More than one talk show xenophobe has suggested the recently arrived 300 millionth American was probably born to immigrant parents. Nobody knows if that is so since the arrival of Number 300 Million was really a public relations exercise aimed at recognizing we recently became 300 million strong.

It’s important when thinking about this to emphasize that last word—strong. The anti-immigration crowd wants us to believe the rising number of children from foreign-born parents is a sign of weakness—more kids for the public to educate and support.

The facts don’t square with this view. Let’s say for the sake of argument that Number 300 Million is a girl born in East Los Angeles to parents who emigrated there from Mexico. While she is important to mom and dad for personal reasons, she is important to retiring baby boomers and the Wall Street stock analysts for economic ones.

That’s because, with a little help on the education front, Number 300 Million can help fuel the economic growth and workplace productivity needed to maintain a positive Social Security balance and keep U.S. companies competitive. Were it not for her and others like her, we would face the same troubling picture that confronts countries like France, Belgium and Germany.

Fertility rates there are now below replacement level. Barring some intervention, these countries are unlikely to have a future labor force sufficient to maintain current rates of economic growth and meet pension and public health obligations.

This is a huge problem. According to the Organization for Economic Cooperation and Development’s just-released Starting Strong II report, it’s widespread. Of 20 industrialized countries studied, only the U.S. and Mexico remain above replacement rate. The OECD also reports that several countries invest a far higher percentage of their gross domestic products (GDP) in preschool education than the U.S. (see article on Page 8).

Of course, Number 300 Million can’t do her part without some investment in her education. Right now, she’s at a disadvantage. In a recent policy paper from Pre-K Now, Arizona State University investigator Eugene Garcia says Hispanic children receive preschool education less frequently, enter kindergarten behind their classmates, and graduate high school and college at far lower rates. Meanwhile, studies at NIEER and elsewhere showing that Hispanic children benefit from high-quality preschool education at least as much as children from other groups—and in some cases, more.

We are indeed fortunate in this country to have a growing population with the potential to keep our country prosperous. To make that happen we need to invest in their human capital and that begins with a high-quality early childhood education.

Number 300 million could use a little less demonizing from the anti-immigration crowd and a little more help from the policymakers who can offer her a high-quality preschool education. She also needs a name. Let’s call her America.
By now, the goal is a familiar one—create inclusive classrooms where preschoolers with disabilities can learn right alongside children without disabilities. It’s a goal embraced by educators, civil rights activists, and parents alike.

Yet it’s a goal that presents substantial challenges for teachers in the classroom—and many don’t have any training on how to proceed. “Early childhood preparatory programs don’t address the issues of inclusion,” says Pam Winton, senior scientist and director of outreach at the Frank Porter Graham (FPG) Child Development Institute in Chapel Hill, North Carolina. “Even teachers with four-year-degrees don’t feel confident and competent,” Winton adds.

That’s no small issue these days. With 42 states now funding public pre-K programs, most are under the gun to see that children with disabilities are placed in classrooms with typically-developing children. Federal law requires that disabled students be integrated into regular educational settings wherever possible, but prior to the massive expansion of public pre-K, the settings just didn’t exist to get the job done. The expansion of state-funded pre-K programs offers new possibilities for diverse programming and inclusive classrooms.

And the data show that states have readily embraced that potential. The number of preschoolers with disabilities in regular classrooms grew by 32 percent between 1992 and 2001, according to the federal Office of Special Education. “That means that most preschool education classrooms now have at least one child with a disability,” says Winton. “But few teachers have any training on how to create a high-quality inclusive classroom.”

That fact became painfully clear to Winton as she traveled the country over the last decade, conducting workshops on the topic. “I’d go in and people would be very eager to hear what I had to say,” she says. “Many had never had a course on how to meet the educational and developmental needs of all the children at once, in one setting,” she explains.

Yet in follow-up interviews, she also found that few of the educators who attended her workshops were able to implement the new practices. “They told me they enjoyed my workshops, but there was just no way to really change things across the systems they worked in,” she says. “I was glad they found me entertaining, but I asked myself how we could really make lasting change to serve the needs of all children.”

The answer came to her in a new initiative just launched at the FPG Institute: The new National Center on High Quality Personnel in Inclusive Early Childhood Settings, which will promote research-based practice and professional development for pre-K teachers. “There are three critical areas we need to focus on—policies, resources and practices,” says Winton. “And we need to do that across funding streams and settings, to reach all the early childhood professionals working in inclusive settings.”

