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AUTHOR(S): Donna Melton

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Dr. Christiane Wood
COMMITTEE CHAIR

DocuSigned by:
Christiane Wood
D72BC15A51A2456...
SIGNATURE

8/8/2019
DATE

Dr. Erika Daniels
COMMITTEE MEMBER

DocuSigned by:
Erika Daniels
98F2B1F096034A4...
SIGNATURE

8/8/2019
DATE

COMMITTEE MEMBER

SIGNATURE

DATE

COMMITTEE MEMBER

SIGNATURE

DATE

Running Head: KINDERGARTEN READINESS

**Kindergarten Readiness: A Website to Help Parents Prepare Their Children for
Kindergarten**

by

Donna M. Melton

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Abstract

Recent education policy changes in California have affected the expectations and standards of kindergarten, making the curriculum more rigorous. It is necessary for students entering kindergarten to be prepared academically and social emotionally in order to be successful during the school year. Students that have not been exposed to foundational academic skills (i.e. letter and number identification, letter sound knowledge, and counting) prior to entering kindergarten, begin the year at a disadvantage. Similarly, students that have not yet developed appropriate social emotional skills for a classroom setting (i.e. managing emotions, interacting positively with others, and being able to focus during classroom activities) may have difficulty learning and reaching the end of year kindergarten standards. The purpose of this project is to provide parents the information and resources necessary to prepare their children for kindergarten. This project consists of a website that is aligned with the Oceanside Promise Kindergarten Readiness Checklist and has resources throughout that will expose young children to foundational pre-literacy and mathematic skills. It also lists some social emotional development skills on which parents can evaluate their children's readiness. The website features pages on the following themes: academic foundational skills, social emotional skills, oral language development, physical development, transitional kindergarten, end of year kindergarten standards, and additional resources. Each page provides information and/or resources that are intended to guide parents in preparing their child for kindergarten.

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Chapter 1: Definition of Problem

Kindergarten teachers see a wide range of students enter their classrooms with various levels of readiness for school. There are students who come into the classroom having some foundational skills (i.e. letter identification and letter sound knowledge) that are necessary for being reading ready. Others come in already reading at some level. Still, there are children that have no previous classroom experience and have not yet mastered any, or very little, academic foundational skills. This variance, coupled with the wide range of ages that were allowed to enroll in kindergarten, makes the task of having all students achieve certain academic standards (as mandated by No Child Left Behind (NCLB) Act in 2001) very difficult. An achievement gap among the kindergarteners is evident and persists into the subsequent grades. Although the NCLB Act was replaced by the Every Student Success Act (ESSA) of 2015, the academic need for students to meet the same standards remains. In 2010, the state of California reacted to the gap issue by passing the “Kindergarten Readiness Act”. This legislation, more formally known as Senate Bill 1381 (SB 1381), moved the kindergarten enrollment cutoff date from December 2, to September 1. This change mandates that in order to enroll in kindergarten in California, a child has to have their 5th birthday by September 1 of the year of enrollment. This impacts kindergarten by limiting the age range of the students in classrooms. Previously, younger students (aged 4 years and 9 months) could have been in the same classroom as other students over a year older than them (San Diego Unified School District, 2019). As a case in point, my son entered kindergarten at age 5 and turned 6 on November 23rd of that year. Since this was before SB 1381, one of his classmates turned 5 on December 1st. My son is one year and eight days older than his classmate, yet both children were held to the same standards, academically

and social emotionally. At this age, children are growing and developing very rapidly. The potential difference between a 4 and a 6 year old physically, academically, and social emotionally is vast.

By changing the enrollment cutoff date, the state was able to narrow the age gap in these classes. However, now the younger students that would have previously been able to enroll in kindergarten were now left to seek other options (i.e. remain at home, attend non-academic daycare or private preschools). This would leave those younger students without the academia opportunities they would have been receiving otherwise. Recognizing the issues at hand, SB1381 created a new program called transitional kindergarten (TK). This new grade is a state funded program that is now part of the California K-12 public school system. Its purpose is intended for children to gain social and academic experience (Hopkinson, 2017) before going to traditional kindergarten. According to research, students who have attended TK are better prepared for the rigor of kindergarten than those who did not participate in this program (Manship et al., 2015). Transitional kindergarten has shown to improve pre-literacy and literacy skills as well as mathematical knowledge and problem-solving skills. The program also supports behavioral self-regulation in children. Each of these skills are important to kindergarten readiness.

The City of Oceanside is a coastal city in San Diego County, California. It is located 35 miles north of San Diego proper and immediately south of Marine Corps Base Camp Pendleton. With a diverse population of 178,021 people (Oceanside at a Glance, n.d.), Oceanside is home to the Oceanside Unified School District (OUSD). The district has 23 schools, for its 18,071 students. 16 of those schools are categorized as elementary (Oceanside Unified School District, n.d.). Ivey Ranch Elementary is one of these schools. Although transitional kindergarten is not

offered at this location, some students that enroll in kindergarten at Ivey Ranch do so after attending TK at other schools. Being that transitional kindergarten makes such a positive impact on kindergarten readiness, it is concerning that the program is not available to everyone in the Oceanside Unified School District. In this district TK is only available to students with fall birthdays from September 2 - December 2 (OUSD, n.d.). The students who are not eligible for transitional kindergarten are still left to seek alternative avenues.

In 2010 the State of California Department of Education adopted the Common Core State Standards. OUSD implemented these standards in the 2014-2015 school year. It was then that the end of the year standard for reading, for students to be considered at grade level, increased from having students be "reading ready" to having them reading at a Guided Reading Level (GRL), as developed by Irene Fountas and Gay Su Pinnell, (Fountas & Pinnell, n.d.) of a C or higher. This standard was raised again in the 2015-2016 school year to a GRL of D or higher. The increase in rigor of the kindergarten curriculum demands an increase in kindergarten readiness, that is arguably not determined by age alone. Students must also be ready academically as well as social emotionally. Since not all children are eligible for programs like transitional kindergarten, or can attend private preschools, the bulk of the responsibility to prepare future students falls upon their families.

In 2016, the Oceanside Promise organization emerged. This organization is a community wide partnership that is focused on building promising futures for all the members of the Oceanside community. A primary factor of the Oceanside Promise vision is preparing all OUSD students to be college and career ready. An important step in achieving this vision includes improving the kindergarten readiness of Oceanside's young children.

Problem Statement

The need for preparation for kindergarten is undeniable. With the increasingly rigorous standards implemented in kindergarten, students without strong foundational skills, like knowledge of letters and the sounds that they make as well as the ability to rhyme and identify individual sounds within words, begin the academic year at a disadvantage. Even those who do have strong foundational skills may still not exhibit kindergarten readiness. Kindergarten students also need the development of their executive functions. The ability to self regulate, inhibit behavioral impulses, shift attention from one task to another, and problem solve have been linked to social emotional development (Riggs, Jahromi, Razza, Dillworth-Bart, & Mueller, 2006). The combination of both academic and social emotional groundwork is helpful in having a child be prepared for the demands of kindergarten. As this may be a child's first encounter within a classroom environment, it is important that they know what to expect and be able to participate appropriately. Therefore, it is important for parents to know what will promote their child's success and set the expectations for kindergarten accordingly.

The purpose of this project is to create a website for Ivey Ranch Elementary and the Oceanside Unified School District that explains the importance of kindergarten readiness and provides information and resources to help parents prepare their children for kindergarten. This website is meant to serve as a guide for parents and students in the acquisition and development of both academic and social emotional foundational skills. It will also serve as a tool to be used for practice at home, supporting the daily activities in the classroom. The website provides access to Common Core State Standards for kindergarten so that parents and students are aware of the goals toward which the children are working. The website also presents information about

the transitional kindergarten program to help parents make informed decisions about their child's education.

Preview Literature

Research supports the idea of kindergarten readiness for students. Although there may be many interpretations of what school readiness means, there is agreement that the "national education goals ... stress the importance of children being ready to learn when they enter school" (Duncan & Rafter, 2005, p. 355). It has been found that factors such as weak academic skills, low social skills, an inability to follow instructions, and a lack of independence, can predict social and academic failure (Stormont et al., 2014). The research supports the importance for social and academic preparation to begin before a student enters kindergarten. These skills encourage elements of success throughout the students' lives. It is essential, especially if a child is not enrolled in an academic preschool or daycare setting, that children are exposed to situations that develop social emotional skills like cooperation and self-confidence (Hopkinson, 2017) as well as foundational academic skills, like numbers and letters. It is equally important for there to be a source of information, that is accessible to parents and others who are invested in children's education.

Preview Methodology

To get the most out of the kindergarten experience, it is critical for children entering the grade to be prepared for the academic and social environment. To provide the families with the information that they need to help their children be kindergarten ready, this project includes a website that is aligned with the Oceanside Promise Kindergarten Readiness Checklist and the California Common Core State Standards (CCSS) for kindergarten. The website uses the

information from the checklist to provide resources that will help children build concrete academic skills, such as letter identification, letter sound recognition, and rote counting. There are also resources based on the CCSS that parents and children can use to go beyond kindergarten readiness and move towards the end of year kindergarten goals. For example, it is a kindergarten readiness goal for students to be able to rote count to twenty by ones. I have included a video to help with this skill on the website. It is a Common Core State Standard for students to be able to rote count to one hundred by ones. I included a video to help with this skill on the website as well.

The kindergarten readiness website is separated into nine pages: Home, Academic Foundational Skills, Social Emotional Skills, Oral Language Development, Physical Development, Transitional Kindergarten, End of Year Kindergarten Standards, Additional Resources, and References. There are also nine subpages attached to the Academic Foundational Skills page that pertains to a specific academic skill: Letter Identification, Letter Sounds, Writing the Alphabet, Rote Counting & Number Identification, Counting Objects, Writing Numerals, Colors, Shapes, and Reading. Each of these academic subpages contain at least one resource that is intended to teach the user that specific skill.

