

SUPPORTING THE TRANSITION TO KINDERGARTEN IN NEVADA

A Guide for Ensuring Equitable, Coordinated,
and Sustainable Programming for Young Children
Entering Elementary School



EducationCounsel
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Table of Contents

Table of Contents	2
Section 1: Introduction and Purpose	3
Section 2: Planning for Successful Kindergarten Transitions	4
Phase I: Build a Team and a Plan	4
Phase II: Implement Activities	6
Phase III: Evaluate and Adapt	12
Section 3: Implementing Your Plan	14
Appendix A: One-Year Change in Nevada Public School Enrollment by District, SY20-21	23
Appendix B: Transition Team Worksheet	24
Appendix C: Sample Transition Team Work Plan	25
Appendix D: Publicly Available Data Sources for Evaluating Transition Activities and Impact	26
Appendix E: Overview of Federal Funding Programs	27
Appendix F: Other National & NV Specific Resources to Support Kindergarten Transition Work	31

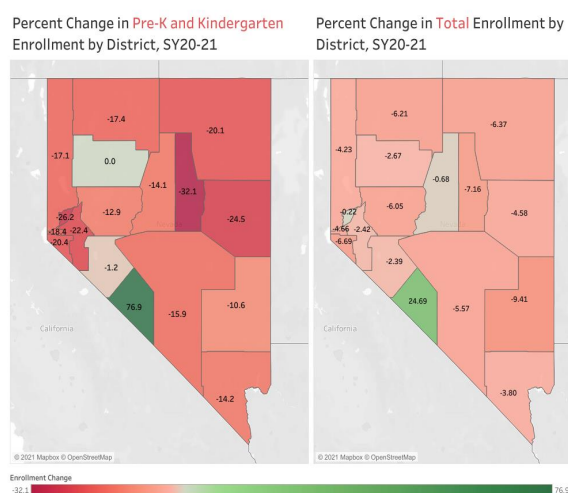
Section 1: Introduction and Purpose

Young children experience transitions on a near-daily basis, but none may loom as large for children and their families than the shift from early childhood settings into kindergarten. This guide -- developed by the Nevada Department of Education with the support of EducationCounsel and input from a number of local school administrators, teachers, and early childhood professionals -- intends to support schools and school districts as they plan through the uncertainty that comes with the first day of kindergarten in 2021 and beyond. Considerable [research](#) suggests that school districts that focus on and invest in activities to support kindergarten transitions benefit in both the short- and long-run. Children are better prepared to hit the ground running in kindergarten, and inequities are [reduced](#) throughout elementary school for populations of children who have been historically underserved. Teachers in districts and schools that offer robust support for new kindergarteners also report [higher levels of satisfaction](#) with the readiness of new children and their abilities to connect with children from low-income families.

Although this guide was written during the context of the Covid-19 pandemic, key recommendations and strategies for supporting children through kindergarten transitions will continue to be a priority far beyond current circumstances. The economic and social disruptions caused by Covid-19 have exposed inequities and inefficiencies, and kindergarten cohorts in the Fall of 2021 and for years afterward will enter school having experienced significant hardship. As indicated in the graphic to the right, sharp enrollment declines in pre-K and kindergarten suggest that a large number of children in early grades may not have had any formal education experiences for the prior 18 months.¹

With sufficient planning and resources, school districts can ensure that all young children experience positive and seamless transitions to kindergarten. This guide provides a number of tips and best practices to support district-wide planning initiatives around kindergarten transitions. Section 2 focuses on building and maintaining local transition working groups and coordinating efforts across often disconnected providers and social service agencies. Section 3 then builds on the types of transition activities set out in the prior section by identifying specific federal funding streams and partners that local education agencies can tap to implement their transition plans. The guide also includes several appendices for districts to use as they assemble teams, plan for and implement activities, and evaluate existing programs.

¹ The graphic included in-text and in Appendix A maps SY20-21 enrollment by Nevada districts,



showing the outsized impact of declines in enrolled Pre-K and K students on overall public school enrollment.

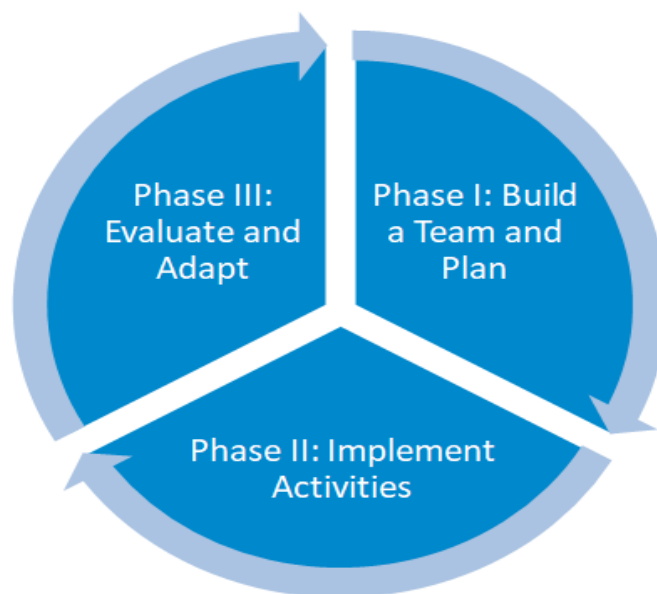
Section 2: Planning for Successful Kindergarten Transitions

The first day of kindergarten can feel overwhelming and confusing for children and their families, and the shift from a well-known home or child care setting to an elementary school will always take some adjustment. However, effective planning and coordination well in advance of a child's first day can significantly improve academic and social-emotional development throughout the kindergarten year and the early grades. Schools and school districts, educators, child care providers, families, pediatricians, and social service agencies each play critical roles in kindergarten transitions and readiness. When all are aligned around a shared plan for supporting transitions, new kindergarteners can focus more on meeting their teacher and new classmates, and less on the chaos of transition occurring around them.

Planning for kindergarten transition should be a *continuous, inclusive, and nimble* process. This section of the guide identifies several activities school districts and their partners can take throughout the academic year to ensure that four- and five-year-olds -- and their families -- are prepared for successful transitions to and experiences in kindergarten. The graphic below depicts this process as cyclical: regularly in need of revision and incorporation of new ideas and new voices. Actual timing of each phase can vary throughout the year, but some suggested timelines are included below.

Phase I: Build a Team and a Plan

Suggested Timing: ASAP → March before transition



Phase I. A. Build a Team

Regardless of what time of year your district is beginning to think about the kindergarteners who will enroll in the next school year, you should begin to assemble a transition team if you do not already have one. Transition teams are critical for identifying areas of strength and weakness in

transition activities, ensuring continuity of services, and effectively engaging with families and new kindergarteners. District and school-level staff should convene the group regularly (e.g., at least once per month) especially when it is initially formed, but meeting cadence can be adjusted once plans are in place and team relationships strengthen over time.

