

Ready to Make a Difference: Research to Practice  
Birth through Grade Three--  
A Two Part Research Conference Series



Part 2:  
Prekindergarten through  
Grade Three  
April 29, 2008  
8:30 AM-4:00 PM

Doubletree Hotel  
16<sup>th</sup> and Dodge  
Omaha, NE

Sponsored By:

Nebraska Department of Education  
Nebraska Department of Health and Human Services  
Nebraska Head Start-State Collaboration Office  
NDE-Early Childhood Training Center  
Nebraska Children and Families Foundation  
Nebraska Council of School Administrators

## Purpose:

The research conference series “Ready to Make a Difference: Birth through Grade 3” is designed to ground providers of education and caregiving services in the research on child development and best practices related to children from birth to grade three. Participants will learn how to apply research findings and use them to design and implement effective services for children from birth through grade three. Part one of the series focused on birth to age five. Part two, the April research event, will focus on children from prekindergarten through grade three. The conference will address issues of leadership, literacy, assessment, meaningful implementation of curriculum, and transitions children experience as they move from preschool through kindergarten and the early elementary grades.

## Objectives:

1. Increase understanding of child development research related to children from birth through grade three.
2. Help teachers, caregivers, and administrators understand specific ways they can improve practice based upon research findings.
3. Prepare schools and community partners to develop strong and effective programs and services for children from prekindergarten through grade three.
4. Teachers, caregivers, administrators, and community partners understand how to develop programs and services that meet the needs of young children and their families.

## Who Should Attend?

- ❖ School administrators, principals who currently operate or want to operate prekindergarten through grade three programs and services
- ❖ Community partners who want to partner with school districts as they serve children from prekindergarten through grade three
- ❖ Teachers and educators of children from birth through grade three
- ❖ Head Start, Early Head Start and Even Start programs staff
- ❖ Public health agency staff who want to partner with school districts as they deliver programs and services to children from prekindergarten through grade three
- ❖ Schools and community partners who deliver programs and services to children from prekindergarten through grade three

## Opening Session: Principals Lead the Way PreK-3

Elementary school principals from Austin, Texas, Albuquerque, New Mexico, Casper, Wyoming, and Cairo, Nebraska, will discuss efforts to provide leadership to their schools from prekindergarten through grade 3. Principals will discuss what they are doing to align curriculum, help children and families with transitions from prekindergarten through third grade, assist staff with professional development, and ensure results for children.

### Keynote Presenters April 29, 2008:

#### Ruth Wharton-McDonald: Developing Literacy in Prekindergarten to Grade Three Classrooms-- Effective Practices and a Few to Discard

Ruth Wharton-McDonald is an associate professor of education at the University of New Hampshire. Her interest in children's literacy development stems from her experiences as a classroom teacher, a reading specialist, a school psychologist, and a mother of two young boys. Dr. Wharton-McDonald conducted research with Michael Pressley on language and literacy development for several years. Dr. Wharton-McDonald's research frequently takes her into preschool and elementary classrooms, where she focuses on the characteristics of exemplary literacy. Dr. Wharton-McDonald's work has been published in *The Reading Teacher*, *The Elementary School Journal*, and *Scientific Studies of Reading*, as well as in *Learning to Read: Lessons from Exemplary First Grade Teachers*, and a variety of book chapters.



#### Marjorie Kostelnik: Enhancing Children's Learning through Use of Play Prekindergarten to Grade Three

Dr. Kostelnik is currently Dean of the College of Education and Human Sciences at the University of Nebraska-Lincoln. She entered the field of early childhood education as a Head Start teacher and has been involved in educating young children ever since. A former child care provider, an elementary school specialist, and director of an early childhood center, she received her master's degree and doctorate in human development and family studies from Penn State. Dr. Kostelnik was on the faculty at Michigan State University for 22 years. The author of 10 books and numerous scholarly activities, Dr. Kostelnik came to



the University of Nebraska-Lincoln six years ago as Dean of the College of Human Resources and Family Sciences. In 2003 she was named dean of the newly-formed College of Education and Human Sciences at UNL.

### Breakout Session Topics:

- Leading and administering programs prekindergarten to grade three
- English language learners and supporting families with English language learners
- Transitions Relay Model: Aiding children with special needs as they transition from prekindergarten through grade one
- Language and literacy development: prekindergarten to grade three
- Strategies and practices for engaging families in their children's education especially for children at-risk
- Connecting instruction and assessment for children prekindergarten to grade three
- High Scope Ready Schools Assessment: Lessons Learned

### Registration Fees:

The registration fee for the April 29, 2008 Research Conference will be \$45.00 for an individual. If teams of three or more come from a community, school district, or school district and community partners, the registration fee for each participant will be reduced to \$35.00. The registrations of the three people need to come in together to get the reduced registration fee. The registration fee will include coffee, snacks, and lunch. Registration will be limited to 350 due to space limitations at the hotel.

