



LEARNING LOSS RECOVERY CHALLENGE



PROMOTING IMPACTFUL TEACHING AND LEARNING IN KINDERGARTEN

Kindergarten can be a "sturdy bridge" for students from pre-K to kindergarten and then to the early grades of elementary school when we use evidence-based practices on how young children learn best. Research clearly indicates effective strategies and there are a variety of promising practices that support these young learners. As a part of our Learning Loss Recovery Challenge messaging and engagement initiative, the Campaign for Grade-Level Reading (CGLR) and New America's Early & Elementary Policy Program have joined forces to host a series of sessions to explore literacy, math and social-emotional development in Kindergarten and how educators, districts and states can play a part in transforming kindergarten.



SERIES HIGHLIGHTS

A Pivotal Year: Kindergarten's Important Role in Students' Education

October 25, 2022, 3-4:30 p.m. ET

This GLR Learning Tuesdays discussion features **Swati Adarkar**, Deputy Assistant Secretary for Policy and Early Learning at the **U.S. Department of Education**; **Ellen Galinsky**, author of *Mind in the Making*; and **Ryan Lee-James**, Chief Academic Officer at the **Atlanta Speech School**. They discuss why kindergarten is such an important year. Adarkar talks about kindergarten as the sturdy bridge between pre-K and the early grades. Galinsky talks about how, for the sturdy bridge to work, it needs to have a good foundation before and after kindergarten. Lee-James highlights the importance of relationships for building a reading brain. She also discusses how the COVID-19 pandemic wreaked havoc on children's learning, but points out that schools were struggling to meet all children's needs, especially children from marginalized communities before COVID. We need to do better for our young learners. [View here.](#)



Play + Academics + Relationships: Teaching in Ways Kindergartners Learn Best

"How do we get all these wonderful practices that you're hearing about into the length of day that we have in kindergarten?"

- Nell K. Duke, Ed.D.

November 29, 2022, 3-4:30 p.m. ET

In this GLR Learning Tuesdays webinar co-sponsored by CGLR and New America, **Lisa Guernsey**, Senior Fellow & Strategic Advisor of the Education Policy Program at **New America**, moderates a conversation with a panel of leaders, exploring some of the most important research findings on teaching and learning in kindergarten. **Nell Duke, Ed.D.**, of **Stand for Children**; **Kathryn Hirsh-Pasek, Ph.D.**, of **Temple University** and the **Brookings Institution**; **Anya Hurwitz, Ed.D.**, of **Sobrato Early Academic Language (SEAL)**; and **Deborah Leong, Ph.D.**, of **Tools of the Mind** discuss what it means to "stop the schoolification" of kindergarten and instead use play to build executive functioning skills, support the development of language skills and more. **Cynthia Crespo** and **Seymonnia Cutkelvin** of **New York City Schools** and **Luis Gallego, M.A.Ed.**, of **Tools of the Mind** provide their perspectives as frontline educators providing instruction to kindergartners and the significance of relationships with both students and their families to support learning and development. [View here.](#)

Learning How States, Districts and Educators are Strengthening Kindergarten

"Over the course of the past 15 to 20 years, the concept of Kindergarten as building the foundation for students has been lost, and kindergarten has evolved into programming to 'fast track' students toward specific benchmarks... In so doing, programs are trying to put the roof on the house before the foundation has had an opportunity to set." - Pamela Truelove-Walker, Ed.D.