Research indicates that songs and rhymes are great memory tools and very effective in helping young children learn. "The repetition of words, language structures, and rhythm enhance learning and they stick easily in learners' mind" (Delibegovic Dzanic & Pejic, 2016, p.42). Many of the resources provided throughout the website are animated videos of engaging songs. The use of videos provides an additional layer of multimodal instruction. Children could watch, listen, and sing along with the videos to learn specific skills necessary for being considered

kindergarten ready. Many of the songs are easy to learn and can be practiced without access to the internet.

It is my intention to publish this website and promote it from the Ivey Ranch Elementary School website's home page as well as through the kindergarten grade level team. This website will best benefit its audience well before the beginning of the school year. Thus, it will also be included in the circulations regarding kindergarten registration.

Significance of the Project

By creating an informative website that supports kindergarten readiness, I am able to help parents support the educational needs of their children in a clear and organized way. By providing resources to learn academic foundational skills as well as information on developing social emotional skills, this website will most benefit children who have no prior exposure to classroom settings. As some parents are not aware of the rigor of the kindergarten curriculum, this website can help families support their children and be involved with their education from the beginning. The material on the website can also take the guesswork out of how to properly instruct children on certain concrete concepts, such as letter and number formation. By offering instructional videos as resources, the website is a tool that provides at home practice for them.

Because kindergarten standards have increased in difficulty and complexity, it is vital that students are intellectually ready for the academic rigor of kindergarten. The development of social emotional skills as well as that of executive functions (working memory, cognitive flexibility, and inhibitory control) which are necessary to increase academic learning (Schmitt, Geldhof, Purpura, Duncan, & McClelland, 2017) is also essential. As most parents / families are interested in preparing students academically, they less often look at the social emotional aspect

of being school ready. It is becoming more important that the family or other pre-kindergarten caregivers (i.e. daycare, pre-school, transitional kindergarten) provide the social and emotional growth based on age appropriate practices that are no longer the focus of kindergarten. Without these skills, academic learning can be difficult. Having a strong foundation in both academic and social emotional skills increases the chance of success during the academic heavy kindergarten and beyond.

Summary

Throughout recent years, kindergarten curriculum and expectations have undergone significant changes. With the national standards introduced by the No Child Left Behind Act of 2001, an achievement gap in these young students was revealed. As a prime factor in this gap was believed to be the age variance of kindergarteners, the Kindergarten Readiness Act was adopted in 2010. This changed the enrollment cutoff date from December 2 to September 1. Adjusting the enrollment cutoff date, and delaying entry for younger students, did narrow the age gap in kindergarten and subsequent grades. However, it left formerly eligible students to seek other options, potentially without the academic and social emotional benefits of being in kindergarten. Transitional kindergarten was then created as a place for some of these youngest students. However, with introduction of the Common Core State Standards, it was quickly determined that age played only a small part in kindergarten readiness. Students had to have a strong foundation in academic skills as well as appropriate social emotional skills to succeed. This means that there is work to be done before a student enters kindergarten.

No one wants their child unprepared for kindergarten. The problem seems to be, however, that a lot of families are unclear on what it means to be prepared. With the changes that

occurred in the kindergarten curriculum recently, odds are that kindergarten is not the same as when the parents of incoming students attended. There is a heavy academic presence in the classroom now. There are rigorous standards that need to be met. In order to accommodate these new challenges, development of the whole child is necessary. Time should be spent building solid foundational academic skills and developing their executive functions and social emotional skills that will help them be successful with the academic rigors and increasingly high expectations of kindergarten. This development, academic and social emotional, needs to start before they enter the kindergarten, where they will be off and running building reading and writing skills. This project is meant to aid in the inception and guidance of this development.

This kindergarten readiness website is intended to be a guide to preparing young students for their next, and sometimes first, step in education. It includes information and tools to be used to increase a child's readiness for a year of kindergarten. The website contains sections that identify specific goals according to the CCSS as well as instructional videos to help students meet these goals. There are also sections with tips on helping children develop social emotional skills needed to reach the academic goals.

Chapter 2: Literature Review

As a child enters kindergarten, it is an exciting time for the entire family. Parents are often met with some bittersweet emotions, as starting school is often considered a great milestone, which means their "baby" is growing up. It may also be the child's first encounter with a classroom setting, so parents may be eager for this big step, as well as nervous because they want to make sure their child will do well. Whatever the emotions are, it is common for families to prepare for this momentous occasion. They may go shopping for new clothes, backpacks, and

school supplies. They may even purchase a workbook or two in an effort to prepare their child for the academia to come. Parents may talk to their children about listening to the teacher, making new friends, and how exciting this new experience is going to be for them. While these are all good things to do, is this preparation all that students need to be kindergarten ready?

According to Diane Long and her colleagues, "A parent may be likely to focus at home on teaching skills that do not necessarily promote school readiness as viewed by teachers" (Long, Bergeron, Doyle, & Gordon, 2006, p. 25). Research has found that factors such as weak academic skills, low social skills, an inability to follow instructions, and a lack of independence, can predict social and academic failure (Stormont et al., 2014). This leads us to question: how can we help parents prepare their children for kindergarten?

Research supports the idea of kindergarten readiness for students. Although there may be many interpretations of what school readiness means, there is agreement that the "national education goals ... stress the importance of children being ready to learn when they enter school" (Duncan et al., 2005, p. 355). Existing research suggests that students should have certain academic and social skills prior to entering kindergarten. These skills encourage elements of success throughout the students' lives. It is important, especially for a child not in a academic preschool or daycare setting, that he or she is exposed to situations that develop social emotional skills like cooperation and self-confidence (Hopkinson, 2017) as well as foundational academic skills, like numbers and letters. It is equally important for there to be a source of information and resources, that is accessible by parents so that they may encourage the development of the necessary academic and social skills for kindergarten.

The following is a review of literature related to the topic of kindergarten readiness. It explores two themes that are important factors in preparing a child for kindergarten: academic skills and social emotional skills. These two types of skills work hand in hand in ensuring that children develop solid foundations so they may handle the rigors of kindergarten and continue successfully to upper grades. It is based on these themes that I decided to develop a website that informs and provides resources to parents on how to help their children be prepared and work through the kindergarten expectations.

Academic Foundational Skills

Research strongly suggests that early acquisition of academic foundational skills predict achievement. A study that evaluated readiness screening found that "poor academic readiness increased the risk for low reading performance at the end of the year" (Stormont et al., 2014, p. 223). According to the American Academy of Family Physicians, students who learn foundational or pre-reading skills prior to kindergarten make substantial academic gains compared to their peers without these skills (Waterford, 2019). The National Early Literacy Panel (NELP) studied the effectiveness of pre-kindergarten programs and found that the presence of foundational skills, such as phonological awareness, is predictive of increased measures of literacy development (National Early Literacy Panel, 2008). Knowing that phonological awareness is a strong predictor of learning to read VanDerHeyden, Witt, Naquin, and Noell (2001) developed probes intended to provide efficient and accurate measures of student work to identify students needing further assessment and intervention. Using these probes, the study found that mastery of academic readiness skills correlates with performance during subsequent instruction (VanDerHeyden et al., 2001).

Being able to recognize the letters of the alphabet is one of the strongest predictors of reading success for young students (Duncan et al., 2007). There is also a powerful correlation between children possessing readings skills, including word knowledge and phonemic awareness (being able to identify beginning and ending word sounds) and reading success. Similar to this, Duncan et al. (2007) found that early math concepts, such as number and ordinality knowledge are very strong predictors of subsequent learning. When children enter school with skills that are considered behind their peers, due to no prior preschool experiences, they are at risk of never making up the differences (Duncan, Schmitt, Burke, & McClelland, 2017). This research leads to encouragement of promoting academic foundational skills before entering elementary school. It is also suggested that school districts add domain-specific early skills as a qualification for school readiness (Duncan et al., 2007).

Social Emotional Skills

Social emotional skills have implications for school readiness. Young children who enter school without appropriate social and emotional skills may have difficulty learning. Part of being ready for school includes being able to handle the different social and emotional demands of a classroom setting. Becoming an active participant and engaging in classroom activities necessitates a child's ability to self-regulate, follow directions, and attend to lessons. (Riggs et al., 2006). Executive function is a specific type of social emotional component that includes the ability to inhibit impulses, move attention from one task to another, and utilize working memory (Riggs et al., 2006). In their study of working memory Fitzpatrick and Pagani (2012) found that toddler working memory can "reliably forecast persistent, focused, and goal-directed behavior in kindergarten" (p. 210). They determined that "children who develop better working memory

from early childhood to school entry may find it easier to keep instructions and procedures in mind during the completion of classroom tasks" (Fitzpatrick & Pagani, 2012, p. 210). These behaviors relate to children's social emotional development and demonstrate a traditional example of students' readiness for school.

Mcclelland, Tominey, Schmitt & Duncan (2017) looked at three main components of social emotional learning skills and their relationship to school readiness. Emotional processes, social/interpersonal skills, and cognitive regulation were studied as focal points of early childhood interventions. Emotional process includes the skills that children use to regulate their emotions appropriately and recognize the feelings of others. Children that are able to recognize, label, and manage their emotions as well as see different perspectives and feel empathy for others are demonstrating appropriate emotional skills for kindergarten readiness. When children can interact positively and effectively with others, understanding social cues and interpreting behaviors, they are exhibiting proper social and interpersonal skills for school. Cognitive regulation includes the executive function processes noted above. Executive function helps children inhibit impulses in order to focus and switch from one task to another. Executive function is important for the academic demands of school as it allows students to be able to listen to and remember instructions. When the interventions in the study ran as expected, they showed improvements in both social emotional learning skill as well as academic achievement (McClelland, Tominey, Schmitt & Duncan, 2017).

Summary

Because of the current demands of kindergarten, it is important for students to have skills that demonstrate readiness. These skills include academic foundational skills as well as social

and emotional skills. Academic foundational skills include letter and number identification, phonemic awareness, and problem solving. Social emotional skills include management of emotions, positive interactions with others, and executive function. Each of these types of skill adds to a child's level of readiness for school.