Composition of your transition team may change throughout the year as new priorities emerge, but recommended core team members include representatives from the groups identified below.² (A worksheet with recommended representatives is available for use in Appendix B.) Although this guide is primarily geared toward the development of district-wide transition teams, leadership of individual schools should also consider creating their own school-based transition teams with equivalents to the stakeholders identified below to ensure that district-level work is implemented effectively at the school level.

- District administrators (e.g., Superintendent and/or Deputy Superintendents, Chief Academic Officer, Chief Financial Officer, elementary school building supervisors, data and accountability staff)
- Individual school administrators (e.g., Principals and/or designees, kindergarten teachers, Title I staff, counselors, family engagement professionals, IDEA coordinators)
- Pre-K Administrator, Kindergarten Coordinator/Teacher, and/or Literacy Coach
- Local Head Start programs
- Faith-based and/or private child care providers
- Home-visiting programs
- Community institutions (e.g., child care resource & referral agencies, libraries or institutions of higher education)
- McKinney-Vento liaisons
- Social service providers (e.g., Medicaid/CHIP administrator, local housing assistance staff, public transportation)
- Community leaders (e.g., City/County council members, nonprofit leaders)
- Families, parents, and PTA/PTO leaders

Ensuring that most or all of the identified groups are involved in transition planning is vital to the success of local initiatives. Participation should not be symbolic or passive. Instead, each representative invited to serve on a school or district's transition team should be actively involved, with support and encouragement from team leaders. Team leaders are the bridge between all partners, responsible for ensuring communication and collaboration.

Building this bridge begins by clearly communicating to partners the purpose of the team: **to maximize collective impact by leveraging, connecting, and expanding the programs that already exist to support young children and their families.**

² Source: [Georgia Department of Education](#)

Phase I. B. Assess Current Transition Activities and Plan for the Fall

As team leaders reach out to possible team members, they should simultaneously identify a transition self-assessment tool and begin the first steps of taking stock of current transition activities. A number of self-assessment tools exist for this purpose, and team leaders can select an existing one from those listed below, or create a variation of their own given local priorities:

- [New York State's Tool to Assess the Effectiveness of Transitions from Pre-K to K](#)
- [Massachusetts Self-Assessment Tool](#)
- [Illinois Birth through Third Grade Self-Assessment and Action Planning Guide](#)

As a part of outreach to future transition team members, leaders should also request any materials and plans from partner organizations related to current activities in support of kindergarten readiness and transition. This could be accomplished through a brief survey prompting partners to upload any links or descriptions of existing programs, materials, or supports related to professional development, data-sharing, child assessment, family engagement, etc. Team leaders can then compile all existing resources within overarching buckets of transition activities, including attention to issues of equity, in order to drive conversation and identify any duplication or gaps at a team kickoff meeting.

To build shared momentum and buy-in among team members, the initial transition team meeting should produce a concrete, comprehensive action plan for supporting new kindergarteners in the next school year.³ Actual timing can vary, but action plans should be developed and shared by the spring semester prior to the start of the new academic year. Action plans should also include a broad vision, collection of current transition activities each team member is already engaged in, and a set of activities with measurable goals the team will pursue in the short- and long-term. Local leaders can use any action plan models that work for them, but Appendix C includes a template district and school teams could look to and adapt as a starting point.

Phase II: Implement Activities

Suggested Timing: April before transition → April after transition

This section of the transition guide is organized using a framework for coordination in transition planning and implementation from the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services' Administration for Children and Families (ACF). ACF identifies [four primary types of connections](#) through which local transition teams can support children as they enter kindergarten:

1. Child-School Connections;
2. Family-School Connections;
3. Program-School Connections; and
4. Community-School Connections.⁴

³ This [resource](#) from the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services offers clear guidance and best practices for coordinating an initial transition summit or kickoff meeting.

⁴ Source: [HHS ACF, 2020](#).

Coordination is the central component of each of the transition activities identified below. Local context can and should influence the actual implementation of work plans, but all transition teams need effective collaboration to be successful. ACF's framework also centers the school as the glue for connecting the web of local partners. In a time of major changes in a young child's life, the stability and familiarity of a school or central hub is critical for ensuring new experiences are positive.

Special Considerations for Rural Districts

Although this guide was primarily developed to apply regardless of geographic context, rural school districts face unique challenges and can consider the following activities for ensuring that all children are prepared for and supported through kindergarten:

- Significant pre-K slots can be [added in rural districts](#) that serve large migrant populations by deploying the right mix of Migrant Education Program (MEP), Title I, and other state or local funds, as well as through coordination with existing Head Start or child care providers.
- Family Child Care providers or representatives from Family Child Care Networks should be heavily involved in the work of rural transition teams, and districts should consider formalizing coordination agreements with FCC networks similar to those they are required to have with Head Start providers.
- [Research](#) shows deliberate focus on family engagement is especially important in rural districts. As rural localities grow increasingly diverse and see rising numbers of dual-language learners, outreach strategies that are [culturally responsive](#) and linguistically accessible to families are critical.
- For the early grades, district leaders can use [home-visiting models](#) as a wedge for engaging with parents early on, a strategy that has shown lasting [positive benefits](#) for child development throughout elementary school.

Phase II. A. Transition Activities Related to Child-School Connections

The developmental, academic, and social-emotional needs of individual children experiencing transition should be centered throughout planning and implementation phases. Local transition teams can help foster connections between children and their new schools in various ways:

- In advance of the first day of school, support principals and school leaders in creating opportunities for children to meet and connect with their kindergarten teachers. Districts can provide small stipends or bonuses could be provided to kindergarten teachers who visit Head Start, state Pre-K, and other child care classrooms during planning periods or after school to form relationships with future students. Events could also occur at community centers or spaces that young children may be familiar with already.⁵

⁵ This [resource](#) from Head Start provides tips and best practices for planning kindergarten registration events.

- Provide annual funding to schools to bring four-year-olds from various providers in the community to visit their new schools and meet future teachers on field trips during the school day. Funding could be variable so that schools expecting significant enrollment spikes or that serve large populations of low-income students receive more support from the district.
- Encourage transition team partners to find ways to ease children into future kindergarten routines. The district might incentivize this through joint professional development opportunities for kindergarten teachers and child care providers. Normalizing new routines in early childhood classrooms can help set expectations for children about the school day in the new year. Districts could support this work by relying on existing local best practices, offering grants to child care providers proposing or implementing curriculum focused on routines and kindergarten expectations.
- Consider establishing formal Memoranda of Understanding (MOUs) between schools and home-visiting programs as a leverage point for socializing out-of-school kindergarten routines with young children.
- Create or expand summer programs for children in the summer prior to kindergarten. Summer might also be a time when kindergarten teachers could use additional funding to visit programs to help orient incoming students, or do home visits and professional development.