Already, Winton says she and her team have had some dramatic impact in Iowa, Idaho, and Pennsylvania by bringing together professionals in health, mental health, early childhood, special education, and families to share learning and strategies. “It’s hard to promote change and learning across systems, but we’ve learned a lot about how to make it happen,” she says.

Which is why the U.S. Department of Education decided to give Winton and her colleagues a $2.5 million, five-year grant to work to promote just such systems change. Her new center will select partners in eight states to create professional development opportunities for teachers working in inclusive settings. “It’s crucial for people to know that there are evidence-based approaches that can support teachers, the children and families alike,” says Winton.
Why Cities Are Making Preschool Education Available to All Children

Motivated by High Poverty and Low School Achievement, Cities from Boston to San Francisco See Universal Pre-K as an Answer to Their Problems

Savvy city leaders no longer wait for those holding state-level office to get around to providing universal access to preschool education. In Seattle, Denver, Boston, San Francisco, Los Angeles, Chicago, New York City, and Washington, D.C., they have made providing publicly funded preschool education for all children a policy goal—often in the face of resistance from public officials and some blocs of voters.

Little wonder. With child poverty rates often exceeding 50 percent, low high school graduation rates and startling youth crime statistics, metropolitan areas have begun recognizing what economists have long said—that high-quality early education programs deliver a return on investment and make a positive contribution to declining economies.

In California, where a ballot initiative calling for provision of a state-funded preschool program for all 4-year-olds was rebuffed by voters last November, universal programs are gaining ground in a handful of cities and counties. First 5 San Francisco, the city and county agency responsible for implementing a voter-approved universal pre-K program, went through a frenetic planning process and in the space of a few months, made the plan operational. Last year, the first wave of 550 children began attending. Programs screen every child for special needs and operate on an inclusion model, offering arts, science and literacy enrichment programs. Within five years, enrollment is expected to reach 4,800 kids, or about 80 percent of 4-year-olds.

First 5 San Francisco faces a problem seen in New York and other cities—a shortage of affordable space in an expensive real estate market. They’d like to see their model program widely adopted, but the question of where to put all the kids remains a real barrier. “A year from now… finding open space or refurbishable buildings will be next to impossible,” says Deputy Director of First 5 San Francisco Gloria Corral.

Governor Arnold Schwarzenegger offered some relief when he signed into law a program offering $50 million to boost preschool education enrollment and another $50 million for facilities. While welcome, that kind of money represents only a start in a state the size of California. And, competition for the money will be stiff.

A couple hundred miles down the Pacific Coast Highway Los Angeles County is likely to get a sizable share of the pie. The county will undertake the Herculean task of serving 110,000 4-year-olds when its universal pre-K program is fully implemented. That’s more than Georgia currently serves and nearly as many as Florida served in the first year of its statewide universal program. Officials in the county face the challenge of scaling up from the current level of 10,000 preschoolers and bringing hundreds of new providers on board without sacrificing program integrity. Already in place: assessments of each provider and on-going training, coaching and mentoring designed to boost quality.
Evelyn Martinez, executive director of First 5 LA, is fond of saying the process is a bit like setting out on a sea voyage while you’re still building the boat. Other cities are experiencing the same struggle. Many say the states need to step up to the plate to make the whole system work. San Francisco’s Corral believes that infrastructure can’t be built without state involvement because cities and counties alone can’t resolve some of the thorniest issues, like creating programs at public colleges and universities to help provide a well-educated, continually developing early childhood workforce.

In New York, where the state’s supreme court ordered a $5 billion-a-year school funding increase, spending for special needs in K-12 education consumed more than a quarter of the state’s 2004 education budget. Today, school districts in the city are still waiting to see whether the court-ordered windfall materializes.

New York City Mayor Michael Bloomberg and others have said they want to use that money to pay for more preschool education slots, both in public schools and private settings. The mayor recently proposed that about 34,000 existing half-day slots become full-day. It’s a change that would make the program feasible for working parents, and would help to fill half-day slots that have gone unused.

In Washington, D.C., expenditures for special education are approaching half the city’s education budget, making the argument for enhancing school readiness through universal preschool education more compelling.