Research supports the idea of having both academic foundational skills as well as social emotional skills to be considered ready for kindergarten. This research informed my decision to develop the kindergarten readiness website. I believe that it is important for parents to know of the expectations of kindergarten. I decided that a website is an easily accessible tool to disseminate information about these expectations. The website is also an instrument that can be used by the parents to provide support to their children through the resources available.

Chapter 3: Methodology

Policies like No Child Left Behind, the Kindergarten Readiness Act, and the Common Core State Standards have changed kindergarten enrollment guidelines and curriculum. These changes have closed the age gap between students in kindergarten by changing the enrollment eligibility date and raised the academic standards considerably. A decade ago, the end of year kindergarten expectation for students was to be "reading ready". With the demand of higher literacy goals, students now must be reading with fluency and comprehension at a certain predetermined level to be considered successful. As 21st century learners, kindergarten students are also expected to be writing in various genres, thinking critically about problem solving, collaborating with others, and communicating their ideas in various creative ways. Today, students are expected to come in to the classroom with knowledge of the alphabet letters and their corresponding sounds on the first day. With these academic expectations, there are also

social emotional skills that are needed. Students should have certain executive functions to be fully engaged, active participants in the kindergarten curriculum. They not only have to be ready to learn; they also must be prepared for school (Duncan et al., 2005).

The number of skills needed by children to be considered kindergarten ready may come as a surprise to parents with students entering kindergarten. Those who may not be privy to the changes that have occurred in recent years may not know that kindergarteners have rigorous expectations for which they need to be prepared. This is especially true of lower-income and ethnically diverse children that have not participated in a public-school based program prior to kindergarten (Ansari & Winsler, 2016).

Parents need access to information that will help them prepare their children for kindergarten. The website that I have developed for this project makes information and resources readily available to parents. The website explains the importance of kindergarten readiness and provides helpful resources for parents so that they can prepare their children for kindergarten. The website is meant to serve as a guide for parents and students in the acquisition and development of both academic and social emotional foundational skills. It is also intended to be a tool that can be used for practice at home, supporting the daily activities in the classroom.

The website includes the Common Core State Standards for kindergarten so that parents and students are aware of the goals toward which the children are working. It also provides information about other options, like transitional kindergarten, to help the families make informed decisions about their child's education. Research supports that children entering kindergarten, especially those not coming from a state sponsored pre-Kindergarten childcare

facility, are generally at a disadvantage when they are not showing strong foundational skills in academics as well as social emotional development (Duncan et al., 2018).

Design

Despite kindergarten not being mandatory in the state of California, there is still a set of Common Core State Standards for this grade. Students are expected to reach these goals by the end of the academic year. These standards are generally academic, yet can be achieved more readily if the students possess specific foundational social emotional skills as well. A kindergarten student at Ivey Ranch Elementary in the Oceanside Unified School District (OUSD) is only in school half day (about 3.5 hours a day). To reach these end of the year standards, students must come to school prepared for the rigor of the kindergarten curriculum. For students who enter kindergarten without a strong foundation in academic skills, it is very difficult for them to "catch up" to their peers with this knowledge. For example, the Oceanside Unified School District expects that the first 20 days of kindergarten includes a review of all 26 letters of the alphabet, upper and lowercase, including their sounds. If a child has never been exposed to the letters, these days can be overwhelming. Adding to this experience, a student with no prior classroom understanding will be in a new social, academic setting with new norms. If a student does not have strong and appropriate social emotional skills, he or she will not be able to focus on learning. All of these ideas were taken into account when creating the kindergarten readiness website.

The design of my website focused on providing information and resources to parents so that they may help their children prepare academically and social emotionally for kindergarten. I used the Oceanside Promise website, which includes a kindergarten readiness checklist, as well

as the Common Core State Standards to guide the information that was placed on each page of the website. I included information about other options and resources that may come into play when parents are making decisions regarding their child's education. Also, for those who are inclined to dig deeper into the research and organizations available, I included a page with additional resources as well.

Intended Audience and Setting

This website is intended to be used by parents who are preparing their child to enter kindergarten at Ivey Ranch Elementary School within the Oceanside Unified School District. The website is also intended to be a resource for parents of students currently enrolled in kindergarten at Ivey Ranch who need some guidance in supporting their children at home by reinforcing the skills needed in school. It can also be used as a resource for teachers of grades other than kindergarten for students that are lacking the skills highlighted within the website.

Instruments

I designed the kindergarten readiness website with organized, easily accessible resources for parents to use with their children. Though, the design of the website is mine, the information and resources available on it were gathered from a variety of sources and compiled for ease of use and dissemination in this new format. It is important that the parents are able to get to this information without barriers and share the resources with their children often.

Procedures and Evaluation of Process

In creating the kindergarten readiness website, I first researched Google Sites, a free website construction tool provided by Google for those with Google accounts. Finding that it was very intuitive, I decided to use this tool to build the website. As I was ready to begin, I

selected a theme and created the Home page. I wanted it to be simple and calming, yet eye catching. Since I developed the website for the parents within the Oceanside Unified School District zone, I chose the beach theme that was a standard option from Google sites. I included a short introduction letting parents know that the website was built for them and encouraging them to use it to help their children get ready for kindergarten.

Knowing that I wanted to include resources for academic skills and social emotional skills, I made pages for each. Because the academic foundational schools are very concrete, I was able to find resources from YouTube and add them to this page. Many of these resources are songs. As research shows, "songs are suitable for different learning styles, they encourage positive learning experience, and enhance (young learners') knowledge" (Delibegovic Dzanic et al., 2016, p. 40). The social emotional page lists some of the skills that parents should look for in their children to see if they are ready for the behavioral demands of the classroom setting. On this page, I included some offline resources for the parents to use with their child. The practice of social emotional skills outside of the classroom provides a basis to which the children can refer while inside the classroom.

I then added additional pages for transitional kindergarten and the end of year kindergarten standards. I wanted to provide information about transitional kindergarten to demonstrate that there is an option available in case the parents felt that their child was truly not ready for kindergarten. I also wanted to provide information to parents about what the end of the year expectations were for kindergarten students, making this website a reference that parents could use all year long.

After being introduced to the Oceanside Promise website and discovering their own readiness checklist, I added the oral language development, physical development, additional resources, and references pages. I felt that because I am developing this project for the parents within the OUSD, I wanted the information that I was providing to be consistent with that found on their website. The social emotional skills page includes a list of skills that a parent should review with their child in mind.

Each page was made to be easily accessible from the top menu on all pages and additionally from the buttons on the bottom of the home page. Each resource on a page includes a brief description of the resource and how it relates to either the kindergarten readiness skill or the end of year kindergarten standard. Also, just below the header of each page gives the readiness skill from the Oceanside promise kindergarten readiness checklist and or the kindergarten end of year standard. This is to inform the parents of the reason the specific resources are provided on the website.

This project is meant to be under constant evaluation. As the website is promoted, I will take all feedback into consideration. As new resources are developed, I will evaluate them and consider including them on the website. As with the evolving world of education, this website will never be considered complete.

Summary

As research indicates, it is important for children to possess many academic and social emotional skills to be considered ready for kindergarten. By creating a kindergarten readiness website where visitors can view information and resources regarding kindergarten readiness, I have provided parents with an opportunity to make more informed decisions about their child's

education. The website is aligned with the Oceanside Promise website and addresses the rigor of the OUSD kindergarten curriculum as well as the common core state standards. The website allows parents to review the skills recommended for children to possess in order to be kindergarten ready and as well as provides resources to help their children build these skills. Using this website can be one way to close the achievement gap as the children enter school.

Chapter 4: Kindergarten Readiness Website

This project addresses the need for the dissemination of information to parents of young children that are considering enrollment in Kindergarten at Ivey Ranch Elementary School within the Oceanside Unified School District. This website is meant to provide information and resources to parents so that they may help their children prepare to enter kindergarten with the recommended academic and social emotional skills.

The following is the URL for the [Kindergarten Readiness Website](https://sites.google.com/oside.us/kindergartenreadiness/home):

<https://sites.google.com/oside.us/kindergartenreadiness/home>

Home Page

The Home Page provides a welcome message to the parents and an invitation to use the resources available throughout the website. The message explains that the website is in alignment with the Oceanside Promise Kindergarten Readiness Checklist as well as the Common Core State Standards and has links to both. The top menu includes links to all pages and subpages within the website. There are also navigation buttons at the bottom of the home page that will take the user to the respective pages.



Figure 1. Screenshot of the Home page

Academic Foundational Skills

The Academic Foundational Skills page contains images representing the various academic skills that are recommended for kindergarten student. These skills include letter identification, letter sounds, letter writing, rote counting, counting objects, writing numerals, colors, shapes, and reading. Each image and its corresponding label is embedded with a link that will take the website user to the appropriate subpage. For each of the subpages, there is at least one video resource that is intended introduce or enhance the child's foundational skill. Videos were used throughout the website as multimodal tools to engage children in the lessons.