Specialized Supports for Young Children with Disabilities During Kindergarten Transitions

In addition to the more universal activities described above for supporting transitioning students, local teams should consider targeted approaches and systems for children with disabilities. Much of this work can be achieved through established avenues for screening young children for disabilities and developing Individual Education Plans (IEPs). Districts should seek to establish [formal MOUs and service coordination agreements](#) with all Head Start, state Pre-K, and other private child care providers within attendance zones to collaborate on the following activities:

- Referral and evaluation processes;
- Service coordination (e.g., special education, speech or occupational therapy, etc.);
- Least restrictive environment/reduction of dual enrollment;
- Participation in the development of the IEP plan; and
- Implementation of the IEP.

Specific [transition services](#) for this group of children can vary, but some for consideration by the transition team include:

- Ensure robust participation of families, teachers, school support staff, etc. in summer annual IEP meetings.
- In addition to any welcome letters sent out to new parents, schools and districts should coordinate on more tailored follow-up letters for parents of new kindergarteners with disabilities.
- Children who are identified as having a disability during screening processes should be assigned to district staff for observation while they are still in preschool, allowing district support staff to add context about services needed to any discussion between early childhood and new kindergarten teachers.

Phase II. B. Transition Activities Related to Family-School Connections

Relationships with adults -- especially parents and guardians -- are vital for healthy child development and navigation of new experiences in early years. For children to be as prepared as possible for the start of kindergarten, it is important for families to also be engaged and aware of expectations for the new year. Transition teams can consider the following activities to build relationships between families, schools, and other critical partners:

- Prioritize early kindergarten enrollment and make teacher assignments as quickly as possible. This will allow kindergarten teachers to connect well in advance of the first day of school with parents by phone, email, or in-person.
- Publish guidance recommending that schools hold parent and family engagement activities at times when working families can attend and provide child-friendly activities and food. Central office district staff could work with individual school clusters to administer surveys or analyze local workforce data to determine when and how best to host such events.
- Encourage parent and family outreach activities that take place during the summer for families transitioning from early childhood programs to school.
- Require that parent and family engagement resources be available in languages that reflect the community served by the school. Districts can support quick rollout of accessible outreach materials by providing translation and other services to school staff publishing materials.
- Provide stipends to parent and family ambassadors to welcome new families and provide information and resources -- either by word of mouth or through formal parent-parent conferences and events. Districts and schools can also host training events for parents willing to serve as new parent liaisons.
- Establish school pilot programs or district-wide teams for partnering with other agencies and community partners that make regular contact with parents of young children (e.g., health care providers, social workers, etc.) to facilitate introductions between teachers, school administrators, and parents.
- Gather feedback from parents, teachers, and other partners about each transition activity and whether it was effective in order to continue to improve the process from year to year.

Effective Family Engagement: Examples from Washoe County

During periods of virtual instruction during the Covid-19 pandemic, the Washoe County School District made a concerted effort to connect with parents through a series of short videos and engagement sessions to set expectations about kindergarten and publicize enrollment processes. Examples of recent videos include:

- [What Does Kindergarten Look Like in Washoe County School District?](#)
- [Questions About Kindergarten Enrollment with the Staff of Agnes Risley Elementary School](#)
- [Supporting Positive Behavior and Education at Home](#)

The series builds on brief promotional videos the district releases regularly regarding kindergarten transitions (see the 'First Day of Kindergarten' series from [2017](#) and [2018](#)). Planning long-term, coordinated family engagement strategies like this can help districts and local transition teams better prepare for future periods of uncertainty.

Phase II. C. Transition Activities Related to Program-School Connections

Under federal law, school districts receiving Title I funds are already required to enter into formal coordination agreements or MOUs with local Head Start agencies to ease transitions of children between Head Start and kindergarten classrooms. Broadening these links between school districts and early childhood providers in the community at large are important tools for improving kindergarten transitions. For each of the activities below, formal MOUs or legal agreements between districts and providers are often the most effective tools for systematic change throughout a district:

- Develop a district-wide [data-sharing agreement](#) with local early childhood providers in all elementary school attendance zones for the district. The agreement should include specific procedures and timelines for transferring child health, developmental screening, and other records with processes for parents to provide consent as needed.
- Through the transition team, districts can take stock of the types of assessment and screening tools used by child care providers to work to align district assessment policy in grades K-2 with that in the local early childhood landscape.
- The district can host and subsidize joint professional development opportunities for pre-K and early childhood educators to participate in with kindergarten teachers.
- Districts can hire full- or part-time staff members in the central office or to serve specific school clusters as a tool for building and managing relationships between elementary schools and early childhood providers.
- Establish working groups within the transition team for district office staff, teachers, and child care providers to meet regularly throughout the spring and summer to align curriculum objectives across four- and five-year-old classrooms to create aligned learning experiences across settings and move toward more [developmentally appropriate kindergarten programs](#).
- Collaborate with district [MTSS](#) Teams to support social emotional learning, including the use of PBIS and [Pyramid Model practices](#).
- Provide additional funds to support connections between schools designated for improvement and their major child care feeders.

Developing Coordination Agreements to Support Transitions

The Every Student Succeeds Act (ESSA) requires local education agencies (LEAs) and Head Start grantees to develop a memorandum of understanding (MOU) to ensure collaboration and continuity of policies and practices. MOUs can be powerful tools for supporting young children as they transition from early childhood settings to kindergarten, especially if reach is expanded beyond just Head Start classrooms to broader pre-K and child care providers. Sample MOUs are provided by a number of districts and state agencies nationwide, including:

- [North Carolina's LEA/Head Start Coordination Guidance](#)
- [Illinois' Sample MOU for Head Start Grantees and pre-K providers](#)
- [District of Columbia's Sample MOU with Head Start agencies](#)
- [Current MOU between Peoria Unified School District \(AZ\) and local Head Start grantee](#)

Phase II. D. Transition Activities Related to Community-School Connections

In supporting transitions, school districts should also consider the out-of-school needs of young children and their families. This can occur through the support of a variety of partners and be tailored toward local needs:

