting

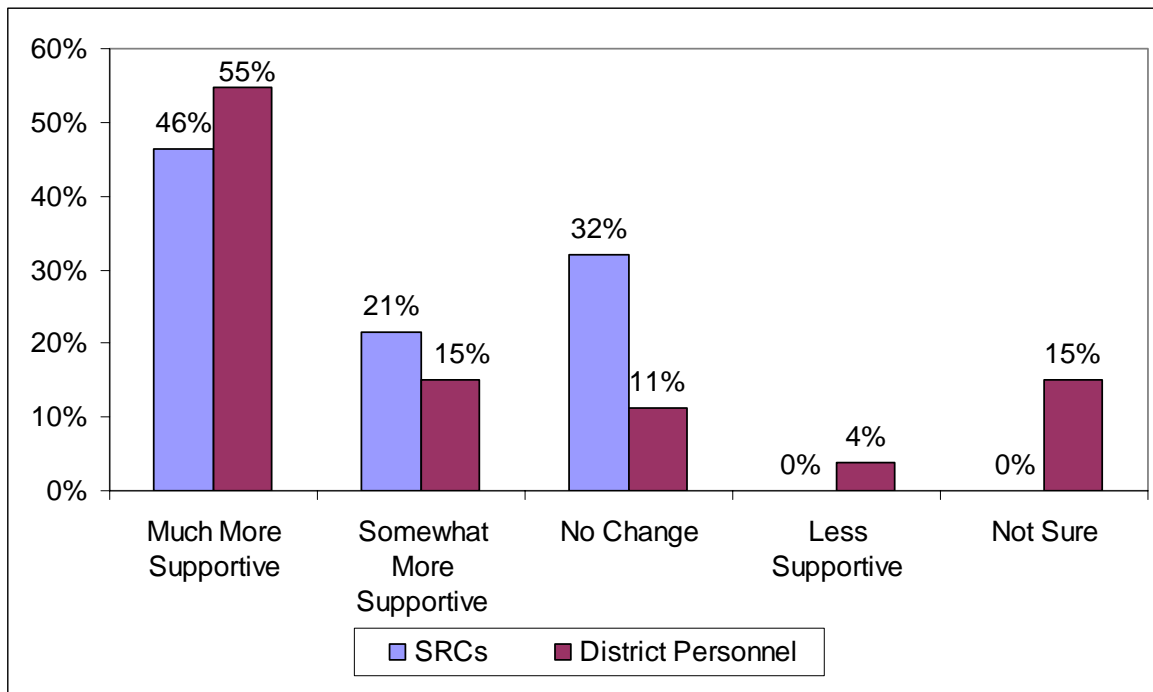
grants...Orange County has a problem in general getting grants because it is not recognized that there are thousands of kids in poverty.”

**Levels of Support**

We can continue to measure SRC effectiveness by looking for increases in school district administration and school board support for the idea of school readiness. These increased levels of support would indicate SRC effectiveness in convincing districts of the importance of preparing children for kindergarten and preparing schools for kindergartners.

There is a general agreement among the School Readiness Coordinators and district personnel that school boards in Orange County have increased their support for school readiness over the past five years.

**Figure 13: SRC and District Personnel Opinions on Change in School Board Support for School Readiness over Past Five Years**



The majority of early care and education providers in Orange County (58%) also believe that “district support for preschool has increased over the past five years.”<sup>21</sup>

<sup>21</sup> For more information on the ECE Provider Survey please see the section of this report on “Early Care and Education Provider Perspectives.”

Currently, 93% of surveyed SRCs and 81% of surveyed school district personnel believe that their school board is very or somewhat supportive of the idea of school readiness.

School district personnel were also asked about current and past support of district administration for the idea of school readiness. The personnel who were surveyed see their district administration as slightly more supportive of the idea of school readiness than school board members (with 89% saying that their district administration is very or somewhat supportive) and also believe more strongly that district administration has become much more or somewhat more supportive over the past five years (79%).

According to SRCs, school district personnel, and Commission consultants, when the Local School Readiness Initiative began five years ago, some school boards and district administrations were unsupportive of the idea, but as they have seen the programs and services progress these groups have generally become more supportive:

*“We went through a very conservative school board... they didn’t want to hear about pre-kindergarten or social services... now the school board is very supportive – they know my name.”* (From an SRC)

*“[My district] was the last to get on board with school readiness, but now they are starting to get on board... the more we do the more they see the benefit.”* (From an SRC)

*“When the work started the general feeling was that preschool was not the district’s responsibility and was a chore – more recently the board voted to spend money on preschool programming and signed a resolution in support of Preschool For All.”* (From an SRC)

*“The districts now have a recognition of ECE and what we are doing... now they ask about preschool... there is more of a conversation in the districts.”* (From an SRC)

*“Through the tremendous efforts and dedication of our SRC our district went from minimal awareness of the importance of school readiness to a high level of understanding and support for the program.”* (From a Director of Special Programs)

*“The administration has realized that preschool is one of the most important things for the early learning of our boys and girls.”* (From a Principal)

*“Earlier we had a board member say that 0-5 is not our audience and that they would not spend one dime of general funds on 0-5... now this same board member says 0-5 is a focus... it used to be that districts would first see parents on the first*

*day of kindergarten, now they are concentrating on getting parents earlier.”*  
(From a Commission Consultant)

Another Commission consultant commented on the large impact a supportive district can have on the work that SRCs are able to do. According to this consultant, “there is a segment [of SRCs] that feels that they have too much and that it is overwhelming, but the majority are energized by doing something new... it goes back to the districts, the amount of support from the districts – in some districts it is still like climbing a mountain everyday, the amount of district support is key... the support of the districts has a lot to do with leadership; if the superintendent is engaged and buys in, they can be an advocate with the board.”

## **VI. Value of School Readiness Activities**

School Readiness Coordinators are not working in a vacuum – in order to be truly effective the work they are doing should have value for their districts and their communities. As one way to determine the value that district and community members place on the Local School Readiness Initiative, we conducted a series of surveys with district personnel, local early care and education providers, and parents of preschool-aged children in Orange County.

### ***School District Perspectives***

In order to gain insight into the views of school district personnel we developed a short survey for personnel in each district to complete. We contacted school district personnel who had been listed by School Readiness Coordinators as “district or school staff most familiar with your work” as well as personnel listed by School Readiness Coordinators as the person they report to and the person their supervisor reports to. In total, we contacted 118 school district personnel across 23 districts (every district except Savanna) by phone or by email. We received completed surveys back from 53 district personnel in 22 districts (every district surveyed except Fountain Valley) for a survey response rate of 45%. We received completed surveys back from a wide range of school district personnel including Superintendents, Assistant/Deputy Superintendents, other Administrators, Teachers, Principals, and School Nurses.

School district personnel in general are very supportive and enthusiastic about the Local School Readiness Initiative. At least 79% of those surveyed see their district’s School Readiness Coordinator as very effective in increasing the overall awareness of school readiness, increasing the overall level of school readiness, increasing the readiness of schools to accept incoming kindergartners, and increasing the readiness of children to begin kindergarten.

Through their comments, district personnel provide us with more detailed views on the work that School Readiness Coordinators do and the value that they place on this work:

*“She does an outstanding job communicating with the parents, day care providers, and private schools and in reaching out to those with little ones, she works hard at making the transition from preschool to kindergarten work.”* (From an Assistant Superintendent)

*“The SRC is a great asset to the district. Her years of experience and open attitude make her a perfect link to the preschool community.”* (From a Kindergarten Teacher)

**Table 7: Views of School District Personnel on General SRC Effectiveness**

<b>How effective has your district’s SRC been in increasing the...</b>	<b>Very Effective</b>	<b>Somewhat Effective</b>	<b>Neutral</b>	<b>Somewhat Ineffective</b>	<b>Very Ineffective</b>	<b>Not Sure</b>
<b>Overall Awareness of School Readiness</b>	91%	9%	0%	0%	0%	0%
<b>Overall Level of School Readiness</b>	79%	17%	2%	2%	0%	0%
<b>Readiness of Schools to Accept Incoming Kindergartners</b>	79%	13%	0%	4%	0%	4%
<b>Readiness of Children to Begin Kindergarten</b>	83%	15%	0%	0%	0%	2%

*“She brings excitement and relevance with her message of getting children ready for school before they enter the regular kindergarten program. School personnel respond well to that vision because they clearly understand the importance of children getting off to a good start in their schooling.” (From a Deputy Superintendent)*

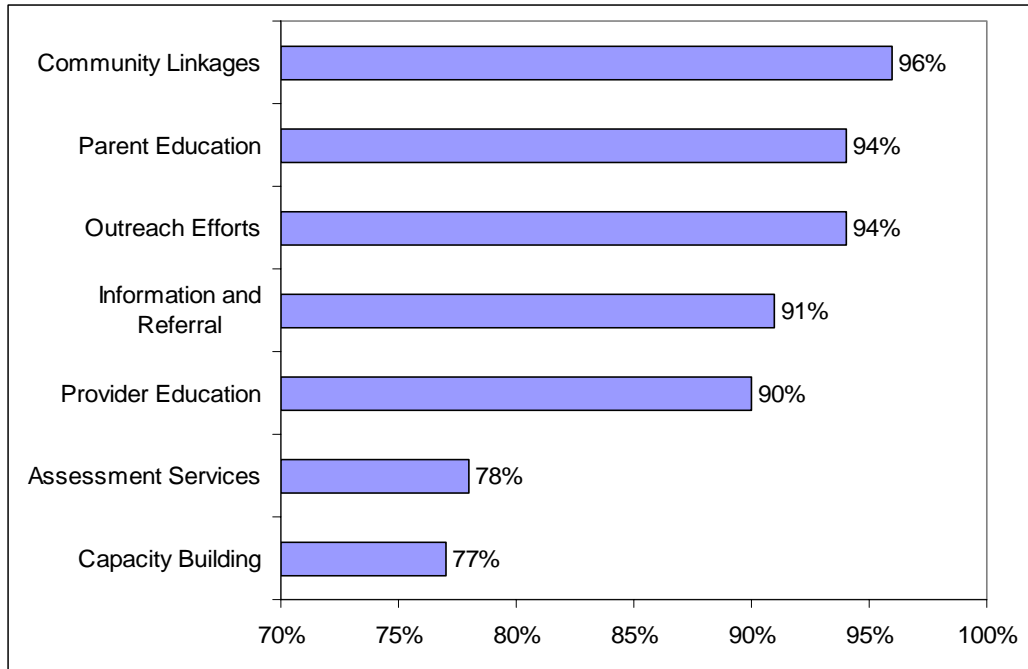
*“She has really brought the level of preschool instruction up. She has coordinated all of the sites in the district to ensure that there is a consistent preschool curriculum. She has also worked a lot with the kindergarten teachers to improve the transition process.” (From a Principal)*

*“If it weren’t for her – it just wouldn’t get done; she does everything within her power to help us and get us what we need. She’s the one who sets the wheels in motion; she gives us so much support. Whenever I have a spare room I call her right away to make sure we get one of her parent classes in. She has spearheaded the bringing together of community groups interested in early education and our children.” (From a Principal)*

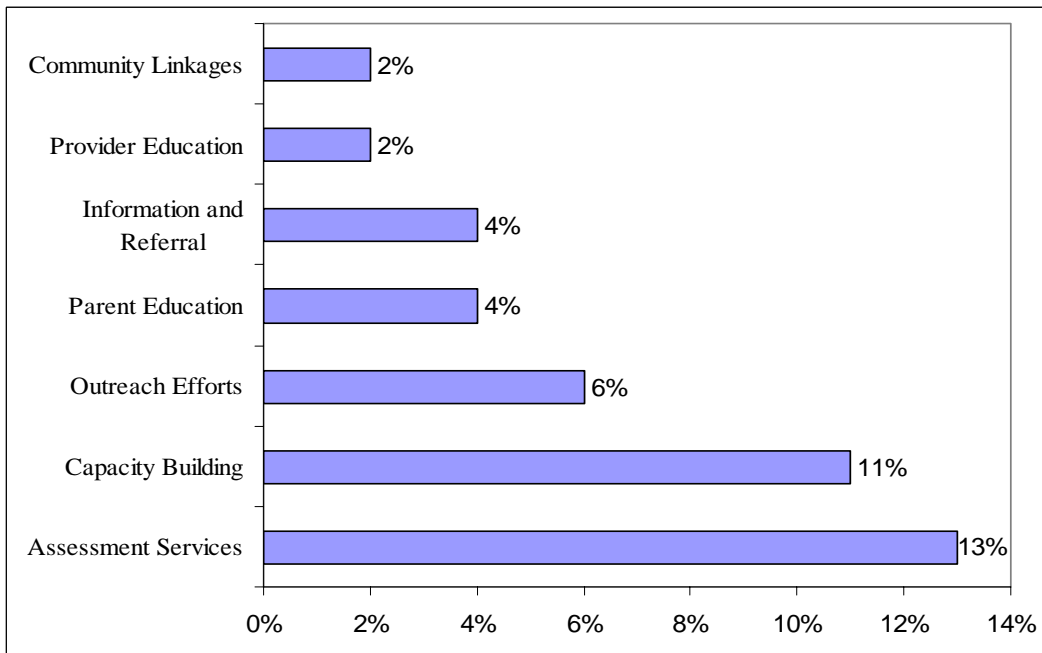
District personnel were also asked what they believe to be the top accomplishment of the SRC in their district and their opinion on the effectiveness of School Readiness Coordinators in each of the Commission’s seven strategy areas. The answers that school district personnel gave to these two questions are not completely consistent with one another; while 29% of the accomplishments that school district personnel listed are in the area of capacity building, capacity building (along with assessment services) was the strategy area where district personnel rated SRCs as least effective or not working at all. It may be that district personnel do not think of the SRCs as building capacity even though they recognize the accomplishments they have made in this area. It is also important to note that even though 11-13% of district personnel see

SRCs as somewhat ineffective or not working at all in the areas of assessment services and capacity building, a large majority of district personnel see SRCs as effective in all seven areas.

**Figure 14: Percent of District Personnel Describing SRC Activities as Very or Somewhat Effective**



**Figure 15: Percent of District Personnel Describing SRC Activities as Somewhat Ineffective or an Area Where the SRC is Not Working at All**



District personnel mentioned top accomplishments in each of the seven strategy areas, but the majority of accomplishments they listed were in the areas of capacity building (29%) and outreach efforts (31%). Accomplishments listed include:

*“It is difficult to mention just one top accomplishment, but if hard pressed, I would say that she has expanded the meaning of school readiness in our district. In addition to health and physical development, we now focus on emotional well-being and social competence, attitudes toward learning, and communicative and cognitive skills... Our SRC has given us clarity and thoughtfulness to an area that was all over the map until her arrival.”* (From an Assistant Superintendent)

*“She has done a great job in getting the various agencies (WIC, Head Start, medical resources, etc) to identify their needs as well as their services and getting the 0-5 population aligned with them.”* (From a District Nurse)

*“Coordination with the community preschool programs and development of a dynamic team to work in the community to locate, assess, and provide services to our preschool age children.”* (From a Director of Student Services)

*“She brings together learning opportunities for children, staff development, and supports for parents. She embraces the culture and background of the families and children from our community.”* (From a District Preschool Site Facilitator)

*“Making the entire community aware of the great need and clear advantage that is preschool.”* (From a District Preschool Teacher)

*“The SRC has brought a variety of services and programs to our district... At my school, we now have a preschool class, we have a family literacy program, we have parent and child classes, and a day long kindergarten round-up event. We also have a summer pre-kindergarten program. Without the SRC’s leadership and ability to find funding, we would not have any of these things. My kindergarten teachers tell me they can tell a difference in the students who have attended these programs.”* (From a Principal)

As one way to measure the value that school district administration officials place on the Local School Readiness Initiative, a smaller set of district personnel (eleven administrators such as Superintendents and Assistant Superintendents) were asked whether they thought that their district would continue to fund the Local School Readiness Program even without outside funding. Two of these administrators indicated that, in their opinion, their districts would not continue to fund the program without the financial support of the Commission. Of the eight administrators who indicated that they believe their districts would continue to fund the program, four believe that their districts would fund the program at the same level it is currently funded

and four others believe that their districts would continue to fund the program, but at a decreased level. One additional administrator indicated that she was not sure whether or not her district would continue to fund the program.

The two administrators who indicated that they believe their district would end the program without outside funding pointed out that it is not because the districts do not value the program, but simply a shortage of funds:

*“It isn’t a matter of valuing the program enough; our district has limited funds and cannot afford a new encroachment. Lack of funding would likely end this outstanding program.”* (From a Director of Elementary Education)

*“High value -No money!”* (From an Assistant Superintendent)

Other administrators who thought that their district would have to decrease funding without Commission support also cited a lack of funding as the reason:

*“Although there is great support for the program and we know that it is making a difference, we do not have the funding it would take to provide this program if the current funding was no longer available.”* (From a Director of Categorical Programs and Assessment)

*“I assume the board would continue the position even without funding from the Commission because of the priority they place on preschool, but it all depends on funding. The district clearly wants all children to have a quality preschool experience before entering kindergarten and they’ve done much to support that belief. If it meant funding an SRC, I would recommend cutting something else to make this happen.”* (From a Superintendent)

School Readiness Coordinators also realize that although their districts value the work that they do, many would have to decrease funding to the program without continued support from outside sources; as one SRC commented during the SRC focus group, “the school board will only be supportive if there is money attached... they value it, but won’t fund it.”

### ***Early Care and Education Provider Perspectives***

Important insight into the value that communities receive from the Local School Readiness Initiative can also be gained by tapping the knowledge of early care and education providers. We asked SRCs to provide us with lists of the early care and education providers that serve children in their districts and based on these lists we contacted 422 providers (both home-

and center-based) in Orange County.<sup>22</sup> We received 73 replies from center directors and home-based child care providers for a survey response rate of 17%.<sup>23</sup>

Awareness of school district involvement in school readiness activities is fairly high among early care and education providers in Orange County with 71% of respondents replying that they are “aware of personnel at [their] local school district who are charged with school readiness activities.” The majority of providers (79%) also feel as though their local school district “consider[s] preschool an important part of a child’s educational experience.”