The screenshot displays the 'Academic Foundational Skills' page with a navigation bar at the top. The main content area features a grid of nine activity tiles:

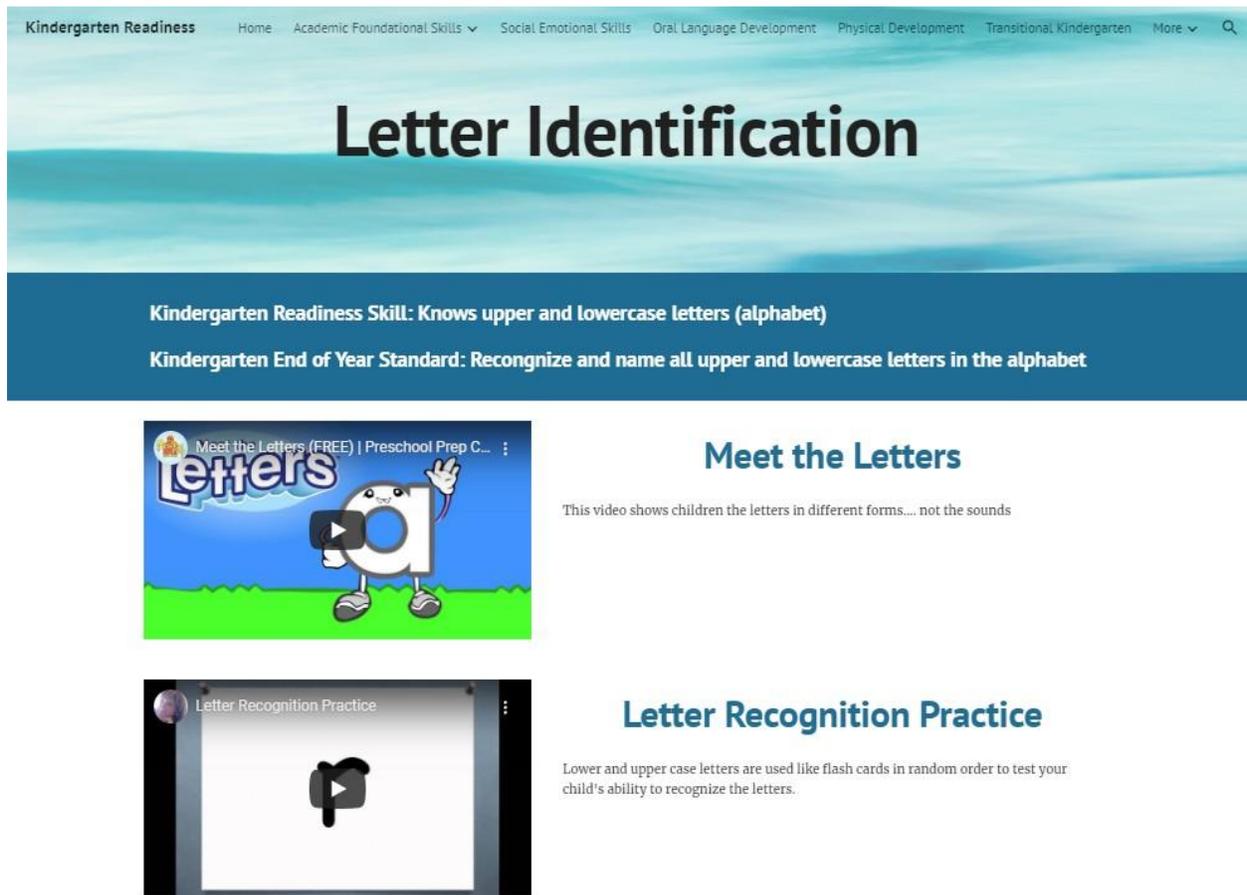
- Letter Identification:** A grid of 26 letters (A-Z) in various colors and fonts. Below it: **Letter Identification**, Upper and Lowercase Letters.
- Letter Sounds:** Large letters A, B, C with corresponding animal icons (apple, bear, cat). Below it: **Letter Sounds**, All Consonants and Short and Long Vowels.
- Writing the Alphabet:** Tracing lines for letters Aa through Vv. Below it: **Writing the Alphabet**, Correct Formation.
- Rate Counting & Number Identification:** Numbers 1-9 in various colors. Below it: **Rate Counting & Number Identification**, By Ones and Tens.
- Counting Objects:** A bar graph with 10, 4, 8, 3, 5 bars. Below it: **Counting Objects**, One to One Correspondence.
- Writing Numerals:** Tracing lines for numerals 0-9. Below it: **Writing Numerals**, Correct Formation.
- Colors:** A collection of colorful crayons. Below it: **Colors**, Recognize and Identify Colors.
- Shapes:** A grid of 2D shapes (square, triangle, circle, rectangle, heart, star) with their names. Below it: **Shapes**, Identify and name 2D & 3D Shapes.
- Reading:** A group of diverse children reading a book. Below it: **Reading**, Reading and Concepts of Print.

Figure 2. Screenshot of the Academic Foundational Skills page

Letter Identification

The Letter Identification page is a subpage of the Academic Foundational Skills page. The Letter Identification page has two resources with links to videos from YouTube.com. The first video, Meet the Letters, shows animated letters in a variety of styles and fonts. The video displays all 26 letters of the alphabet, both uppercase and lowercase, in alphabetical order. Accompanying the visual representation is an audio recording of the name of the letter being said repeatedly. The repetition of the letter name combined with the animation encourages young children to participate and recite the letter names in concert with the video.

The second video, Letter Recognition Practice, can be used for the next step of learning or practice. The video displays uppercase and lowercase letters in a random order and encourages the child to recall the letter name. Once the letter appears on the screen, the narrator provides wait time before saying the name of the letter. This wait time presents the child with a chance to recall the letter name, recite it, and then quickly assess his or her answer.



Kindergarten Readiness Home Academic Foundational Skills Social, Emotional Skills Oral Language Development Physical Development Transitional Kindergarten More

Letter Identification

Kindergarten Readiness Skill: Knows upper and lowercase letters (alphabet)

Kindergarten End of Year Standard: Recognize and name all upper and lowercase letters in the alphabet

Meet the Letters

This video shows children the letters in different forms... not the sounds

Letter Recognition Practice

Lower and upper case letters are used like flash cards in random order to test your child's ability to recognize the letters.

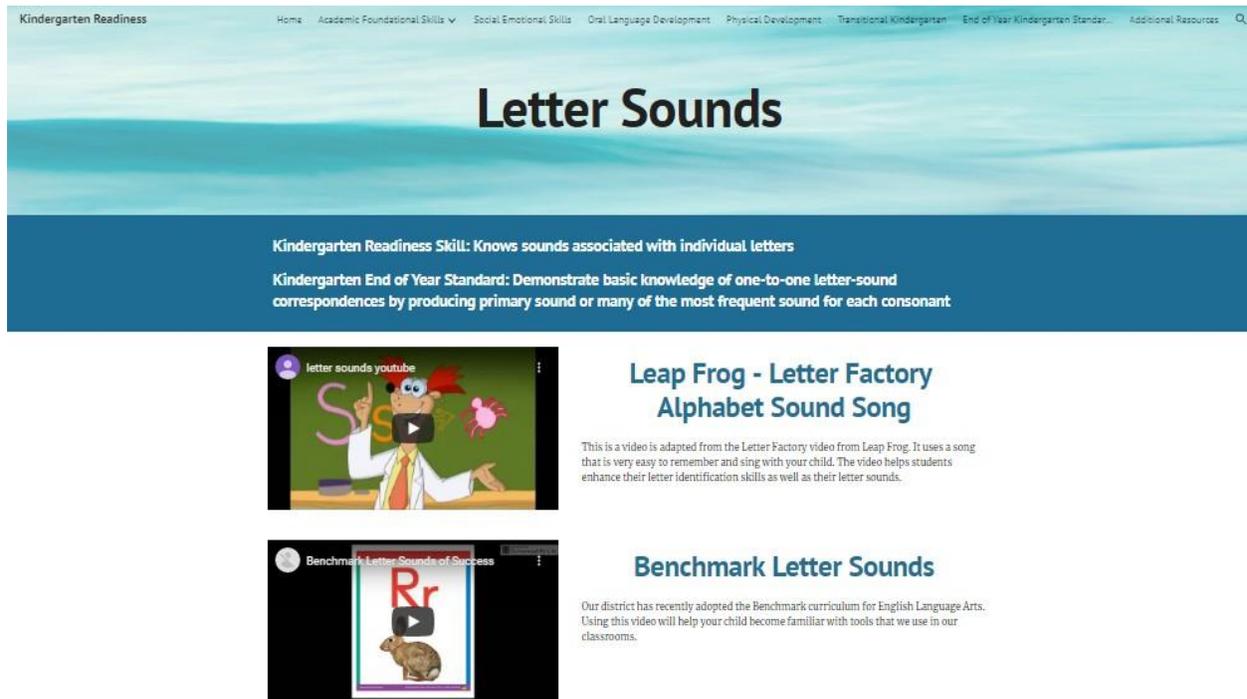
Figure 3. Screenshot of the Letter Identification page

Letter Sounds

The Letter Sounds page is a subpage of the Academic Foundational Skills page. The Letter Sounds page focuses on the phonological awareness needed in early literacy. As children

begin to understand the alphabetic principle, that letters represent sounds and can be put together systematically to form words, they can begin to combine letters to read and write. The first video on the page is an abbreviated version of Leap Frog's Letter Factory video. This song has a simple pattern that is easy to learn and is highly engaging. The song is great practice for children and can be sung without the video in locations where one may not have access to the internet.

The second video, Benchmark Letter Sounds, utilizes the letter cards from the Benchmark ELA curriculum to teach letter sounds. The Oceanside Unified School District recently adopted the Benchmark ELA curriculum and will be implementing it in the 2019-2020 academic year. Having a child familiarize himself or herself with tools that will be seen in the classroom, may instill a level of confidence that will support engagement in school. In the Benchmark Letter Sound video, the letter cards are displayed in alphabetical order. As a card is shown, the voiceover vocalizes the letter name, the name of the object on the card which begins with the letter, and the sound that the letter makes.



Kindergarten Readiness Skill: Knows sounds associated with individual letters

Kindergarten End of Year Standard: Demonstrate basic knowledge of one-to-one letter-sound correspondences by producing primary sound or many of the most frequent sound for each consonant

Leap Frog - Letter Factory Alphabet Sound Song

This is a video is adapted from the Letter Factory video from Leap Frog. It uses a song that is very easy to remember and sing with your child. The video helps students enhance their letter identification skills as well as their letter sounds.

Benchmark Letter Sounds

Our district has recently adopted the Benchmark curriculum for English Language Arts. Using this video will help your child become familiar with tools that we use in our classrooms.