- Connect with and create data-sharing agreements with public housing agencies and other housing providers in the community. This is also an avenue through which districts can conduct family engagement, host kindergarten enrollment events, etc. The U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development has multiple [resources](#) on best practices for district-housing authority data-sharing agreements, most notably [this toolkit and guide](#).
- Partner regularly with McKinney-Vento liaisons to streamline services for identifying and serving children and families experiencing homelessness.
- Recommend that central office and school staff regularly attend meetings of the state or local Continuum of Care, a network for identifying and coordinating services for individuals and families experiencing homelessness. This is a common form of partnership between school districts and homeless prevention agencies [nationwide](#).
- Provide financial assistance to families of new kindergarteners who may be at risk of housing insecurity, with one time or recurring grants for rent or utility bills. The Tacoma (WA) Housing Authority's [Elementary School Housing Assistance Program](#) is a highly effective partnership providing housing vouchers to parents of new elementary schoolers that districts could adapt and learn from given their own local context.
- Partner with Head Start and other community agencies to identify health care providers to administer developmental assessments and screenings, as well as vision, hearing, and dental screenings.
- Partner with a local law firm or volunteer lawyers association to provide free legal counsel to parents of new students who may be facing eviction or housing insecurity. Information on this type of assistance could be provided when families complete kindergarten registration.⁶
- Develop MOUs with local social service agencies that families may interact with regularly to co-host kindergarten readiness and registration events with food banks, community health providers, etc.
- Create a parent leadership network for grassroots family engagement and word-of-mouth communication about the importance of transitions. Such networks exist in many states across the country (including [Oregon](#), [Louisiana](#), [Michigan](#), [Iowa](#), and [West Virginia](#)) and can be powerful tools for bridging traditional divides between early childhood and K-12 sectors. Consider providing stipends to parents for participation in such activities.
- Consider hiring staff or developing a stand-alone community partnerships office within the district to manage relationships with community-based organizations.

⁶ [Standing With Our Neighbors](#), a partnership between the Atlanta Volunteer Lawyers Foundation and Atlanta Public Schools, is a potential model for designing such a program.

Forming Community Partnerships to Support Children Experiencing Homelessness

Housing insecurity complicates the transition process immensely and can significantly worsen inequities over time for young children who are already experiencing hardship. Requirements of school districts through the federal McKinney-Vento Homeless Assistance Act ensure that every local education agency has a liaison for supporting children and families within districts who are currently or at-risk of experiencing homelessness. Supporting these district staff with [relevant coordination agreements and resources](#) can bolster a district's ability to better identify and serve children:

- Conduct outreach to homeless shelters and request that all conduct early childhood [self-assessments](#).
- Examine data on housing insecurity and types of homelessness with the transition team to increase collective understanding of areas of specific need throughout the community. Through this process, transition teams should focus specifically on extended-stay hotels and motels as possible hubs of housing insecure families.
- Conduct outreach to the local public housing authority and local community development agencies to explore possible [data-sharing agreements](#) and other coordination activities.
- Consider processes for supporting mid-year or non-traditional transitions to kindergarten for children who may change schools throughout the year because of housing displacement.
- Offer priority to children experiencing homelessness for any before- or after-school services.

Phase III: Evaluate and Adapt

Suggested Timing: October → February

Phase III. A. Evaluate Transition Activities

Although suggested timing for Phase III of a transition team's work is fall through early spring -- after most Phase II activities have been implemented -- it is critical to build processes and plans for evaluating activities ahead of time. Teams should be thinking about ways to evaluate success and achievement of goals while they are designing work plans for supporting transitions.

District assessment and accountability staff can be critical in this work by providing technical assistance to transition teams on best practices for evaluating new initiatives. Especially as transition teams roll out activities for the first time, they may want to consider conducting pre- and post-intervention surveys to gauge impressions of success from children, teachers and staff, parents, and community members. This information can provide insight beyond evaluation using traditional measures of kindergarten readiness and child development. Screening and assessment are also critical, though, and district and school leaders should consider ways in which to systematize which formative assessments are used in pre-K and kindergarten classrooms to ensure that data is reliable and consistent throughout the transition period.

Transition teams should also periodically conduct analyses of local employment, housing, health, and other trends to understand areas of emerging strength or concern. By understanding the full

landscape of child and family welfare in the community, local teams can regularly find new and innovative ways to leverage public resources and ensure that time and resources are spent on the most prominent inhibitors to successful transitions. Appendix D provides several publicly available neighborhood-, city-, and county-specific data sources that may be useful in this work.

Phase III. B. Adapt for Next Year

Once the evaluation stage is complete, the full transition team should meet for an annual or semi-annual summit on transitions. This is an opportunity to revisit goals and local work plans before refining activities to support the next class of kindergarteners. Especially after the first year of formal, coordinated transition activities, the work plan should be updated with a focus on the development of goals that are measurable and realistic.

Section 3: Implementing Your Plan

Local teams can put forward creative and collaborative solutions for easing kindergarten transitions, but these efforts will only go so far without consideration of the financial resources and planning required to implement activities. Luckily for districts, the Every Student Succeeds Act (ESSA) includes significant language around coordination between early childhood and K-12 systems. ESSA also identifies transitions as a critical first step for building bridges between the two sectors.

This section is primarily organized around Figure 1 below, which identifies allowable use of federal education funds to support the transition activities included in Section 2. Figure 1 is organized to coincide with the framework presented in Section 2, first presenting Child-School activities, followed by Family-School, Program-School, and lastly Community-School. The “Federal Funds for Use” column in Figure 1 uses abbreviations and shorthand for federal education programs. Full descriptions of each program included in this table can be found in Appendix E, *Overview of Federal Funding Programs*.

Figure 1. Allowable Use of Federal Funds to Support Transition Activities

Phase	Activity	Federal Funds for Use	Key Partners
II. A.	Provide bonuses or stipends to K teachers for meetings with children prior to the first day of kindergarten	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● ESSA (Title I) ● CARES (k-12) ● CRRSA (k-12) ● ARP (k-12) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● School district leaders ● Community based child care, including Head Start programs, private child care, and family child care homes
II. A.	Support events for transitioning students to attend	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● CCDBG (quality funds), ESSA (Title I, family engagement) ● Head Start ● CARES (CCDBG, k-12) ● CRRSA (CCDBG, k-12) ● ARP (CCDBG, k-12) ● McKinney-Vento (for families experiencing 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● School district leaders ● Community based child care, including Head Start programs, private child care, and family child care homes ● Libraries ● Health care providers ● County/city child care intake agencies ● Child care resource and referral agencies

