

Early Learning Multnomah’s P-3 Focus Schools: Early Insights into What, Why, and How?

Background – What Are the P-3 Focus Schools?



In 2015-16, Early Learning Multnomah (ELM) received input from K-12 schools, early learning partners, and parents that suggested that school-based early learning opportunities were a priority. Working with these partners, they developed an application process to select eight local elementary schools to be designated as Prental-3rd Grade (P-3) focus schools¹. These schools were given funding to support a P-3 Coordinator charged with (1) family engagement, especially of culturally and linguistically diverse families who were historically under-represented in school leadership and activities and families whose children are not yet in elementary school; (2) providing Play and Learn groups for families and their children ages 0-5; (3) hosting Parent Cafés throughout the school year; and (4) supporting the implementation of Early Kindergarten Transition (EKT) programs at the school. To learn about the first year of the P-3 Coordinator’s work, their role, successes, and challenges, we conducted interviews with 2 ELM staff, 8 P-3 Coordinators, and 3 SUN staff. What follows is a summary of

the main themes that surfaced across interviews and also individual experiences which vary from site to site and person to person. Information specific to the implementation of the Play and Learn groups is presented in a separate brief².

What Do P-3 Focus Schools Do?

Respondents described a number of roles and goals for the P-3 focus schools, including:

- Extending SUN Community Schools into early childhood by providing programming and opportunities for families with children under 5;
- Implementing relationship-focused and culturally-specific outreach and advocacy support for families prior to starting school, especially families historically not effectively engaged in school activities and/or leadership;
- Working to improve transitions into kindergarten;
- Helping to change school climate around the importance of engaging diverse families, especially those with very young children;

- Building the schools’ capacity to truly be a “community school” that meets the needs of community members more broadly.

“To be a P-3 Focus school means a school that supports and values early learning and parents and families. It is a school that is creating a hub for the community as a resource. That encourages and promotes parents in helping their children learn before they are even born.” [P-3 Coordinator]

Engage Culturally and Linguistically Diverse Families

A unique and important goal of the ELM P-3 Focus Schools is the explicit focus on engaging diverse families. This work involved multiple strategies, including:

- Offering and doing outreach to families to participate in culturally-specific and responsive

¹The ELM P3 focus schools are Kelly (PPS), Lincoln Park (DDSD), Wood (Centennial), Rigler (PPS), Sacramento (Parkrose), Salish Ponds (Reynolds), Wilks (Reynolds), and Ventura Park (DDSD).

² See Play & Learn Brief (Play and Learn Groups: A Bridge between Families and Schools)

“Play and Learn” groups for families with children ages 0-5;

- Implementing Parent Cafés to hear from parents about their needs related to supporting children’s school success;
- Hosting school-based family-friendly activities and working with school staff to communicate and build relationships with families;
- Helping families to access other resources and act as a “systems navigator” to help families meet basic needs.

“Some good outcomes could be higher levels of family engagement among families of color, families in the school community that go unheard or without a voice. I’m hoping that a successful P-3 school would give those parents a voice.” [Hub Staff]

“The delivery of services to engage and work with [diverse] communities better, so we can actually look at the family and say, I see you and I see your child – we are working with you to provide responsive services and supports.” [P-3 Coordinator]

One SUN staff noted that changes were already happening:

“I have noticed that particular families are more involved...I noticed that there were parents that came to [Parent Cafés] that I haven’t seen come to a formal event...I have seen parents that I think have been disconnected from the school historically taking more active roles. That leads me to believe that the school climate is changing.” [SUN Staff]

Improve Child & Family Readiness for School

A key role for the P-3 Coordinator was to engage families in kindergarten transition activities and to develop pathways to make the transitions to kindergarten smoother for families and children. Seven of the eight schools had existing Early Kindergarten Transition (EKT) programs, which the P-3 Coordinators either led or supported. Further, P-3 Coordinators facilitated participation by culturally diverse families in EKT and other kindergarten transition programs by identifying families with rising kindergarten students and linking them to these specific kindergarten transition activities.

Overall, respondents were clear that the Play and Learn groups were central to laying the groundwork for both family engagement with the school and for building children’s school readiness.