In Massachusetts, the groundwork had been laid for making state-funded preschool education available to all children when Governor Mitt Romney excised references to universal provision of services. That hasn’t stopped Boston’s Mayor Mike Menino from pledging preschool education for all 4-year-olds by 2010 as a way to close the achievement gap. Boston has committed nearly $30 million over the next five years.

Jason Sachs, who heads up Boston Public Schools’ early childhood education program, hired Wellesley College to assess its classroom instruction and environment. They found that, despite solid marks, the scores didn’t reflect the kind of program that can close the gap. In order to change that, he’s secured $6.5 million in grants to put coaches in classrooms and create a literacy- and math-rich curriculum.

**Growing Tension**

Sachs believes the income diversity that comes with preschool education for all pays dividends for every kid in the program. The strongest criticism has come from private providers of early care and education who feel the city has “stolen” students from their ranks. Sachs argues that schools are operating in a new era where public and private providers need to become allies and work toward a greater good.

“I think we have to have an honest conversation about what the role of the public schools is and how we can work constructively together,” Sachs says. “No matter what setting children are in, we all need to do better. I haven’t seen one system get this totally right yet.”

If expanded, a pilot program tested this year would give private providers back some of their students and create a full-day, wrap-around service for kids. Under the pilot, private providers willing to abide by certain conditions receive a $5,000 subsidy on top of their state money to offer universal pre-K. Although the experiment revealed some problems and the model is sure to evolve, Sachs says, in the end, working with the city’s high quality early care and education providers may be more cost effective than reconfiguring public schools.

In Denver, Mayor John Hickenlooper pushed hard for a program that would raise the sales tax on a $100 purchase by 12 cents in order to fund preschool education for all the city’s 4-year-olds. Hickenlooper and his allies managed to get the proposal on the ballot this November. Despite opposition from the Anti-Defamation League on the grounds that taxpayer money would go to religious schools and a “vote no” effort from the anti-tax lobby, the ballot measure was clinging to a slim lead at press time.

Welding together coalitions to push through preschool for all is sometimes easier at the city level than the state level. Pre-K Now Executive Director Libby Doggett believes local efforts have contributed to the huge strides states have made on early education in just the last two years. “Good leaders don’t wait around,” says Doggett. “They see a need and they get moving on it. They’re not waiting for the federal [or state] government to put police on the streets or give more money for schools.” When these resources begin flowing, places like Los Angeles, New York and Washington, D.C., will be ready.
Responding to Governor Jon Huntsman’s proposal for voluntary full-day kindergarten programs for low-income children, Utah Senator Howard Stephenson is suggesting an alternative approach. His plan, called the Kindergarten Readiness Initiative, proposes to train 100 specialists statewide to help parents prepare their children for kindergarten. The specialists would visit homes and also reach out to preschools, child care centers and other providers that can help families prepare kids for school.

While they would reach out to all families, their numbers are low compared to the population of young children in the state. Particular attention would be paid to those who are at-risk due to low incomes or limited English skills. One aim of the specialists would be to help limited English proficiency families address the knowledge gap many say accounts for low pre-K participation among such families: they don’t know how to access available services. In addition to home visits, outreach would include the formation of small groups of parents and liaisons with public libraries and neighborhood schools.

With a $7 million price tag, Stephenson’s plan would cost about as much as the full-day kindergarten proposal. However, Stephenson says his proposal is a more family-friendly alternative. He is quick to point out his proposal is not aimed at competing with the governor’s initiative, despite his personal opposition to Huntsman’s proposal. However, Stephenson said, “I think it would be interesting to compare them side by side. We have to evaluate what we expect of each and give it the best educated evaluation we can.” Utah would be the first state in the country to attempt such a program.

New Mexico Voters Support Public Preschool Education

More than half of New Mexico’s voters want a publicly funded, universal preschool education program in their state, at least according to a recent telephone poll. The poll, commissioned by the Albuquerque Journal and conducted by Research & Polling, Inc. of Albuquerque, surveyed a sample of 400 voters and found that 67 percent approved of a state-funded preschool education program for all 4-year-olds.