Figure 4. Screenshot of the Letter Sounds page

Writing the Alphabet

The Writing the Alphabet page is a subpage of the Academic Foundational Skills page. The video on the Writing the Alphabet page illustrates the proper letter formation and repeats itself to allow the child to practice along. The How to Write Letters A-Z video is 45 minutes in its entirety. However, the lessons are broken into short segments for each letter (uppercase and lowercase) and can be easily navigated. Parents can have their children practice one or two letters in a sitting and then return to the next segment for the next session. Being able to move through the letters is important if the parents are helping their child learn how to write their name. The parents can maneuver through the video and show their child the letters as they appear in his or her name.



Kindergarten Readiness Skill: Writes first name (with first letter Uppercase and the rest Lowercase)

End of Year Kindergarten Standard: Prints many upper- and lowercase letters

Correct Letter Formation

It is so important that children develop correct letter formation at the very beginning. Some key points to mention are always starting on the top, and making sure to differentiate between upper and lowercase letters.

When teaching your child to write his or her name, please use the formation taught in these videos. Please have your child use a capital letter at the beginning of his or her name and lowercase letters for the rest.

Figure 5. Screenshot of the Writing the Alphabet page

Rote Counting and Number Identification

The Rote Counting and Number Identification page is a subpage of the Academic Foundational Skills page. The Counting to 20 by Ones video has the viewer count to 20 using a rhythmic song. As the characters are counting, the numbers are shown on the screen. This multimodal video is meant to engage learners as they watch, listen, and sing along.

As prescribed by the California Common Core State Standards for kindergarten, children are expected to count to 100 by ones and tens by the end of the academic year. I included two videos on the Rote Counting and Number Identification page. Both videos, Counting to 100 by Ones and Counting to 100 by Tens, can be used throughout the year as extra practice outside of the classroom.

Kindergarten Readiness Skill: Counts to 20 and identifies written numbers up to 10
 Kindergarten End of Year Standard: Counts to 100 by 1's and 10's; Identifies written numbers up to 20

Counting to 20 by Ones
 This video is a multi-sensory activity that will help your child practice counting from 1-20. Please watch, listen, and sing a long.

Counting to 100 by Ones
 Counting to 100 by ones is a Kindergarten End of Year Standard. This video will help your child practice by counting in segments of 20.

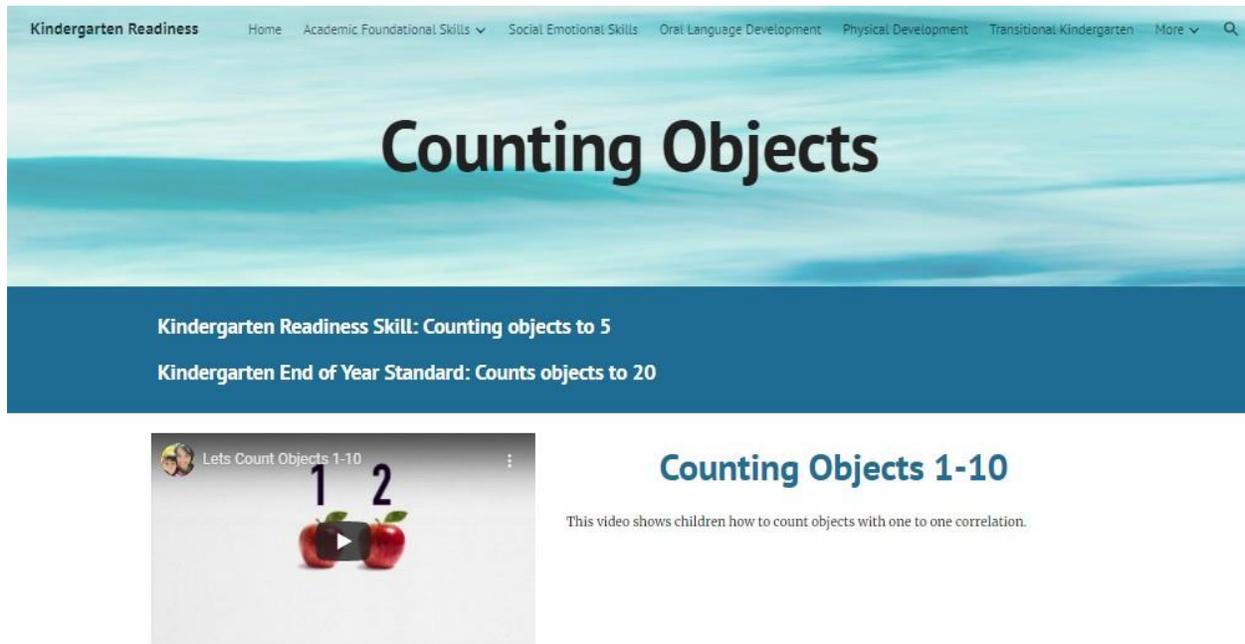
Counting to 100 by Tens
 Counting to 100 by tens is a Kindergarten End of Year Standard. Practice this standard with this video.

Figure 6. Screenshot of the Rote Counting and Number Identification page

Counting Objects

The Counting Objects page is a subpage of the Academic Foundational Skills page. The first video included on this page, Let's Count Objects 1-10, shows one to one correlation with the objects being counted. The objects are displayed as a movement or an action on the screen indicates which object is being counted. This one to one correlation skill of counting objects works in conjunction with rote counting. As a child learns to count higher, he or she can work on combining that rote counting skill with pointing to or touching an object for each number. The child will be able to increase the number of objects counted accordingly. Parents can supplement

the video with having their child count objects found around the house or in their daily environment.



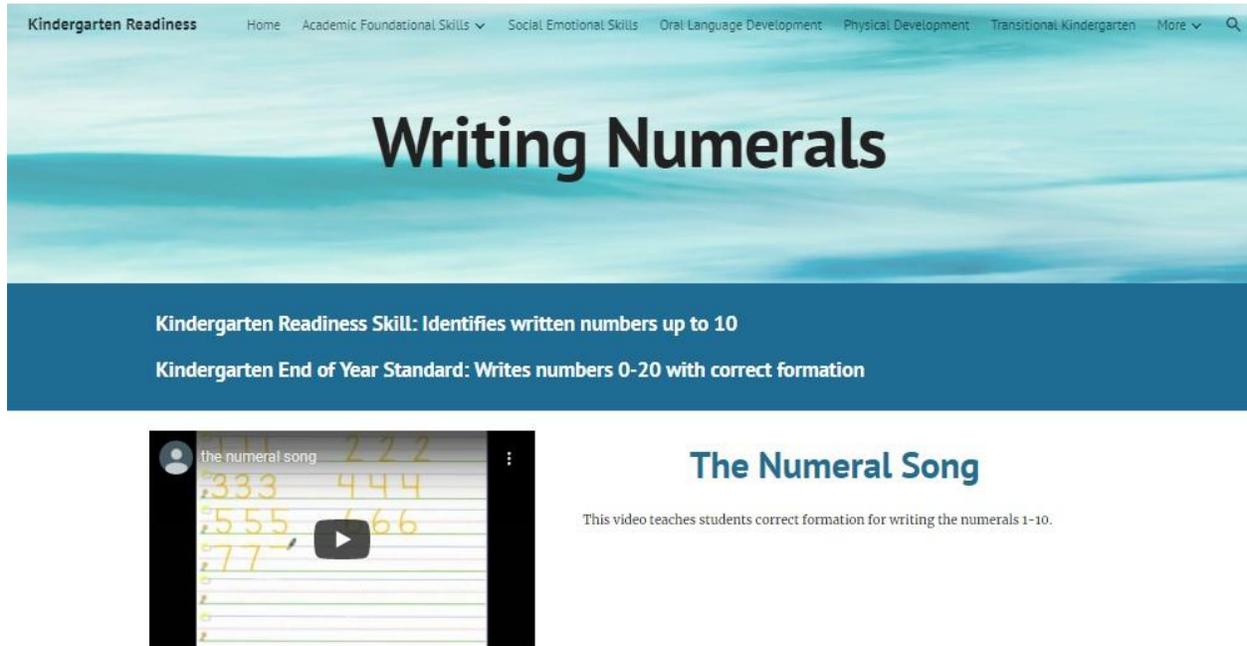
Kindergarten Readiness Skill: Counting objects to 5
Kindergarten End of Year Standard: Counts objects to 20

Counting Objects 1-10
This video shows children how to count objects with one to one correlation.

Figure 7. Screenshot of the Counting Objects page

Writing Numerals

The Writing Numerals page is a subpage of the Academic Foundational Skills page. The video listed is Dr. Jean's The Numeral Song. The song is quick paced, so I recommend that the parent watches the video with their child for a few times to first learn the lyrics. Then, the parent could model how to "air write" the numbers for the child. This is done by using one's pointer finger to write in the air. After the parents and child are comfortable with the song, paper and pencil could be introduced. If the song is still too fast, the parent could pause the song, or sing it slowly to the child, modeling the number formation on the paper.



Kindergarten Readiness Skill: Identifies written numbers up to 10

Kindergarten End of Year Standard: Writes numbers 0-20 with correct formation

the numeral song

2 2 2

3 3 3 4 4 4

5 5 5 6 6 6

7 7 7

The Numeral Song

This video teaches students correct formation for writing the numerals 1-10.

Figure 8. Screenshot of the Writing Numerals page

Colors

The Colors page is a subpage of the Academic Foundational Skills page. On this page, I included nine videos of individual color songs from Frog Street Press. The color songs are red, orange, yellow, green, blue, purple, brown, black, and white. These videos demonstrate objects that fall into that color category as well as teach the viewer how to spell the color. This skill will benefit the child's reading and writing.

