

## **Investigating the Pathway to Proficiency - Summary**

Since 2012, Ohio has put millions of federal and state dollars into improving its early education system for children ages birth through Kindergarten entry who are from economically disadvantaged homes. Findings from research done recently by the Ohio Education Research Center (OERC) show why financial commitments like these are important. The Ohio Education Research Center's study of Cleveland Metropolitan School District (CMSD) confirmed what all k-12 educators know: that quality early learning experience can greatly affect a child's readiness to begin kindergarten.

This study took place in Cleveland, but it has implications for all Ohio students. There are certain factors that can help to identify students challenged with literacy development. Understanding the factors that make children less likely to be ready for kindergarten and to pass the third grade reading test will aid schools in finding those children early on and getting them the help they need to be successful readers.

### **Kindergarten Readiness Assessment-Literacy (KRA-L)**

Early childhood services such as newborn home visiting, foster care, center-based childcare and Head Start have shown positive effects on improving Kindergarten Readiness Assessment-Literacy scores. Cleveland public schools and Universal Pre-Kindergarten also play a role in impacting kindergarten readiness scores. The Kindergarten Readiness Assessment-Literacy (KRA-L) is a way for teachers to measure a child's school readiness, specifically the ability to develop concepts of print, comprehension of age-appropriate text, phonological awareness and letter recognition.

Males, Hispanics, children with a low birth weight, and children who speak English as a second language are all more likely to have lower readiness scores. The younger a child is when he or she enters kindergarten can also have negative effects on readiness, as well as the family's economic difficulty, mothers without high school diploma, and neighborhood poverty. Additionally, when a child frequently changes addresses, or is mistreated, their readiness scores are more likely to be low.

### **Third Grade Reading Proficiency**

Early childhood care services also contributed to increasing the possibility of passing the third grade reading test. These included newborn home visiting, Cleveland public school and Universal Pre-Kindergarten.

Several factors can also have negative effects on a child's readiness to pass the third grade reading test, including male gender, low-birth weight and African-American race, as well as English as a second language, mothers without high school diplomas, and the family's economic difficulty. Chronic absences, frequent change of address and a disability were other negative factors.