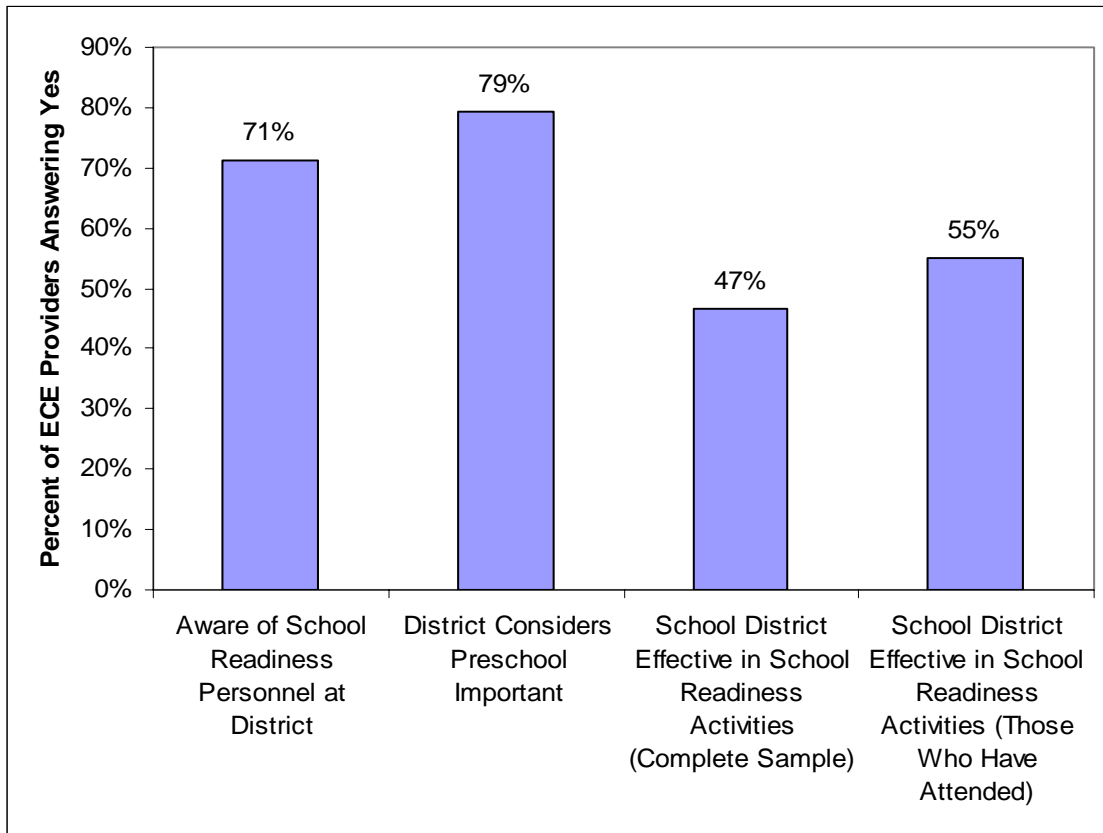
These providers, though, are less sure of the value they receive from this school district involvement in the school readiness arena – overall, 53% of those surveyed answered either “no” or “not sure” to the question, “is your local school district effective in its work to increase the readiness of children to start kindergarten?” Among those providers who had attended either a school district sponsored training or meeting on the topic of school readiness the number answering “no” or “not sure” decreases somewhat to 45%; this may indicate that once providers are exposed to school district work in the school readiness field their opinion of school district effectiveness tends to increase at least somewhat. Early care and education providers overall also see district support for school readiness as improving and 60% believe that “district support for preschool has increased over the last five years.”

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<sup>22</sup> We did not receive a list from Savanna Elementary.

<sup>23</sup> We received only seven replies from home-based child care providers (an 8% response rate among this sub-group compared to the 17% overall response rate). It is interesting to note that SRCs also commented on the difficulty of getting in touch with home-based child care providers. As one SRC noted, “[We are not reaching] family day care... they are so engrossed in what they do.” We received replies from preschools in every district surveyed except for one (Irvine); the number of replies per district ranged from one to six.

**Figure 16: Views of Early Care and Education Providers**



This somewhat unfavorable view of the districts’ value and effectiveness in school readiness activities may stem in part from a rivalry between the early care providers (some of whom also offer kindergarten or elementary programs) and the school districts. This competition for children and money creates a wedge between these two educational systems:

*“[It] is hard to work too closely together with the school district because they are kind of our competition.”*

*“Before [the School District] thought that preschool was just play time, now they are just starting to realize that it is not. Their main interest in preschool is that they need more money - they put banners up trying to get kindergartners to enroll in their district. We have a kindergarten here too so they are our competition.”*

SRCs have noticed this competition as well; during the SRC focus group one SRC commented that, “those [preschools] with private kindergartens won’t collaborate.”

Another issue which may be causing some preschool providers to be less enthusiastic about school district involvement in the affairs of preschool-aged children is philosophical

differences over what a developmentally appropriate educational program for young children should look like:

*“Take the stress off these young children – give them back their childhood... I do not support preschool in the public school system unless the teachers are able to offer activities that encourage the development of the whole child.”* (From a Preschool Director)

*“No Child Left Behind Standards have widened the gap between ECE and district perspectives on school readiness... some ECE providers think that kindergarten is not developmentally appropriate.”* (From an SRC)

*“ECE people feel like the standards are not developmentally appropriate, but many have not read them... ECE providers don’t always realize the growth from ages five to six in the kindergarten year... the kindergarten standards are for the end of kindergarten and they are achievable even for kids who start behind.”* (From a Commission Consultant)

Despite this lack of enthusiasm for district effectiveness in school readiness activities, most early care and education providers are involved in activities organized by their local school district. 70% of those surveyed indicated that they have attended either a district sponsored meeting or training session on school readiness.

**Table 8: ECE Participation in School District Sponsored School Readiness Activities**

<b>Has anyone from your organization participated in school district sponsored</b>	<b>Percent Saying Yes</b>	<b>Percent of Those who Attended Saying Useful</b>	<b>Percent Saying Not Invited</b>
<b>Meetings on school readiness or the transition to Kindergarten</b>	62%	84%	30%
<b>Trainings on early childhood education or school readiness</b>	56%	93%	26%

Most of the providers who participated in these district sponsored activities found them beneficial - 93% of those providers who participated in trainings found them “helpful in their work” and 84% who attended meetings with the school district found these meetings “useful.” Most of those who did not attend these meetings or trainings indicated on their survey that it was because they had not been invited.

One director who indicated on her survey that she has not been invited to any trainings or meetings commented, “I have heard there are these programs - directors from other districts have

shared how helpful they are...I am VERY interested in any resources [the district] can offer.” Another director advised, “Information and handouts that are passed out at meetings should be sent to preschools in the district who were unable to attend”

Some of the providers who did not find the trainings useful felt as though the district was giving them basic information that they are already using. According to one provider, “The activities we have attended were not useful - they were telling us things we already know - we could tell them a few things about early childhood development - that is what we do.”

Several providers also noted what they see as a lack of commitment from kindergarten teachers in school district sponsored trainings and meetings:

*“The kindergarten teachers at our school district have not attended any of the meetings with the preschools at the district. I feel like this is unprofessional on the kindergarten teachers’ part.”*

*“[We want] more meetings with kindergarten teachers.”*

*“I would like the kindergarten teachers to come over to our center (1 block away) to see and greet the children.”*

These early care and education providers were also asked to indicate how they feel they are currently doing at preparing children in their care to start kindergarten and what the school district could do to help them with this important work. All except five of the providers surveyed feel that it is part of their organization’s responsibility to prepare children to start kindergarten and 93% feel like they know how to prepare the children in their care. Unfortunately, more than 40% of the providers have not received any information from their local school district regarding what skills or knowledge children are expected to have when they start kindergarten (only 58% of providers say they have received this information from their local school district).

Many directors commented that they would like to have this information and think that it would help them in their work:

*“[They should] put out there what they are looking for children to know when they enter the room on the first day of kindergarten - a list of the main qualities. I have seen standards of what children should know when they leave kindergarten, but not when they start.”*

*“[I want] a general outline of their expectations of a child starting kindergarten. Where do they expect them to be developmentally when entering? What academic skills should they have mastered?”*

*“Have an actual list of things that kindergarten teachers want children to be competent in before entering kindergarten... everything from social/emotional to academics.”*

Other providers feel like their districts could assist them in other ways as well:

*“Update us on current methods and curriculum being used.”*

*“I think it would be great to offer some training materials (i.e. video/DVD, charts and graphs) that could be used in staff training for the organization.”*

*“Hearing from kindergarten teachers about what they see as important skills for kindergarten success would be very helpful.”*

*“More help evaluating children who may not be ready to start kindergarten.”*

*“I would love the opportunity to take my little group of 12 students to a kindergarten environment... maybe a mock kindergarten event.”*

*“It would be helpful if my school readiness coordinators would come to my program to give me feedback on my environment.”*

Many preschool providers also had very positive comments to make regarding their local school district’s commitment to school readiness. Although our survey did not mention School Readiness Coordinators, some directors mentioned this position or even the name of their district’s SRC without being prompted:

*“The district outreach has been very good... they have kindergarten teachers meet with preschool teachers – that is valuable for us.”*

*“I like the fact that our district has a liaison who works between the schools and the preschool – she gives us flyers and keeps us up to date on what is happening in the district. This makes me more effective when I am talking to parents... I can give them information such as when registration is. It helps me be a better support to the parents.”*

*“They are doing a good job already – they have an ECE Coordinator who is a liaison between the district and the preschools in the area – she does a fabulous job and is always telling me about programs I can go to and bringing flyers and information that I can copy and hand out to the parents.”*

*“We have a great liaison who we can call whenever we have questions.”*

*“In the past three years my school readiness coordinators have put in a lot of effort to reach out to the child care community. I have attended at least ten workshops on anything from book making to math to thematic classes. We have*

*received kindergarten assessment packages, handouts, and supplies to enhance our program.”*

Overall, it seems as though those early care and education providers who have worked with their local School Readiness Coordinator are happy with the activities they have attended and value the service. Unfortunately, the SRCs have not yet been able to completely break into the large early care and education community in Orange County.<sup>24</sup> As indicated by some of the directors’ comments, this may be partially due to a sense of competition over money and children. It may also be due to what one SRC described as the high director and staff turnover in the early care and education community or to the difficulty of bridging the gap between what another SRC explained as “two separate worlds with two separate cultures.” Lastly, it is important to remember that we do not know what we would have found if we had surveyed ECE providers five years ago; perhaps, without the Local School Readiness Initiative and the influence of the School Readiness Coordinators, ECE opinions of school district effectiveness in preparing children to start school would have been even lower.

### ***Parent Perspectives***

A third group that is affected by the work of the School Readiness Coordinators is parents of preschool-aged children. In order to learn more about the opinions of this group, we worked with the SRCs to conduct a survey of parents across Orange County. This survey, which was developed by SPHERE, but largely administered by the SRCs themselves, focused on parent knowledge of school district work in the area of school readiness, the value that parents and families gain from their participation in these events, and barriers to their participation. The survey was available in English, Spanish, and Vietnamese and was completed by 893 parents across 14 school districts in Orange County.<sup>25</sup> The large majority of surveys were completed by

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<sup>24</sup> According to one Commission consultant, it has been easier for SRCs in smaller districts to reach out to the ECE providers in their communities; this consultant commented, “SRCs in smaller districts can talk to all of the ECE providers... larger districts have to depend on fliers and then see who responds – they cannot go out and entice each one.” We can see from our survey that this consultant’s intuition seems to be correct; while 92% of preschool providers in small districts indicated that they are “aware of personnel at [their] local school district who are charged with school readiness activities,” only 67% of preschool providers in medium and large districts indicated that they also have this awareness.

<sup>25</sup> 27 surveys were completed in Vietnamese, 194 were completed in English, and 672 were completed in Spanish.

parents who were attending School Readiness Events in their district; a much smaller number of surveys were conducted at Kindergarten Registration Events and City-Wide Events.<sup>26</sup>

It is interesting to note that while the great majority of parents who completed the survey were attending events put on by their district's School Readiness Coordinator or district preschool, only 69% of these parents answered "yes" to the question, "does your local elementary school offer programs for children ages 0 to 5 or their parents?" This may indicate that at least some of the parents who are attending these events do not know who is putting on the event or that the event is part of a district-sponsored program. Among the parents who responded to the survey at Kindergarten Registration events or city-wide events, a smaller number of parents (41%) indicated that they are aware of programs sponsored by their local elementary school for young children and their parents.

The survey indicates that most parents hear about school readiness events through their child's preschool (51%), with substantial numbers of parents also hearing about the events through their local elementary schools (36%), or from other parents (27%).<sup>27</sup> These numbers highlight the importance of preschool outreach for School Readiness Coordinators; successful preschool outreach seems to be a key way of attracting parents to events as well. Other parents mentioned that they had heard about school readiness events through alternative sources including their social workers, physicians, or own English as a Second Language classes.

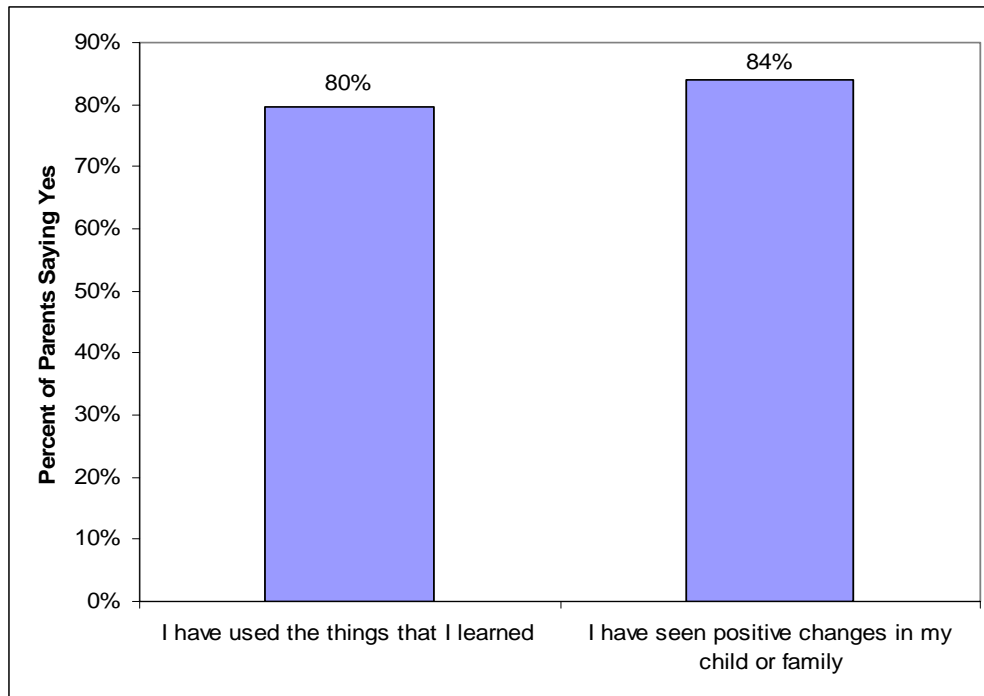
Even though some parents may not realize that they are attending events sponsored by their local school district, they value the programs greatly and feel that the things they have learned are improving their children and families. In fact, 80% of parents answered "yes" to the question "have you used the things you learned during these programs or events?" and 84% answered "yes" to the question "have you seen positive changes in your child or your family as a result of things that you learned during these programs or events?" Only 4% of parents answered "no" or "not sure" to these questions, with the remainder not answering or indicating that they were attending their first event and so could not answer the question.

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<sup>26</sup> Just 11 surveys were conducted at Kindergarten Registration Events and just 48 were conducted at City-Wide Events.

<sup>27</sup> These numbers add up to more than 100% because many parents indicated that they hear about events in more than one way.

**Figure 17: Parent Views on Value of School Readiness Activities**



When asked why the school readiness events they had attended were useful to themselves and their families, parents responded with a wide range of comments about how the programs had helped them as well as their children:

*“It teaches me how to be a better mother.”*

*“The program is very good and I recommend it to any parent.”*

*“It’s gotten my son ready for kindergarten to the point where I feel confident for him to start this fall.”*

*“It is great to learn with my child so I can help him at home and in kindergarten.”*

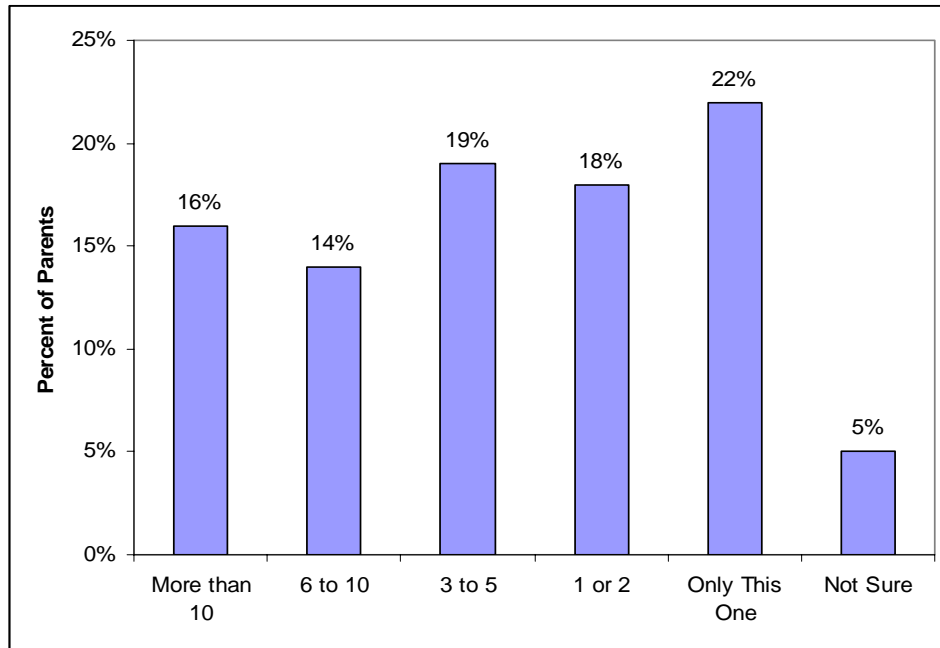
*“The programs have been really good... training for the children as well as the parents... not only the children learned, also the parents.”*

*“I learned where to go (social services/health services) and how to apply for my family’s needs.”*

*“It brought things to my attention that I otherwise wouldn’t have known – especially in the health area.”*

Parents were also asked how many school readiness events they had attended over the last year and if they had not attended events, why they had not been able to. Nearly a third of parents responding to the survey (30%) indicated that they had attended six or more school readiness-type events over the past year. At the same time, 22% indicated that they were attending their first event of the year; this may indicate that they had attended other events in previous years or that they were attending their first event ever.