Critics of the idea of a state-sponsored universal preschool education program say the public is misinformed and are unaware that the state only pays for 2 1/2 hours of preschool education—parents wanting more will have to pay for any additional hours spent in preschool education programs. They say working parents in particular will not receive much benefit from the short instruction time paid by the state. Experts say providing preschool education for the state’s estimated 25,000 4-year-olds would cost up to $59 million. New Mexico’s current preschool education program only serves children from low-income families.
Idaho, Ohio Panels Recommend Strategic Changes to Preschool Education Efforts

Advocates for public preschool education have found new potential allies—in the form of early childhood panels in both Idaho and Ohio. In Idaho, the state Legislature appointed a panel—the Early Childhood Education Task Force—to study the preschool education issue after an attempt to overturn the state law barring school districts from spending state funds on preschool education programs failed. Before the coming January legislative session, the task force will prepare a proposal to bring before the full Legislature.

In Ohio, the State Board of Education has also commissioned a panel—the School Readiness Solutions Group, which has already channeled 14 months of work into a report containing 10 recommendations on early childhood education. Chief among these recommendations is the call for the state to establish a new financing model that will enable high-quality early learning services to be available to all children from birth through age 5. Other recommendations include establishing a Board of Early Education and Care to govern all early childhood services and educational programs within a single state agency, requiring all school districts to offer full-day kindergarten by 2015, establishing a new birth through kindergarten teaching license, and creating a legislative task force to ensure that children and families have access to a continuum of services that support school readiness.

The panel hopes to influence the state Legislature by enlisting the heads of key state agencies as allies in the upcoming state budget process. The cost of implementing the recommendations has not yet been determined.

Chief among these recommendations is the call for the state to establish a new financing model that will enable high-quality early learning services to be available to all children from birth through age 5. Recommended by the School Readiness Solutions Group to the Ohio State Board of Education.
Anyone believing early childhood education’s rise on the public agenda is an American phenomenon should spend some time with *Starting Strong II*, the latest education report from the Organization for Economic Cooperation and Development (OECD). Whether one measures a nation’s commitment to early childhood education and care (ECEC) by children’s access to programs or the public investment in them, the new OECD report documents progress by more than 20 industrialized countries on this front, and in the process confirms what economists have been saying—that the growth in public ECEC programs is a global phenomenon—one in which the U.S. does not currently hold the lead.

Based on a comprehensive international data-gathering effort, *Starting Strong II* compares industrialized countries on a number of measures that, taken together, inform the global picture of ECEC. That picture increasingly resembles a broad movement toward ECEC programs that address concerns occasioned by changes sweeping across societies. Driving the change are issues like rising gender equality, more women with paying jobs, rising immigration, decreasing fertility rates, expanding service economies and the quest for global workforce competitiveness.

As might be expected, not all data in a study this international in scope are directly comparable. Yet the data in *Starting Strong II* provides a comparison of the progress countries are making. For instance, the report looks at public expenditure on ECEC services for young children 0–6 years old in 14 industrialized countries, using percentage of each country’s gross domestic product (GDP) as a measure. At 2 percent of GDP invested, Denmark has a sizable lead over the rest of the industrialized world. Sweden, Norway and Finland occupy the next three positions on the list. Taken together, Scandinavia expends more than 1.5 percent of GDP on its ECEC programs.

European countries like France, Austria, the United Kingdom and Hungary also invest more, as a percentage of GDP, than does the U.S., which occupies the 8th position on the list. Separating the U.S., which invests 0.4 percent of GDP on ECEC programs and last-place Canada, which invests 0.2 percent, are the Netherlands, Germany, Italy, and Australia (see Table 1).

The disparities between child poverty rates in various countries and public investment in ECEC programs also inform the debate. Although the U.S. ranks 8th of the aforementioned 14 countries on a percentage-of-GDP-invested basis, it sits atop the list in child poverty rate, with about 22 percent of all children under 6 living in poverty.

Of course, the purpose of *Starting Strong II* is not to compare the U.S. with the rest of the world, but rather to provide a sound knowledge base for the benefit of all OECD member countries to better inform policy. As important as the data are, there is much to be learned from the report’s discussions of the dynamics leading to...
the current state of ECEC in the industrialized world and the lessons to be shared from experience with the various administrative and service delivery models currently in place. Taken together, they form the basis for the report’s policy observations.

Starting Strong II makes it clear that for most industrialized countries, maintaining the status quo regarding ECEC simply is not an option. The policy question is not whether to invest but rather how much and at what level. What constitutes adequate funding in a political climate of spending limitations? With that in mind, what new sources of stable funding can be created? How much should policymakers challenge the established orthodoxy in formulating and coordinating programs?

