

Early Phase Competition -- Absolute Priority 4 (SEL)
American Institutes for Research
S411C210032

Ready, Set, Succeed: Kindergarten Transitions in Flint (RSS)

Project Abstract

The American Institutes for Research® (AIR®), the Community Foundation of Great Flint (CFGF), Flint Community Schools (FCS), and the Genesee Intermediate School District (GISD) propose **Ready, Set, Succeed: Kindergarten Transitions in Flint (RSS), an early-phase Education Innovation and Research** project. The project addresses **Absolute Priorities 1:** Demonstrates a rationale and **4:** Field-initiated innovations—Fostering knowledge and promoting the development of skills that prepare students to be informed, thoughtful, and productive individuals and citizens; and **Competitive Preference Priorities 2:** Addressing the impact of COVID-19 on underserved students and educators and **3:** Promoting equity in student access to educational resources and opportunities. The project addresses challenges about how to authentically engage Black families and **high-need students** (i.e., low-income backgrounds, racially minoritized learners with unequal access to high-quality education) to support the kindergarten transition. Our innovation leverages the Flint Early Childhood Research-Program Partnership, a diverse coalition of **partners** (AIR, CFGF, Educare Flint, Cummings Great Expectations, FCS, and GISD). **RSS** consists of six components: (1) job embedded professional development focused on racial equity, (2) Building Bridges Meetings (joint PK-K), (3) Staff and Family Data Dialogues, (4) Parent–Provider Cafés, (5) Buddy Visits to K–12 settings, and (6) Direct Family Engagement/Advocacy Activities. Expected study outcomes include: (1) greater collaboration in the PK–12 system, (2) more culturally competent instruction, (3) improved advocacy skills for Black families, and (4) increased school readiness and positive racial identity.

The project has four objectives: (1) design the RSS intervention; (2) pilot RSS (3) test RSS for impact; and (4) analyze, report, and disseminate findings. We will test RSS impacts on **396 transitioning prekindergarten students, 370 families, and 228 educators** in Flint.