**Figure 18: Number of Events Attended Over Past Year**



Most parents who answered the question about why they had not attended other events indicated that they had not attended because they had not heard about them (19%). Other parents indicated that they had not been able to attend other events because of inconvenient times (14%), lack of child care (5%), or lack of transportation (3%).

Lastly, parents were asked what else their local elementary school could “do to help make sure that [their] child is ready to start kindergarten.” Many parents answered this question by asking for more of the programs that they are already attending. For instance, parents made comments such as “more hours,” “have longer classes,” “classes everyday of the week,” “make the classes larger so we can all participate,” and “have more programs like this one.” Other recommendations from parents include:

*“Have a class on exactly what children would be tested on during the kindergarten enrollment process.”*

*“Give the children an evaluation to see if they are ready to start kindergarten.”*

*“Maybe advertise a little more so that all parents are aware of what is going on.”*

*“Make us aware of any other programs in our area that offer help in the learning skills for children under 5.”*

Several parents also mentioned that they would also appreciate similar classes about how to help their adolescent children succeed in school.

Overall then, parents who attend school readiness events in Orange County are very satisfied with the assistance they are receiving. The great majority of parents who attend these events are able to make use of the things they have learned to improve the situations of their young children and families. Parents’ main suggestion is that there should be more of these events, at additional times, and that the subject matter be broadened to include other issues they face in their lives (such as their older children).

## **VII. Challenges, Recommendations, and a Final Analysis**

The SPHERE Institute undertook this evaluation of the Local School Readiness Initiative at the request of the Children and Families Commission of Orange County. By evaluating the work of the School Readiness Coordinators we aimed to help the Commission to better understand the contributions that SRCs and the Local School Readiness Initiative make to improving young children's readiness for school and schools' efforts to assist children in making a positive transition to kindergarten. We will complete our evaluation by presenting information on the challenges that SRCs face, providing recommendations to the Commission from the School Readiness Coordinators themselves, and summarizing our findings at the activity level, the district level, and the initiative level.

### ***Challenges***

SRCs were asked to comment on the challenges that they face in five main categories – funding, staffing, facilities, partnerships, and support. The area where SRCs seem to face the most challenges is funding (23 out of the 28 SRCs who completed the survey indicated funding challenges). The biggest and most basic funding challenge for the School Readiness Coordinators is a lack of money. Many SRCs commented that in order to fully fund their positions they are forced to apply for multiple grants – this can take time away from Local School Readiness Initiative activities, as the needs of each grant must be met and time must be spent looking for and applying for additional grants. Many of the SRCs commented that a lack of funding for support staff can also take time away from program activities as they are forced to complete tedious administrative tasks. As one School Readiness Coordinator summarized this challenge, “[I] could do so much more if I had more funding.” Some SRCs have tried to deal with this money shortage by seeking donations from community organizations. For instance, one SRC who has received no monetary support from her district except for office space in a bungalow, mentioned that she has had learning materials and a computer donated to her program by Lakeshore Learning Materials and the United Way.

There seems to be a slight correlation between funding challenges and the number of Commission grants a district is participating in – while 71% of SRCs who work in districts with two Commission grants commented on funding challenges, 82% of SRCs in districts with three Commission grants, and 90% of SRCs in districts with 4 or more Commission grants commented

on funding challenges.<sup>28</sup> Also, a slightly higher percentage of SRCs in poorer districts (districts with more than 20% of students categorized as socioeconomically disadvantaged) commented on funding challenges.

12 out of the 28 SRCs who completed the survey also commented on staffing challenges that they face in their work. The main staffing challenge faced by SRCs is a lack of support personnel – this is of course closely connected to the funding challenges described above. Many SRCs commented on the amount of time they spend on support tasks that they feel another staff person could easily take over from them. Several SRCs also commented on the difficulty of finding good support staff at the low wages they are able to offer.

Facilities are also a challenge to some of the SRCs (11 SRCs commented on facilities challenges). Facilities challenges also seem to be, at their core, funding challenges. SRCs commented on lack of space and the challenge of finding free space within the district. One SRC commented specifically on how she felt lack of space was making her activities less effective – “[We] would benefit from additional space so staff work stations could be moved out of classrooms and so parenting workshops and community partner meetings could be more effective.” Another SRC commented, “... staff don’t have places to work with children or meet with parents in a private setting.”

Just as with funding challenges, SRCs in districts with fewer Commission grants reported fewer facilities challenges – in this case, only 14% of SRCs in districts with two Commission grants reported facilities challenges, but 36% and 60% of SRCs in districts with three and four or more Commission grants, respectively, reported facilities challenges. Facilities challenges are also associated with district size, district wealth, and perceived level of school board support. SRCs in small school districts and those in wealthier school districts reported fewer facilities challenges than those in medium and large districts and those in poorer districts. While 39% of SRCs who reported very supportive school boards also reported facilities challenges, 50% of SRCs who reported somewhat supportive school boards reported these challenges.

A much smaller number of School Readiness Coordinators commented on partnership and support challenges (only 4 SRCs each). In terms of partnership challenges, SRCs commented about the challenge of finding the time to form genuine partnerships and about the

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<sup>28</sup> This may be because districts with greater needs in the first place have been able to successfully apply for a greater number of grants.

difficulty of forming partnerships within the private preschool community. Several SRCs mentioned that they have faced these partnership challenges by being persistent and not giving up. One SRC commented that forming partnerships was simply “going out and knocking on doors” and another said that although she sometimes had difficulties in this area she just kept “continually putting out invitations.” Other SRCs mentioned that they have been able to establish effective partnerships due to personal connections formed through long time residence in the communities where they live and work. The SRCs who commented on partnership challenges all work in medium or small districts; none of the SRCs from large districts mentioned having any partnership challenges.

Support challenges include a lack of support from the district (“the district continues to see itself as a K-8 district”), lack of support from certain administrators, and in one case, lack of support and involvement from kindergarten staff. SRCs who indicated earlier on the SRC survey that their district’s school board was only somewhat supportive of the idea of school readiness were more likely to indicate support challenges on this section of the survey. SRCs from smaller districts were also more likely to report support challenges, as were those from poorer districts. Lastly, SRCs who work for districts with fewer Commission grants were more likely to report support challenges – 29% of SRCs in districts with two Commission grants reported support challenges, while only 9% of those SRCs in districts with three Commission grants and 10% of those SRCs in districts with four or more Commission grants reported support challenges.

### ***SRC Recommendations***

As part of the SRC Survey, the School Readiness Coordinators also listed recommendations to the Commission for the next contract round. The SRCs were asked to list recommendations in the areas of funding, staffing, work plans, and reporting requirements.

### **Funding**

The majority of the SRCs’ funding recommendations are to increase the amount of funding districts receive. Several SRCs recommend that the Commission update funding to account for cost of living adjustments<sup>29</sup>, while others recommend that funding be increased to

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<sup>29</sup> This recommendation has already been acted on by the Commission; starting with the contract extension planned for October 2006, each district will receive a 3% cost of living adjustment increase in the amount of funding they receive from the Commission for the Local School Readiness Initiative.

enable SRCs to hire higher quality support personnel and buy additional supplies. Other SRCs suggest that the funding formula be changed to take into account factors in addition to district size:

*“Do not base funding solely on district size and demographics – provide additional funding to districts based on demonstrated ability to maximize resources, meet goals, and objectives.”*

*“[The] Commission should look at the unique needs and contributions of each district when considering funding.”*

### Staffing

In the area of staffing, SRCs recommend that they be given additional funding to enable them to hire support personnel. SRCs would like to be able to hire personnel to help with clerical duties as well as data entry and reporting:

*“It would be a huge benefit to have some money to hire someone a few hours a week to help with translations, paperwork, copying fliers, putting things together, etc.”*

*“[I] need someone to help with all the reports, work plan input, and CDOM Data.”<sup>30</sup>*

### Work Plans

Another set of recommendations focus on decreasing the reporting requirements that are currently a part of SRC work plans. Recommendations include:

*“Do not expect the same number of milestones for small and large districts”*

*“Logging on and providing updates is extremely time consuming – too much time collecting data and too little time planning programs.”*

*“The SRC and SRN work closely together but are both required to count the same numbers; perhaps one work plan per district rather than one per grant would be easier.”*

*“Eliminate reporting on the one-time items that have been reported on repeatedly over multiple years.”*

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<sup>30</sup> CDOM is not required for the Local School Readiness Initiative, but may be required for other Commission grants.

Another work plan recommendation is to make sure that work plans are entered in OCERS on or before the contract start date. As one SRC said, “It would be helpful if work plans were available as soon as possible – it is very difficult to go back several months and input data because the work plans were not available at the onset of the contract.”

One SRC also recommended that work plans and contracts last for four years to decrease the hassle of renewing them more often.

### Reporting Requirements

In the area of reporting requirements, several SRCs mentioned computer system problems and recommend that these be addressed. These SRCs report “ongoing difficulties inputting into the new live system” and that “the OCERS milestone update screen will occasionally flicker and erase all unsaved data – debugging or design refinements are needed.”

Other SRCs comment that “reporting is excessive” and that there are “too many requirements – AMM, CDOM, monthly aggregate... as well as other grants that require reporting – we spend so much time in meetings and gathering data that it is amazing we accomplish anything else.”<sup>31</sup> As one solution to this “excessive” reporting one SRC asks, “Instead of monthly updates of the milestones, why not quarterly?”

SRCs were given an additional opportunity to discuss reporting requirements during the SRC focus group; during these conversations SRCs commented about the “repetition” of reporting and suggested a restructuring of requirements so that activities only need to be reported once. Another SRC commented, “I’m working on projects that take a long time to develop... [it is] tedious to report ‘still doing the same thing’ ... it takes a long time to tell you monthly that I am in the same spot... maybe a quarterly report... [this would] alleviate some of the time, but tell the same thing.”

### Other Recommendations

One SRC and one Commission consultant also made comments about the monthly SRC meetings; they believe that these meetings could be put to better use as a way to allow SRCs to

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<sup>31</sup> CDOM is not required for the Local School Readiness Initiative, but may be required for other Commission grants.

spend time learning from each other instead of as a way to learn about resources that are available in the community:

*“It would be helpful to spend more time at monthly SR meetings learning from other coordinators about what they are doing that is working and less time hearing about available social services.”* (From an SRC)

*“There could be a lot of learning from each other... [the monthly meeting] has become a venue for people seeking face time with the coordinators... we want to make sure that the coordinators find this valuable... maybe there could be another venue for training and technical assistance... there are currently not a lot of opportunities [for this kind of activity].”* (From a Commission Consultant)

Other recommendations that the School Readiness Coordinators mentioned on their surveys include:

*“Have some meetings/events in North Orange County”*

*“The Commission needs to do more to understand the school district infrastructure – a lot of challenges come from a misalignment of systems.”*

*“We need a more consistent county-wide focus and less focus on individual programs.”*

These recommendations from the School Readiness Coordinators to the Commission should not suggest in any way that the SRCs are unhappy with the support they receive from Commission staff. On the contrary, 22 of the 28 SRCs who completed the SRC Survey indicated that they believe the support they receive from the Commission is “about right.”<sup>32</sup>

## ***A Final Analysis***

As a final step in our evaluation, we will summarize our findings at three levels – the activity level, the district level, and the initiative level.

### Activity Level Analysis

The School Readiness Coordinators are involved in a wide array of programs and activities. Overall, SRCs see the most importance in the areas of parent education and outreach efforts and have concentrated their activities in the areas of community linkages, outreach

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<sup>32</sup> While 22 of the 28 SRCs indicated that they believe the support they receive from the Commission is “about right,” 2 SRCs indicated that they believe the Commission is “overbearing,” 2 SRCs indicated that they believe the Commission does not provide enough support, and 2 SRCs did not answer this question.

efforts, and parent education. In the view of school district personnel, the SRCs have been most effective in these three areas as well. According to Commission consultants and SRCs:

*“Parent education has become a focus for everyone... it is the same as the Head Start Philosophy... they see the parent as the primary educator of their children... [the SRCs] feel that they get more bang for the buck if they go straight for the parents.”* (From a Commission Consultant)

*“As a former kindergarten teacher I have been on the other side; I used to see kids starting kindergarten who had never held a pencil... I want to let parents know that they can be the first teacher.”* (From an SRC)

SRC parent education efforts have been well received by parents across Orange County, with 84% indicating that the skills they have gained at school readiness events have led to positive changes for their children and families.

One of our most consistent findings at the activity level of analysis is that assessment services is the area where SRCs may need the most encouragement and assistance to move forward. Assessment services was the area ranked by SRCs as least important to their districts, the area where they report spending the least amount of their time, the area where they listed the fewest activities and next to the fewest accomplishments, and the area where school district personnel were most likely to say that SRCs were somewhat ineffective or not working at all.

There seems to be a general confusion among SRCs over what assessment services should entail in the context of the Local School Readiness Initiative. Many of the SRCs discussed assessment services as if they believe that the Commission wants them to go into their communities and assess preschool children themselves, although this activity is clearly not a part of the definition of assessment services provided in the Commission Service Plan.<sup>33</sup> The Commission may need to clarify the definition of assessment services and make it clear that direct assessment by SRCs is not what they are asking for. It may even be helpful to change the name of this strategy area to something that does not sound so unappealing to SRCs. According to one SRC, “I don’t feel comfortable saying that I am involved in assessment services... it sounds like we will turn some of the kids away from kindergarten.”

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<sup>33</sup> The definition of assessment services from “School Readiness Initiative of Orange County Service Plan, Phase II: Implementation” is “develop recommendations for a process within the district to assess the progress of children as they transition to the kindergarten through grade 12 education system; develop criteria and consensus recommendations for the use of a recognized standard assessment tool and process for identifying quality in early care and education programs, practices, and research-based strategies.”

Other portions of the assessment services strategy area may have already been completed and should be removed from the definition. For instance, as one Commission consultant explained, “we have found an assessment that works and we don’t need to reinvent the wheel... we use the EISS Assessment.”

At least one dimension of the assessment services area, though, does still seem to be relevant to SRC work. This dimension, to “develop recommendations for a process within the district to assess the progress of children as they transition to the kindergarten through grade 12 educational system,” is one that a Commission consultant admitted that “SRCs are very confused” about. This consultant went on to explain that this dimension is important because “[we] want to measure kids five years down the line... we want district data systems (SASI, ARIES, etc) to have a field that tags that they went to a school readiness program.”

Another consistent finding at the activity level of analysis is that SRCs have made many top accomplishments in the area of capacity building; both SRCs and school district personnel listed a large number of SRC top accomplishments in this area. This finding is not surprising considering the newness of the Local School Readiness Initiative. As the initiative was beginning, many SRCs may have seen an urgent need to increase the ability of their districts to serve young children and plan for their successful transition to kindergarten. SRCs may have felt that they needed to increase capacity early in the life of the initiative before moving on to other programs and services. In fact, one SRC commented to us that she began her stint as SRC by identifying service gaps and when she noticed a shortage of early care spots she began her work by trying to build her district’s capacity to serve preschoolers. Even five years into the initiative, some SRCs still see capacity building as one of their most important roles:

*“In my district it is the first priority...capacity building has to be done constantly... we must serve more children – we are just not there yet.”*

Other SRCs noted that capacity building tends to lead to more capacity building. As one said, “Capacity building can be seen as a by-product of all activities we are involved in... in providing services we build opportunities for more services.”

### District Level Analysis

The Local School Readiness Initiative and the School Readiness Coordinators themselves seem to have been able to find a niche within each district over the past five years. The SRCs,

school district personnel, and early care and education providers all agree that school district support for school readiness has increased over this time period. The school district personnel we surveyed have an overwhelmingly positive view of their district's SRC and many commented that within their districts the SRCs are "viewed as experts," "highly respected," and have been "totally accepted by the leadership team as a colleague."

The SRCs have also noticed their increased integration into district infrastructure:

*"Over the years, [I] have seen school readiness become part of the system... every department knows what we do, what our role is."*

*"It's not just what our program does, but how that fits into the rest of the district... [the district's] current five-year strategic plan has preschool as a major strand... that was huge."*

*"Five years ago you had to explain what school readiness was... you don't need to do that now."*

*"It is an exciting time – school readiness is actually being talked about."*

SRCs also feel that they have made lasting contributions to their districts - contributions which would be durable even if the Local School Readiness Initiative disappeared. Concrete contributions mentioned by SRCs include an "effective kindergarten recruitment and registration processes," "a continuum of instructional settings for inclusion," and "a [district preschool] curriculum fit to Desired Results." Some SRCs also feel that they have permanently altered the mindsets of their districts; according to two SRCs:

*"The philosophies we've helped our districts gain would continue."*

*"[What was durable] was the opportunity of demonstrating what we do... that there are diverse needs and [that we can] find the resources to fit those needs."*

### Initiative Level Analysis

In addition to working within their districts, SRCs have been able to work across districts and communities to promote a countywide commitment to school readiness. One way in which SRCs have been able to work at a county level is by joining together with SRCs from other districts. 82% of the SRCs who completed the SRC Survey indicated that they spend some time working with SRCs from other districts. The SRCs collaborate by sharing ideas and also by co-planning and hosting activities such as parent education classes, teacher trainings, and health

fairs. This collaboration can help SRCs share their areas of expertise as well as conserve scarce resources. During the SRC Focus Group, the School Readiness Coordinators commented on the importance of working with each other and across districts:

*“[We] see each other as professional colleagues... each program is so different, but it is comforting and supportive to know that I can call anyone at this table... there are a lot of resources and ideas exchanged... since it was a new project, it was good to know you’re not alone.”*

*“That collaboration keeps us going, keeps us motivated.”*

*“[Other SRCs] give me stuff and say ‘use it, put your name on it’... no one is in competition with each other.”*

Forming linkages with networks across the county is another way that SRCs have been able to increase the countywide commitment to school readiness. At least one Commission consultant sees this connection of the SRCs and their network to other networks of educators and social service providers as the most important impact of the initiative. As this consultant explained:

*“[This connection of networks] becomes a communication channel for a lot of services... the districts have a tendency to operate in a bubble, but the SRCs are communicating with each other and opening the doors; as an example, the CUIDAR program presented [at a monthly SRC meeting] and within two months they were in half of the districts in the county... [without this network of School Readiness Coordinators, CUIDAR] would have needed to call each of the districts individually.”*

SRCs also reach out into their communities by working with early care and education providers and other community organizations such as health and social service providers. Although a majority of early care and education providers surveyed (70%) have participated in either a school district sponsored training or meeting on school readiness, the SRCs still have a long way to go in convincing these local providers that the school district belongs and can be effective in the early care arena. It may simply be that more time is needed to narrow the long-time gap and build trust between those in the elementary education and preschool education communities.