January 17, 2023, 3-4:30 p.m. ET

In too many schools, kindergarten classrooms look and feel more like third-grade classrooms than pre-K classrooms. This must change; fortunately, there are places across the country from which we can learn. Some state and district officials are working to establish the conditions needed to ensure that kindergartners have learning experiences and environments delivered in the ways they learn best. In this GLR Learning Tuesdays webinar co-sponsored by CGLR and New America, **Laura Bornfreund** talks with kindergarten teacher **Stacy Macri** from New Hampshire; state officials **Pamela Truelove-Walker, Ed.D.**, from the Alabama Department of Early Childhood Education and **Anna Severens** with the Nevada Department of Education; and school district officials **Jeri Robinson** and **Jason Sachs, Ph.D.**, from Boston Public Schools and **Kim Holland, Ed.S.**, from Gwinnett County Public Schools. Presenters share how they are building relationships with families, supporting classroom teachers, and making children's early schooling more joyful, meaningful and seamless. [View here.](#)



Creating Environment and Conditions for Thriving Kindergartners

"The big idea here is that when you think about the nexus of playful learning and safe, supportive and responsive relationships and environments, and then equitable mindsets and practices and policies and systems, the nexus of that is the creation of these fertile conditions in which young children can thrive." - Natalie Walrond

February 14, 2023, 3-4:30 p.m. ET

In this GLR Learning Tuesdays webinar co-sponsored by CGLR and New America, **Laura Bornfreund** asks panelists, what do children need to thrive in kindergarten? **Sheresa Blanchard, Ph.D.**, of SRI International; **Hedy Chang** of Attendance Works; **Rebecca Colbert, Ph.D., RLA**, of the National Wildlife Federation; **Ann Kay** of The Rock 'n' Read Project; and **Natalie Walrond** of WestEd share how a culturally responsive pedagogy, outdoor education, music, equity, relevant learning and much more help make school a compelling space where students and families want to be. [View here.](#)



Promoting High-Quality Math and Science Learning in Kindergarten

"Math classrooms should be spaces where children are encouraged to explore, and teachers are masterful at putting the right questions and tasks in front of them to help them to develop a deep understanding of the math they're learning." - Jessica Tilli

March 7, 2023, 3-4:30 p.m. ET

In this GLR Learning Tuesdays webinar co-sponsored by CGLR and New America, **Laura Bornfreund** asks panelists, what is most important when it comes to teaching and learning math and science in Kindergarten? **Jessica Tilli** of The School District of Philadelphia quotes **Sunil Singh** saying that educators must become "experts and lovers of their discipline." For **Lauren Solarski, Ph.D.**, of Loyola University Chicago, this requires reducing anxiety around math and science for educators. **Douglas Clements, Ph.D.**, of the University of Denver reviews research around the components of high-quality instruction, and our panelists unanimously point toward the importance of teacher education and development around math and science. As educators are equipped, they can then support the development of early STEM identities in learners explains **Chih-Ing Lim, Ph.D.**, of STEM Innovation for Inclusion in Early Education and University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill. **Cindy Hoisington** shares that at the Education Development Center they do this by facilitating opportunities for learners to engage, explore and reflect, providing high-quality math and science learning in kindergarten. [View here.](#)

Investing in Kindergarten as a “Sturdy Bridge”: Philanthropic Opportunities

“We need to build a more aligned system, a system that requires a ‘sturdy bridge’ between the early years and the early grades. This ‘bridge’ is kindergarten.” - Swati Adarkar

April 18, 2023, 12:30-2pm ET

In this Funder-to-Funder Conversation, **Swati Adarkar** of the **U.S. Department of Education** introduces the Department’s new PreK-3 agenda, explaining how the agenda was designed to transform transitions into and out of kindergarten, advance an equity lens to better meet the developmental needs of individual children, and deliver the enabling conditions for success. **Laura Bornfreund** of **New America** then moderates a conversation with a panel of philanthropic leaders – **Chrisanne Gayl** of **Trust for Learning**; **Phil Halperin** of **Silver Giving Foundation**; **Sara Slaughter** of **W. Clement & Jessie V. Stone Foundation**; and **Bryan Stokes II** of the **Robert M. McCormick Foundation** – who discuss their investments to support children’s success along the birth through third-grade continuum and how those investments work to strengthen the “sturdy bridge” that Adarkar describes. The funders emphasize the need to break down the silos that separate the traditional K-12 and early care and education spaces; their efforts to strengthen the early learning and early grades workforces, including pathways into the teaching profession and growth pathways to help educators secure higher credentials; and efforts to build a leadership pipeline to help early grades teachers become principals and to ensure principal preparation programs incorporate early childhood, dual language learning, special education and social-emotional learning into their content. As the panelists discuss these topics, they highlight the unique roles that funders can play, including providing risk capital and taking a long view with their investments. [View here.](#)