Phase	Activity	Federal Funds for Use	Key Partners
		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> homelessness) • IDEA • MEP 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Child Find • Early intervention staff • Migrant Education program staff
II. A.	Provide annual funding to schools to host field trips from various child care providers to meet future teachers and see new classrooms.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • CCDBG (quality funds), ESSA (Title I, family engagement) • CARES (CCDBG, k-12) • CRRSA (CCDBG, k-12) • ARP (CCDBG, k-12) • Head Start 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • School district leaders • Community based child care, including Head Start programs, private child care, and family child care homes • Libraries • Health care providers • County/city child care intake agencies • Child care resource and referral agencies
II. A.	Include a focus on kindergarten routines and expectations in any joint professional development activities for K teachers and early childhood educators.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • ESSA (Title II) • ESSA (Title III for children who are ELL) • CARES (k-12) • CRRSA (k-12) • ARP (k-12) • Head Start • CCDBG (quality funds) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • School district leaders • Community based child care, including Head Start programs, private child care, and family child care homes
II. A.	Offer grants to child care providers proposing or implementing innovative curriculum around kindergarten expectations.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • ESSA (Title I) • ESSA (Title III for children who are ELL) • CARES (k-12) • CRRSA (k-12) • ARP (k-12) • CCDBG (quality funds) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • School district leaders • Community based child care, including Head Start programs, private child care, and family child care homes • Child care resource and referral agencies

Phase	Activity	Federal Funds for Use	Key Partners
II. A.	Develop MOUs between schools and home-visiting programs to socialize out-of-school kindergarten routines with young children.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● ESSA (Title I) ● CARES (k-12) ● CRRSA (k-12) ● ARP (k-12) ● TANF ● Head Start 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● School district leaders ● Individual school leaders ● Pre-k and k teachers ● Home visiting program coordinators
II. A.	Create or expand summer programs for children in the summer prior to kindergarten.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● ESSA (Title I) ● CARES (k-12) ● CRRSA (k-12) ● ARP (k-12, summer funding set-aside) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● School district leaders ● Community based child care, including Head Start programs, private child care, and family child care homes ● County/city child care intake agencies ● Child care resource and referral agencies
II. B.	Prioritize early kindergarten enrollment and make teacher assignments as quickly as possible.	<i>None needed</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● School district leaders ● Individual school leaders ● Pre-k and k teachers ● Community based child care, including Head Start programs, private child care, and family child care homes
II. B.	Publish district guidance recommending that all schools hold parent and family engagement activities at times when working families can attend.	<p><i>None needed for guidance; funding for activities:</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● ESSA (Title I, family engagement) ● CARES (k-12) ● CRRSA (k-12) ● ARP (k-12) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● School district leaders ● Individual school leaders ● Pre-k and k teachers ● Community based child care, including Head Start programs, private child care, and family child care homes

Phase	Activity	Federal Funds for Use	Key Partners
II. B.	Encourage parent and family outreach activities that take place during the summer.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● ESSA (Title I, family engagement) ● CARES (k-12) ● CRRSA (k-12) ● ARP (k-12) ● MEP 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● School district leaders ● Community based child care, including Head Start programs, private child care, and family child care homes ● Libraries ● Health care providers ● County/city child care intake agencies ● Child care resource and referral agencies ● City/county parks and recreation agencies
II. B.	Require that family engagement resources be available in languages reflective of the community served by the school.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● ESSA (Title I, Title III family engagement) ● CARES (k-12) ● CRRSA (k-12) ● ARP (k-12) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Community groups supporting families in households speaking languages other than English ● School district ELL staff ● Individual school staff ● Community child care providers including Head Start programs, private child care, and family child care homes ● Child care resource and referral agencies
II. B	Provide stipends to parents and family ambassadors to welcome new families and provide information and resources.	<p><i>May need to use local funds</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Head Start 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Community groups supporting families in households speaking languages other than English ● School district ELL staff ● Individual school staff ● Community child care

Phase	Activity	Federal Funds for Use	Key Partners
			providers including Head Start programs, private child care, and family child care homes <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Child care resource and referral agencies
II. B	Train parents of current elementary schoolers on how to serve as new parent liaisons.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● ESSA (Title I, Title III family engagement) ● CARES (k-12) ● CRRSA (k-12) ● ARP (k-12) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Community groups supporting families in households speaking languages other than English ● School district ELL staff ● Individual school staff
II. B	Establish school pilot programs or district-wide teams for partnering with other agencies that regularly make contact with parents of young children to facilitate introductions with new teachers and school leaders.	<i>None needed, but time needed for these activities should be included in determining staff capacity</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● School district leaders ● Community based child care, including Head Start programs, private child care, and family child care homes ● Libraries ● Health care providers ● County/city child care/TANF/Nutrition intake agencies ● Child care resource and referral agencies ● Child Find ● Early intervention staff ● School/district ELL staff ● McKinney-Vento district liaison ● Community agencies supporting families (i.e., Catholic Charities, PEP, Latinx Parent organizations)

Phase	Activity	Federal Funds for Use	Key Partners
II. C.	Develop a district-wide data-sharing agreement with local early childhood providers in all elementary school attendance zones for the district.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● ESSA (Title I) ● CARES (k-12) ● CRRSA (k-12) ● ARP (k-12) ● Head Start 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● School district leaders ● Individual school leaders ● Pre-k and k teachers ● Community based child care, including Head Start programs, private child care, and family child care homes
II. C.	Conduct a landscape analysis of all assessment and screening tools used by child care providers to align district assessment policy.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● ESSA (Title I, school improvement) ● CARES (k-12) ● CRRSA (k-12) ● ARP (k-12) ● Head Start 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● School district leaders ● Individual school leaders ● Pre-k and k teachers ● Community based child care, including Head Start programs, private child care, and family child care homes ● Child care resource and referral agencies ● Early intervention staff
II. C.	Host and subsidize joint professional development opportunities for Pre-K and early childhood educators to participate in with K teachers.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● ESSA (Title II) ● ESSA (Title III for children who are ELL) ● CARES (k-12) ● CRRSA (k-12) ● ARP (k-12) ● Head Start ● CCDBG (quality funds) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● School district leaders ● Community based child care, including Head Start programs, private child care, and family child care homes ● School-based pre-k and kindergarten teachers
II. C.	Hire full- or part-time staff members in the central office or to serve specific school clusters to build and manage relationships between elementary schools and child care providers.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● ESSA (Title I, family engagement) ● CARES (k-12) ● CRRSA (k-12) ● ARP (k-12) ● MEP 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● School district leaders ● Individual school leaders ● Community based child care, including Head Start programs, private child care, and family child care homes

