

American Transition from Kindergarten to Primary School System and Its Enlightenment to China

Huan Zhang¹, Jerry Chow Tong Wooi²

¹*School of Economics, Northwestern University of Political Science and Law, Xi'an, 710086, China*

²*Business School, Malaysia University of Science & Technology, Malaysia*

Keywords: Transition from kindergarten to primary school, Curriculum standards, Academic integration

Abstract: Transition from kindergarten to primary school is a holistic, dynamic, and continuous system that requires comprehensive educational planning and policy support. The transition from kindergarten to primary school in the United States has formed a complete system and planning system in terms of management system, teacher training, teaching stage, curriculum connection, and teacher recruitment. The American experience is worth learning.

1. Introduction

Transition from kindergarten to primary school refers to the educational interconnection between the two adjacent educational stages of kindergarten and primary school. During this period, pre-school children will end the game-based kindergarten life and begin to receive systematic formal primary education, which is a holistic, dynamic, and continuous system that requires comprehensive educational planning and policy support [1]. The transition from kindergarten to primary school in the United States have formed a complete system including management system, teacher training, curriculum connection, and teacher recruitment. It is such a complete policy guarantee that the transition from kindergarten to primary school in the United States have rules to follow, and ensure the hierarchical, fair and coherent nature of the transition from kindergarten to primary school education system.

2. System Integration

From the free, lively and spontaneous learning environment in early childhood transformed into a learning environment with sub-discipline learning, homework, and teacher management, children will feel pressure and burden to easily create learning disabilities [2]. The United States combines the kindergarten class with the primary school grades one, two, and three grades as one stage. The kindergarten class is attached to the elementary school. It has the same teaching plan and schedule as the elementary school, and secondly it is the kindergarten. Setting K class and primary school in the same environment is beneficial to parents and teachers to raise the basic requirements for children to learn in advance. The children accepted this regular and strict learning earlier.

3. Learning Standards Integration

The United States has divided the kindergarten to the third grade of primary school into a young convergence phase for a total of four years. Kindergarten K to the second grade of primary school will not be evaluated. Beginning in the third grade, students are required to take part in the state's English language arts and mathematics tests and the annual cognitive test for students of the same age group in the same age. In China the connection only refers to the transition between the kindergarten class and the first grade of primary school. The preparation period is one year or half a year. This practice seems to be short, and it is still difficult for young children to adapt completely. In the United States, children between the ages of 5 and 8 are divided into young transitional periods, so that children can complete the natural transition and reduce the many incompatibility caused by the rapid transition. The connection work is systematic, and the teaching content must be systematic and standardized to avoid Missing and duplication of knowledge.

Since 2002, most states have or are developing early learning standards for infants and preschoolers, and are increasingly perfecting academic and skill standards that are aligned with K-12 programs [3]. The American education community believes that good learning standards have the following characteristics: (1) is the basis for teacher training and certification curriculum; (2) can help parents reasonably set the expectations of children of specific ages to guide their childcare and education; (3) Standards as a public information can inform the public about the appropriate expectations for children; (4) can guide course developers to develop age-appropriate courses according to standards; (5) provide a basis for national monitoring and evaluation.

The model course is a major component of the learning standards. It highlights the concept of learning process and points out that learning is a gradual, in-depth and long-term process. Demonstration courses provide guidance to teachers to help them standardize standards and assessment criteria, help teachers plan their teaching, choose appropriate teaching techniques, textbooks, and other materials [4].

The components of the demonstration course include: (1) details of the content. This section aims to clarify, support and extend the understanding of learning standards. (2) Progress. Progress provides teachers with the knowledge and skills students have acquired before the grade and the knowledge and skills students should learn in the next grade. It reflects the way in which students' skills and knowledge are developed over time, from simple to complex. (3) Teaching support. Ohio's first-line teachers, education administrators, and college teachers work together to carefully select and develop strategies and resources. (4) Teaching strategies. Teaching strategies are practical teaching methods and recommendations for teachers [5].