Finally, SRCs have been able to effect change beyond their districts by opening up the discussion of school readiness in the county and developing a foundation that other programs have been able to build on. When we spoke with the Commission leads on State School

Readiness, the School Readiness Nurses Initiative, and the School Readiness Expansion Project, each mentioned the tremendous help that the Local School Readiness Coordinators have provided in getting these projects off the ground:

*“We were the first county to access the State School Readiness money; we were in a great position to write the grants because of the Local School Readiness Initiative... school districts are now ready to take on the Universal Preschool Initiative – this would not have been the case without the Local School Readiness Initiative.”*

*“In many cases the School Readiness Nurses have close relationships with the coordinators and work right along with them... many of the nurses came from medical backgrounds (hospitals, public health, etc) so they had to learn about working within the district bureaucracy; many of the SRCs were a big help to the nurses in the beginning – they helped them learn about the culture of working in an educational setting.”*

*“The School Readiness Nurses Initiative just started in 2004, by then the SRCs were already familiar with the communities so they could help the School Readiness Nurses in identifying places to start... many private preschool providers were reluctant to open the door to the School Readiness Nurses at first, they had better luck working through the coordinators who already had a relationship in place.”*

*“The project [School Readiness Expansion] wouldn’t have been possible if the SRCs weren’t already in place... by working with the superintendents and boards they have brought programs for 0-5 onto the radar screen – they opened the door.”*

Overall, we see that the School Readiness Coordinators have enabled their districts and communities to make great strides over the past five years. When the initiative started the SRCs were “just given a title and a place... the door was wide open.”<sup>34</sup> Since that time they have built their districts’ capacities to serve families with children under the age of five, gained respect within their districts while helping administrators to change their views about the population that they serve, and collaborated with each other and community organizations to raise the level of commitment for school readiness in Orange County.

More than anybody else, the School Readiness Coordinators are the experts at the work they do; by considering their suggestions and learning from the challenges they face, the

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<sup>34</sup> SRC Comment

Commission may be able to make the Local School Readiness Initiative an even more effective program going into the next contract round.

# **Evaluation of Orange County's Local School Readiness Initiative**

## **Appendices to Final Report**

**May 26, 2006**

Submitted to:

The Children and Families Commission of Orange County



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## Appendix A: Participating Districts and SRC Roster

<b>Participating District</b>	<b>School Readiness Coordinator*</b>	<b>Participating District</b>	<b>School Readiness Coordinator*</b>
<b>Anaheim City Elementary</b>	Elaine Coggins	<b>Laguna Beach Unified</b>	Lila Samia
	Cara Lockwood	<b>Los Alamitos Unified</b>	Barbara Halvorsen
	Patty Lopez	<b>Magnolia Elementary</b>	Jeannine Campbell
<b>Brea Olinda Unified</b>	Betty Manuel	<b>Newport-Mesa Unified</b>	Jan Marquardt
<b>Buena Park Elementary</b>	Christie Baird	<b>Ocean View Elementary</b>	Joyce Horowitz
<b>Capistrano Unified</b>	Carole Browne	<b>Orange Unified</b>	Pat Evans
	Stacy Yogi		Christine Lightfoot
<b>Centralia Elementary</b>	Debi Miles	<b>Placentia Yorba-Linda Unified</b>	Alma Padilla
<b>Cypress Elementary</b>	Anne Hertz	<b>Saddleback Valley Unified</b>	Ingrid Anderson
<b>Fountain Valley Elementary</b>	Mary Lou Watkins		Jean Barbre
<b>Fullerton Elementary</b>	Nancy Kozma	<b>Santa Ana Unified</b>	Nydia Hernandez
<b>Garden Grove Unified</b>	Lorrie Klevos		Marjorie Cardenas
	Martha Campos	<b>Savanna Elementary</b>	Sue Johnson
<b>Huntington Beach City Elementary</b>	Sunny Schroeter		Joyce Burdette
<b>Irvine Unified</b>	Robin Hunter	<b>Tustin Unified</b>	Laura Lee Cabibi
<b>La Habra City Elementary</b>	Judy Wolfe	<b>Westminster</b>	Cathy Malley

\*The School Readiness Coordinators listed here are those who were contacted to complete the School Readiness Coordinator Survey; some are no longer their district's current SRC.

## Appendix B: District and City Data

This appendix provides detailed demographic and performance data for each of the 24 school districts in Orange County with School Readiness Coordinators. We provide district comparison charts on:

- Number of schools in each district (2004-2005 school year, from the California Department of Education (CDE), Data Quest)
- Grades served by each district (from the Education Data Partnership (Ed-Data))
- Total enrollment (2004-2005 school year, from CDE, Data Quest)
- Kindergarten enrollment (2004-2005 school year, from Ed-Data)
- Average class size for each district (2004-2005 school year, from CDE, Data Quest)
- Students per computer (2004-2005 school year, from CDE, Data Quest)
- 2004 Academic Performance Indicator (API) Base (from CDE) – the API Base summarizes the performance of a school district on several standardized tests; the API is on a scale of 200 to 1000 and is calculated from the performance of individual students; the statewide target for 2004 was 800
- Racial/Ethnic composition of students in each district (2004-2005 school year, from CDE, Data Quest)
- Percent of students who are considered socioeconomically disadvantaged (2004-2005 school year, from CDE, API Base Report) – according to the definition adopted by the California State Board of Education, a student is socioeconomically disadvantaged if neither of the student’s parents has received a high school diploma OR the student is eligible for the federal free or reduced price lunch program.
- Percent of students who are English Language Learners (2004-2005 school year, from CDE, Data Quest) – these students are those for whom there is a report of a primary language other than English and who have been determined to lack the English skills necessary to succeed in the school's regular instructional programs.

We also provide the following demographic data for the city where the greatest number of the district’s schools are located

- Total population (from the 2000 Census)
- Percent of population under five-years-old (from the 2000 Census)
- Percent of families living below the federal poverty level (from the 2000 Census)
- Median family income (1999, from the 2000 Census)
- Percent of residents 25 and over with a high school degree or higher and with a bachelor’s degree or higher (2000 Census)

**School District Data**

<b>District</b>	<b>Number of Schools</b>	<b>Grades Served</b>	<b>Total Enrollment</b>	<b>Kindergarten Enrollment</b>	<b>Average Class Size</b>	<b>Students per Computer</b>
<b>Anaheim City Elementary</b>	23	K-6	21,383	2,925	22.5	5.3
<b>Brea Olinda Unified</b>	9	K-12	6,220	367	27.7	7.3
<b>Buena Park Elementary</b>	7	K-8	6,266	701	26.7	4.3
<b>Capistrano Unified</b>	57	K-12	50,615	3,655	29.4	5.2
<b>Centralia Elementary</b>	9	K-6	5,056	641	22.5	16.4
<b>Cypress Elementary</b>	9	K-6	4,439	526	23.4	5.4
<b>Fountain Valley Elementary</b>	11	K-8	6,250	618	27.8	4.9
<b>Fullerton Elementary</b>	20	K-8	13,874	1,366	28.3	3.2
<b>Garden Grove Unified</b>	67	K-12	50,030	3,834	28.7	6.1
<b>Huntington Beach City Elementary</b>	10	K-8	6,782	637	28.9	5.7
<b>Irvine Unified</b>	33	K-12	25,158	1,402	28.8	4.8
<b>La Habra City Elementary</b>	9	K-8	6,352	699	27.4	7.5
<b>Laguna Beach Unified</b>	4	K-12	2,770	147	25.5	4.3
<b>Los Alamitos Elementary</b>	10	K-12	9,100	611	28.7	6.4
<b>Magnolia Elementary</b>	9	K-6	6,771	925	22.9	9.1
<b>Newport-Mesa Unified</b>	31	K-12	22,487	1,678	29.5	4.7
<b>Ocean View Elementary</b>	15	K-8	10,012	1,156	26.9	9.5
<b>Orange Unified</b>	42	K-12	31,351	2,175	28.5	5.3
<b>Placentia Yorba-Linda Unified</b>	31	K-12	26,725	1,707	30.2	4.4
<b>Saddleback Valley Unified</b>	37	K-12	34,901	2,344	30.1	4.8
<b>Santa Ana Unified</b>	56	K-12	61,693	5,170	31.4	6.4
<b>Savanna Elementary</b>	4	K-6	2,524	353	25.6	5.6
<b>Tustin Unified</b>	28	K-12	19,736	1,566	29.5	5.6
<b>Westminster Elementary</b>	17	K-8	10,003	1,054	27.9	4.3

**School District Demographic and Performance Data**

<b>District</b>	<b>2004 API Base</b>	<b>Percent Socioeconomically Disadvantaged</b>	<b>Percent English Learners</b>	<b>Percent White</b>	<b>Percent African-American</b>	<b>Percent Asian</b>	<b>Percent Hispanic</b>
<b>Anaheim City Elementary</b>	643	82%	61%	7%	2%	4%	84%
<b>Brea Olinda Unified</b>	821	17%	9%	54%	2%	14%	25%
<b>Buena Park Elementary</b>	713	66%	45%	15%	6%	13%	58%
<b>Capistrano Unified</b>	794	14%	12%	69%	1%	5%	18%
<b>Centralia Elementary</b>	756	46%	31%	23%	4%	16%	43%
<b>Cypress Elementary</b>	836	23%	14%	41%	5%	26%	21%
<b>Fountain Valley Elementary</b>	839	13%	10%	57%	1%	24%	13%
<b>Fullerton Elementary</b>	744	41%	28%	29%	2%	20%	46%
<b>Garden Grove Unified</b>	722	63%	47%	16%	1%	28%	52%
<b>Huntington Beach City Elementary</b>	821	13%	8%	68%	1%	8%	11%
<b>Irvine Unified</b>	866	7%	13%	46%	3%	37%	7%
<b>La Habra City Elementary</b>	702	63%	44%	20%	2%	2%	75%
<b>Laguna Beach Unified</b>	817	9%	4%	84%	1%	3%	9%
<b>Los Alamitos Elementary</b>	843	9%	2%	66%	3%	10%	13%
<b>Magnolia Elementary</b>	697	77%	56%	14%	3%	10%	68%
<b>Newport-Mesa Unified</b>	729	41%	26%	52%	1%	5%	40%
<b>Ocean View Elementary</b>	790	33%	22%	50%	1%	11%	29%
<b>Orange Unified</b>	744	37%	22%	40%	2%	10%	42%
<b>Placentia Yorba-Linda Unified</b>	778	25%	15%	57%	2%	9%	31%
<b>Saddleback Valley Unified</b>	815	15%	9%	66%	2%	8%	21%
<b>Santa Ana Unified</b>	628	86%	60%	3%	1%	3%	92%
<b>Savanna Elementary</b>	744	67%	40%	22%	5%	11%	53%
<b>Tustin Unified</b>	769	37%	27%	36%	3%	13%	43%
<b>Westminster Elementary</b>	733	63%	47%	20%	1%	34%	39%

**City Data**

<b>District</b>	<b>Primary City Served</b>	<b>Total Population</b>	<b>Percent Under 5-Years</b>	<b>Percent of Families Below Poverty Level</b>	<b>Median Family Income</b>	<b>Percent of those 25 and over with High School Degree or higher</b>	<b>Percent of those 25 and over with a Bachelor's Degree or higher</b>
<b>Anaheim City Elementary</b>	Anaheim	328,014	9%	10%	\$49,969	69%	20%
<b>Brea Olinda Unified</b>	Brea	35,410	6%	3%	\$68,423	88%	34%
<b>Buena Park Elementary</b>	Buena Park	78,282	8%	8%	\$52,327	76%	20%
<b>Capistrano Unified</b>	San Clemente	49,936	7%	5%	\$76,261	91%	36%
<b>Centralia Elementary</b>	Buena Park	78,282	8%	8%	\$52,327	76%	20%
<b>Cypress Elementary</b>	Cypress	46,229	6%	5%	\$70,060	90%	31%
<b>Fountain Valley Elementary</b>	Fountain Valley	54,978	6%	3%	\$74,502	89%	34%
<b>Fullerton Elementary</b>	Fullerton	126,003	7%	8%	\$57,345	82%	31%
<b>Garden Grove Unified</b>	Garden Grove	165,196	8%	11%	\$49,697	68%	15%
<b>Huntington Beach City Elementary</b>	Huntington Beach	189,594	6%	4%	\$74,378	90%	36%
<b>Irvine Unified</b>	Irvine	143,072	6%	5%	\$85,624	95%	58%
<b>La Habra City Elementary</b>	La Habra	58,974	8%	9%	\$51,971	73%	18%
<b>Laguna Beach Unified</b>	Laguna Beach	23,727	4%	3%	\$100,778	96%	56%
<b>Los Alamitos Elementary</b>	Los Alamitos	11,536	5%	4%	\$60,767	87%	30%
<b>Magnolia Elementary</b>	Anaheim	328,014	9%	10%	\$49,969	69%	20%
<b>Newport-Mesa Unified</b>	Costa Mesa	108,724	7%	8%	\$55,456	79%	29%
<b>Ocean View Elementary</b>	Huntington Beach	189,594	6%	4%	\$74,378	90%	36%
<b>Orange Unified</b>	Orange	128,821	7%	7%	\$64,573	80%	28%
<b>Placentia Yorba-Linda Unified</b>	Placentia	46,488	7%	6%	\$68,976	82%	24%
<b>Saddleback Valley Unified</b>	Mission Viejo	93,102	7%	2%	\$86,902	94%	41%
<b>Santa Ana Unified</b>	Santa Ana	337,977	10%	16%	\$43,412	43%	9%
<b>Savanna Elementary</b>	Anaheim	328,014	9%	10%	\$49,969	69%	20%
<b>Tustin Unified</b>	Tustin	67,504	9%	6%	\$60,092	80%	33%
<b>Westminster Elementary</b>	Westminster	88,207	7%	11%	\$52,677	72%	18%

\* Primary City Served is the city served by the district that has the most district schools within city boundaries.

## Appendix C: SRC Activities

This appendix presents SRC Activities divided by district and by strategy area. These activities were listed and categorized by the SRCs as part of the SRC Survey.<sup>1</sup> For the purpose of this list, activities that were categorized on the survey under more than one area are listed under what we believe is the activities' primary area. The seven strategy areas are:

- **Outreach Efforts:** Coordinate outreach efforts to educate the community regarding best practices for early care, early childhood development issues, available programs and services, district readiness expectations, and Kindergarten Content Standards.
- **Parent Education:** Emphasize the participation of consumers and families in all planning forums. Provide information and training to parents of young children so that they may better prepare them to enter school healthy and ready to succeed.
- **Provider Education:** Promote collaboration within the kindergarten through grade twelve educational system and the early care and education community to increase awareness of district expectations, develop a common mechanism for measurement and support the development of optimum transitions from one provider system to the other.
- **Community Linkages:** Strengthen planning linkages, communication, learning and referrals among Commission-funded programs, community agencies, and county-wide networks. Propose and implement community planning forums that include all relevant agencies providing early care and education, health, and social services to the district population.
- **Information and Referral:** Coordinate and exchange the distribution of resource information and school readiness materials between the district and local community agencies, the Commission, and Commission grantees, to better educate parents regarding the available resources that may help them better prepare their children to enter school healthy and ready to succeed.
- **Capacity Building:** Research the feasibility of increasing the number of school readiness programs serving the district. Work to connect early care and education programs with other community agencies and Commission grantees providing health and social services to young children.
- **Assessment Services:** Develop recommendations for a process within the district to assess the progress of children as they transition to the kindergarten through grade twelve education system. Develop criteria and consensus recommendations for the use of a recognized standard assessment tool and process for identifying quality in early care and education programs, practices, and research-based strategies.

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<sup>1</sup> For the purposes of the SRC Survey, SRCs were provided with a list of the activities they (or another SRC in their district) had submitted to the Center for Community Collaboration at Cal State Fullerton for the report titled "Innovative Early Care and Education Practices in Orange County: Activities of School Readiness Coordinators and Family Resource Centers." We assigned each of these activities to one or more strategy areas and asked the SRCs to indicate which activities they were still participating in. SRCs were given the opportunity to list additional activities and to change our categorization of their activities.

## Anaheim City Elementary

### **Outreach Efforts**

- The Director of Early Childhood Education attends all district management meetings and plays an important role on several planning committees.

### **Parent Education**

- Provide school readiness workshops to parents at elementary school sites.

### **Provider Education**

- Work closely with Head Start and State Preschool Programs to provide training on State Standards, Developmental Standards, and curriculum practices, on-going coaching, and in-classroom professional development.
- Ongoing literacy training and professional development for preschool teachers through the EISS Grant.
- Train caregivers on how to provide children with developmentally appropriate activities that will promote academic and social development.
- Training for babysitters to enhance the babysitting program and change it from a childcare perspective into a child development practice.
- Training from the Center for Improving the Readiness of Children's Learning and Education (CIRCLE).