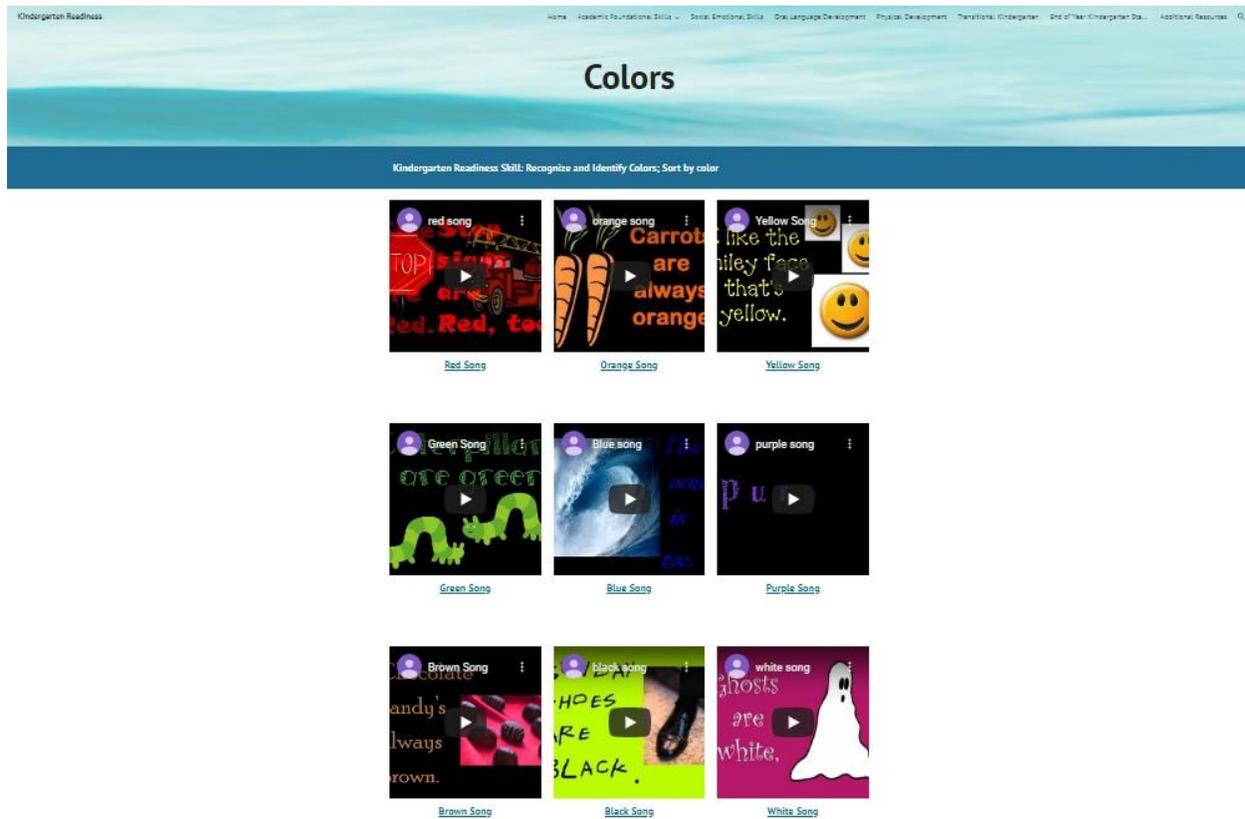
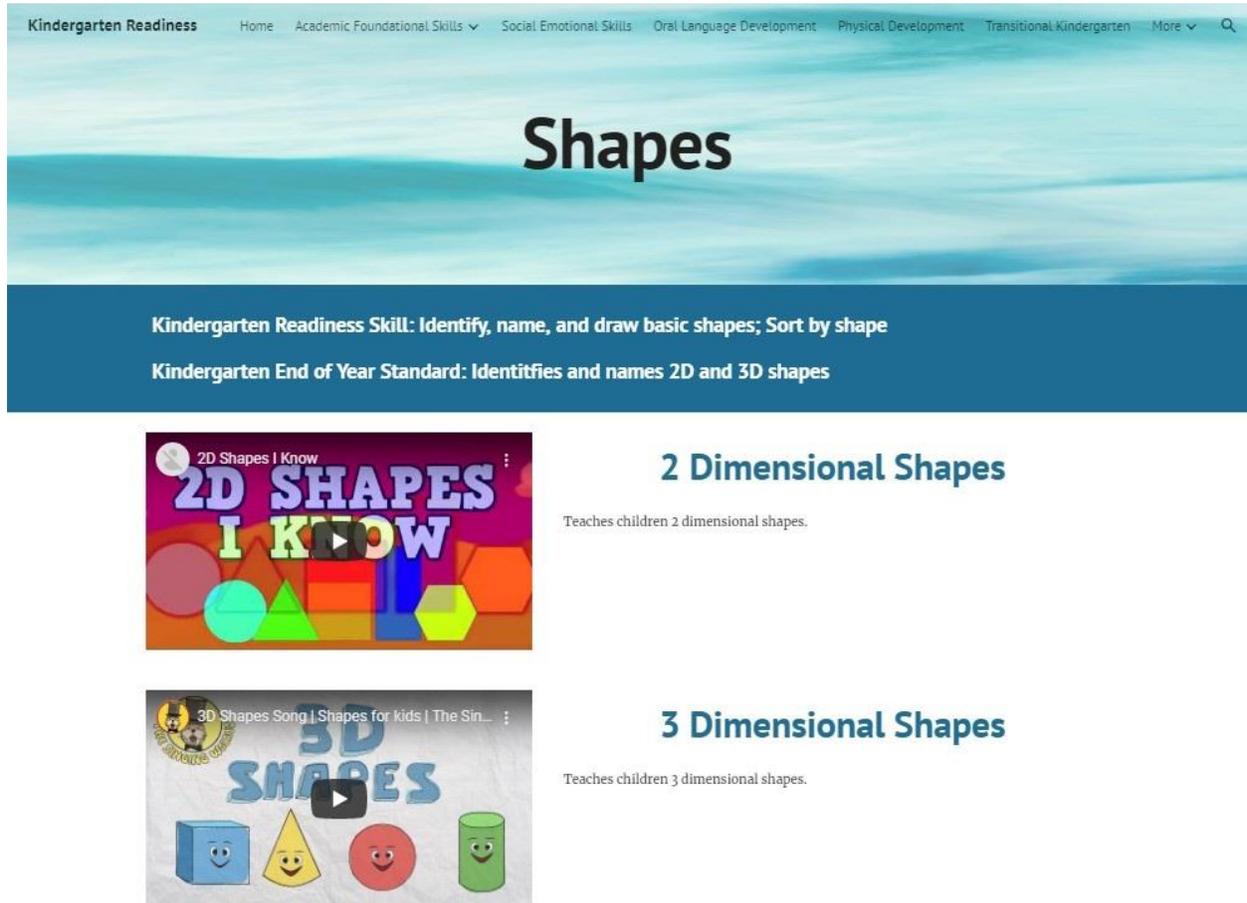


Figure 9. Screenshot of the Writing Numerals page

Shapes

The Shapes page is a subpage of the Academic Foundational Skills page. According to the Oceanside Promise Kindergarten Readiness Checklist, children should be able to identify, name, and draw some basic two-dimensional shapes (circle, triangle, square, and rectangle) as they enter kindergarten. Per the Common Core State Standards, as they leave kindergarten, children should also be able to name, identify, and describe some three-dimensional shapes (sphere, cone, cube, cylinder). The first video on the Shapes page introduces two-dimensional shapes. It explains to the viewer how to determine a shape by the number of sides and corners. It also provides examples of items that are those shapes. The second video on the Shapes page

introduces three-dimensional shapes. It also provides examples of items that are those particular shapes. For example, the video uses a party hat to represent a cone. Both videos use the multimodal approach to teach about shapes.



Kindergarten Readiness Skill: Identify, name, and draw basic shapes; Sort by shape

Kindergarten End of Year Standard: Identifies and names 2D and 3D shapes

2 Dimensional Shapes

Teaches children 2 dimensional shapes.

3 Dimensional Shapes

Teaches children 3 dimensional shapes.

Figure 10. Screenshot of the Shapes page

Reading

The Reading page is a subpage of the Academic Foundational Skills page. One of the kindergarten readiness skills for pre-reading or early literacy is knowing concepts of print. That is children are expected to know the parts of a book (front cover, back cover, spine, etc.),

directionality of print (top to bottom, left to right), and the roles of the author and illustrator. The video, Concepts of Print, uses a familiar book, *If You Give a Mouse a Cookie*, to illustrate these concepts. A limitation of the video is that there are no spoken words, only background music with written text and speech bubbles. It is recommended that a parent watch the Concepts of Print video with their child and reads the text to him or her. They can check for understanding and practice the concepts with books that they have in their home or on visits to the library.

The second video on the Reading page is *The Sentence Song*. Being kindergarten ready does not require a child to know how to identify a sentence. However, as it can be a difficult concept for kindergarteners to grasp, this video can be used to build background knowledge on the concept of what makes a sentence. The *Sentence Song* video explains that a sentence starts with a capital letter and ends with one of three punctuation marks (. ! ?). It shows examples of different sentences and illustrates when you would use each punctuation. For example, if a sentence is describing strong feelings, it would require an exclamation point.

The bottom half of the Reading page is dedicated to sight words. Although knowledge of sight words is not listed as a requirement for being kindergarten ready on the Oceanside Promise Kindergarten Readiness Checklist, it is important for parents to know of the expectation.

According to the Common Core State Standards for California, kindergarteners should know at least sixty sight words by the end of the academic year. Two lists of Dolch Sight Words are provided on the Reading page. The first list is the Pre-Kindergarten list and is made up of 40 words. The second list is the Kindergarten list and made up of 52 words.

The final document on the Reading page describes a method of teaching new sight words to children. The document was developed using Jan Richardson's technique as she described in

her book *The Next Step Forward in Guided Reading* (2016).

Kindergarten Readiness Skill: Know parts of a book and directionality of reading (top to bottom, and left to right)

Kindergarten End of Year Standard: Read emergent-reader texts with purpose and understanding

Concepts of Print

This video teaches parts of a book and directionality of how we read books.

Sentences

This video shows how sentences begin with capital letters and end with certain punctuation.

Sight Words

By the end of kindergarten, children are expected to know at least 100 words. These are words that appear frequently in texts, but typically cannot be "sounded out". It is important for children to recognize them quickly while reading to increase fluency.