Phase	Activity	Federal Funds for Use	Key Partners
II. C.	Establish working groups within the transition team to review and refine curriculum objectives across four- and five-year-old classrooms.	<p><i>None needed but stipends for teachers can be provided:</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● ESSA (Title II) ● CARES (k-12) ● CRRSA (k-12) ● ARP (k-12) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● All members of transition team ● Community partners (including community based child care partners not participating on transition team)
II. C.	Provide funds to support connections between schools designated for improvement and major child care feeders.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● ESSA (Title I, II, III, IV, school improvement, family engagement) ● CARES (k-12) ● CRRSA (k-12) ● ARP (k-12) ● Head Start 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● School district leaders ● Individual school leaders ● Pre-k and k teachers ● Community based child care, including Head Start programs, private child care, and family child care homes
II. D.	Connect with and create data-sharing agreements with public housing agencies and other housing providers in the community.	<p><i>None needed, but time needed for these activities should be included in determining staff capacity</i></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● School district leaders ● District data, research, and accountability staff ● Local Public Housing Agency staff and/or city/county office of housing or community development
II. D.	Partner regularly with McKinney-Vento liaisons to streamline services for identifying and serving children and families experiencing homelessness.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● McKinney-Vento ● ESSA (parent engagement) ● CARES (k-12) ● CRRSA (k-12) ● ARP (k-12) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● School district leaders ● Community based child care, including Head Start programs, private child care, and family child care homes ● Libraries ● Health care providers ● County/city child care/TANF/Nutrition intake agencies

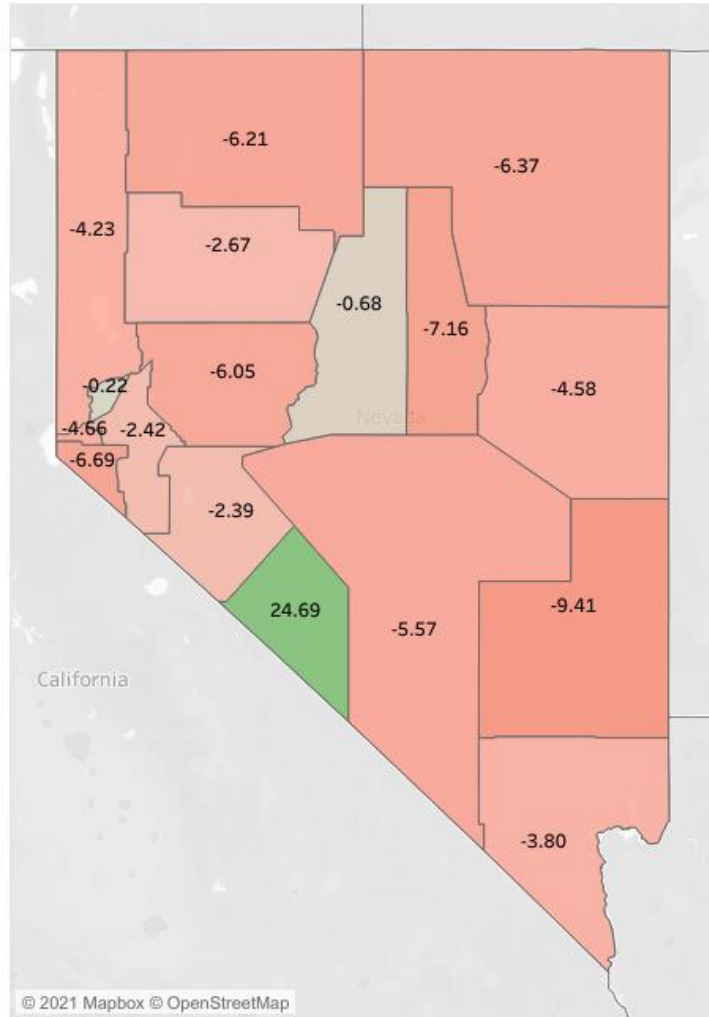
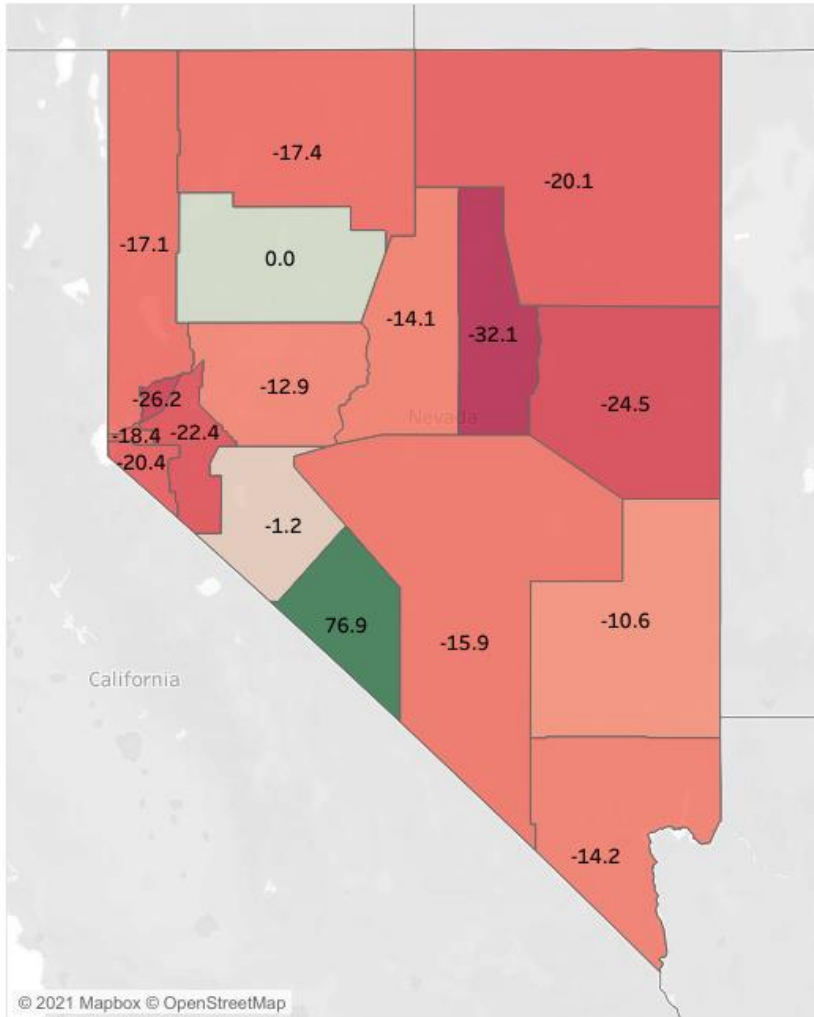
Phase	Activity	Federal Funds for Use	Key Partners
			<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Child care resource and referral agencies ● Child Find ● Early intervention staff ● School/district ELL staff ● McKinney-Vento district liaison ● Community agencies supporting families (i.e., Catholic Charities, PEP, Latinx Parent organizations)
II. D.	Recommend that central office and school staff regularly attend Continuum of Care meetings for identifying and supporting individuals and families experiencing homelessness.	<i>None needed, but time needed for these activities should be included in determining staff capacity.</i>	
II. D.	Provide financial assistance to families of new kindergarteners who may be at risk of housing insecurity.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● TANF 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● County TANF agency ● Local social service agencies
II. D.	Partner with local law firms or volunteer lawyers associations to provide free legal counsel to parents of new students who may be facing eviction or housing insecurity.	<i>None needed, but time needed for these activities should be included in determining staff capacity.</i>	
II. D.	Develop MOUs with local service agencies to co-host kindergarten readiness and registration events.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● CCDBG (quality funds), ● ESSA (Title I, family engagement) ● CARES (CCDBG, k-12) ● CRRSA (CCDBG, k-12) ● ARP (CCDBG, k-12) ● Head Start ● McKinney-Vento ● IDEA 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● School district leaders ● Community based child care, including Head Start programs, private child care, and family child care homes ● Libraries ● Health care providers ● County/city child care intake agencies ● Child care resource and referral agencies ● Early intervention staff