### **Information and Referral**

- Keeping staff abreast of available training and staff development, community events, and school readiness issues.

### **Capacity Building**

- Bringing further support to our young children who are classified as homeless through the McKinney-Vento Grant.
- Working together with the school nurse to develop our Nutrition Education program. The California Nutrition Network has allocated over \$50,000 to the district to enhance nutrition, physical, and food stamp education programs.
- Orange County Head Start awarded the district with an expansion to allow for 20 additional children who receive a full-day Head Start program.
- ACSD is the recipient of a Packard Foundation Capacity Building Grant. The purpose of the grant is to build infrastructure that will help the vision of ensuring that all children are afforded a preschool experience before entering kindergarten.
- Development of a District Funded Preschool for 40 children using Title I Funds.

### **Assessment Services**

- All children in the district's early education programs are now entered into the district's data tracking system.

## **Brea Olinda Unified**

### **Outreach Efforts**

- Distribute transition backpacks to district Special Education and Head Start Children.
- Start streamlining kindergarten registration.
- Attend kindergarten staff development days and discuss kindergarten readiness materials.
- Organize forums with La Habra and Fullerton School Readiness Coordinators.
- Attended NAEYC Conference in Anaheim.
- Full Inclusion Preschool (newly established) collaboration.
- Attended RAISE 17th Annual Child Abuse Prevention and Treatment Conference.
- Preschool/kindergarten classroom visitations.
- School Board presentation.

### **Parent Education**

- Make presentations to parents of Head Start and other local preschools.
- Send Early Years monthly newsletter to parents of local preschools.
- Attend monthly Head Start Parent Meetings.
- Student observations followed by parent conference.

### **Provider Education**

- Monthly on-site visitation/collaboration with local preschool directors.
- Set up visitation/observations for preschool teachers in kindergarten classes.
- Monthly distribution of materials concerning curriculum, health, safety, etc. to providers and parents.

### **Community Linkages**

- Organize field trip to ease transition for Head Start children and Special Education classes entering kindergarten in the fall to visit kindergarten classes and participate in class time activities.
- Serve on FRC Case Management Team.
- Ongoing collaboration for planning/needs in the community with SRN.
- Attended Forum on Conditions of Children in Orange County.

### **Information and Referral**

- Distribute 0-5 materials to high school counselors.
- Set up booth at Community Center for Health Fair and Family Day.
- Collect materials for a District School Readiness Library.

### **Capacity Building**

- Coordinate facilities for developmental screening for those ages 0-5.

## **Buena Park Elementary**

### **Outreach Efforts**

- SRC presented at EISS conferences and a Parent Literacy Conference, and several other conferences on early literacy and parent involvement.

### **Parent Education**

- Offered weekly parent and child interactive classes.
- SRC provides Virtual Pre-K programs at various elementary schools.

### **Provider Education**

- SRC made presentations to district kindergarten teachers and preschool teachers about strategies for ensuring school success.
- SRC presented on Desired Results to own staff members and staff members at neighboring district.
- SRC meets with principals of elementary schools to help them determine how to plan/implement school readiness activities at their sites.
- SRC planned and presented to preschool parents on a variety of topics - presentations were made at elementary schools, Head Start, and private preschools.

### **Community Linkages**

- SRC serves as chair of Teen Parent Workgroup.

### **Information and Referral**

- Offered preschool parents the opportunity to attend "What About Kindergarten?" informational sessions - these sessions provide information for parents about helping their child have a successful transition to kindergarten and kindergarten standards and expectations.
- Held "Kindergarten Round-Up Events" - during the events parents and children participated together in a variety of school readiness activities, kindergarten teachers conducted screenings, and parents received a variety of resources.

### **Capacity Building**

- Provided preschool classes for local children.
- Planned a summer kindergarten program funded by district Title I Funds.
- Developed a successful Even Start Literacy Program.
- SRC is coordinating Nutrition Network School Readiness program.
- SRC participates on the Special Education Preschool Team and oversees a collaborative preschool classroom.

### **Assessment Services**

- Developed an assessment grid and identified tools for pre-kindergarten teachers to use - the assessments include teacher observations and anecdotal records, California Desired Results, teacher checklists aligned with district primary assessment tasks, and portfolio items.

## Capistrano Unified

### **Outreach Efforts**

- A "Welcome to Kindergarten" handbook was distributed to provide parents of incoming kindergartners with information regarding developmental milestones, registration procedures, and district policies.
- Planned and implemented Annual School Readiness Fair in collaboration with the ECE Department, local ECE agencies, and community based organizations to inform families with children 0-5 about early childhood and health resources.
- Conducted school readiness presentations for the Kiwanis Club of San Clemente, South Orange County Community Services Council and the Jr. Women's League.

### **Parent Education**

- Conduct Kindergarten Readiness Workshops for parents of incoming kindergartners.
- Monthly parent-child classes on topics such as literacy, motor development, science, math, and creative arts.
- Monthly parent education classes for the district's teen parents.

### **Provider Education**

- Presentations were made at district Professional Development and Para-educator Academies on school readiness topics.

### **Community Linkages**

- Facilitated teacher collaboration meeting with CUSD early childhood education preschool teachers, CUSD kindergarten teachers and staff from OC Head Start.
- Collaboration meetings were held with district School Readiness, ECE, Adult Education, Parent Child Participation, CAFÉ (CBET), Food Service, and Family Resource Center Representatives.
- Conducted a Community Planning Forum with representatives from the district and community-based agencies.
- School Readiness staff collaborated with alternative high school Teen Parent staff to provide staff development and program support.

### **Information and Referral**

- School readiness staff met with representatives from community-based agencies to network and provide resources to families such as health related programs, food, assistance, and housing.
- A School Readiness Newsletter was distributed bi-monthly to parents.
- Established and maintained a School Readiness Resource Library.
- Collaborated with CUSD FRC and SOC FRC to service families in need of counseling, information, and referral services.

### **Capacity Building**

- Even Start Family Literacy Grant was awarded.
- Nutrition Mini-Grant awarded.

## **Centralia Elementary**

### **Outreach Efforts**

- The SRC serves as a liaison between preschool teachers and kindergarten teachers.
- Work with Child Development program clerk to create Power Point presentations on School Readiness, Neighborhood Resource Centers, and Nutrition Network activities.
- Meet with in-home child care providers.

### **Parent Education**

- Plan parent workshops for year, arrange presenters.

### **Provider Education**

- Conduct meetings for Project EIEIO kindergarten teachers.
- Work with preschool teachers on creating Nutrition Network curriculum.
- Plan staff development, arrange for workshops/conferences to meet the needs of staff and program.

### **Community Linkages**

- Centralia's School Readiness Program and Centralia's Healthy Start Programs work together under the umbrella of the Centralia Community Collaborative.
- Serve on the district Project SAFE-T grant team to insure that the pre-k programs in the district receive the same crisis/safety training as the school age children.
- Serve on the district's Management Council.
- Participate in Community Collaborative Meetings to find new resources and share School Readiness information.
- Attend Nutrition Network meetings.
- Attend conferences/workshops/forums as needed.

### **Information and Referral**

- The SRC reaches out to local private care providers, sharing school readiness and school district information through fliers and invitations to workshops and in-services.
- Serve on district's Curriculum Cabinet to insure that district Pre-K programs are aligned to the elementary curriculum/standards.

### **Capacity Building**

- Research and apply for grants to help sustain program, including expanding State Preschool programs - currently working on a Gerber Foundation grant for 0-3.

### **Assessment Services**

- Work with VISTA volunteer to design and implement Community Needs Survey for School Readiness and 0-5 year health needs.
- Train staff once and update yearly on proper use of Desired Results Developmental profiles.
- Coordinate with School Readiness Nurse for screenings of preschool students.

## Cypress Elementary

### **Outreach Efforts**

- Attend monthly meeting with Superintendent.
- Increase outreach to the Spanish, Korean, and Vietnamese populations.
- Translate original materials into Spanish and utilize multi-lingual publications from other sources.

### **Parent Education**

- Offer a Stay and Play program.
- The SRC speaks about Kindergarten Readiness to parent groups at several preschools in the community as well as at Parent Information Nights hosted by the school district.
- Setting up Lunch and Learn sessions at local businesses to educate working parents about School Readiness activities they can do at home with their children.
- Partner with CUIDAR to host parent education classes.

### **Provider Education**

- The SRC attends provider organization meetings to present information about the school district and school readiness.
- The district hosted an evening Instructional Media Center Open House for early childhood education providers.

### **Community Linkages**

- Facilitate or attend meetings with community organizations, early childhood education providers, kindergarten teachers and district personnel. Attendees are developing contacts and successfully building bridges to collaborate and serve the local community.
- Elementary schools hosted preschool field trips for children, parents, and staff from the Kids Corner Preschool operated by Cypress Recreation Department.

### **Information and Referral**

- We utilize e-mail distribution lists, existing school district publications, the revised Cypress Kindergarten Gazette, local newspapers, community group publications, and cable television to disseminate information.
- The SRC provides school readiness publications to all ten elementary schools. Materials are distributed during Kindergarten Teas, Kindergarten Registration, and Back to School Nights.
- Early childhood education providers utilize the Office of School Readiness for resources and referrals.
- Our program shares resource information and school readiness materials with appropriate district personnel and community organizations.
- Work with the nurse to increase community awareness of health-related issues and services.
- Help at-risk families obtain resources for rent assistance, clothing, food, medical insurance, family counseling and access to medical services.
- Refer families to the Partnership for Solutions Family Resource Center in Los Alamitos.
- The SRC attended a training to become a Certified Application Assistant and has assisted families in applying for Medi-Cal and Healthy Families Insurance.

### **Capacity Building**

- Discussions are ongoing on possible funding and service programs to extend the school readiness program.

## **Fountain Valley Elementary**

### **Outreach Efforts**

- Present/coordinate CUIDAR behavior training for preschool providers.
- Coordinate production/write article for quarterly newsletter.

### **Parent Education**

- Facilitate presentation of CUIDAR ten-week parent training with State Preschool.
- Facilitate/advise parent education programs and attend.

### **Provider Education**

- Answer questions from local private preschools.

### **Community Linkages**

- Attend local collaborative meetings with two other local districts.
- Schedule and facilitate monthly meetings of SRI Committee (SRC, 2 SR Consultants, SR Nurse, State Preschool Coordinator).
- Complete required surveys from commission.
- Attend SEED/OCAEYC workshop.
- Regular communication with Boys and Girls Club of Huntington Valley.
- Hold Directors Luncheon for private schools/Head Start/Boys and Girls Club.

### **Information and Referral**

- Attend monthly School Readiness Coordinator meetings at county.
- Designate attendee for monthly Family Resource Center Meetings.
- Tour/connect with district special education preschools.

### **Assessment Services**

- Enter AMM data in OCERS monthly.

## **Fullerton Elementary**

### **Outreach Efforts**

- The SRC supports the Richman Family Center, which assists and supports parents.
- Write, edit, distribute a monthly SR newsletters to the district and agencies serving families with children 0-5 (State Preschool, Kindergarten Readiness Program, Head Start, WIC, TAPP, etc.).
- Work with Director of Student Support Services to increase the inclusion of children with Special needs into preschool classes throughout Fullerton School District.

### **Parent Education**

- A Parent Orientation targeting those children who have never been enrolled in any type of previous school experience.
- Provide parents with activities they can do at home and a voice in planning the various programs servicing children zero to five and their families.
- The Family Center offers parents the opportunity to participate in a variety of classes/workshops.

### **Community Linkages**

- The SRC has been working to establish transition activities with local private preschool providers in Fullerton.
- Head Start children and their teachers visiting the kindergarten classes.
- SRC collaborates with local Head Start Director to provide information and training to ensure teachers and parents are knowledgeable of skills children need to succeed in school.
- Collaborate with other SRC to continue dialogue between preschool teachers in the North Orange County area.

### **Capacity Building**

- FSD applied and received a State School Readiness grant and is servicing an additional 48 children and their families in Richman School's attendance area. Funds from the grant support a full time School Readiness Nurse and a Community Liaison enhancing services to students and families enrolled in State Preschool and Even Start.

### **Assessment Services**

- Work with District Information Services to develop a data base that can be exported to District Power School.

## **Garden Grove Unified**

<b>Parent Education</b>
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| <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Weekly parent meetings conducted in Spanish, Vietnamese, and English as appropriate. During the parent meetings parents are given hands-on materials in order to work with their child at home.</li></ul> |
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<b>Provider Education</b>
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| <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• School Readiness staff and GGUSD program facilitators provide training and support for School Readiness, State Preschool, CBET, Boys and Girls Clubs, and private providers on child screening, assessment, standards, and intervention.</li><li>• School Readiness staff share curriculum and provide staff training to state preschool teachers, CBET teachers, adult education teachers, and staff.</li></ul> |
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<b>Community Linkages</b>
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| <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Relationships have been created through collaborative partnerships with the Boys and Girls Club, FaCT/FOCUS Collaborative, and the Buena Clinton Neighborhood Coalition.</li></ul> |
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## Huntington Beach City Elementary

### **Outreach Efforts**

- Develop newsletters with information for children 1-12, 12-24, 24-36 months of age.
- Home visits for at-risk kindergarten students and outreach to siblings.
- Participate in District Events, Parent Empowerment and Family Math.
- Conducted presentation on school readiness to principals of HBCSD.

### **Parent Education**

- Provided help to parents to fill out enrollment forms and other documentation.
- Series of parenting classes during the summer, six week sessions.
- Expand HBCSD Parent Empowerment Academy to provide parenting classes.
- Encourage use of the resource center for parents to bring their children to engage in early learning activities and socialization.

### **Provider Education**

- Develop resources for kindergarten teachers and preschool directors.
- Keep contact with ECE providers and offer services, resources, and staff development.

### **Community Linkages**

- Expand collaboration with local agencies serving children 0-5 and keep updated information on preschools, health clinics, and community services.
- Establish a Task Force Committee with kindergarten teachers and preschool directors to work on Kindergarten Transition.
- Develop a connection and meet regularly with In-Home Care Providers of HB.
- Establish Kindergarten Transition Steering Committee with principals, preschool directors, and kindergarten teachers to establish relationships, improve communication, and enhance the transition of HB preschool students to kindergarten.
- Collaborate with HBCSD Special Education teams to conduct psychological and speech testing and arranged meetings between parents and Special Education Team.
- Continue partnership with Oakview Family Resource Center by attending health meetings and providing referrals.

### **Information and Referral**

- Provide parents, in-home care providers, and preschool providers with information on Child Development topics.
- Updated parent education library and resource center.
- Distribute First 5 Brochures and Developmental Wheels to parents, in-home care providers, and preschool providers.
- Develop a community wide Health Fair with presentations on dental, health, nutrition, insurance, and counseling.
- Provide referrals to OVFRFC, HBFRC, HB Clinic, and Vista Dental.

### **Capacity Building**

- Start the Twilight Preschool Program.

### **Assessment Services**

- Update database of children 0-5 in HBCSD.
- Participate in workgroups on School Readiness Developmental Profile and ECE Assessment Tool.

## Irvine Unified

### **Outreach Efforts**

- Assist with coordination of outreach meetings to educate the Irvine community.
- Participate on Irvine's Child Care Committee and city sponsored provider events.
- Arrange outreach meetings with community preschools and in-home care providers.
- Attend Monthly SRI meetings.
- Provided ongoing information outreach via phone, email, and standard mail.

### **Parent Education**

- Hold parent education workshops or series of classes, parent and child interactive education classes, and education events on Saturdays or evenings.
- Present provider education transition workshops, parent transition workshops, and child transition lessons at local preschools.
- Strengthen parent education outreach with an emphasis on supporting the cultural and language needs of ECLC parents.
- Distribute "Kindergarten is Coming!" transition newsletter and "Getting Ready for Kindergarten" parent activity booklet for preschool parents and parents participating in the IUSD Kindergarten Round-Up enrollment process.
- Head Start parent education workshops and series.

### **Provider Education**

- Coordinate and/or participate in provider education workshops.
- Provide training and implement a language and literacy continuum aligned with the state kindergarten standards.

### **Community Linkages**

- Arranged or facilitated SRP collaboration with Prop 10 grantees.
- Arrange for on-site CBET and Adult Education English as Second Language classes to meet the needs of our diverse ECE parent community.
- Coordinate and supervise staff from SSSH grant.
- The SRC facilitated increased communication and collaboration to strengthen the bridge between the ECE and IUSD professional communities.

### **Information and Referral**

- Assist with information and referral services through the Warm Line.
- Ongoing communication regarding resources, referrals, current programs, and services to kindergarten and pre-kindergarten teachers.
- Provide student observations and recommendations for interventions.
- Strengthen service delivery and programs for professionals and at-risk families by utilizing comprehensive case management.

### **Capacity Building**

- Develop long range plan and supervise VISTA member.

### **Assessment Services**

- Identified and began implementation of the Ages and Stages Questionnaire and Ages and Stages Questionnaire/Social Emotional Assessment Tools.
- The SRC assisted in continued program and service tracking through the IUSD Eagle Reporting system.
- Implemented Kindergarten Readiness Screening.

## **La Habra City Elementary**

### **Outreach Efforts**

- Work to make the kindergarten registration process uniform throughout all of the schools.

### **Community Linkages**

- Provide ways for kindergarten and preschool teachers to come together to talk about expectations, routines, and curriculum.
- Provide Kindergarten Preview Programs for parents and incoming students.
- Kindergarten Readiness Reps serve as liaisons between school and SRC and meet bimonthly.
- SRC participation in committees and boards in the community to help increase coordination of efforts – The Institute of Health Advisory, The Head Start Policy Committees, The City Chamber Services, The La Habra Family Resource Collaborative, The City Resource Center, The Even Start and La Habra City School District Administration Group.

### **Information and Referral**

- Include in kindergarten registration packet – an overview of readiness skills, flyers for Kindergarten Parent Preview Program, and interest cards for Summer Pre Kindergarten Transition Program.
- Distribute Commission information to the community.
- Distribute Developmental Wheels created by the Children’s Home Society.
- Distribute Readiness Skills Overview developed by the Definition and Assessment Work Group.
- Continue adding to School Readiness Library or Resources.