“When kids and families are engaged together in activities, there is a much deeper level of commitment from the families and an opportunity to connect to each other in a specific school-based set of tasks together. The Play and Learn classes contributed hugely to the buy-in and number of families that came in asking questions and feeling comfortable talking to the principal and being present in their older kids’ classrooms.” [SUN Staff]

“I want to be able to give [families] tools and new ideas to do at home. That family engagement to make school fun for them in spite of how it went for them. I’m here to show them that school can be fun AND educational.” [P-3 Coordinator]

“It puts an emphasis on the importance of home learning; families having the power to educate their kids because that’s what the PnL model is based on. It puts a lot of power into the hands of parents who participate and creates a culture of ‘we’ll help you find the tools, but you do this at home.’” [SUN Staff]

Shift School Culture

By embedding P-3 Coordinators within elementary schools, partners hope to change school climate, making schools welcoming to diverse families and families with young children. P-3 Focus schools also work to support authentic parent voice and leadership in the school.

“Helping schools think about their role in the community, to shift how they choose to engage families, and [change] principal perspectives around ‘who are my students, who are my families?’ To see that three year old across the street is someday going to be our kid.” [Hub Staff]

“The change I would like to see is everyone getting comfortable seeing babies and toddlers with parents walking in the school, like it is a norm because this is a hub for learning for all ages.” [P3 Coordinator]

“Nurturing parent leadership, authentic leadership. We’re creating opportunities where parents come together and talk about what’s important to them and what they want their school experience to be, and [how] the school can meet their needs.” [Hub Staff]

Build Stronger Parent/Caregiver Community

Finally, an important function of the P-3 School is to create opportunities for parents to connect with each other and to build a supportive community.

“Using [Play and Learn groups] to better connect people to each other...Even though their children are not the same age, they’re able to benefit from the same resources at a different level....So they feel better supported and better connected to the community school.” [P3 Coordinator]

“The difference I hope to make is families being confident and comfortable in connecting with their schools, teachers, and staff when relating to their children and learning regardless of a language barrier.” [P3 Coordinator]

Importance of the P-3 Coordinator

Having resources dedicated to support an on-site P-3 Coordinator at the school is a key component of the P-3 Focus School model. Three aspects of the position were seen as particularly important: (1) providing additional staff capacity; (2) acting as a liaison between parents and the school; and (3) hiring staff who were from the community and represented diverse cultural groups.

Capacity to Focus on Early Learning and Family Engagement

Partners saw P-3 Coordinators as critical to the work in that they provide additional capacity specifically focused on early family engagement within the school and bridging early learning and K-12. SUN Site Managers specifically noted the importance of providing additional capacity around these issues.

“A lot of times the school has a vision and aspirations to do many family centered activities, but they have no capacity...”[Hub Staff]

“It’s hard if you don’t have the resources to have this person in this role. You may have vision but don’t know how to execute or just not have the time to do it. It’s not your every day school day...Who else, in their current role, would have the time to do the work?” [Hub Staff]

Acting as a Liaison Between Schools & Families

Another key aspect of their position was their ability to act as a liaison and “bridge” between parents and the school.

“P-3 Coordinators help connect parents and community members to school; they develop relationships and many times act as a Liaison in connecting parents to teachers and the school principal.” [P-3 Coordinator].

“There’s more trust built in the sense that it helps parents feel that ‘someone has my back.’ It’s almost like we’re a bridge. There’s so much going on at the schools a lot of time the staff is really, really busy...if parents have concerns, it becomes difficult to get time with a principal or teacher. If there’s someone that can help them and be given an opportunity to have their voice heard, there’s more communication.” [P-3 Coordinator]

P-3 Coordinators Represent the Community

The diversity among the P-3 Coordinators was also seen as a critical aspect for the P-3 team. Tasked with connecting culturally and linguistically diverse families to schools where staff may not look like or speak the same languages as families in their catchment area, P-3 Coordinators came from a variety of different ethnic and linguistic backgrounds.

“There is not enough effort in the school to work with communities of color or the English language learner population. Having somebody who’s hired into the P-3 school who understands those dynamics or comes from that background, or to work with those who are skeptical or don’t have trust in schools and systems...that’s what it means to be culturally specific.” [P3 Coordinator]

Parent Cafés

In addition to the Play and Learn groups, another key strategy for engaging culturally and linguistically diverse families were Parent Cafés. Parent Cafés use a specific model for facilitated group discussions (hosted by the P-3 Coordinators, who were all trained as Parent Café facilitators) that focus on issues identified as important by parents in key domains such as resilience, communication, relationships, and social connections. Each Parent Café has a theme, such as self-care, and facilitated parent discussion and sharing follows. Coordinators may share specific ideas and strategies, but the predominant focus is on peer support and shared learning, seeing parents as experts in raising their families.

