Transition to Kindergarten

Transition Plan During a Period of Physical Distancing (Short Term Example)

This is an example of a transition plan to support the transition to kindergarten after a period of physical distancing, with only a few weeks leading up to the start of school.

Step 1: Assess your partnership — Identify committee team members and their affiliations. Designate a leader.

Committee Members:

	Affiliation:
Hannah Rudolph	*school principal*
Sonia Chavez	*kindergarten teacher*
David Lewis	*parent - volunteer coach*
Adriana Chavez	*early childhood educator*
Vishnu Arunachlem	*Head Start–education manager*

Designated Leader: *Vishnu Arunachlem*

Step 2: Identify goals — Fill in goals for your transition team below.

1. *Foster connection and relationship building between children/families and their receiving schools/teachers.*
2. *Help families prepare their children for kindergarten with only a short time leading up to the start of school.*
3. *Help teachers prepare to receive children/families by getting them the key information they need to respond to strengths and support needs.*

Step 3: Assess what's happening now — On page 2, complete the matrix with current transition activities practiced in your community, deciding what type of connection it fosters and the focus of the activity. You may have some blank boxes.

Step 4: Identify and evaluate data on current practices — Complete the last column of the matrix with evidence you have that practices are or are not working.

Type of connection	Sharing information	Building relational supports	Fostering alignment between settings	Evaluation (Step 4)
Child–School	Work with receiving K principals to share a video introduction along with images or a short video tour of the school. Mail or have a pick-up site for printed versions.	Receiving K teachers send a short video and letter welcoming children to the class. At the start of school, teachers connect incoming children with older 'mentor' children that can help to orient the incoming children to the school and routines.	Hold a virtual meeting the school and family to assess the child's level of school readiness after a period of physical distancing, so K teachers can align beginning of year expectations, classroom supports, and curriculum.	Children have all met their teacher in person, virtually or via a video recording and report feeling excited about going to kindergarten. Teachers report feeling ready to receive children and have necessary supports in place.
Family–School	Email families the documents needed to register for kindergarten and mail printed copies. Receiving schools have paperwork and registration stations set up on site to register families for K on the first day of school, if necessary.	Receiving school holds a virtual family orientation for incoming students before kindergarten starts, so families can get to know their children's teachers. If time allows prior to the start of school, ECEs connect families from the child's program to other families transitioning to the same school (via an email strand or virtual community space.) At the start of school, receiving teachers connect families to first grade (K alumni) families.	ECEs email/text links to online learning sites and mail a packet of printed activities to do with children prior to their kindergarten year while in a periodof social isolation. ECEs share a link to an "Introducing Me" packet for families to fill out and mail or bring in hand to the start of school.	All families are registered by the first day of school and have either met in person or virtually or received a video introduction from their child's new teacher and principal.
School–School	ECEs call receiving school teachers discuss children's strengths and support needs.	ECEs reach out to teachers to make introductions or re-connect if a relationship is already established (before asking what information the teachers need and getting it to them.)		Kindergarten teachers report feeling well-informed about where children are and what individual children's needs are when they enter school.
Community–School				

Step 5: Plan and prioritize — Reevaluate your goals, create new ones if necessary, and plan steps to take. Brainstorm up to four activities that could either address areas in need or intensify areas already focused on. Consider the type of connection, type of activity, when in the year it would occur, who needs to be involved to make it happen, possible barriers, and who is responsible for follow-up.

Revised/refined activities and goals (if necessary):

1. _Narrow in on the key ways to strengthen the relationship between each child/family and their new school/teacher._

2. _Help families determine the key ways that they can support children's readiness for K with only a few weeks leading up to the start of school_

3. _Help teachers prepare to receive children/families by getting them the key information they need to respond to strengths and support needs._

Goal addressed	Type of connection and activity	Transition activity	When does activity occur?	Who needs to be involved?	Possible barriers and solutions	Who is responsible for follow–up?
1	Family–School (information sharing, relationship building) Community–School (building relational supports) Child–School (building relational supports)	Work with receiving teachers/principals to record a short video welcoming children and families with a brief tour of the school/K classrooms.	As soon as possible	Receiving school teachers/ leaders	Making sure it is accessible to all families.	Vishnu and Hannah will work together to get video recorded and to families. Adriana and Sonia will work together to get video recorded and to families
2	Family-School (fostering alignment)	Provide each family with key resources from ECLKC: _Your Child Is Going to Kindergarten: Making the Move Together_ and _Selected Children's Books About Kindergarten_ along with an option to pick up 2 board books from the list.	As soon as possible	ECEs	Securing a pick up site and a complete phone/ email list for families	Adriana will work with Vishnu to get resources out to families
3	School–School (fostering alignment between settings Program-School (fostering alignment and building relationships)	Have a collaborative phone conversation with each child's receiving teacher and family to share key info about child's strengths and support needs coming into school.	As soon as possible	ECEs and K teachers	Logistics of getting everyone on the phone at the same time for each child.	Adriana and Sonia will work together to schedule calls with families and receiving teachers.

Key Resources — From these resources, pull out the key practices and activities that are feasible to do or support remotely.

- *Building Bridges Videos:* Families Engaging in the TTK, Educators Supporting the TTK, Leaders Supporting the TTK
- *Healthy Children are Ready to Learn*
- *Leadership Practices for Successful TTK*
- *Selected Children's Books About Kindergarten*
- *Supporting Children who are DLLs*
- *Supporting Children with IEPs*
- *Transition Resources for Families*
- *Transition to Kindergarten: Partnering With Families and Schools simulation*
- *TTK Activity Calendar for Families*
- *Your Child Is Going to Kindergarten: Making the Move Together*

Guiding Questions — Consider these questions when planning and using resources to support children and families' transition to K during or soon after a period of physical distancing.

- Which practices/activities can I do remotely?
- How can I be creative about getting information to families?
  - » Phone / Teleconference
  - » Email
  - » Social media/community platforms
  - » Printed materials - via pick-up sites/mail
  - » Community outreach

- Which practices will have the greatest impact on strengthening relationships?
  - » Between program and school leaders?
  - » Between children/families and their new school/teacher?
  - » Between early childhood educators and school teachers?

- Which practices will have the greatest impact on the success of
  - » ALL children and families?
  - » Children who are DLLs?
  - » Children with IEPs?

- What information can be shared with families, schools, and Head Start educators that will have the greatest impact on teacher's readiness to receive and support children at the start of school?