Phase	Activity	Federal Funds for Use	Key Partners
			<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● McKinney-Vento liaison ● Child Find staff
II. D.	Create a parent leadership network for grassroots family engagement about the importance of transitions, and consider providing stipends to families that participate.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Head Start 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● School district leaders ● Community based child care, including Head Start programs, private child care, and family child care homes ● Child care resource and referral agencies ● Migrant families
II. D.	Hire staff or develop a community partnerships office within the district to manage relationships with community-based organizations.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● ESSA (parent engagement) ● CARES (k-12) ● CRRSA (k-12) ● ARP (k-12) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● School district leaders ● Community based child care, including Head Start programs, private child care, and family child care homes ● Libraries ● Health care providers ● County/city child care intake agencies ● Child care resource and referral agencies ● Early intervention staff ● McKinney-Vento liaison ● Child Find staff

Appendix A: One-Year Change in Nevada Public School Enrollment by District, SY20-21

Percent Change in **Pre-K and Kindergarten** Enrollment by District, SY20-21

Percent Change in **Total** Enrollment by District, SY20-21



Appendix B: Transition Team Worksheet

Representative	Team Member (Name/Email)
District administrators (e.g., Superintendent and/or Deputy Superintendents, Chief Academic Officer, Chief Financial Officer, elementary school building supervisors, data and accountability staff)	
School administrators (e.g., principal, kindergarten teachers, Title I staff, counselors, family engagement professionals, IDEA coordinators)	
Pre-K Administrator, Kindergarten Coordinator/Teacher, and /or Literacy Coach	
Head Start	
Faith-based and/or private providers	
Home-visiting programs	
Community institutions (e.g., libraries or institutions of higher education)	
McKinney-Vento liaisons	
Social service providers (e.g., Medicaid/CHIP administrator, local housing assistance staff, public transportation)	
Community leaders (e.g., City/County council members, nonprofit leaders)	
Parent Teacher Association leaders	
Parents	

Appendix C: Sample Transition Team Work Plan

This work plan template can be used by district transition teams to ensure that responsibilities are shared, timelines are met, and resources needed are clear. School level transition teams may also be encouraged to use a similar planning tool. The template is organized by types of transition activities that districts may want to implement to ensure that all elements of transitions are accounted for.

Type	Activity Description	Target Date	Responsible Team Member	Needed Partners	Funding or Resources Needed
Child-School					
Family-School					
Program-School					
Community-School					

Appendix D: Publicly Available Data Sources for Evaluating Transition Activities and Impact

Although not always state-guided or specifically focused on early childhood outcomes, individual communities nationwide are pursuing data- and evidence-driven strategies for improving social service coordination and efficiency. This appendix includes a list of publicly available data sources to support local transition teams in identifying community needs, evaluating activities, and coordinating services.

K-12 Student Achievement and Indicators of School Performance

- Nevada Department of Education's [Accountability Portal](#)
- Stanford's [Educational Opportunity Project](#), which provides information on student achievement and growth over time by school district.

Child Wellbeing

- Nevada Department of Health and Human Services' (DHHS) [dashboard on local use of the Women, Infants, and Children \(WIC\) program](#)
- The DHHS Division of Child and Family Services regularly publishes reports and updates data on its [landing page](#) for reporting around indicators of child welfare.
- Various state- and county-level indicators are available through the Annie E. Casey Foundation's [Kids Count Data Center](#).

Poverty and Employment Trends

- Nevada Department of Employment, Training, and Rehabilitation's [Local Area Unemployment Statistics](#)
- Significant data on poverty, employment patterns, and child and family wellbeing is available through the US Census Bureau's [American Community Survey](#) (ACS). These data can generally be filtered by county, metropolitan area, Census tract, and in some localities, individual neighborhoods.
- [The Opportunity Atlas](#), which provides insight into how poverty and racial demographics influence social mobility by census tract.

Housing and Homelessness

- The Nevada Housing Division compiles state- and county-level data on residential trends and housing affordability through its [Housing Database](#).
- County-level data on eviction rates from Princeton's [Eviction Lab](#)
- Continuum of Care Homeless Populations and Subpopulations reports on [counts of individuals experiencing homelessness](#) and [existing housing inventory](#)

Health Indicators

- DHHS dashboards on [local health indicators](#), [state Medicaid use](#), and [behavioral health caseloads](#)
- [County Health Rankings](#)

Appendix E: Overview of Federal Funding Programs

The overview table in Section 3 of this guide uses shorthand for the many federal education resources available to financially support transition-related activities. This appendix is designed to provide brief overviews of each of the programs with links to additional information that districts can look to for guidance on how to budget for and allocate federal funds.

The vast majority of federal education resources come from the Elementary and Secondary Education Act (ESEA), which was reauthorized by Congress in 2015 as the [Every Student Succeeds Act](#) (ESSA). This law creates and sets policy around the programs often referred to under the “title” of federal law where they appear (e.g., “Title I” funds). Overviews of each of the major ESSA dollars below come directly from [this resource developed by the ESEA Network](#):

- **Title I, Part A: *Supporting Basic Programs Operated by Local Education Agencies***
The goal of this program is to provide financial assistance to LEAs and schools with high numbers or percentages of children from low-income households to help ensure all children meet state academic standards. Funds are allocated through 4 statutory formulas based primarily on census poverty records. Unless a participating school is operating a school-wide program (available to schools where children from low-income families make up at least 40% of enrollment), the school must focus services on children who are failing or most at risk of failing to meet state academic standards. A “proportionate share” of funds must be available to eligible children enrolled in private schools.
- **Title I, Part C: *Education of Migratory Children (“Migrant Education Program”)***
The goal of the Migrant Education Program is to ensure that all migrant students reach challenging academic standards and graduate with a high school diploma (or complete a GED) that prepares them for responsible citizenship, further learning, and productive employment.
- **Title II, Part A: *Supporting Effective Instruction***
The purpose of this program is to increase academic achievement by improving teacher and principal quality. This is done by increasing the number of highly qualified teachers, principals and assistant principals in classrooms/schools through professional development, support for new teachers and other like activities.
- **Title III, Part A: *English Learners and Immigrant Education***
The overarching purpose is to ensure that English learner (EL) students, including immigrant children and youth, attain English language proficiency and meet the same challenging state academic standards that other students are expected to meet. LEAs must use Title III funds to supplement state language instruction educational programs, designed to assist EL students’ achievement goals. The state educational agency (SEA), LEAs, and schools are accountable for increasing the English proficiency and core academic content knowledge of EL students.

