



# SCHOOL READINESS MATTERS



## THE CHALLENGE

## CAMPAIGN MOBILIZATION

too many children start school already far behind their peers and never catch up. Especially for low-income children, this readiness gap predicts a persistent achievement gap and diminished prospects for reading on grade level by the end of third grade.

### research confirms:

- Low-income children are twice as likely to experience developmental delays as their higher-income peers. Poverty-associated trauma and toxic stress exacerbate these developmental delays and compromise social-emotional health.
- Low-income children are significantly more likely to be in poor health and are less likely to receive adequate treatment for vision, hearing, dental caries and other health conditions that could compromise physical and cognitive development.
- By 18 months, low-income toddlers are already several months behind more advantaged children in language proficiency. By age 4, low-income children would have heard 30 million fewer words than their more affluent peers.
- Low-income children have few if any age-appropriate books in their homes — there is one book per 300 children in low-income neighborhoods versus 13 books per child in middle-income neighborhoods.
- Low-income children have less access to high-quality developmentally appropriate early care and learning opportunities.

## IMPROVING SCHOOL READINESS: KEY STRATEGIES FOR SUCCESS

home visiting and other programs that offer messages, tools and supports to help parents and caregivers succeed in promoting early language and literacy and healthy on-track child development

universal comprehensive health and developmental screening with appropriate follow-up, intervention and supports

community-wide efforts to create language-rich and book-rich environments for children before they start school

policy supports, resources and programs to improve availability of and access to high-quality early care and learning opportunities for children across a variety of programs and settings

the campaign helps by:

- Raising awareness, with an emphasis on outreach to parents and caregivers (Read Across America Day, Read Aloud 15 MINUTES, PBS)
- Mobilizing community engagement, civic action and policy advocacy (Sesame Workshop and the Alliance for Early Success)
- Establishing the Network Communities Support Center (NCSC) to serve as a one-stop, fast-track resource providing technical assistance and support to GLR Network communities
- Finding, developing and incubating efforts to enhance parents' knowledge, skills and access to supports for nurturing early literacy and language development (Successful Parents Initiatives and Book-Rich Environments Initiative)