### Lodging Information:

A block of rooms is being held at the Doubletree Hotel in Omaha for those who will need overnight lodging. The room rate is **\$109.00** per night plus tax for single or double occupancy. To reserve a room under the block, call **402-346-7600** and mention the Nebraska Department of Ed (Code "NDE"). **If you need lodging you should call as soon as possible** to reserve your room. You can **reserve your room with a credit card hold** while you wait for funding approval through your organization. The block of rooms for lodging will be held until **Monday, April 7, 2008** and then released to the general public.

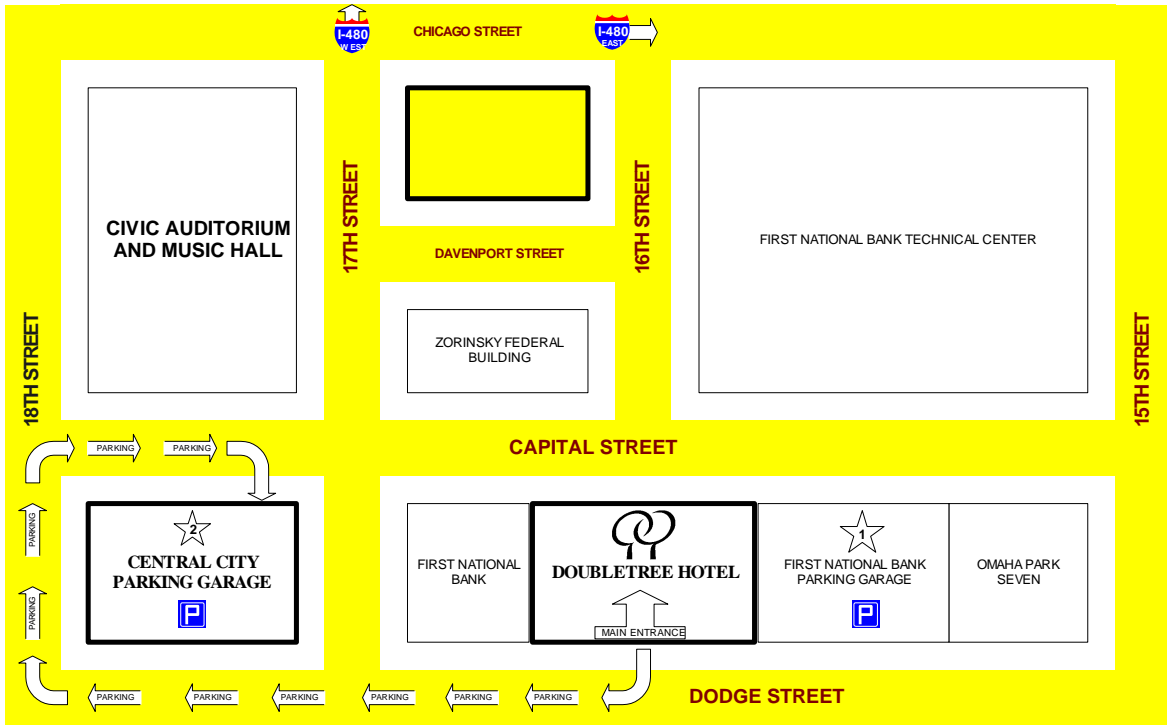
### Parking information:

Complimentary parking is available for conference participants at the Central City Parking Garage at 17<sup>th</sup> and Capitol. Just mention the Department of Education Research Conference as you enter the garage. There is also a tunnel from the parking garage that goes over to the Doubletree if you don't want to walk outdoors if there are poor weather conditions. The tunnel goes through the First National Bank Building.



★ The First National Bank parking garage, adjacent to the Doubletree Hotel is open 24 hours. The Doubletree Hotel is accessible via the elevator, press Level (2), exit the elevator into the garage, turn right to access the hotel lobby.

★ Central City parking garage is open 24 hours. Public parking is available in spaces 1-30, payment is made in the coin box at the entrance. The Doubletree Hotel is accessible via the elevator and the underground tunnel. Press Level "B" and follow the tunnel walkway into the First National Bank corridor. Continue past the elevators and escalators to the end of the corridor and turn left. Enter the Doubletree Hotel, proceed to the elevator, press the Lobby button.



**April 29, 2008 Research Conference  
Ready to Make a Difference: Research to Practice  
Birth through Grade 3**

**Registration Deadline April 18, 2008**

- \$45.00 for individual registration is enclosed
  
- \$35.00 registration fee per person for a team of three or more individuals is enclosed

**Unless a purchase order is provided, payment is expected with registration. No refunds will be issued.**

**Make check payable to: Nebraska Department of Education**

Name:

Title:

Agency:

Address:

City, State, Zip:

Phone Number:

FAX:

Email:

Special Needs of Participants:

\_\_\_ Check if, under the American with Disabilities Act, you may require auxiliary aids or services during the conference. Requests must be made by, **April 18, 2008**

\_\_\_ Check if you have medically directed dietary needs. Please specify restrictions: \_\_\_\_\_

**Mail Registration To:**

April 29, 2008 Research Conference  
Early Childhood Training Center  
Nebraska Department of Education  
6949 South 110<sup>th</sup> Street  
Omaha, NE 68128  
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