

West Contra Costa Unified School District

Community

SRI schools:

- cities of Richmond and San Pablo
- 18 qualifying, participating schools (of district's 42 elementary schools)
- SRI schools' average (school wide) FRLP: 86%
- SRI schools' average (kindergarten only) ELL: 53%

Change agent: AGENCY-driven

In the beginning:

- Program onset: January 2004
- onsite preschools were "stepchild" of the K-5; neither acknowledged the other
- accountability pressure deterred most principals from taking on one more thing
- tension and lack of real collaboration between district and community agencies
- lip-service to parent involvement

School Readiness Staffing

- Transition Coordinator: 1 full time, former preschool supervisor
- Outreach Workers: 3 full time, bilingual & diverse,
- SRI primary staff employed through CSD
- SRI program/staff link to district link through district State Preschool Coordinator
- District employees serve as activity assistants on a part time basis

Outreach and Family Contact

- target Family Child Care providers and children in home-based care (with parents or other relatives/friends)
- cluster-based outreach by:
 - various agencies' referrals and word of mouth
 - school mailings and siblings
 - ESL classes
 - contacts at community events
- "school readiness message" relayed to families through:
 - parent-child workshops
 - home visits
 - field trips
 - school-initiated transition activities

For more information about Contra Costa's School Readiness Program, contact Debi Silverman, First 5 Contra Costa, 925-335-9991 ext 33 or dsilverman@firstfivecc.org or for West Contra Costa Unified School District specifics, contact Ron Pipa at 510-374-7468

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Keys to Effective Transition Planning

- consistent communication between Transition Coordinator and school principals
- all schools use same planning framework, with flexible, school-based outcomes
- strong relationship with gatekeepers
- allowed time trust to build, “buy in” in to happen, and process to take hold
- began by enhancing existing practices
- proven reliable relationship and support by outreach coordinators
- transition plan part of the School Improvement Plan
- new funds allocated to transition planning

Systems Change

What you'll see:

Schools:

- transition plan part of the School Improvement Plans
- Increased parent voice and involvement
- onsite preschool teachers and kindergarten teachers collaborating

District:

- SRI goals and agency partnership more coordinated with the district
- the preschools and the transition activities are not just “programs”, they are embedded in the district

Factors influencing systems change and receptivity to SRI:

- change in district leadership – new “vision” and message
- change in preschool coordinator – more action oriented, collaborative, supportive
- respected Transition Coordinator
- respected Preschool Coordinator/former WCCUSD principal
- measurable indicators defining school readiness are tracked regularly, shared with schools and district, and used to inform practice



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