Dolch Sight Words
Pre-Kindergarten (48 words)

Dolch Sight Words
Kindergarten (100 words)

Teaching Sight Words

This is a list of sight words recommended for children to learn before entering kindergarten.

This is a list of sight words recommended for children to learn while in kindergarten.

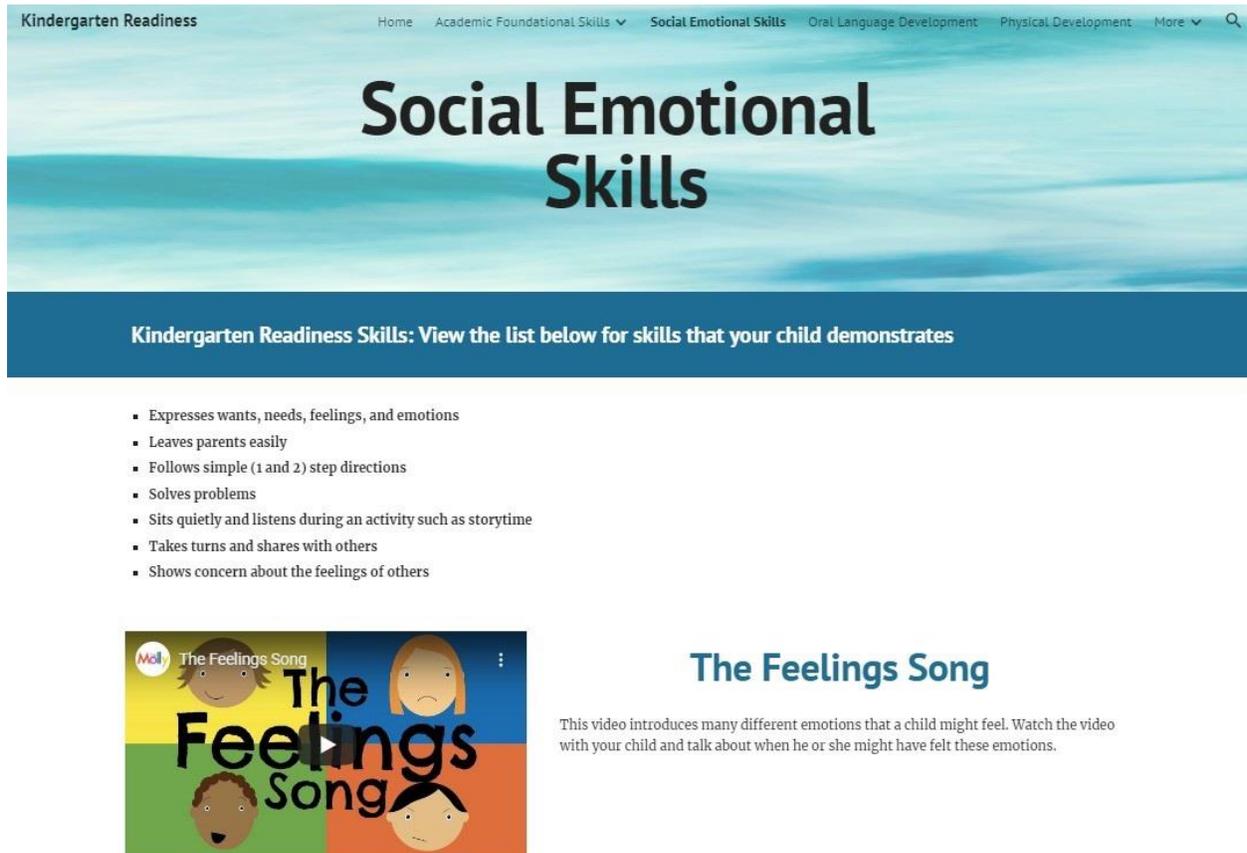
This document demonstrates a method of teaching new sight words to children.

Figure 11. Screenshot of the Reading page

Social Emotional Skills

The Social Emotional Skills page lists a number of social emotional skills that are recommended on the Oceanside Promise Kindergarten Readiness Checklist. These specific social emotional skills are: expresses wants, needs, feelings, and emotions, leaves parents easily, follows simple directions, solves problems, sits quietly and listens during an activity such as story time, takes turns and shares with others, and shows concern about the feelings of others. Parents are asked to view the list and evaluate whether or not their child demonstrates these skills.

One video is included on the Social Emotional Skills page. The Feelings Song video introduces the viewer to many different emotions that he or she may experience at a given time. The video uses illustrations of facial expressions and body language to demonstrate the different emotions. It is helpful for children to identify and name their feelings as they learn to self regulate.



Kindergarten Readiness Skills: View the list below for skills that your child demonstrates

- Expresses wants, needs, feelings, and emotions
- Leaves parents easily
- Follows simple (1 and 2) step directions
- Solves problems
- Sits quietly and listens during an activity such as storytime
- Takes turns and shares with others
- Shows concern about the feelings of others

The Feelings Song

This video introduces many different emotions that a child might feel. Watch the video with your child and talk about when he or she might have felt these emotions.

Figure 12. Screenshot of the Social Emotional Skills page

Oral Language Development

The Oral Language Development page lists a number of oral language skills that are recommended on the Oceanside Promise Kindergarten Readiness Checklist. These specific oral

language skills are: states first and last name when asked, starting to speak in full sentences, expresses wants, needs, feeling, and emotions, asks for help when needed, takes turns in conversations with others, retells simple stories, and begins to rhyme words. Parents are asked to view the list and evaluate whether or not their child demonstrates these skills.

Below the list of oral language development skills, there are some tips adopted from a blog on the Inclusion Lab website. The tips listed are to be used by parents to encourage oral language development. These tips include encouraging conversation, modeling sentence structure and syntax, making eye contact, reminding children to articulate clearly, and play rhyming games. Parents can help their children develop their vocabulary and oral language skills, which are important factors in early literacy.

Kindergarten Readiness Home Academic Foundational Skills Social Emotional Skills **Oral Language Development** Physical Development Transitional Kindergarten End of Year Kindergarten Stand... Additional Resources Q

Oral Language Development

Kindergarten Readiness Skill: View the list below for skills that your child demonstrates

- States first and last name when asked
- Starting to speak in full sentences
- Expresses wants, needs, feelings, and emotions
- Asks for help when needed
- Takes turns in conversations with others
- Retells simple stories
- Begins to rhyme words

A Few Tips to Help

- **Encourage Conversation** - The greatest thing you can do to help you child develop oral language skills is to talk with them. Have conversations: take turns talking and listening, ask questions, rephrase answers, prompt them for more, to encourage the conversation to continue. Ask your child about his or her day and how they are feeling. Learning to express themselves will help them get their needs met when they are not with you.
- **Model Sentence Structure and Syntax** - When your child uses an incomplete sentence, model a complete sentence back to them. Not only does this help with his or her oral language practice, it will help with writing as well.
- **Make Eye Contact** - Children will learn to gauge your attention and adjust their language, volume, or speech. It will help them pick up on nonverbal cues and communicate more clearly.
- **Remind Children to Articulate Clearly** - Sometimes children need a gentle reminder to slow their speech and pronounce words clearly. It is often helpful to model the correct pronunciation so they can repeat it back to you.
- **Play Rhyming Games** - Children love to be silly and they love to rhyme. Combine the two by thinking of silly (or real) rhyming words together.

Note: Be sure not to interrupt or correct mistakes too quickly. Instead, rephrase what the child says using the correct form.
If the child says, "I eated my sandwich fast," you might say, "Wow! You ate your sandwich so quickly. You must have been hungry."
You show interest in what the child is saying and model the correct word without embarrassing him or her.

<https://www.inclusionlab.com/blog/oral-language-development>

Figure 13. Screenshot of the Oral Language Development page

Physical Development

The Physical Development page lists a number of physical skills that are recommended on the Oceanside Promise Kindergarten Readiness Checklist. These specific physical development skills are: holds a pencil or crayon with three point grip, uses scissors to cut a straight line, puts and 8-10 piece puzzle together, bounces, kicks, throws, and catches a ball, claps to a beat, tries to tie shoes, hops on one foot and alternating sides, puts things away, and cares for self: brush teeth, go to the restroom, put on coat, wipe nose, and wash hands. Parents are asked to view the list and evaluate whether or not their child demonstrates these skills. If there child is not performing the skills independently, parents should give direct attention to teaching the skill. Because some of the skills, such as the three point grip, or using scissors to cut may not be intuitive, videos of how to teach such skills are provided below the list. The first three videos, Correct Pencil Grip, Scissor Skills, and Tying Shoe Laces, are instructional videos. Parents should watch these videos and use them to teach their children the skills described. This is especially important for the Scissor Skills video, as it only has background music and text. Children will need extra support and a lot of practice to master these skills. The final video, Hopping Skipping Song, is one to which a child could practice hopping and skipping on command. For five minutes and five seconds, the song in the video provides commands like "hop", "skip", "right foot hop", "left foot hop", and "walk it out".

Kindergarten Readiness Skill: View the list below for skills that your child demonstrates

- Holds a pencil or crayon with three point grip
- Uses scissors to cut a straight line
- Puts an 8-10 piece puzzle together
- Bounces, kicks, throws, and catches a ball
- Claps to a beat
- Tries to tie shoes
- Hops on one foot, and alternating sides
- Puts things away
- Cares for self: brush teeth, go to the restroom, put on coat, wipe nose, and wash hands

Correct pencil grip

Proper Scissor Use

Tying Shoe Laces

Hopping and Skipping Song

Figure 14. Screenshot of the Physical Development page

Transitional Kindergarten

The Transitional Kindergarten page provides a brief description of transitional kindergarten (TK) and proposes it as an option to those who may feel their child is not quite ready for traditional kindergarten. Below this description is a button that links to an article, "Understanding Transitional Kindergarten - A Quick Guide", from the EDSOURCE website. The article uses a FAQ format to provide the reader with general information about the transitional kindergarten program in California.

The second button on the Transitional Kindergarten page provides a link to the Oceanside Unified School District's (OUSD) Transitional Kindergarten page. This resource is targeted for

those families living within the OUSD zone and provides pertinent information regarding the TK program in Oceanside, CA.

