

social/emotional adjustment curriculum for low-income preschool children living in diverse, high-risk urban settings. The integrated curriculum will be developed, tested, and refined in partnership with researchers and practitioners. It will be built upon empirical research in three focal areas: (1) early literacy and language, (2) early numeracy and (3) social/emotional adjustment, with special attention to foundational approaches to learning and emotional development, and to the differential family, classroom, and neighborhood contexts within which development occurs. The integrated curricula will be formed and tested in four consecutive phases: parallel curricula integration phase (year 1), parallel randomized field trials phase (year 2), full curricular integration phase (year 3), and randomized longitudinal experiment phase (years 4-5). The strength of this application is its integration of these areas of research in such a way that applications are configured practically to the real preschool classroom environment, and the families and cultures of urban Head Start children. Overall, the project's goals are (a) to develop an evidence-based integrated early literacy, numeracy, and social/emotional adjustment curriculum, and (b) to conduct a randomized, longitudinal experiment that will investigate the efficacy of the integrated curriculum in alternative forms and across multiple preschool settings, using state-of-the-art research methods.

## University of Virginia

### *Project Title:*

Web-training: PreK Teachers, Literacy, and Relationships

### *Principal Investigator:*

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### *Project Funding Years:*

2003-2008

### *Project Abstract:*

Large-scale observational studies of pre-kindergarten classrooms indicate overall mediocrity and a high degree of variability in classroom quality and practices, even when experienced, credentialed teachers use the same curriculum. Most educators recognize that ongoing training and support for high quality implementation is critical to ensuring the value of early education experiences, particularly for children at-risk of early school failure. Thus the proposed project evaluates two conditions of Web-based training designed to support teachers' implementation of an integrative curriculum in early literacy, oral language, and social relationship/self-regulation skills in state-funded week classrooms. Two models of training will be implemented

for 2 years and compared in this longitudinal study: (1) Web-Training, in which teachers (N=110) receive workshop training in the curriculum and have access to a Website with additional material and examples, and (2) Web-Consultancy, in which teachers (N=110) receive the same workshop and training as the other condition but who also receive weekly, live, Internet-mediated consultation focused on implementing the curriculum. The Web-Consultancy condition provides teachers with direct feedback on lessons they implement and consultation about how to improve quality of implementation. Six school divisions will be randomly assigned to these two conditions (3 each) and all pre-k teachers in those divisions will be enrolled in one condition for 2 consecutive academic years. Observations of classroom quality and teaching practices will be collected regularly during the two intervention years and in a third non-intervention follow-up year. In each intervention year 4 children will be randomly selected from each pre-k teacher's classroom (N=1,760 total) and administered direct assessments in language and literacy. Pre-k teachers and observations provide information on social relationships and self-regulation for these children. The entire pre-k population will be assessed using teacher report of literacy, language, and relationships/regulation as a no treatment control. All children (those in the 2 experimental conditions and those in the population control) will be followed into kindergarten and first grade with teacher questionnaires assessing language, literacy, and social relationships/regulation. We hypothesize that children in both treatment conditions will show greater growth in child outcomes through first grade and that the Web-Consultancy group will show a significantly greater rate of growth than will the Web-Training (and no-treatment) groups. We further hypothesize that the differences in child outcomes between the Web Consultancy and Web Training groups will be mediated by higher quality implementation of the curriculum as a function of exposure to the Web Consultancy. The results of this study have direct implications for the importance of training and implementation as a key factor enhancing school readiness, apart from curriculum, and provide information on the effectiveness of delivering training at-scale over the Internet.