These are not unfamiliar questions to anyone arguing for early childhood programs at the national, state or local levels in the U.S. Highlighted in the report are vignettes of leading initiatives like the coordinated child development policy in Prince Edward Island, Canada, progress toward compulsory early education in Nuevo Leon, Mexico, market economy adaptations in Hungary’s Children’s Centers, ECEC subsidy programs in France and the structure and components of the Arkansas Better Chance Program.

The new report also highlights a pressing reason governments across the industrialized world are making early childhood education a higher priority—continuing changes in the demographic composition of their populations. Low fertility rates and declining populations typify several countries in the OECD. As economists have pointed out, this argues for developing a better-educated workforce through early education programs so as to boost productivity among the smaller native working population. These programs also encourage childbearing among native working couples by giving them the confidence in early care and education arrangements they need before deciding to have children.

Accompanying this trend is the immigration of foreign-born families essential to filling out the workforce in most OECD countries. This influx presents a need for early childhood education so that children from foreign-born parents do not enter school unprepared to learn. Studies conducted in several countries, including the United Kingdom, Germany and Australia inform this issue.

The report’s policy observations are well-drawn, comprising a 10-point checklist that should be read by any policymaker entertaining thoughts of creating new ECEC programs or making changes to existing ones. Points such as forging a broad vision of early childhood services, establishing appropriate standards and governing structures, providing accountability and quality assurance, and improving teacher and staff conditions are pillars that could have been more sturdily constructed in some state-funded programs that currently fall short of the mark here at home. For more information, visit: http://www.oecd.org/edu/startingstrong2

### Aging and Immigrant Populations in the OECD World

#### Ratio of Population 65 to Total Labor Force, for 2005 and projections for 2020

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#### Increase in the foreign population/foreign-born population between 1993 and 2002

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Ensuring School Readiness: A Tale of Two Studies

CONTINUED FROM PAGE 12 >>

Why the Hard Skills Count

Northwestern University’s Greg Duncan and fellow researchers conducted a study of children’s abilities at school entry as predictors of later achievement. Analyzing data from six long-term studies, they found the strongest predictor of later achievement to be children’s school-entry math skills, followed by reading and ability to pay attention. The big surprise was that math skills ranked as the most important predictor of school success.

Adding to this surprise was the fact that soft skills like social behavior turned out not to be significant predictors of later academic performance. Early behavior problems like aggression or moodiness didn’t prove to be a strong predictor of whether a child would do well in school. “Despite the fact that it seems there ought to be these connections between how kids behave and how they learn…that just doesn’t seem to be the case with school entry and later learning,” says Duncan.

Not all soft skills turned out to be less predictive of school success, however. The ability to pay attention was the third-most-important predictor of success, a finding Duncan says shows that attention skills need more study.

Complex Interaction

Although the findings from these studies appear to conflict, it may be that they do not. Duncan’s analysis considered behavior problems at school entry and not behavior that developed subsequently. Socio-emotional skills are harder to measure than academic skills. What’s more, there may be “crossover effects” between the soft and the hard skills that may not be taken into account.

Stipek says the fact that the effects of positive behaviors don’t appear to carry over into the higher grades may be because more emphasis is placed on social skills in the lower grades. She sounds a note of caution about how academics are introduced into preschool. Unless activities designed to increase academic achievement are appropriately individualized and embedded in meaningful activities, they could cause negative behaviors to begin appearing earlier than current findings indicate. As research continues to expand our understanding of children’s acquisition of skills and behaviors, we’ll be better positioned to administer early interventions to prevent poor achievement later.
Chris Gregoire: Bringing New Energy and Focus to Early Childhood Education

Visionary governors have been a driving force behind the rapid growth in state-funded preschool education. Having the vision for improving children’s lives through state pre-K and implementing programs that actually deliver are two different things, however. Between the two lies a mountain of work that often requires changing the old model, developing a new one and building the support to make it all happen.

Few governors have shown the political surefootedness of Washington Governor Chris Gregoire in this regard. Shortly after her election as the “education governor,” she tapped business, community, and education leaders to re-envision the state’s education system. Since then, she has reorganized management of early childhood education under a cabinet-level department, pushed through increased funding for state pre-K, and formed a public-private partnership that enlists non-profits like the Bill and Melinda Gates Foundation and companies like Boeing in an ongoing effort to improve early learning. Earlier this year, she took over as Chair of the National Governors Association’s Education, Early Childhood and Workforce Committee.