“Parent Cafés are organized conversations and opportunities for parents to get to know each other, share ideas, and practice how to listen to each other, express concerns, and share experiences, as well as taking those groups and educating and learning from one another.” [P-3 Coordinator]

Teachers, principals, and other school staff sometimes attend the parent café, with the “rule” that they must participate and not just observe.

“Principals have really been impressed with them...We’re the only program that is practicing this model, and it is something we hope will dig deeper and become contagious. Parents are able to find a space what they want to know and where they go for support...It’s not the average PTA meeting, for sure.” [P-3 Coordinator]

Foundations for P-3 School Success

Respondents described a number of factors they felt were key to building an effective P-3 Focus School. These included: (1) having strong buy-in and support from partners and schools; (2) getting input from parents; (3) embedding the model within established SUN schools; (4) hiring the “right person” for the P-3 Coordinator role; and (5) using data and information to inform planning.

Getting Buy-In from Schools & Other Partners

One of the main factors to success was having strong buy-in and support from key partners, and especially from school administrators.

“Gotta have full buy-in from all partners, Head Start communities, parents, kindergarten teachers and the principal. When they partner to focus on needs of students and families, I think that school could be successful. It’s not just the Coordinator; she has to be supported by the principal.” [Hub Staff]

“The principal is a champion of the work and s/he believes in the work and believes in the position. Other staff will follow that lead.” [P-3 Coordinator]

“My principal rocks. He’s awesome – one of my biggest supports, other than the SUN staff.” [P-3 Coordinator]

“We had huge buy-in from the principal...He was great about talking to staff at the school about the program. The P-3 Coordinators were invited to all the staff meetings to be part of conversations with teachers.” [SUN Staff]

In building this buy-in, respondents described some of the requirements of the initial application to become a P-3 focus school. Specifically, schools had to clearly describe the role of specific key partners including the School District liaison, principal, all the kindergarten teachers and the SUN Site Manager. These individuals were then required to sign off on their role description as part of applying. Schools were selected based on a rubric designed to assess each schools’ “readiness” to do the P-3 work as well as structural factors such as low principal turnover and space available for early learning/parenting activities. Further, all schools had to be SUN schools, to have existing or be willing to have Early Kindergarten Transition (EKT) programs, and to support parent-teacher home visiting. These were seen as critical for integrating the P-3 work into ongoing efforts to build community schools.

Getting Input from Parents

One key element of buy-in is school and district support to engage and respond to parent voice and input:

“This is a system changer in that it changes the system to redo and rethink how we connect with parents. Parents and families normally have to fit into a system, and this way, it allows parents to create that system.”

“Parents have to feel it’s something they really need and it’s something for them and not ELM and/or their schools telling them that it’s a great program.” [Hub Staff]

Embedding the Work within the SUN Program

All schools had an existing SUN Program and an on-site SUN Site Manager. This design helped support integration of the P-3 work at the school. SUN Coordinators were able to facilitate relationship building between the P-3 Coordinator, parents, and school staff. SUN Site Managers helped to identify potential P3 Coordinators who had existing connections to families in the schools, and were also helpful in problem-solving logistical issues (e.g., securing space) and in working with principals/building leadership. SUN staff also spoke of the value of the P-3 Coordinators in expanding the school’s capacity to address early learning issues and engage families with young children. Further, a number of the P-3 Coordinators talked about the importance of the close collaboration with the SUN manager.

“It’s allowed me to do things better, having someone who’s targeting that family involvement and early childhood piece. I can delegate things that fit under that P-3 umbrella.” [SUN Staff]

“I get a lot of my families [from SUN] and can start making connections with families to siblings who have not been under the early learning umbrella. My SUN Manager has been outstanding with the whole P-3 program.” [P-3 Coordinator]

Hiring and Supporting the “Right” Staff

Respondents talked about the importance of hiring the “right person” for the P-3 Coordinator role. A decision was made early in the hiring process to prioritize hiring people who lived in and/or were connected with the communities in which the schools were located and who demonstrated strong relationship skills. Commitment to community,

cultural responsiveness, and ability to work with both parents and children were also seen as key.

