

High Quality Preschool Expansion: What Does Research Say?

Speaker Biosketches

Steven Dow has served since 1992 as Executive Director of Community Action Project (CAP) Tulsa – a nationally recognized provider of high quality early education for young children coupled with parent support services as part of a two-generation approach to breaking the cycle of poverty. CAP operates 140 classrooms within 13 centers located across three school districts reaching more than 2,000 children under age five. CAP also enrolls an additional 400 children under age three into evidence-based home visiting programs. Since 2006, CAP has concurrently administered the statewide Oklahoma Early Childhood Program, which indirectly serves nearly 1,000 children through collaborative partnerships with 10 providers across seven communities that are enhancing the quality of early education in 74 classrooms. CAP Tulsa’s program is recognized as a ‘Head Start Center of Excellence’ by the Administration for Children and Families, and the agency’s success to date has been featured by a range of national press, including “CBS Evening News” and *The New York Times*.

Deborah Phillips is Professor of Psychology and Associated Faculty in the Public Policy Institute at Georgetown University. She was the first Executive Director of the Board on Children, Youth, and Families of the National Research Council and the Institute of Medicine and served as Study Director for the Board’s report *From Neurons to Neighborhoods: The Science of Early Child Development*. She also served as President of the Foundation for Child Development, Director of Child Care Information Services at the National Association for the Education of Young Children, and Society for Research in Child Development (SRCD) Congressional Science Fellow on the staff of Congressman George Miller. Her research focuses on the developmental effects of early childhood programs for both typically-developing children and those with special needs, including research on child care, Head Start, and prekindergarten programs. Dr. Phillips is a Fellow of the American Psychological Association, the Eastern Psychological Association, and the American Psychological Society. In 2011, she received the Distinguished Contributions to Education in Child Development Award from SRCD.

Jason Sachs joined Boston Public Schools (BPS) as Director of Early Childhood in 2005 to oversee the expansion of kindergarten–grade 1 (K-1) classes and coordinate kindergarten and preschool programs for three-, four-, and five-year-olds. Since its inception, Dr. Sachs has led an effort to deliver a universal high quality system of early childhood programs for BPS, including the successful implementation of the K-1 curriculum, a professional development system for teachers and principals, expansion of National Association for the Education of Young Children (NAEYC)-accredited classrooms in Boston, and a comprehensive evaluation system of both classroom quality and child outcomes. Dr. Sachs works closely with the community through his work with the Community Partnership Council. In May 2008, the Boston Association for the Education of Young Children presented Dr. Sachs with the Community Outreach award, which recognizes an educator who has been able to establish relationships with community resources to support the achievement program goals. He received his master’s degree from Tufts University, and obtained his doctorate from the Harvard School of Education.

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Christina Weiland is an Assistant Professor in Educational Studies at the University of Michigan School of Education. Her research focuses on the effects of early childhood interventions, developmental contexts, and public policies on children's development, particularly among children from low-income families, and on the mechanisms by which such effects occur. Her body of work includes a large-scale, Institute of Education Sciences-funded evaluation of the Boston Public Schools prekindergarten program's impacts on children's language, literacy, mathematics, and executive function skills. She has conducted studies of the role of classroom quality and peer socio-economic composition in promoting the outcomes of children enrolled in the Boston program. She is also conducting research on the impacts of Un Buen Comienzo, a preschool teacher professional development program in Santiago, Chile, and on variation in the impacts of Head Start through the Secondary Analysis of Variation in Impacts of Head Start Center. A former middle school teacher, she holds a master's degree and an EdD (Quantitative Policy Analysis in Education) from Harvard University's Graduate School of Education, and a BA from Dartmouth College.

Hirokazu Yoshikawa is the Courtney Sale Ross University Professor of Globalization and Education at New York University (NYU), and the Co-Director of the Institute for Globalization and Education at NYU. He is a community and developmental psychologist who studies the effects of public policies and programs related to immigration, parental employment and education, and poverty on children's development. He conducts research in the United States and in low- and middle-income countries. His recent books include *Immigrants Raising Citizens: Undocumented Parents and Their Young Children* (2011, Russell Sage, sole authored). He currently serves a member of the National Board for Education Sciences. He is also currently co-chair of the early childhood development and education group of the U.N. Sustainable Development Solutions Network, the research and technical group advising on the post-2015 global development goals, under the auspices of the U.N. Secretary-General.

Martha Zaslow is Director of the Office for Policy and Communications of the Society for Research in Child Development (SRCD) and a Senior Scholar at Child Trends. As Director of the SRCD Office for Policy and Communications, Dr. Zaslow facilitates the dissemination of research to decision-makers and the broader public, and keeps the SRCD membership apprised of social policy and science policy developments related to children and families. She also directs the SRCD Policy Fellowship Program, working with the SRCD Policy Fellows who have placements in the Executive Branch and Congress. As a Senior Scholar at Child Trends, Dr. Zaslow conducts research focusing on professional development of the early childhood workforce and approaches to improving the quality of early care and education. Dr. Zaslow is a member of the Network of Infant/Toddler Researchers. She serves on the Planning Committee for the Head Start Research Conference, on the Expert Panel for the National Study of Early Care and Education, on the Advisory Council of Child Care and Early Education Research Connections, and on the Technical Working Group for the Self-Sufficiency Research Clearinghouse.