

Kindergarten COUNTS

The transition to kindergarten is a critical opportunity for schools and community to come together to support success in school for all children right from the start because *Kindergarten COUNTS*.

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School-based kindergarten transition practices are associated with improved academic achievement for low income children and increased parent-initiated involvement, but **those who can benefit the most from transition practices are least likely to receive them.**¹

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25% of kindergarten students were chronically absent in 2011-12 across the six largest school districts in Multnomah County. Recent data for Oregon schools show that there is a clear and consistent relationship between early attendance and later achievement.²

What is Kindergarten Counts?

Kindergarten Counts is a community-wide campaign in Multnomah County bringing together early childhood and school partners to promote successful kindergarten transitions in SUN Community Schools for children and their families through supporting:

- **Early kindergarten registrations** to ensure families are connected to their school and receive the support and information they need.
- **Summer opportunities** to engage parents and promote social and emotional school readiness skills and summer learning for children.
- **Good attendance in kindergarten** through data informed early outreach, parent engagement, and attendance incentives.

“The developmental model of transition . . . emphasizes the importance of fostering positive relationships among the home, school, community, and peer group to support the child throughout the transition to kindergarten . . . Successful transitions are not considered solely contingent on the skills a child brings to kindergarten, but they are believed to be the result of close, collaborative, and supportive relationships among the family, school, peers, and community.”¹

1. Shulting, A.B., Malone, P.S., & Dodge, K.A. (2005). The Effect of School-Based Kindergarten Transition Policies and Practices on Child Academic Outcomes. <http://www.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/pmc/articles/PMC2757260/pdf/nihms-143120.pdf>

2. Attendance Works, The Children’s Institute, The Chalkboard Project & ECONorthwest. Chronic Absence in Oregon. Feb 2012. <http://www.attendanceworks.org/wordpress/wp-content/uploads/2012/02/oregon.pptx>

- **Early kindergarten registrations** to ensure families are connected to their school and receive the support and information they need.
 - **Register for School by June Campaign:** Outreach campaign with partners to encourage and support parents to register their child for school by June.
- **Summer opportunities** to engage parents and promote social and emotional school readiness skills and summer learning for children.
 - **Early Kindergarten Transition Program:** Support and expand this program across SUN Community Schools. Collaborate with early childhood partners for outreach and program resources and supports.
- **Good attendance in kindergarten** through data informed early outreach, parent engagement, and attendance incentives.
 - **Kindergarten Attendance Campaign:** Outreach campaign with partners to talk to parents about attendance and provide tips and resources that will support parents to get their children to school.
 - **Technical Assistance:** Collaborate with Attendance Works to support schools and community partners with developing and implementing attendance strategies.

Kindergarten Counts is a collaborative effort coordinated through Linkage, an initiative of the SUN Service System Division of Multnomah County Department of County Human Services that fosters early support and successful transitions in SUN Community Schools. The Linkage Steering Committee is comprised of early childhood, school and community partners who advise and guide the effort.



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The Kindergarten Counts name was inspired by **Ninth Grade Counts**, an initiative of All Hands Raised that connects youth in Multnomah County with “the support they need to enter high school on the right track.”