The third button on the Transitional Kindergarten page links to the Transitional Kindergarten Frequently Asked Questions (FAQs) listed on the California Department of Education's website. This robust set of FAQs cover many of the legal questions, such as eligibility and restrictions, about TK.



Figure 15. Screenshot of the Transitional Kindergarten page

End of Year Kindergarten Standards

The End of the Year Kindergarten Standards page lists the end of the year goals that are used in the kindergarten progress reports (report cards) for the Oceanside Unified School District. These are the standards that kindergarten students are expected to meet before promoting to first grade. This information is included on the website in an effort to inform

parents of these expectations. It is anticipated that having the knowledge of the end of year goals, parents will remain active participants in their children's education.

The buttons listed below the kindergarten goals will take the user to other websites for additional information on the kindergarten standards. The first button links the user to an EDSOURCE article titled "Understanding Common Core: A Quick Guide". This article is written in a FAQ format and provides the reader with information about Common Core.

The following three buttons are used as links to the California Department of Education website for Common Core State Standards (CCSS) page, the California Common Core State Standards for English Language Arts & Literacy in History/Social Studies, Science, and Technical Subjects document, and the California Common Core Standards for Mathematics document, respectively.

Kindergarten Readiness Home Academic Foundational Skills Social Emotional Skills Oral Language Development Physical Development Transitional Kindergarten End of Year Kindergarten Standards Additional Resources

End of Year Kindergarten Standards

Below are the goals towards which kindergarten students are working.

- **Reading / Foundational Skills:**
 - Knows 52 letter names
 - Knows 35 letter sounds (including long & short vowel sounds; including digraphs (ch, sh, th, wh))
 - Can read 60 sight words
 - Reads at level D or above with understanding
- **Printing:**
 - Prints first name without model & with correct formation
 - Prints 48-52 letters (uppercase and lowercase) neatly & with correct formation
- **Writing:**
 - Writing cohesively in multiple genres (Narrative, Information, Opinion) with beginning, middle, and end
 - Writes using grade level capitalization, punctuation, grammar, & spelling
- **Mathematics:**
 - Counts to 100 by ones
 - Counts to 100 by tens
 - Counts 20 or more objects
 - Recognizes numbers 0-20
 - Writes numbers 0-20 with correct formation
 - Solves various types of word problems
- **Social Emotional / Life Skills:**
 - Listens attentively
 - Participates in group discussions (on topic)
 - Raises hand to talk during lessons
 - Follows 1 - 2 step directions (i.e. "Put your paper in your cubbie and meet me at the carpet")
 - Works independently
 - Works and shares with others (collaboration)
 - Keeps hands and feet to self

Understanding Common Core in California CA Common Core State Standards (CCSS)

CCSS - ELA in History/Social Studies, Science and Tech CCSS - Mathematics

Figure 16. Screenshot of the End of Year Kindergarten Standards page

Additional Resources

The Additional Resources page, includes links to other tools and organizations that are intended to help parents navigate their child's educational journey from early childhood and beyond. The first resource listed is Kiddle.co, a search engine created specifically for children. Each search result is handpicked and vetted by the editors. The results are displayed with large images and font, making it easier for children to access. Parents are encouraged to use this search engine with their children. It is important for parents to promote the curiosities and passions of their children, as it is a powerful influence in building a lifelong love for learning.

The first button opens the Oceanside Promise - Early Childhood Success webpage. On this page parents can learn more about the community partnership known as the Oceanside Promise and its Early Childhood Success Action Network. This organization is committed to better prepare the citizens of Oceanside for "success in college, career and life" starting with the youngest member of the community.

The second button is embedded with a link to the Oceanside Promise - Kindergarten Readiness webpage. This page contains information about kindergarten readiness and is the basis for this project. From this Kindergarten Readiness webpage, parents can download the Oceanside Promise Kindergarten Readiness checklist for their own review.

The third button links to the First 5 San Diego website. First 5 San Diego is an organization that is dedicated to the health and well being of the young children of San Diego, from the pre-natal stage until 5 years old. They are an integral part of the Quality Preschool Initiative that is advocating for the best learning experiences for children.

The fourth button links the user to the Child Trends website. Child Trends is a research organization that focuses solely on helping children improve their lives. They support programs and policies that are research based and take into account what is known about child development. On this website parents can educate themselves about child welfare and the research that is providing data that support the development of programs to enhance children's lives.

The fifth button directs the user to the Early Edge California website. Early Edge California is a early learning advocacy organization. Their goal is to improve early learning programs and solidify social justice and education equity for all young children in California.

Parents can visit their website to understand what issues are being raised and what is being done to improve programs statewide.



Figure 17. Screenshot of the Additional Resources page

Chapter 5: Conclusion

Recent changes in California's education policy have increased curricula rigor for all grades, including kindergarten. With what is expected of the state's youngest learners, the need for preparation is undeniable. Students without strong academic foundational and social emotional skills begin the school year at a disadvantage. Typically, these students are those who start kindergarten without any prior classroom experience. These children and their families need access to resources so that they may be informed of the demands of kindergarten and learn how to develop appropriate intellectual and social emotional skills for the classroom. By creating an

engaging and informative website that supports kindergarten readiness, I am able to help parents support the educational needs of their children in a clear and organized way.

The purpose of this project is to create a website for Ivey Ranch Elementary and the Oceanside Unified School District that explains the importance of kindergarten readiness and provides information and resources to help parents prepare their children for kindergarten. This website is meant to serve as a guide for parents and students in the acquisition and development of both academic and social emotional foundational skills. It will also serve as a tool to be used for practice at home, supporting the daily activities in the classroom. The website provides access to Common Core State Standards for kindergarten so that parents and students are aware of the goals toward which the children are working. The website also presents information about the transitional kindergarten program to help the families make informed decisions about their child's education.

Lessons Learned From the Process

When beginning this project, I had a general idea of what I wanted it to look like and for whom I wanted to create it. As a kindergarten teacher at Ivey Ranch Elementary School in Oceanside, CA, I have seen students enter my classroom with a range of academic and social emotional skills. For children without letter identification and phonemic awareness skills, I had some knowledge of resources that helped students develop these skills. I knew that I wanted to include these and other resources on the website so that families would have access to them prior to starting kindergarten.

As I began developing my ideas, I also wanted to include information on transitional kindergarten (TK). I believe that if students are eligible for the year of preparation that TK

provides, the children should be enrolled in the program. I also wanted to include information about the Common Core State Standards to give parents information about what is expected in kindergarten.

One of the things I learned in the process was that the Oceanside Promise organization had already laid some groundwork in raising awareness about kindergarten readiness. I was able to use their Oceanside Promise Kindergarten Readiness Checklist in alignment with my design and provide cohesive information to parents through my website. In my research for the project, I also discovered multiple other organizations that are advocates for improving early education. I included some of these organizations on the Additional Resources page of the website.

Recommendations for Implementation

This project will be a useful resource to many people who need to support children that are lacking the academic foundational skills that are necessary for reading, writing, and problem solving. It also provides information regarding appropriate social emotional skills that are necessary for intellectual learning to occur. Although it was created to inform and support families within the community of Oceanside in preparing their children for kindergarten, educators, administrators and support staff can also use the website as a source for children that need interventions and additional practice.

I would first recommend this website to my administrators and their support staff. I would encourage that a link to the kindergarten readiness website be placed on the school's website where it could be found easily by parents inquiring about kindergarten. The school website is often the first point of interaction between the school and the community. New parents will often visit the website to gather information about school and enrollment procedures. If

parents were able to access the website early in their inquiry, they would be able to provide academic and social emotional development support to their children right away. When parents visit the school, administrators and their staff would be able to direct them to the website for additional resources. Furthermore, the administration would be able to disseminate information about the website at the time of the yearly outgoing notifications regarding kindergarten registration and kindergarten orientation.

I would also provide the information about the website to my grade level team. We could then use the website as a tool for the students that come into kindergarten without the academic resources included in the website. Using the resources provided on the website consistently, as a team, would provide a level of unity with regard to the importance of kindergarten readiness. Also, it would create an avenue for feedback from educators and families about the website and allow for reflection and improvements.

Finally, I would present the project to the Oceanside Unified School District and the Oceanside Promise organization. If these two entities provided access to the kindergarten readiness website from their own, the number of families it could impact increases greatly.

Limitations

A limitation to the effectiveness of the kindergarten readiness website would be that it is not tailored for the individual child. All children are unique and have a variety of needs and talents. As teachers can differentiate within the classroom, this website cannot. The responsibility of using the information and resources from the website effectively falls greatly upon the parents. This takes time. Unfortunately, a lot of the students without prior access to the skills needed for kindergarten readiness, come from environments that may not be able to invest

a lot of time. Still, I am hopeful because most of the resources provided to build academic skills are engaging, multimodal videos that when watched, even a few times, make the subject matter more accessible.

Future Directions

Research supports that transitional kindergarten (TK) is effective in preparing children for kindergarten. However, eligibility to enroll in TK in the Oceanside Unified School District (OUSD) depends on a child's birth date. One must be born between October 2 and December 2 in order to qualify for the program. The kindergarten readiness website was created to support the children that do not qualify for transitional kindergarten or do not have access to a similar program. A recommendation for future researchers would be to investigate the possibility of making the TK program available to every child. This change would make transitional kindergarten the first year of a two year kindergarten program. The kindergarten readiness website would still prove to be beneficial in providing information and resources to families.

Conclusion

Proponents of improving early childhood education for the sake of better preparing students to be college and career ready are growing in numbers. With the increasingly rigorous demands of kindergarten, preparation must begin prior to children enrolling in this grade. It is important that students enter kindergarten with strong academic foundational and appropriate social emotional skills. For children that do not have pre-k opportunities like transitional kindergarten to develop these skills, a website is now available . The kindergarten readiness website provides information and resources to these families. The project as described in this paper ultimately provides educational equity to a community of learners that was in need.

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