### **Capacity Building**

- 4-week Summer Pre-Kindergarten Transition Program.

## **Laguna Beach Unified**

### **Outreach Efforts**

- Participation in the district's Quality for Excellence Committee.
- Collaborate with the SR Nurse on a regular basis to address both district and community needs relevant to school readiness.

### **Provider Education**

- Work with early childhood educators including staff training and providing referral and resources.
- Conducting outreach to local private, church-based, and home-based early childhood providers.
- Provide training to district staff who serve children 3-5.
- Provide support to Boys and Girls Club preschool program via training, parent's education workshops, and curriculum resources.

### **Community Linkages**

- Talk with ECE Directors to discuss ways in which preschool staff and district staff can meet on a monthly or quarterly basis to align current district curriculum with preschool curriculum to facilitate successful transitions.
- Serve as a consultant to ECE providers as well as a liaison between providers and the district.

### **Information and Referral**

- Disseminate information and referrals to district, county, private, and grant supported programs that serve children aged zero to five.

### **Capacity Building**

- Opened a district preschool program at one of our elementary school sites. This program was designed to address the needs of our special education students aged three to five.
- Through collaboration with the speech pathologist, the district was able to address and screen more children who are potentially at-risk.
- The school readiness coordinator has increased the district's ability to provide direct services which include: student study team meetings with families and preschool teachers; psycho-educational and behavioral screenings and assessments; vision and hearing screenings; referrals to outside agencies; and providing early interventions for special education preschool children.

## Los Alamitos Unified

### **Outreach Efforts**

- Los Alamitos Health Fair/Booth at Rossmoor Elementary School 5K Expo.
- Purchase and distribute NAEYC, CHS and commission brochures and written material.

### **Parent Education**

- Parent education opportunities in the areas of early literacy, community resources, behavior issues, and child development.
- Annual parent meeting with kindergarten teachers that covers how to help preschoolers make a successful transition.
- School Readiness Series - monthly parent education meetings.
- Monthly family newsletters and bi-monthly "School News" school readiness featured articles.

### **Provider Education**

- In-services for CDC staff and Los Alamitos providers - first aid, early literacy, behavior issues.
- Provide kindergarten teachers with written student transition information from all providers in district.

### **Community Linkages**

- Collaborated with We Care Family Resource Center, Los Alamitos and Seal Beach Libraries, and Cypress WIC to inform families of open preschool slots.
- Presentations at advisory and district meetings.
- Coordinate with WIC, CHOC, and other grantee programs to enhance educational services.

### **Information and Referral**

- The SRC conducted presentations for the parent advisory board, the school board, and the California State School Board Association.
- Established a library of resource materials at Weaver CDC to provide written information to families and staff. Parent and Child Home Book Packs were made available for family check-out.
- The Weaver CDC Office continued to be an ongoing resource center for families requesting information on dental clinics and other low cost health care resources.
- Provided information to families about kindergarten registration.
- Implement Parent and Child Book Pack Check Out Program.

### **Capacity Building**

- Distribute nutrition/health information in newsletters or at parent meetings.

### **Assessment Services**

- Preschool Information Sheets were included in enrollment packets to provide specific information about student progress to kindergarten teachers.
- Information about student preschool attendance was entered into the District Aeries Computer system to enable analysis and evaluation as students progress through the elementary system.
- Work with CDC staff to input CDC data into district systems.

## **Magnolia Elementary**

### **Outreach Efforts**

- School Readiness Student Study Team.
- Implement a research based curriculum called DLM Express by SRA/McGraw Hill.
- Implemented a kindergarten transition plan including kinder round-ups.
- Send out monthly newsletter with a health column for parent awareness on health issues.
- We are a part of the Nutrition Network Coalition and utilizing the Harvest of the Month activities.
- Part of the California Preschool Instructional Network for Orange County.

### **Parent Education**

- Parent Education through monthly parent group meetings.
- Parent Lending Library.
- Held Kindergarten Round-Up events where parents and child participate together in a variety of school readiness activities, kindergarten teachers conduct screenings, and parents receive a variety of resources.
- Implemented Virtual Pre-K parent and child classes.
- Conducted Literacy Parties in the Home of more than 40 families.
- Established parent/child preschool classes at all nine schools.
- Created 500 Parent Child Interactive Literacy Packets to be used by parents and children to support learning at home.

### **Provider Education**

- Enriched instructional staff skills by participating in various trainings.
- Presentations to district kindergarten teachers and preschool teachers about strategies for ensuring school success.
- Becoming a certified trainer in Guided Language Acquisition and Design (GLAD) to help ensure teachers are providing adequate instruction/strategies to English Learners.
- 5 staff trained in Family Math strategies have held 5 family math activities.
- Strong collaboration with Child Development Inc at Salk to ensure students in State Preschool will enter MSD's schools.

### **Community Linkages**

- Collaborate with special education team in appropriately placing preschool students into school readiness programs and begin developing a plan to expand services to offer mainstreaming preschool services and inclusion.
- Pre-k students receive Developmental Screenings and Immunization Record Assessments by Pediatric Nurse.
- Children's Hospital of Orange County "Healthy Tomorrows" mobile health van located at most School Readiness sites.
- University of California Cooperative Extension Expanded Food and Nutrition Education Program, providing nutrition education for meal planning, shopping wisely, storing food safely, and budgeting.
- Dental Clinics along with a community health fair that provides new awareness of health services.
- Referrals to district for Special Education Testing.
- Serve as pre-k/kindergarten advisor for Reading First Leadership Board.
- Collaboration with local FRC's in supporting children 0-5.
- Collaborated with NOCCD to create Latino Family Literacy program for families at two schools.

**Capacity Building**

- Collaborate with outside agencies to offer additional health screening services and referrals.
- Expanding preschool class time from a jump start program to 180 day school readiness program.
- MOU with Head Start to increase services to Magnolia School District.
- Develop a successful Even Start Family Literacy Program.
- Established a blended preschool program at Baden Powell with Special Education Department - there are six special ed students and eight regular ed students.

**Assessment Services**

- Develop an assessment grid and identify tools for pre-kindergarten teachers to use. The assessments include teacher observation and anecdotal records, California Desired Results, teacher checklists aligned with district primary assessment tasks, and portfolio items.
- Utilize MSD School Readiness pre and post assessment.
- Utilize Desired Results Developmental Profile.
- Other formal and informal assessments are also utilized to drive instruction.

## Newport Mesa Unified

### **Outreach Efforts**

- The School Readiness team has made numerous presentations at community forums, conferences, and other events to inform groups of the importance of school readiness for future success.
- Monthly Site Facilitator Meetings.

### **Parent Education**

- Distributed daily calendar of activities – ideas for parent-child activities based on the Desired Results Developmental Profile (DRDP).
- Volunteer Orientation Program and Parent-to-Parent Mentoring.
- Workshop series presented in evenings and on Saturdays (sensory integration).
- Developed Keeping Your Child Healthy – tips to promote healthy development.
- Distributed Books to Read Aloud to Prepare Your Child for Kindergarten – a list of books about going to kindergarten.
- The Parent Empowerment Project (PEP) was implemented at three preschool sites, to provide a series of parent education workshops focused on child development, early literacy, kindergarten transition, discipline, nutrition, and parenting children with special needs.
- Kid Builder contributor/editor and Pilot Distribution District.

### **Provider Education**

- Participating with teachers as mentor in UCI Pre-K/K Leadership Institute.
- Two Full staff development days focused on pre-k English language development and curriculum implementation for English Language Learners.
- Expansion of Inclusive Instructional Preschool Settings to Pomona Elementary Site.

### **Community Linkages**

- HOPE School Readiness Team meets monthly to brainstorm, problem solve, create, and innovate in order to continually improve our programs for children 0-5 and maximize collaboration amongst all departments to best serve our children.
- Partner with the District Nutrition Network grant staff to provide classroom instruction and parent education on nutrition.
- Began the process of aligning District preschool enrollment materials and computer systems with the enrollment materials and computer systems in the K-12 program.
- Technical Assistance Visitation Host and Meetings Provider to Orange County Districts and LA District.
- The Early Childhood Education Instructional Leadership Team was created to guide the preschool instructional program, plan professional development for district and community early childhood educators, and develop user-friendly resources for local preschools and incoming kindergarten families.

### **Information and Referral**

- The program newsletter, “Shining Bright,” is distributed quarterly to all District preschool and kindergarten staff, local preschool providers, and community partners to share information related to School Readiness.

### **Capacity Building**

- Expansion of the state preschool program to serve three- and four-year-old children.
- Open Harper HOPE School Readiness Resource Center to provide space for professional development, materials check-out and preparation, parent education workshops, adult education classes, and the future Preschool Children’s Library.

- First 5 California Special Needs Pilot Project Implementation - LEAPS (Learning Early Intervention and Parent Support).

**Assessment Services**

- Implemented the Preschool Teacher Questionnaire for preschool teachers to complete and send directly to a child's kindergarten teacher to share the child's current developmental progress.
- Implemented the Parent Questionnaire for parents to share information with the receiving kindergarten teacher.
- School Link Pilot Project.

## Ocean View Elementary

### **Outreach Efforts**

- Make presentations about school readiness to OVSD Board of Trustees, OVSD Superintendents Cabinet, Oak View Collaborative Action Team, Steering Committee, Church Related Early Care and Education Federation, OVSD PTA/O President's Roundtable, and an Orange Coast College ECE Class.
- Along with Fountain Valley and Huntington Beach School Readiness Coordinators, hosted Community Forum about School Readiness.
- Bridge to Kindergarten: School Readiness Activities and Calendar.

### **Parent Education**

- Coordinated and developed a video (English and Spanish) to be used to show parents what OVSD kindergarten is really like. Distributed copies to all elementary schools in OVSD and all public and private preschool/childcare centers - the kindergarten video has been updated to reflect the new administration and is on DVD in Spanish and English, each school and private ECE program will receive an updated copy.
- Provided Zoo Phonics training to parents.

### **Community Linkages**

- Coordinated and hosted “Bridging the Gap” event for OVSD kindergarten and preschool/childcare providers. Lakeshore Learning Materials co-sponsored the event and presented a workshop on coordinating preschool and kindergarten activities to target the same standards.
- Established a monthly meeting of kindergarten teachers, principals, and preschool and child care providers. The purpose of the meetings was to discuss Commission goals, school readiness issues and transition activities.
- Established a system for preschool/child care directors and teachers to visit OVSD kindergarten classes.
- Established and implemented a system for kindergarten teachers to visit preschool classes.

### **Information and Referral**

- Distributed kindergarten standards, pre-kindergarten learning and development guidelines, commission information and resources, and Desired Results for Children and Families to early care and education providers.
- Distributed information to all preschool and child care providers about OVSD kinder visitations, kindergarten registration, and transfer procedure.

### **Assessment Services**

- Developed district system to track entering kindergarten students by the early care program they attended.
- Coordinated efforts of preschool/child care providers to transfer developmental and other information from their program to kindergarten teachers. Developed “pink and blue” cards to be used for this purpose.
- Preschool assessment information will be sent to the feeder school in the summer before the child begins kindergarten.

## Orange Unified

### **Outreach Efforts**

- Developed "Book Bag" program to be used at Title I school as part of transition program; leveraged Title I and EIA-Let Funding.
- Informed principals/district administrators about current issues/plans for district on school readiness
- Attended OCERS/CDOM Training.
- Attended conferences associated with school readiness.

### **Parent Education**

- Held Literacy Parties for Spanish speaking parents on kindergarten readiness and how to help your child at home.
- Provided funding and training to CBET teachers and School Readiness Coordinators to hold Family Latino Literacy Trainings.
- District Health Fair.

### **Provider Education**

- In-serviced principals and kindergarten teachers on transition, early assessment, and early parent orientation.
- Provided training sessions to Homecare Provider Group on early literacy, math, science, and music.
- Provided two workshops for preschool teachers at the district Child Development Center on Literacy and Math.
- Held three CIRCLE trainings for preschool teachers and homecare providers.
- SRCs provided music education to enhance literacy/math skills at district preschools.

### **Community Linkages**

- Facilitated CBET excursions/in-school presentations for parents and their children.
- Held monthly or bi-monthly District School Readiness Committee meetings.
- Attended SRI and State Preschool Monthly Meetings.

### **Information and Referral**

- Distributed quarterly newsletters to families.

### **Capacity Building**

- Opened two new preschools in partnership with Orange Children and Parents Together Head start.
- Wrote Nutrition Grant for \$4000. Provided nutrition information to Homecare Provider Group and lesson plans to Kinder Camps and district preschools.
- Organized and evaluated Kinder Camp Sessions for incoming kindergarten children.

### **Assessment Services**

- Facilitated kindergarten intervention programs - this included pre- and post-assessment and daily tutoring in small groups.
- Assembled district assessment kit - trained principals and kindergarten teachers on using the kits.

## Placentia Yorba-Linda Unified

### Outreach Efforts

- The School Readiness Program conducted district wide outreach to identify and enroll families with children ages 0-5 into the Program for the 2005-2006 School year.
- The School Readiness Facilitator partnered with the City of Placentia- Human Services Division to put on the annual Health Fair at Mc Fadden Park on May 26, 2005. Twelve community agencies participated in the event. Families received brochures of information and healthy treats and prizes to promote an active lifestyle (hoola hoops, balls, jump ropes).
- The School Readiness Coordinator mailed brochures to ECE providers about injury prevention to educate parents on safety in the home.
- School Readiness Coordinator met with Topaz and Placentia Head Start Directors to discuss transition activities for children entering kindergarten.
- The School Readiness Coordinator maintains an updated list of all the ECE providers in the community serving the children living in the district boundaries.

### Parent Education

- Provided (ten-week) Latino Family Literacy Series of classes to parents in the School Readiness Program, upon completion of the class, families received a bookshelf and 20 children's books (family library).
- Provided Healthy Smiles Classes to parents in the School Readiness Program to educate parents about the importance of consistent dental care for their children ages 0-5.

### Provider Education

- Coordinated staff development for school readiness staff (ECE Providers) on universal precautions/safety in collaboration with the School Readiness Nurses.
- Coordinated Preschool Curriculum Staff Development with consultant, Dr. Short. The focus is to align the preschool curriculum to Desired Results and High Scope.
- School Readiness Facilitator coordinated site visits and staff development for the School Readiness Staff by collaborating with West Ed's Program for Infant Toddler Caregivers. (Applied and received grant for services provided).
- The School Readiness Facilitator held a meeting to discuss the implementation of Desired Results in the School Readiness Preschool. The importance of this developmental profile was discussed and strategies for implementation.

### Community Linkages

- School Readiness Facilitator attended meeting with District Facilities Planning staff and Orange County Head Start to explore the possibility of adding to additional Head Start sites at Rio Vista Elementary and Ruby Drive Elementary.

### Information and Referral

- Coordinate regular meetings between the School Readiness existing staff and the new Nurse Expansion, to maximize the School Readiness efforts and to avoid duplication of services.
- The School Readiness Coordinator met with the Commission funded School Readiness Nurses to brainstorm ways to outreach and maximize services. A school calendar was created to assist in the organization of services.
- The School Readiness Coordinator met with Director of Student Assessment to discuss the linking of preschoolers into the new student data system being purchased by the district.

**Capacity Building**

- The School Readiness Facilitator created a binder of resources to assist the School Readiness Facilitators/Leads in the referral process of children with special needs and community services available.
- The School Readiness Facilitator assisted with the coordination of the First Families Collaborative Meeting to discuss the collaboration needed to assist with the implementation of the Community Building Initiative and ways the School Readiness Program can be enhanced through these services.

**Assessment Services**

- Coordinate monthly School Readiness Leadership Meetings to ensure the proper collection of OCERS, aggregate data and documentation for program compliance.
- Coordinated a Technical Assistance Meeting with SRI - Limor Bar Cohen on State Data Requirements and Procedures.

## Saddleback Valley Unified

### **Outreach Efforts**

- Outreach efforts have provided early child care educators with information regarding workshops, professional developmental trainings, commission sponsored programs, services, and materials. This has been accomplished through mailings, flyers, and workshops.
- Provided information regarding school readiness to SVUSD's English Language Advisory Committee and the English Language Development paraprofessionals and community liaisons on ways to enhance the quality of services within the district and to inform them of commission sponsored programs and services.
- School principals have been surveyed throughout the district to see what additional programs and services would be useful to address the needs of kindergarten students.
- Participated in OCDE CPIN and SEED work groups and program development.

### **Parent Education**

- Parent Education classes were also coordinated with other Commission programs.
- SVUSD has hosted many workshops teaching media and early literacy.

### **Provider Education**

- Provided workshops and trainings in Transitions to Kindergarten, Getting Ready for Kindergarten, Early Steps to Reading Success, Brain Development, Building Community Partnerships, Positive Discipline, and Raising Successful Students.
- Provided numerous professional trainings in the community to center based and family child care providers and professional associations.

### **Community Linkages**

- Involved in supporting county wide efforts for children zero to five years of age through community partnerships. The SRS attended monthly community partner meetings including United Way Success By Six, South Orange County Family Resource Center, Orange County Planning Council, and Families Forward.
- The SRS has coordinated community forums and Director's Forums to help identify gaps in school readiness services and identify the growing needs within the community.
- Participated in United Way Success By Six Leadership committees.
- Participated in the OCDE CPIN and SEED work groups and program development.
- Membership on the Orange County Child Care Planning and Development Council.

### **Information and Referral**

- Distribute the Commission's First 5 brochures throughout the district and to local family child care providers and center-based programs with the assistance of PTA representatives.

### **Capacity Building**

- The SRS has successfully written three grants: Kid's Plate, California Nutrition Network, and Early Intervention for School Success, and has secured an additional \$70,000 funding for school readiness services within the District. District continues to write for funding. Awarded in 2004/2005 Kid's Plate and 2003/2004 and 2004/2005 California Nutrition Network grants and EISS funding in 2003/2004.
- Collaborated in the Commission capacity building grant for the South Orange County Coalition. The Coalition partners include SVUSD School Readiness, Capistrano USD School Readiness, South Orange County Family Resource Center, and the City of Aliso Viejo. The Coalition meets regularly to build capacity programming for families with children 0-5 in south Orange County.