- **Title VII, Part B: McKinney-Vento Education for Homeless Children and Youth**

The program supports an office for coordination of the education of homeless children and youths in each state, which gathers comprehensive information about homeless children and youths and the impediments they must overcome to regularly attend school. These grants also help SEAs ensure that homeless children, including preschoolers and youths, have equal access to education. States must make competitive subgrants to LEAs to facilitate the enrollment, attendance, and success in school of homeless children and youths. This includes addressing problems due to transportation needs, immunization and residency requirements, lack of birth certificates and school records, and guardianship issues.

The [Individuals with Disabilities Education Act](#) (IDEA) is another source of important federal funds available to school districts for ensuring children with disabilities are provided a free appropriate public education (“FAPE”). The ESEA Network outlines the core intentions of IDEA Part B, which is the most applicable section of the law to LEAs, as follows:

- To ensure that all children with disabilities have available to them a free appropriate public education that emphasizes special education and related services designed to meet their unique needs and prepare them for further education, employment, and independent living;
- To ensure that the rights of children with disabilities and parents of such children are protected;
- To assist States, localities, educational service agencies, and Federal agencies to provide for the education of all children with disabilities;
- To ensure that educators and parents have the necessary tools to improve educational results for children with disabilities by supporting System improvement activities; coordinated research and personnel preparation; coordinated technical assistance, dissemination, and support; and technology development and media services; and
- To assess, and ensure the effectiveness of, efforts to educate children with disabilities.

In response to disruptions caused by the Covid-19 pandemic, Congress passed a series of **emergency education funding packages** for state and local education agencies in 2020 and 2021. In general, these dollars come with significant flexibility for localities. Section 3 of this guide refers to each bucket of funding based on the legislative vehicle through which it was passed. In general, education funding programs within each of the listed pieces of legislation build on the CARES Act, which set up a funding structure for providing rapid education relief dollars to LEAs:

- The [Coronavirus Aid, Relief, and Economic Security Act](#) (CARES), signed into law in March 2020;
- The Coronavirus Response and Relief Supplemental Appropriations Act (CRRSA), signed into law in December 2020; and
- The [American Rescue Plan Act of 2021](#) (ARP), signed into law in March 2021.

Major education programs within each of the three emergency relief acts are funded through two primary vehicles outlined below. Especially through the ARP, though, Congress authorized

additional boosts for IDEA, McKinney-Vento, and CCDBG that districts should consider for expanding support for certain groups of students as they transition to kindergarten.

- **Governor’s Emergency Education Relief Fund (GEER)**

CARES and CRRSA provided discretionary education funding to Governor’s offices nationwide to be quickly administered to state agencies and school districts in response to the pandemic. This funding is available to support any education-related entity or program that the Governor deems essential for supporting students or educators. States were allocated through a formula accounting for total state populations of children and percentages of children eligible for Title I services.

- **Elementary and Secondary School Emergency Relief Fund (ESSER)**

Most of the education dollars allocated under CARES, CRRSA, and ARP are administered through ESSER. Funding was administered through the same formula through which states receive Title I, Part A support, and the law requires that nearly all ESSER funds collected by states be subgranted to LEAs. ESSER provides broad flexibility for school districts, generally allowing the bulk of funds to support any activity authorized under other federal education programs. ESSER funds provided through ARP have slightly more -- but still limited -- targeting requirements focused on addressing learning loss.

Other important federal child care, education, and child welfare dollars outlined in Section 3 that can be used to support kindergarten transitions include:

- **Child Care and Development Block Grant (CCDBG)**

The federal Child Care Development Block Grant (CCDBG) provides funding to states to subsidize access to child care for low-income working families. The subsidies are typically administered as vouchers, which families can use in the child care market to help cover the cost of the program of their choosing. States have broad discretion in setting subsidy policies, and policies vary considerably from state to state, and studies have shown that subsidy policies can impact access to quality child care, particularly for low-income children.

- **Temporary Assistance for Needy Families (TANF)**

TANF plays a crucial role in offering relief to low-income families for their child care expenses. Because TANF adults are required to engage in work or work activities (with some exceptions and exemptions), child care subsidies are critical in supporting TANF parents’ employment as well as their children’s healthy development, and access to subsidies continues to be critical for families and children transitioning off TANF. States have the flexibility to utilize TANF funds to support low-income families through increased access to child care and early education opportunities. A state can transfer up to 30% of its TANF funds to the Child Care and Development Block Grant (CCDBG), and states are also permitted to spend TANF funds for early education. Additionally, expenditures for early education can count toward meeting federal maintenance of effort (MOE) requirements; however a state cannot count education activities or services that are generally available to other residents without cost or regard to income.

- **Head Start and Early Head Start**

Head Start (HS) and Early Head Start (EHS) are free, federally funded preschool programs designed to promote school readiness for children from low-income families. EHS serves pregnant women and families with children under age 3, and HS programs serve children between 3 and 5 years old. With Head Start funds come several important federal requirements around family engagement, transportation, and coordination with local school districts.

Appendix F: Other National & NV Specific Resources to Support Kindergarten Transition Work

National

- [Head Start Early Learning & Knowledge Center- Transition to Kindergarten](#): Videos, guides, and other helpful resources to support program and school efforts to understand the importance of the transition to kindergarten and implement transition practices

Statewide

- Early Childhood Program Search by [Area/Region](#): Use this search to find the local early childhood programs in your area (*log in as guest*).
- [Head Start Center Locator](#): Use this search to find the local Head Start programs in your area.
- [The Children’s Cabinet](#):
 - “Ready for K” Online Parent Engagement Program- Free online trainings for parents and guardians on helping children develop skills necessary for kindergarten readiness
 - “I’m Ready for K” Booklet- A resource for families to support children in the transition to Kindergarten ([English Version](#) and [Spanish Version](#))
- [Nevada PEP](#): Increase the opportunities for home, community and school success for children with disabilities, including those who are at risk or who have serious emotional disturbances, their families and their service providers, through education, encouragement and empowerment activities.
- [Nevada Pyramid Model Partnership](#): Resources for promoting young children’s social emotional learning

Southern Nevada

- [Las Vegas Clark County Library District](#): Free trainings and resources to support young children and families transitioning into Kindergarten