Kindergarten as a “Sturdy Bridge”: Place-Based Investments

“...the transition into kindergarten and then transition from kindergarten into first grade. When those transitions and those systems are so misaligned or disjointed, it puts an extra burden on families because they’re not just trying to align to one system. They’re trying to align to different systems that are themselves disjointed, and it just creates additional barriers for families.”

-Vivian Tseng

June 20, 2023, 12:30-2pm ET

In this Funder-to-Funder Conversation, **Vivian Tseng** of **Foundation for Child Development** moderates a conversation with a panel of philanthropic leaders –**Jonathan Hui** of **The Kresge Foundation**, **Barbara Reisman** of **Maher Charitable Foundation**, **Karla Ruiz** of **Sobrato Philanthropies** and **Jymil Thompson** of the **John and Janice Wyatt Foundation** –as they discuss their approaches to supporting children’s success along the birth through third-grade continuum. Their investments include the development of a 53-acre cradle-to-career campus in Detroit; advocacy to secure public funding for the statewide scaling of a high-quality PreK program using a mixed-delivery approach with a focus on educator training and compensation; systems change and programs to support English learners and their families while equipping educators to deliver rigorous language learning; and kindergarten readiness strategies that engage and support public school systems, community-based providers and families. The panelists discuss the wide range of roles that funders can play, including investments in early learning facilities, family engagement efforts that bring diverse cultures and languages into K-12 systems, community engagement and listening, professional development for educators, and advocacy for increased public investment in early learning and better compensation for early learning educators. [View here.](#)

Strengthening Kindergarten to Improve PreK-3rd Grade Experiences

"The vast majority of people in our school communities want to create equity oriented educational systems. When we put the pieces together we create the conditions to act. This joyful, developmentally appropriate aligned equity focus, early learning and elementary continuum. The results are incredibly hopeful."

June 20, 2023, 3-4:30pm ET

-Anya Hurwitz, Ed.D

In this GLR Learning Tuesdays moderator **Laura Bornfreund** of **New America** asks panelists what a well-aligned, joyful, and developmentally informed PreK through third continuum means for dual language learners, children with disabilities, and children from families with low incomes. **Gloria Corral** of the **Parent Institute for Quality Education (PIQE)** explains it this way, "children's ability to thrive is based on their ability to feel welcome, for their families to feel welcome, for their culture and the community to be valued." For **Shantel Meek, Ph.D.**, the Founding Director of the **Children's Equity Project** of **Arizona State University**, "there are some really clear, established inequities that we have seen, that have been consistent in services and systems for kids with disabilities in the K-12 system or the PreK-12 system." **Anya Hurwitz, Ed.D.** of **Sobrato Early Academic Language** shares her dream that "When we truly ground in assets, in seeing children for all of their potential across their multiple languages, cultures, and worlds and seeing teachers for all their potential" we create a stronger kindergarten and a stronger PreK through third grade experience. [View here.](#)



BY THE NUMBERS

UNDUPLICATED ATTENDEES-TO-DATE

1,425

ATTENDEES BY SESSION

A Pivotal Year: Kindergarten's Important Role in Students' Education	292
Play + Academics + Relationships: Teaching in the Ways Kindergartners Learn Best	375
Learning How States, Districts, and Educators Are Strengthening Kindergarten	259
Creating Conditions and Environments for Thriving Kindergartners	242
Promoting High-Quality Math and Science Learning in Kindergarten	178
Investing in Kindergarten as a "Sturdy Bridge": Philanthropic Opportunities	79
Kindergarten as a "Sturdy Bridge": Place Based Investments	102
Strengthening Kindergarten to Improve Children's PreK-3rd Grade Experiences	195