“We came to the conclusion that it’s more important to hire someone from the community than hiring someone with prior work experience. [We] were looking for people who have that relationship support” [Hub Staff]

“[She] had that character trait that is open to people and she was ready to come to a school building and build relationships with a genuine curiosity in building relationships with people.” [SUN Staff]

“They have to fit in the community they’re in. You have to be organized and persistent. Someone who is very outgoing and responsive to the community especially as it shifts and changes. Responsive to all cultures, that doesn’t mean that it has to be your culture, just responsive to all cultures.” [HUB Staff]

“It’s pretty exciting that all of the P-3 Coordinators are staying on. Having eight women of color who are helping to influence the school system is very powerful.” [HUB Staff]

Given this, the importance of ongoing professional development and support was seen as important for P-3 Coordinators:

“I think learning how to work in the school building is really tricky. It takes being in it. If the county was able to provide professional development around that school environment and the complexities that would help.” [Hub Staff]

Opportunities for the P-3 Coordinators to meet together and share ideas was also seen as extremely valuable in supporting them as professionals. P-3 Coordinators meet monthly with the support of ELM staff for a combination of shared training, brainstorming, and opportunities to reconnect with the vision for P-3.

“Whenever we do something that has worked, we’ll borrow and steal each other’s ideas because we’re all doing the same thing. I feel better when I leave because I know I’m not going crazy! It’s a good opportunity to see how we’re moving as a group. It’s

good because it allows for more general vision of P-3.”
[P-3 Coordinator]

“It’s empowering to be part of such a diverse group [of P-3 Coordinators] because it gives us perspective on each school. It feels like a sisterhood. The diversity feels very nurturing. It’s not always pretty – we do disagree and sometimes we don’t understand, but there’s enough trust that we can step on each other’s toes and it’s ok because we know we’re coming from a good place.” [P-3 Coordinator]

“Being able to meet monthly is crucial, so that the 8 Coordinators can talk about promising activities or practices. You’re already building that culture of not re-inventing the wheel. Let’s share this information and work collectively.” [Hub Staff]

Credit for creating these opportunities went largely to the ELM staff-person managing the project.

“She’s created this environment where we’re all trying to work together and support each other.” [P-3 Coordinator]

“She makes us be a team [through] the monthly meetings and trainings together this year. I hope that doesn’t get lost as the program grows.” [P-3 Coordinator]

Using Data to Inform Planning

Several respondents mentioned the importance of prior data and evaluation related to P-3 as being central to helping them in their planning process.

“We wanted to build off what was working the community looking at Earl Boyles and Clarendon. We also looked at the Kindergarten Partnership and Innovation evaluation that PSU did.” [Hub Staff]

“A lot of early learning administrators and P-3 and KPI grantees came together to figure out a way to combine the two and meet the needs of both systems. They had a P-3 systems workgroup that helped design the vision to get this off the ground.” [Hub Staff]

Challenges in Implementing the P-3 Model

Respondents talked about several challenges during this first year of implementation. Chief among these were: (1) getting clarity about the role and function of the P-3 Coordinator and the P-3 work more broadly; (2) insufficient support and/or buy-in from some principals, especially in terms of working towards integrating the P-3 work into the school; (3) lack of staff/support for translation with multi-lingual populations; (4) logistical support including space, transportation, and administrative support for the Coordinators.

Lack of Role Clarity

The most frequently mentioned challenge was the lack of role clarity for P-3 work and for the Coordinator’s positions within the elementary schools. This is not surprising, given the lack of existing models that might have informed the work; P-3 work is innovative and emergent. While respondents talked about reviewing information from other models (e.g., at Earl Boyles Elementary and Clarendon Early Learning Center), the work envisioned by ELM for these Coordinators was unique, and P-3 Coordinators largely had to “learn by doing.”

“This is the first year. It is a brand new program. We’re getting [school] on board to let them know what I can do and what they can do to help make a better community. They are getting around to it, but they didn’t know what it was and I was new, too. So we were learning together. This upcoming year, I will have more participation and help from teachers, and they know what I have been doing and my track record on what changes have been in the school.” [P-3 Coordinator]

Teachers, school leadership, and parents all needed to learn more about P-3 work in this first year of implementation as well.

“I think because it was the first year, there were a few challenges. For teachers to learn what it is, and what the roles really are. It can be confusing sometimes. When it comes to the parents, it’s a new thing for them, too.” [P-3 Coordinator]

Third, the lack of a clear job description and specific work for the P-3 Coordinator was challenging. Some Coordinators reported the challenge of trying to “fill the gaps” in staffing resources for schools broadly vs. doing work more specifically related to P-3.