## Santa Ana Unified

### **Outreach Efforts**

- Establish a Parent Advisory Committee to include parents of children enrolled in the Kinder Readiness program and Cambodian Family in program decision making.
- Participate in Curriculum Specialist Meetings when offered.

### **Parent Education**

- Implemented COPE/CUIDAR for Attention and Learning parenting sessions in collaboration with CHOC/UCI Initiative for the Development of Attention and Readiness.
- Parents received presentation on a successful kindergarten transition.
- Collaborated with City of Santa Ana Public Library to inform parents of the resources available through the library. This included a presentation to parents on the importance of literacy.
- Parents of pre-kinder students participated in monthly parent education and training sessions.
- Pre-kinder students and their parents participated in pre-kinder to kinder transition meetings and classroom activities.
- Intensive distribution of Kid Builder books to parents of students enrolled in Kinder Readiness Program and Cambodian Family.
- Collaborate with California Nutrition Network to educate pre-kindergarten students and parents on nutrition and physical activity.
- Improve the school readiness of teen parents and their children by collaborating with SAUSD Teen Parent Program at Valley High School and SAUSD WIC Center.

### **Provider Education**

- Pre-kinder teaching staff and other district and community early care and education staff participated in quality ongoing staff development and in-class modeling and support.

### **Community Linkages**

- Established partnership with UC-Irvine Jumpstart Program to provide individual assistance to pre-kindergarten students who are identified as having difficulties in language and literacy development.
- Developed a Dental Plan including student and parent dental presentations (Teeth 4-Ever) and dental screenings (Healthy Smiles).
- Pre-kinder and kindergarten teaching staff participated in transition meetings and classroom visitations by pre-kinder students.
- Parents of pre-kinder students participated at least once a month as classroom volunteers in their child's pre-kinder class.
- Planned and implemented Community Forums.
- Collaborated with Mitchell Child Development Center for speech and language referrals and screenings.
- Nurse provided screening and referral services to pre-kinder students and provided families with medical insurance information and referral services.
- SRC will implement bi-monthly Pre-K Steering Committee Meetings to improve linkages and services.
- Collaboration and sharing of school readiness information between district pre-kindergarten programs, such as, Twilight, Head Start, O.C. Therapeutic Arts Center, Children's Hospital of O.C. (CHOC) and Cambodian Family.
- Supervise AmeriCorps VISTA worker to increase community outreach efforts to increase knowledge in the community of services and programs available through the School Nurse Initiative and School Readiness Initiative.

- SRC and pre-k teachers participate in UCI -National Science Foundation FOCUS leadership institute.

**Information and Referral**

- Implement and maintain a system for information and referral with the local Family Resource Centers.

**Assessment Services**

- Teaching staff administered Pre-IPT Oral Test (pre-post), Basic Skills Assessment (pre-post), and Desired Results Developmental Profile (pre-post) yearly to all students.
- School Readiness Coordinators input pre-kinder/preschool student information into district's database system.

## Tustin Unified

### **Outreach Efforts**

- TUSD maintains a current list of ECE and childcare programs serving children within district boundaries. A brochure was created to aid families seeking child care services in the Tustin area.

### **Parent Education**

- TUSD is in the process of creating a parent resource area for families to share information about health services, nutrition, school readiness, safety, early literacy, etc.
- Parents of special education children are invited to participate in parent education meetings to increase the school readiness of children with special needs.

### **Provider Education**

- TUSD provides curriculum training for local child care providers in the community.

### **Community Linkages**

- TUSD is in the process of working with community partners to create a Transition Plan to streamline transition from preschool to kindergarten across the community.

### **Information and Referral**

- TUSD coordinates bi-monthly Community Forum meetings in order to collaborate with community child care providers, coordinate services and to disseminate school readiness information.
- The School Readiness Coordinator writes articles to inform and educate district administration on School Readiness issues and make recommendations for TUSD regarding School Readiness.

### **Capacity Building**

- Through a State Readiness Grant, TUSD has opened 4 Kindergarten Readiness Academies to prepare preschoolers for kindergarten.

## Westminster Unified

### **Outreach Efforts**

- The SRC presented an overview of the School Readiness Program at a district management team meeting and met with each site administrator to coordinate monthly meetings at each site.

### **Parent Education**

- Provided kindergarten orientation meetings at every school site.
- Held monthly parent workshops at each elementary school site in the district.

### **Community Linkages**

- Hosted monthly meetings of the Early Learners Task Force. These meeting provided the opportunity for preschool and kindergarten teachers, community-based preschool providers, district administrators, school principals, and early care and education supervisors to discuss important topics regarding early learners.
- Presented parenting workshops to the Pregnant and Parenting Teen Program participants in the Huntington Beach Union High School District.

### **Information and Referral**

- Coordinated a pre-kindergarten and kindergarten round-up event that including distributing “Getting Ready for Kindergarten” guides to all new students and their families.

### **Capacity Building**

- Offered free immunization clinics at locations throughout the district.

## **Appendix D: SRC Accomplishments**

This appendix presents SRC Accomplishments by strategy area. These accomplishments were listed by the SRCs as part of the SRC Survey. Since the SRCs were not asked to categorize their accomplishments, these accomplishments have been categorized by SPHERE.

Each SRC submitted her top three accomplishments; where there were duplicates due to two SRCs in the same district submitting identical accomplishments, the accomplishment has only been listed once.

### **Outreach Efforts**

- Outreach.
- Building relationships with private care providers (teachers and directors) and district kindergarten teachers.

### **Parent Education**

- Parent education and Welcome to Kindergarten Handbook.
- Spring parent education sessions on the transition to kindergarten.
- Annual parent conference hosted in collaboration with Fiesta Educativa.
- School Readiness parent education workshops.
- Developing early literacy and parent involvement presentations and presenting in a variety of arenas.
- Home-School Connection meetings with parents and children.
- Establish parenting workshops; one to three a month depending on the availability of the person who's going to do the workshop.
- School Readiness Series meetings – monthly parent education meetings open to all families with preschool age children.
- Transition to school activities.
- The development of the Anaheim Family Literacy Network – Literacy Parties.
- Expansion of parent education programs and services.
- Parent education classes.
- First 5 California Special Needs Project award and implementation – LEAPS (Learning Early Intervention and Parent Support).

### **Provider Education**

- CIRCLE Training – I became a certified CIRCLE Trainer and delivered CIRCLE training to all of the pre-k teachers in the district. The training has transformed the classroom environments to literacy rich-developmentally appropriate classrooms.
- Train ECE staff in the use and implementation of Desired Results Developmental Profile (DRDP) and Early Childhood Environment Rating Scale (ECERS) evaluation tools.
- The school readiness program now participates in the district's staff development days. Three times a year, work days are set aside for staff development. TUSD's preschool

staff, along with community partners, train together in workshops that focus on preschool curriculum that is aligned to district standards.

- ECE providers visit kindergarten classrooms.
- Literacy through music.
- We have received a variety of professional development, trainings, and workshops in early education, school readiness, and brain research which have helped prepare us in supervising and increasing the quality of child care in SVUSD. This knowledge assists us in assuring that the SR programs and local child care providers are educated in using the best practices in early childhood education and that programs reflect quality programming.
- Implement Imagine Learning English (ILE) to increase English language development of pre-kinder students. This is a computer based program. ECE staff received three days of staff development in technology and English language development.
- Regular preschool provider training and education updates.
- CIRCLE Training.

### **Community Linkages**

- Provided support via a MOU with the Boys & Girls Club preschool program which includes: parent education workshops, pre-k curriculum which is in alignment with district kindergarten curriculum to assist in a smooth transition, and kindergarten visits for pre-k students to assist in transition to kindergarten.
- Preschool and kindergarten teacher collaboration.
- Getting kindergarten teachers and preschool teachers together and recognizing the value in articulation between the levels.
- Preschoolers in kindergarten classrooms.
- We have developed a strong network of community partners. Through the reciprocity of services both the district and community partners have benefited. Our community partners have been available for a variety of programs and services including food banks, clothing, dental screenings, parent education, literacy activities, health insurance enrollment, etc.
- Curriculum alignment with Head Start and State Preschool, i.e., Houghton Mifflin.
- MOU established with Head Start to increase percentage of district children being served.
- We conduct bi-monthly School Readiness meetings in which TUSD and community ECE providers come together to collaborate and brainstorm ways in which we can all serve preschool children.
- Collaboration with North Orange County Community College District with CBET. Moved into college district building in August 2004 with a grant from the Packard Foundation. All children (40 per day in preschool, 48 per day in child care while parents attend classes in the college) receive services. It is a unique relationship between parents, adult education, and early education.
- Developed excellent working partnership with our SR Nurse. We worked closely to develop outreach activities, events for community, and at the SR Center.
- Collaboration with Oak View FRC and Oak View Collaborative (monthly meeting with OVSD and HB SRC and local private preschool directors).
- Established a strong base of community involvement.

- Collaboration with the SR Nurse on a regular basis.
- The Health Fair is a wonderful accomplishment for the School Readiness Program. It has united agencies in the community with the district program. The collaboration with Commission funded programs has been enhanced. The Health Fair is an annual event held at different locations around the district community which draws many families and children (ages 0-5).

### **Information and Referral**

- Community Resource Open House.
- Information and referral.
- Kindergarten Roundup at all school sites.
- Kindergarten Roundup Events - every elementary school in the Buena Park School District now offers a Kindergarten Roundup Event to its incoming kindergarten students. Kindergarten teachers assess students, parents receive information from a variety of community partners and children have an early introduction to the school. The roundup event is followed up with parent "Kindergarten Is Coming" sessions. Children are invited to attend the district summer pre-kindergarten program that runs concurrent with the regular summer school program and attend school site "Operation Good Start" sessions the week before regular school begins.
- Created print resources including the Cypress Kindergarten Gazette, Child Care Directory, School Readiness Tri-fold, and Dental Directory.
- Quarterly newsletter and information.
- Development of a School Readiness Newsletter that is posted on the school district website and sent to providers in the Fullerton community.
- Established a more detailed ECE informational newsletter providing current information and events. It is mailed to the community, public libraries, preschool directors, HBCSD board members, principals, kindergarten teachers, Commission staff, FRCs, etc.
- Collaborate with State School Readiness Nurse and School Nurse Expansion Initiative Nurses to implement community outreach events to inform community of district school readiness programs and health services and other resources available in the community.
- TUSD has created a brochure for families that lists childcare and preschool providers in the Tustin area.

### **Capacity Building**

- Full-inclusion preschool.
- Kinder Camps.
- Since I started in the district as a School Readiness Coordinator/Consultant five years ago, I have managed to oversee a systemic change in district organization. I convinced the district of the importance of a Director position that would direct specifically the Early Childhood Education Programs in collaboration with the other departments in the school district and have an equal representation in management and decision making. Three years ago I was given the Director's position and now direct a combination of Even Start, Head Start, State Preschool, State School Readiness and Local School Readiness programs continuing to build capacity and quality and contribute to the overall effectiveness of Anaheim City School District.

- Secured funding to provide preschool and family literacy programs for children in the Buena Park School District.
- Getting our Neighborhood Resource Center, which also houses our School Readiness Office, manned as a school-based clinic three days per week by a Pediatric Nurse Practitioner who is able to do immunizations, sick child appointments, and write prescriptions.
- Created the Jump Start School Readiness Center.
- Increased preschool capacity from 384 to 1008.
- The Twilight Program is now servicing infants from six weeks to two-years-old, together with the preschool, pre-k and school age children and parents. Children are emerging to kindergarten with English knowledge.
- Establishing and refining a pre-k to kindergarten articulation team. This team is entering its fourth year of implementation and has been instrumental in increasing communication between the two service systems and easing family, student, and teacher transitions into the formal education system. This team has created an at-risk transition document, aligned kindergarten language and literacy standards to developmentally appropriate pre-k behaviors and teaching strategies, aligned kindergarten math standards to developmentally appropriate pre-k behaviors and teaching strategies, and has plans to continue addressing transition issues between ECE and kindergarten.
- Implementation of the School Readiness Program.
- Secured funding for Family Literacy Program.
- Three instructional setting for inclusion of children with special needs.
- Receiving an additional Even Start Program in our district.
- Transition Plan: School Readiness Coordinators created a binder of activities and forms for schools to use to hold an early orientation, early assessment, and classroom visits for incoming kindergarten students and parents.
- Latino Family Literacy Project Teacher.
- The SRC collaborated and brainstormed with school principals about ways to provide full classroom spaces for the preschools and child care programs. In the beginning of the program, preschool and child care were held in one classroom. Now, every preschool and child care has its own classroom at all of the program sites: five preschool classrooms, five child care classrooms, five parent education classrooms, and five computer labs for parent education. The classroom space was doubled through the collaborative efforts.
- The acquisition of Title I funds to support a preschool program at Guinn School.
- Acquiring the new Houghton Mifflin Preschool Curriculum (purchased by district), implementing its use in all preschool programs, integrating this curriculum with High Scope, CIRCLE, and Developmentally Appropriate Practice and Pre-K Guidelines.
- Beginning inclusion activities between our State Preschool Programs and district SDC preschool classes.
- Addition of nursing staff service.
- Establishing and refining an at-risk student referral process case management system at the Early Childhood Learning Center.
- Facilitated placement of two preschools at OUSD sites.
- The addition of the School Readiness Lead Teacher, a classified full-time position with benefits, has greatly improved the quality and safety of our School Readiness Program at

two sites. Prior to this addition the schools were not receiving adequate supervision and support. SRC and Cinda Muckenthaler, the project lead, evaluated the effectiveness of the program and then made the recommendation that the district change the part-time certificated position to the full time classified model to help improve the quality of the program. Not only was this move better for the program, it was a more economical model, so the district agreed.

- Planning for and moving all IUSD Early Childhood programs to one facility, the Early Childhood Learning Center (ECLC). Currently our site houses the School Readiness Program which serves as a resource and program support to the following programs (as well as to the Irvine Community): Special Education Preschool (includes Speech and Language Clinic, ABA Clinic, OT Clinic, 2 SUCCESS Classrooms, and 14 SDC Classrooms), Head Start Preschool, Early Start Preschool, and Montessori International.
- We have successfully written grants that have secured over \$127,000 over a five-year period.
- Early Learners Task Force.

#### **Assessment Services**

- Provide school readiness information to kindergarten teachers through a district “student information” link system that all entering kindergarten parents receive in registration packets.
- Participation in conducting screenings, assessments, and referrals for pre-k students and families.
- Distributing student assessment materials for entering kindergarten children.
- Inclusion of a preschool field in our Aeries computer program in the district.

## Appendix E: SRC Survey

### Part 1: Respondent Information

<b>1. Name:</b>		<b>2. Job Title:</b>	
<b>3. School District:</b>		<b>4. Phone Number:</b>	
<b>5. Address:</b>			
<b>6. Email Address:</b>		<b>7. How long have you held your current position?</b>	
<b>8. What was the last job that you held (title and organization)?</b>			
<b>9. What educational degrees or credentials do you hold?</b>			
<b>10. What do you consider your areas of expertise?</b>			
<b>11. In which programs are you a certified trainer (for example CIRCLE, etc)?</b>			

### Part 2: Job Characteristics

<b>12a. How many positions in your district are funded by the Local School Readiness Initiative Grant?</b>				
<b>12b. What are the titles of these positions?</b>				
<b>12c. If more than one, how do you divide work between positions (for instance, by school, program area, etc.)</b>				
<b>13. Do you work full- or part-time?</b>				
<b>14. Are you a: (check only one)</b>	School District Employee <input type="checkbox"/>	Consultant <input type="checkbox"/>	Other <input type="checkbox"/>	
<b>15. Approximately what percent of your time is spent on:</b>	a. Local School Readiness Initiative Activities			%
	b. State School Readiness Initiative Activities			%
	c. Other Program Grant Activities			%
	d. Other Activities			%
<b>16. Please check the statements below that apply to your position: (check all that apply)</b>				
My position is funded solely through the Orange County School Readiness Grant.				<input type="checkbox"/>
I am responsible for planning and implementing the O.C. School Readiness Grant and do not have additional duties.				<input type="checkbox"/>
My position is funded through multiple grants.				<input type="checkbox"/>
I am responsible for planning and implementing multiple Commission funded projects.				<input type="checkbox"/>
My position is an administrative position that existed before the Orange County School Readiness Grant.				<input type="checkbox"/>

### 17. Please rank the relative importance of the following strategy areas to your district's needs, and estimate the percent of time you spend working on each area:

Strategy Area	Ranking (1-7 where 1 = most important for my district and 7 = least important):	Percent of time spent on this area during the beginning of the school year*:	Percent of time spent on this area during the rest of the school year:
a. Outreach Efforts		%	%
b. Parent Education		%	%
c. Provider Education		%	%
d. Service Integration: Community Linkages		%	%
e. Service Integration: Information and Referral		%	%
f. Capacity Building		%	%
g. Assessment Services		%	%
		=100%	=100%

\*For the purposes of this survey "beginning of the school year" is August through October

**Part 3: Activities (Please be sure to read the instructions for this section)**

The Commission has designated 7 Strategy Areas and 5 Core Principles (descriptions of each of these strategy areas and principles can be found on the “Definition Sheet” that you should have received with this survey). They are:

**Instructions:**

- **Activity** – We have already listed the activities your district submitted to Cal State Fullerton’s report on Best Practices. If you would like to change or update any of these activities you may do so in the blank rows on the following pages. It is okay if activities are repeated on the surveys of all SR Positions in your district.
- **Activity of another SR Position in District** – Please indicate here if the activity listed is one that you do not participate in, but that another SR Position in your district does (or did) participate in. If you check this box you do not need to fill out the rest of the row.
- **My Current or Past Activity** - Indicate whether the activity listed is **current** (is ongoing or took place since August 2004) or happened in the **past** (happened before August 2004). If you check the past activity box you do not need to fill out the rest of the row.
- **Activity that Needs to be Updated** – Mark here if this is a current activity that you would like to change or update in some way. You can update your activity by entering it in one of the blank rows on the following pages.
- **Strategy Area/Core Principles** - For already listed activities we have grouped each of your activities by strategy area and core principle. If you do not agree with our categorization of your activities please feel free to change it.
  - As you add new activities to the list, you should assign each one a strategy area and, if applicable, a core principle.
  - Every activity should be assigned to one or more strategy areas.
  - Every activity does not need to be assigned to a core principle.
- **Number Served** - Fill out only where applicable. For instance, for a parent training you can list the number of trainings of this type held in the last year or the number of parents who participated.