Preschool Matters asked Gregoire about her early learning initiatives and what she sees for the future.

Q: You are not bashful about saying our world is changing and government needs to get ahead of the curve. How do you see that playing out in the context of early childhood education?
A: The role of government is to collaborate with the private sector to help create a vision and the path to get there. Working together, we can work to help families be healthy and make sure children are prepared for school when they reach kindergarten.

Q: Has the new Department of Early Learning lived up to your expectations as far as breaking down the barriers between previously separate early childhood silos?
A: The Department of Early Learning is still relatively new—Jone Bosworth, the new director, just started within the last month. Nevertheless, yes, the department has done a great job. Jone is highly qualified and I am very excited to have her working here in Washington. She and all the staff at the department are very passionate about early learning and they are devoted to the children of our state. In fact, Jone was recently invited by the National Governors Association to become a fellow with the State Early Childhood Policy Leadership Forum.

Q: Washington’s state pre-K program currently serves less than 10 percent of 4-year-olds. Do you see that changing and if so, how?
A: Yes, the Department of Early Learning is working with the public K–12 system in Washington to make the transition from pre-K to the public schools as seamless as possible. It’s a two-way street: the department is looking forward to see what skills children will need to succeed in the public school system and the public school system is looking back to see how they can improve their system to make the transition from early learning seamless and effective.

Q: A number of states have made providing public pre-K to all children a policy goal. Do you see that in Washington’s future?
A: Our goal is a smooth transition from early learning for all Washington children into kindergarten and the grades beyond. Universal voluntary kindergarten is an interesting idea that we are looking into as well.

Q: Washington is home to some legendary entrepreneurs and philanthropists. Could you talk a little about your efforts at uniting public and private endeavors under one early childhood initiative?
A: Thrive by Five (www.thrivebyfivewa.org) is the perfect example of a strong, functioning partnership between government and the private sector, one that I think could be a model for the nation about how government and businesses can work together to improve the lives of the people in their communities. It is a very exciting group that is made up of the biggest movers and shakers in our state and in the nation.

Q: What do you hope to accomplish during your term as Chair of the National Governors Association’s Education, Early Childhood and Workforce Committee?
A: The committee obviously focuses on much more than early learning and I think the name of the committee really lays out why early learning is so important: early childhood education leads to greater success in the later school years and that leads to a skilled workforce that can compete globally. I want to start the conversation across the nation about what early learning is and why it is so important to our economy and our success. Early learning is a small investment we can make now that will lead to huge successes in the future.
Ensuring School Success:
A Tale of Two Studies

Knowing What Skills at School Entry Best Predict Later School Success Can Better Inform Policy—If Only We Had a Handle on Cause and Effect

It sounds simple: Figure out what skills at kindergarten entry ensure that all children do well later in school and then configure early education interventions so all the grades—not to mention millions of children—get the benefit.

Before such a goal can be fully realized, however, we need a better understanding of how soft skills such as social behavior and paying attention and the hard skills like math and reading relate to later achievement in school. To what extent does one set of skills enhance or limit a child’s potential for acquiring the other? Which skills have the most effect on later achievement? Two relatively recent studies offer fascinating, even unexpected insights.

Social Behavior and Literacy
Stanford researchers Sarah B. Miles and Deborah Stipek investigated the association between social skills and literacy achievement in low-income children who were between 4 and 6 years old when their study began.

Their work confirmed what other research has suggested—that children who were good at social interaction had better literacy achievement in first grade. Miles and Stipek extended their analysis to the fifth grade, showing that low literacy achievement in the early grades predicted more aggressive behavior in third and fifth grades. This supports the oft-held view that having difficulty learning to read produces acting-out behavior.

Whether that is responsible for the aggressiveness or not, their findings seem to reinforce the need to effectively teach literacy in the early grades of school. Stipek, who is Dean of Stanford’s School of Education and a member of NIEER’s Scientific Advisory Board, can’t identify exactly what is leading to the behavior issues seen in the study but says, “Our best guess is that the kids are probably getting frustrated.”

She and Miles conclude that early intervention for children who are slow to catch on to literacy, such as one-on-one tutoring may be an effective way of stemming the development of negative behavior that can later lead to more poor performance. Given the cost of remedies in later grades such as special education, early tutoring may also be economically advantageous.

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Some researchers found a connection between good social skills and literacy achievement.