“I wasn’t in a defined role with my work load. I had to step in places where I thought there would be work. I would take on jobs that didn’t pertain to what I was doing. It’s challenging when you become someone that people depend on and then you have to break it to them later that it’s not something that I actually do.” [P-3 Coordinator]

Finally, the importance of specific onboarding and support for P-3 Coordinators in their new roles is an issue that other sites seeking to implement this model should address. This affected Coordinators sense of efficacy in doing the work, at least at the beginning.

“The challenge that covers all the others is that, because the position is new, it’s hard to see what a P-3 Coordinator is. I stepped into the role with not so much confidence because I didn’t know what was going on.” [P-3 Coordinator]

These Coordinators likely have significant insights that could be shared with other schools and communities attempting to build P-3 focused models within schools.

Insufficient Buy-In from School Leadership & Integration with Schools

While some Coordinators expressed their experiences of strong support from school leadership, others felt that a lack of involvement from school leadership was a significant barrier to progress in the first year. This was despite efforts through the site selection process to ensure that leadership would actively support the new position. Some also noted struggling when the SUN Site Manager wasn’t regularly at the school.

“We don’t have buy-in from everyone involved. The leader of the school has to be the one to say ‘I want this for my school.’ It has to be seen as a need. If it’s not a need, there’s not a lot of effort.” [P-3 Coordinator]

“There is no system created by the school to support P-3 referrals; all the families who are involved were recruited through the P-3 Coordinators’ efforts. Most teachers and staff are not pitching Early Learning/P-3 at the schools yet.” [P-3 Coordinator]

“Getting the school involved. The actual staff. I feel like they appreciate what I do, but then again, they don’t know what I do to some extent. I have tried to reach out, but they are so overwhelmed that don’t have time.” [P-3 Coordinator]

Related to this was the challenge of learning the school building culture, and the desire for more support in doing this.

“Learning the culture of the school can be a challenge. Things are in place you don’t want to step on. You take your precautions in the first year of not overstepping what they are already doing.” [P-3 Coordinator]

Another essential element of school buy-in is continuity of school leadership, and Hub Staff report that when there is a turnover at the Principle level it impacts P-3 work.

Ability to Meet the Needs of Multi-Lingual, Multi-Cultural Families

Although Coordinators were specifically selected for their community ties and ability to do culturally-specific work, the complexity of effectively supporting what, in most schools, were very diverse populations of families remained a challenge. Significantly more resources to support culturally-specific and responsive outreach, even if just through translation, would be helpful.

“[The school] has a very diverse population and very diverse community – we have families from Somalia, Russia, Mexico and a big population from Southeast Asia, Burma, Korea, Nepal, Vietnam, China. Most staff here are White, not bilingual, not bicultural. Whatever information comes from the school, I try to advocate, at least for my community, the families that I speak the same language. However, other than that I have no talent to speak with families in other languages. We need to work on getting staff from other cultures involved. For some communities they don’t trust

people – even if they understand English – they don't trust people who don't speak their language, who don't come from their own community." [P-3 Coordinator]

"One barrier is that there are more Spanish-speaking families. I speak English, I don't speak Spanish, so that has been a challenge for me. Now that we're getting someone to translate and take it to the next level, because their presence is just as valuable as an English speaking person. And I like to work with all different cultures." [P-3 Coordinator]

"There are languages I wish I could reach out to, but getting a person takes some navigation. Having translation services you could call to have them come to your Play and Learn groups. A little cheat sheet on what and who to call would be helpful." [P-3 Coordinator]

Logistical Challenges with Early Childhood Spaces, Transportation, & Materials

Finally, a number of respondents described challenges related to the lack of appropriate, designated early childhood spaces, age-appropriate materials, and the need for transportation support. These challenges impacted outreach and advertisements about the groups and other activities and made the work more difficult for Coordinators.

"Since there is not dedicated space [for Play and Learn groups], there isn't a place to display the proud work of parents and children. There is a lack of evidence that Play and Learn takes place." [P-3 Coordinator]

"Space is a big issue. There is hardly any space in the school. We are partnering with an apartment complex right by the school. That had worked out for us but that is extra coordination." [P-3 Coordinator]

"Space was a big challenge. Not having a curriculum was another big challenge. Transportation. Our school is far from the bus line and families have to walk with little kids. The ones who most want to be here will do it no matter if it's raining or cold. But other families

will only come when it's nice weather, or they have a ride to get there." [P-3 Coordinator]

"I share with SUN, which is great, but they already have their own stuff. You can't just come into the school and demand things. She [SUN Site Manager] has been so kind to share space with the SUN room. My program quality Coordinator, having her come to my site and look at my space situation, giving guidance about what I could do or buy to better optimize my storage. You have to get a lot of mobile things. But doing that every week is a lot of work, it's very time consuming." [P-3 Coordinator]

Solutions & Recommendations

Respondents described a number of strategies that were being implemented to resolve challenges for Year 2.

