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## SECC Early Childhood Community of Practice E-Newsletter

Greetings! Thank you for taking the time to participate in the community of practice (CoP). We encourage you to continue visiting the [CoP website](#). Here are some of the latest updates!

### State Highlights

#### Alabama

The Alabama Department of Early Childhood released an [Issue Brief](#) detailing the results of a longitudinal study analyzing the impact of the state’s First Class Pre-K program on reading and mathematics proficiency. One key finding of the study is that students participating in Alabama’s First Class Pre-K program were significantly more likely to be proficient in both reading and math than students who did not. After controlling for factors such as demographics and school attended, First Class Pre-K attendees were more likely to be proficient in reading by 1.6 percentage points and by 3.2 percentage points in math than non-attendees. Additionally, researchers found that there was no evidence of “fade out” over time for study participants who were enrolled in the First Class Pre-K program and that those results were persistent from elementary school through Grade 7, the last year tested from the first cohort in the study.

#### North Carolina

Similar to the study results in Alabama, researchers from Duke University reported that children who participated in North Carolina’s Smart Start and North Carolina Pre-K Programs also did not experience the “fade out” effect in their reading and math scores from Grades 3 through 8 (Dodge, Bai, Ladd, & Muschkin, 2018). To the contrary, the study titled [Evaluation of North Carolina’s Smart Start and NC Pre-K Programs: Follow-Up Through Eighth Grade](#), found that children who participated in adequately funded early childhood state programs (a) consistently increased their reading and math scores from Grades 3 through 8, (b) were significantly less likely to be placed in special education services, and (c) and were less likely to repeat a grade. More than 1 million children were followed from preK through the end of Grade 8 for this study. An [executive summary](#), and an additional [white paper](#) provide more details about the specifics of this study.

**Reference:** Dodge, K., Bai, Y., Ladd, H., & Muschkin, C. (2018). Evaluation of North Carolina’s Smart Start and NC pre-K programs. [Executive Summary]. Durham, NC: Duke, University. Retrieved from <https://childandfamilypolicy.duke.edu/resources/publications/>

### Resource Spotlight

The Ounce of Prevention Fund and the University of Chicago Consortium on School Research have developed a new resource, Snapshot, which is a research report based on findings from the Early Education Essentials measurement system. The December 2018 Snapshot, [Early Education Essentials: Illustrations of Strong Organizational Practices in Programs Poised for Improvement](#), provides contrasting descriptions of what strong and weak organizational systems look like in early childhood education (ECE) settings. These descriptions are organized around five of the six essential supports that positively impact ECE quality: effective instructional leaders, collaborative teachers, involved families, supportive environment, and ambitious instruction.

### Research Spotlight

The results of a new study, Advanced Content Coverage at Kindergarten: Are There Trade-Offs Between Academic Achievement and Social-Emotional Skills? published in the American Educational Research Journal indicate that despite concerns about increased academic rigor in kindergarten, children exposed to higher level academic content were more likely to have better math and reading scores. In addition to improved academic achievement, more rigorous instruction in math had a positive effect on social-emotional outcomes, such as interpersonal skills and the ability to focus attention. Access to the full study requires a subscription. However, the [abstract](#) is available and an article published in [Chalkbeat](#) provides a summary of the study’s methodology, findings, and limitations.

For other early childhood news and information, please visit the [CoP website](#). We appreciate your continued collaboration.

The ECCoP Team

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