In order to achieve the internal consistency and continuity of the goal and teaching methods in the young articulation course, the K-level of the same course and the same content of the first, second and third-grade course elements are progressively carried out, and completed through four years of theme learning [6].

4. Kindergarten Preparation Status Assessment

According to the regulations of the US Federal Ministry of Education, the kindergarten preparation assessment test is a tool to examine the ability and knowledge level that children have acquired before entering primary school [7]. The test results are used by kindergarten teachers and primary school teachers to improve teaching and help children to make their readiness.

Each state in the United States has a Kindergarten Readiness Assessment system that measures school readiness in line with the state's early learning and development standards (from birth to kindergarten) and is intended to be used by teachers to improve the classroom and to provide information for policy makers, educational research, and educational decision makers, also parents

and kindergarten teachers understand each child's skills, learning and development needs, and then give corresponding support and help [8].

5. The Enlightenment to China

As far as China's current academic system is concerned that kindergartens and primary schools belong to two relatively independent academic stages. Kindergartens follow the general guidance and specific requirements of the *Guidelines for the Guidance of Kindergarten Education* and the *Guidelines for Learning and Development for Children 3-6 Years Old*. Primary education follows the syllabus of various disciplines in the compulsory education stage.

There are inconsistencies between the kindergarten curriculum and the primary school curriculum in terms of curriculum objectives, curriculum content, teaching methods, and curriculum evaluation, which leads to inconsistent curriculum orientation. These inconsistencies cause young children to have inconsistent course experiences during the young cohesion process [9]. To fundamentally solve the problem, the education administrative department must organize experts and scholars and front-line teachers in the field of preschool education and primary education to cooperate and formulate standards for educational goals and outline systems.

It is necessary to establish a bridge between the kindergarten and the first grade of the primary school, which is effectively linked. Combined with the principle of vertical organization, the connection between kindergarten and primary school cannot be too blunt, ignoring the feelings of young children. All in all, the transition from kindergarten to elementary school is a huge challenge and is linked to the sustainable development of children [10]. We should consider it in the context of lifelong education, rather than treating it as a problem between two educational stages.

References

- [1] Bassok D, Latham S, Rorem A. *Is kindergarten the new first grade?* [J]. *AERA Open*, 2016, 1(4), 1–31.
- [2] Bredekamp, Copple C. (1997) “*Developmentally Appropriate Practice in Early Childhood Programs*”. Washington, DC: NAEYC. Archived from the original on 2007-02-28.
- [3] *Position Statements* [EB/OL]. [2019-4-21]. <https://www.naeyc.org/resources/position-statements>.
- [4] Eckert T. *Researching the transition to kindergarten for typically developing children: A literature review of current processes, practices, and programs.* [M]. *School psychology: 21st century issues and challenges*, NY: Nova Science Publishers. 2008: 235–252.
- [5] *Model Curricula* [EB/OL]. [2019-5-2]. <https://education.ohio.gov/Topics/Learning-in-Ohio/OLS-Graphic-Sections/Model-Curricula>
- [6] *Ohio's Educational System* [EB/OL] [2019-5-2]. <https://education.ohio.gov/Topics/Learning-in-Ohio>
- [7] National Association for the Education of Young Children, & National Association of Early Childhood Specialists in State Departments of Education. (2002). *Early learning standards: Creating the conditions for success*.
- [8] Helm J H. *Best practices in assessment in early childhood education*[EB/OL].[2019-4-28].
- [9] <http://rec.ohiorc.org/Research/Reference/Briefs.aspx>.
- [10] Ralph W Tyler. *Basic Principles of Curriculum and Instruction*[M]. university of Chicago press. 2013: 84.
- [11] Clarke B. *A shape is not defined by its shape: Developing young children's geometric understanding.* *Journal of Australian Research in Early Childhood Education*, 2004 11(2), 110–127.