First, several P-3 Coordinators described increasing their ongoing efforts to meet regularly with principals and teaching staff to build their understanding of the P-3 work.

"I'm sitting down with my principal explaining my needs and things of that nature and allowing him to reiterate that to the staff. I'm working with him and the SUN Site Supervisor to get ideas for how to pull teachers in and make it beneficial for them." [P3 Coordinator]

Some Coordinators reported that, over the course of Year 1, they were better able to understand their role and communicate it to school partners, which increased their ability to focus on early learning and develop their skills.

"Half way through the year, I started making it clear that what I was working on and things that weren't part of my role, so people started having a more clear understanding of my services. I can point to specific things I do rather than general ideas." [P-3 Coordinator]

Further, ELM elected to support implementation of Kaleidoscope, an evidence-informed curriculum for Play and Learn groups which was seen as a positive step. Additional trainings provided throughout the year to develop P-3 Coordinators skills was also clearly

appreciated, although some expressed the desire for more of these kinds of supports.

“The training provided by [ELM staff] was very beneficial.” [P-3 Coordinator]

“For EKT, for example, before it starts they already have buckets of resources that have been pre-put together and then everybody who’s assigned or hired into a specific EKT role are expected to go to specific trainings. That should be extended to P-3.” [P3 Coordinator]

“The early childhood support would be really helpful. You have to look for that kind of stuff. If it was already provided, ‘These are the trainings we want you to go to that would help with the demographic you’re working with,’ that would be great.” [P3 Coordinator]

“I would like to see more support from my agency and from the County.” [P-3 Coordinator]

Specific support requested from ELM include having them increase their presence within the school and school district to advocate for P-3 work, as well as providing more support to convene leadership from the affiliated agencies (e.g., IRCO, MFS). One concrete suggestion was to invite SUN supervisors to attend the P-3 Coordinators meetings on a quarterly basis.

“To move the work of P-3 forward, I believe at some point it may be useful to have the agency supervisors there for more big picture planning to happen. Collaboration that could be happening across the sites, ability to leverage more resources from each respective agency by having supervisors present.” [Hub staff]

Bringing in additional resources for families by collaborating with other community agencies was also suggested as a key way to improve the work with families.

“I think it would be easier to focus our attention on finding resources and people in the neighborhood that could also provide the kinds of support I’m doing. So that I’m not the only person providing direct services.” [P3 Coordinator]

Conclusions

Considerable progress has been made during the first year of implementation of the P-3 Focus Schools in Multnomah County. The work to implement an approach that truly prioritizes family engagement of multi-lingual and multi-cultural communities, particularly for families with very young children, has begun to have successes and ways to strengthen the model moving forward have been identified by a variety of stakeholders. While initially roles and goals were relatively loose, over the course of the year, additional training and support around a set of focused activities has led the P-3 Coordinators to feel increasingly empowered to enact their roles as building-level advocates for parents and young children. To the extent that the County can support and facilitate even more opportunities for shared learning between and among the P-3 Coordinators, school leadership, and SUN Coordinators, it seems likely that the intensity and success of these efforts can be sustained and expanded. Over the next year, P-3 Coordinators saw the potential of the work to expand in a number of areas that are likely to increase the impact of these services on child and family outcomes, including:

1. Increasing the number of families with young children involved in the Play and Learn groups, Parent Cafés and other school-based early learning and parent support activities;
2. Increasing the level of collaboration and partnership with school staff. This two-way partnerships in which P-3 Coordinators provide support to elementary school staff (for example, by communicating and engaging with parents around issues such as school readiness and reducing absenteeism) and for teachers to facilitate and encourage families to access P-3 activities and supports;
3. Increased focus of the work of the P-3 Coordinator on issues directly related to improving school readiness, such as supporting and strengthening kindergarten transitions;
4. Continuing to develop the skills and expertise of the P-3 Coordinators around issues such as early childhood development, adult learning styles, and culturally specific approaches.