<p><b>7 Strategy Areas:</b></p> <p>(1) Outreach Efforts/Miscellaneous Outreach                  (2) Parent Education                  (3) Provider Education                  (4) Service Integration: Community Linkages                  (5) Service Integration: Information and Referral                  (6) Capacity Building                  (7) Assessment Services</p>	<p><b>5 Core Principles:</b></p> <p>(C) Collaboration                  (LF) Leveraging Funds                  (DU) District Uniqueness                  (RB) Research-Based                  (MO) Measured Outcomes/Evaluation</p>
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Local School Readiness Initiative Activity	Activity of another SR Position in District	My Current Activity	My Past Activity	Activity that Needs to be Updated	Strategy Area	Core Principle	Number served
<b>EXAMPLE: Coordinate monthly meeting between kindergarten teachers and ECE providers</b>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	4	C	6 ECE Teachers, 2 Kinder Teachers
Hold a parent education night for parents to learn strategies for reading to and with their children.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	2		
Work with Joshua Medical Center to provide immunizations and physical exams at our kindergarten registrations.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	4,6	C	
Worked with UCI Medical Center to have a medical van on campus.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	4,6	C	
At kindergarten registration the SRC provides packets of information to families on how they can work with their child to prepare them for school.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	5		

Use the following table to update activities from above that have changed or to add new activities. If you are updating an activity from above check the “updated activity from list above” box, if you are adding a new activity check the “new activity” box.

Local School Readiness Initiative Activity ( <u>feel free to use additional pages as needed</u> ) (Please list activities that you are currently participating in and activities that you have participated in since August 2004).	Updated Activity from List Above	New Activity	Strategy Area	Core Principle	Number Served
	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>			
	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>			
	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>			
	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>			
	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>			
	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>			
	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>			
	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>			
	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>			
	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>			
	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>			
	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>			
	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>			

**Part 4: Accomplishments, Challenges, and Future Plans**

**18. Please identify your 3 top accomplishments, along with why you feel they are valuable and who benefits. (Please note that your accomplishments could be valuable to and benefit any number of groups – children, the district, parents, ECE providers, community partners, etc)**

<b>Accomplishment 1:</b>			
<b>Why valuable?</b>			
<b>Who benefits?</b>			
<b>When Accomplished?</b>		<b>How long did it take to accomplish?</b>	
<b>Accomplishment 2:</b>			
<b>Why valuable?</b>			
<b>Who benefits?</b>			
<b>When Accomplished?</b>		<b>How long did it take to accomplish?</b>	
<b>Accomplishment 3:</b>			
<b>Why valuable?</b>			
<b>Who benefits?</b>			
<b>When Accomplished?</b>		<b>How long did it take to accomplish?</b>	

**19. Have your Local School Readiness Activities received any awards (for example Golden Bell Award, etc)? (please list)**

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**20. Please describe any ongoing challenges you face in the following areas: (attach additional pages as needed)**

<b>a. Funding:</b>	
<b>b. Staffing:</b>	
<b>c. Facilities:</b>	
<b>d. Support:</b>	
<b>e. Partnerships:</b>	
<b>f. Other:</b>	

<b>21. Please list up to 5 activities that you are planning for the future:</b>
a.
b.
c.
d.
e.

**Part 5: Supports**

**22. Currently, how supportive do you feel that your school board is of the idea of “school readiness”? (please check only one box)**

Very Supportive <input type="checkbox"/>	Somewhat supportive <input type="checkbox"/>	Neutral <input type="checkbox"/>	Somewhat unsupportive <input type="checkbox"/>	Very unsupportive <input type="checkbox"/>	Not Sure <input type="checkbox"/>
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**23a. Thinking back over the last 5 years, do you feel that your school board has become: (check one answer)**

Much more supportive <input type="checkbox"/>	Somewhat more supportive <input type="checkbox"/>	No Change <input type="checkbox"/>	Somewhat less supportive <input type="checkbox"/>	Much less supportive <input type="checkbox"/>	Not Sure <input type="checkbox"/>
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**23b. If you answered more or less supportive to the question above, what evidence do you have of this increased or decreased support of school readiness?**

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**24. Is the amount of support you receive from the Commission: (please check one answer)**

Too Much (Overbearing) <input type="checkbox"/>	About Right <input type="checkbox"/>	Not Enough <input type="checkbox"/>	Not Sure <input type="checkbox"/>
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**Part 6: Suggestions**

25. Please list any suggestions or recommendations you may have in the following areas for the next contract round: (attach additional pages as needed)	
a. Funding	
b. Staffing:	
c. Work Plans:	
d. Reporting Requirements:	
e. Other:	

26a. Do you collaborate closely with School Readiness Coordinators in other districts?	Yes <input type="checkbox"/>	No <input type="checkbox"/>	N/A <input type="checkbox"/>
26b. If yes, which other districts do you spend most your time collaborating with:			
26c. If yes, on which types of projects do you spend most of your time collaborating (for example ECE trainings, parent trainings, newsletters, sharing materials, holding fairs, etc)			

**Part 7: Contacts** (please keep in mind that we may call some or all of these contacts for a brief interview)

27. Please list 3-5 district or school staff most familiar with your work: (for example, principles, teachers, secretaries, teachers aids, administrators, school nurses, etc)			
Name and Title:		Contact Information (phone # &/or email)	
Name and Title:		Contact Information (phone # &/or email)	
Name and Title:		Contact Information (phone # &/or email)	
Name and Title:		Contact Information (phone # &/or email)	
Name and Title:		Contact Information (phone # &/or email)	

<b>28. Name and title of the person you report to:</b>		Contact Information (phone # &/or email)	
<b>29. Name and title of the person your supervisor reports to:</b>		Contact Information (phone # &/or email)	

<b>30. Who are your top 5 community partners (those you work with the most)?</b>	<b>Contact Name</b>	<b>Contact Phone # &amp;/or Email Address</b>
<b>31. Who are your top 3 Prop 10 Grantee partners, if any? (Please note: it is okay if these lists overlap)</b>	<b>Contact Name</b>	<b>Contact Phone # &amp;/or Email Address</b>

## Appendix F: School District Personnel Survey

<b>Name</b>	
<b>Title:</b>	
<b>School District:</b>	

1. In your opinion, how effective has your district's School Readiness Coordinator been in increasing the <i>overall awareness of school readiness</i> in your district? (please check only one box)					
Very Effective <input type="checkbox"/>	Somewhat Effective <input type="checkbox"/>	Neutral <input type="checkbox"/>	Somewhat Ineffective <input type="checkbox"/>	Very Ineffective <input type="checkbox"/>	Not Sure <input type="checkbox"/>

2. In your opinion, how effective has your district's School Readiness Coordinator been in increasing the <i>overall level of school readiness</i> in your district? (please check only one box)					
Very Effective <input type="checkbox"/>	Somewhat Effective <input type="checkbox"/>	Neutral <input type="checkbox"/>	Somewhat Ineffective <input type="checkbox"/>	Very Ineffective <input type="checkbox"/>	Not Sure <input type="checkbox"/>

3. In your opinion, how effective has your district's School Readiness Coordinator been in increasing the <i>readiness of schools</i> to accept incoming kindergartners? (please check only one box)					
Very Effective <input type="checkbox"/>	Somewhat Effective <input type="checkbox"/>	Neutral <input type="checkbox"/>	Somewhat Ineffective <input type="checkbox"/>	Very Ineffective <input type="checkbox"/>	Not Sure <input type="checkbox"/>

4. In your opinion, how effective has your district's School Readiness Coordinator been in increasing the <i>readiness of children</i> to begin kindergarten? (please check only one box)					
Very Effective <input type="checkbox"/>	Somewhat Effective <input type="checkbox"/>	Neutral <input type="checkbox"/>	Somewhat Ineffective <input type="checkbox"/>	Very Ineffective <input type="checkbox"/>	Not Sure <input type="checkbox"/>

5. For each of the following areas please indicate, in your opinion, how effective the School Readiness Coordinator in your district has been.							
a. General Outreach	Not an SRC Role <input type="checkbox"/>	Very Effective <input type="checkbox"/>	Somewhat Effective <input type="checkbox"/>	Neutral <input type="checkbox"/>	Somewhat Ineffective <input type="checkbox"/>	Very Ineffective <input type="checkbox"/>	Not Sure <input type="checkbox"/>
b. Parent Education	Not an SRC Role <input type="checkbox"/>	Very Effective <input type="checkbox"/>	Somewhat Effective <input type="checkbox"/>	Neutral <input type="checkbox"/>	Somewhat Ineffective <input type="checkbox"/>	Very Ineffective <input type="checkbox"/>	Not Sure <input type="checkbox"/>
c. Provider Education	Not an SRC Role <input type="checkbox"/>	Very Effective <input type="checkbox"/>	Somewhat Effective <input type="checkbox"/>	Neutral <input type="checkbox"/>	Somewhat Ineffective <input type="checkbox"/>	Very Ineffective <input type="checkbox"/>	Not Sure <input type="checkbox"/>
d. Community Linkages	Not an SRC Role <input type="checkbox"/>	Very Effective <input type="checkbox"/>	Somewhat Effective <input type="checkbox"/>	Neutral <input type="checkbox"/>	Somewhat Ineffective <input type="checkbox"/>	Very Ineffective <input type="checkbox"/>	Not Sure <input type="checkbox"/>
e. Information and Referral	Not an SRC Role <input type="checkbox"/>	Very Effective <input type="checkbox"/>	Somewhat Effective <input type="checkbox"/>	Neutral <input type="checkbox"/>	Somewhat Ineffective <input type="checkbox"/>	Very Ineffective <input type="checkbox"/>	Not Sure <input type="checkbox"/>

f. Capacity Building	Not an SRC Role <input type="checkbox"/>	Very Effective <input type="checkbox"/>	Somewhat Effective <input type="checkbox"/>	Neutral <input type="checkbox"/>	Somewhat Ineffective <input type="checkbox"/>	Very Ineffective <input type="checkbox"/>	Not Sure <input type="checkbox"/>
g. Assessment Services	Not an SRC Role <input type="checkbox"/>	Very Effective <input type="checkbox"/>	Somewhat Effective <input type="checkbox"/>	Neutral <input type="checkbox"/>	Somewhat Ineffective <input type="checkbox"/>	Very Ineffective <input type="checkbox"/>	Not Sure <input type="checkbox"/>

**6. What do you consider to be the top accomplishment of the School Readiness Coordinator in your district?**

**7. From your perspective what would you say the main role of the School Readiness Coordinator is in your district?**

**8. Currently, how supportive do you feel that your district's *school board* is of the idea of school readiness? (please check only one box)**

Very Supportive <input type="checkbox"/>	Somewhat Supportive <input type="checkbox"/>	Neutral <input type="checkbox"/>	Somewhat Unsupportive <input type="checkbox"/>	Very Unsupportive <input type="checkbox"/>	Not Sure <input type="checkbox"/>
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**9. Thinking back over the last 5 years, do you feel that your district's *school board* has become: (please check only one box)**

Much More Supportive <input type="checkbox"/>	Somewhat More Supportive <input type="checkbox"/>	No Change <input type="checkbox"/>	Somewhat Less Supportive <input type="checkbox"/>	Much Less Supportive <input type="checkbox"/>	Not Sure <input type="checkbox"/>
--	--	---------------------------------------	--	--	--------------------------------------

**10. Currently, how supportive do you feel that your district's *administration* is of the idea of school readiness? (please check only one box)**

Very Supportive <input type="checkbox"/>	Somewhat Supportive <input type="checkbox"/>	Neutral <input type="checkbox"/>	Somewhat Unsupportive <input type="checkbox"/>	Very Unsupportive <input type="checkbox"/>	Not Sure <input type="checkbox"/>
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**11. Thinking back over the last 5 years, do you feel that your district's *administration* has become: (please check only one box)**

Much More Supportive <input type="checkbox"/>	Somewhat More Supportive <input type="checkbox"/>	No Change <input type="checkbox"/>	Somewhat Less Supportive <input type="checkbox"/>	Much Less Supportive <input type="checkbox"/>	Not Sure <input type="checkbox"/>
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**12. Do you have any other comments on your district's School Readiness Coordinator?**

## Appendix G: Early Care and Education Provider Survey

<b>Name:</b>	
<b>Title:</b>	
<b>Organization:</b>	

<b>1. Are you aware of personnel at your local school district who are charged with school readiness activities (preparing children to start kindergarten and preparing schools to accept incoming kindergartners)?</b>	Yes <input type="checkbox"/>	No <input type="checkbox"/>	Not Sure <input type="checkbox"/>
<b>2. In your opinion, does your local school district consider preschool an important part of a child's educational experience?</b>	Yes <input type="checkbox"/>	No <input type="checkbox"/>	Not Sure <input type="checkbox"/>
<b>3. Do you feel like the district's support for preschool has increased or decreased over the past 5 years?</b>	Increased <input type="checkbox"/>	Stayed the Same <input type="checkbox"/>	Decreased <input type="checkbox"/> Not Sure <input type="checkbox"/>
<b>4. As far as you know does your local school district sponsor any activities or programs focused on preparing children to start kindergarten?</b>	Yes <input type="checkbox"/>	No <input type="checkbox"/>	Not Sure <input type="checkbox"/>
<b>5. In your opinion, is your local school district effective in its work to increase the readiness of children to start kindergarten?</b>	Yes <input type="checkbox"/>	No <input type="checkbox"/>	Not Sure <input type="checkbox"/>

<b>6a. Has anybody from your organization participated in any school district sponsored trainings on early childhood education or school readiness?</b>	Yes <input type="checkbox"/>	No <input type="checkbox"/>	Not Sure <input type="checkbox"/>
<b>6b. If so, did you find these trainings helpful in your work?</b>	Yes <input type="checkbox"/>	No <input type="checkbox"/>	Not Sure <input type="checkbox"/>
<b>6c. If not, have you been invited to these trainings, but not attended?</b>	Yes <input type="checkbox"/>	No <input type="checkbox"/>	Not Sure <input type="checkbox"/>
<b>6d. If invited but not attended, why did you not attend?</b>	Inconvenient <input type="checkbox"/>	Not Interested <input type="checkbox"/>	Other (please list below) <input type="checkbox"/>

<b>7a. Has anybody from your organization participated in any school district sponsored meetings on school readiness or the transition from preschool to kindergarten?</b>	Yes <input type="checkbox"/>	No <input type="checkbox"/>	Not Sure <input type="checkbox"/>
<b>7b. If so, did you find these meetings useful?</b>	Yes <input type="checkbox"/>	No <input type="checkbox"/>	Not Sure <input type="checkbox"/>
<b>7c. If not, have you been invited to these meetings, but not attended?</b>	Yes <input type="checkbox"/>	No <input type="checkbox"/>	Not Sure <input type="checkbox"/>
<b>7d. If invited but not attended, why did you not attend?</b>	Inconvenient <input type="checkbox"/>	Not Interested <input type="checkbox"/>	Other (please list below) <input type="checkbox"/>

<b>8. In your opinion, is it part of your organization's responsibility to prepare the children in your care to start kindergarten?</b>	Yes <input type="checkbox"/>	No <input type="checkbox"/>	Not Sure <input type="checkbox"/>
<b>9. Has anybody from your local school district communicated with you what skills or knowledge they expect children to have when they start kindergarten?</b>	Yes <input type="checkbox"/>	No <input type="checkbox"/>	Not Sure <input type="checkbox"/>
<b>10. Do you feel like you know how to prepare the children in your care to be ready to start kindergarten?</b>	Yes <input type="checkbox"/>	No <input type="checkbox"/>	Not Sure <input type="checkbox"/>
<b>11. In your opinion, how could the district help you to better prepare the children in your care to start kindergarten?</b>			
<b>12. Do you have any other comments on your local school district's role in supporting you or your work – things you think they are doing well, not doing well, or could do better:</b>			

**Appendix H: Parent Survey**

**1) As far as you know, does your local elementary school offer programs for children ages 0 to 5 or their parents?**

- Yes
- No
- I'm not sure

**2) Please let us know about the kinds of programs that you are interested in and the kinds that you have attended:**

	<b>I would like my local school to organize this type of program:</b>	<b>I have attended this type of program:</b>
<b>Classes to help me get my child ready for kindergarten.</b>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
<b>Classes to help me keep my child healthy.</b>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
<b>Classes for me and my child to go to together.</b>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
<b>Programs or events about social and health services available for me and my child.</b>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
<b>Meetings about my child starting kindergarten.</b>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
<b>Other types of programs Please list here:</b>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

**3) How do you usually hear about the programs that you attend (including this one)?**

- From my child's preschool teacher or a flyer from the preschool
- From my local elementary school
- From another parent
- From the newspaper, TV, or radio
- Another way (please list here)

**4) About how many programs have you attended in the past year?**

- More than 10
- 6 to 10
- 3 to 5
- 1 or 2
- None, except for this one
- I'm not sure

**5) If you have not attended any programs except for this one, why is that?**

- I hadn't heard about any other events
- I wasn't interested
- The times were inconvenient for me
- Lack of transportation
- Lack of child care
- Another reason (please list here)

**6) Have you used the things that you learned during these programs or events?**

- Yes
- No
- I'm not sure
- This is the first event I have attended

**7) Have you seen positive changes in your child or your family as a result of things that you learned during these programs or events?**

- Yes
- No
- I'm not sure
- This is the first event I have attended

---

**If you have the time, please share more of your thoughts:**

**1) What about the programs or events made them useful to you?**

**2) What else could your local elementary school do to help you make sure that your child is ready to start kindergarten?**