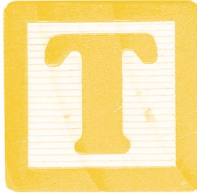


## PREFACE



The National Governors Association (NGA) Center for Best Practices offers *Building the Foundation for Bright Futures: A Governor's Guide to School Readiness* as a companion piece to *Building the Foundation for Bright Futures: Final Report of the NGA Task Force on School Readiness*. Under the 2002–03 chairmanship of former Governor Paul E. Patton of Kentucky, NGA established a gubernatorial Task Force on School Readiness to identify actions that governors and states can take to support families, schools, and communities in their efforts to ensure that all children are ready for school. The task force continued under the leadership of the 2003–04 NGA chair, Governor Dirk Kempthorne of Idaho. Participating governors included Governor Mike Huckabee of Arkansas, Governor Jennifer Granholm of Michigan, former Governor Bob Holden of Missouri, Governor Bob Taft of Ohio, Governor Edward G. Rendell of Pennsylvania, and Governor Mark Sanford of South Carolina.

This governor's guide ties the state policy recommendations of the task force to concrete examples of state initiatives to promote school readiness. It includes key considerations for state policymakers and resources to help inform their decisions. The guide follows the same readiness framework as the task force report, presenting what states are doing to build Ready States and to support Ready Schools, Ready Communities, Ready Families, and Ready Children.

The program and policy examples are representative of current state efforts to support the adults, institutions, and systems seeking to ensure that all children enter school ready to reach their full potential. Not every option entails a high price tag, and opportunities exist to leverage flexible funding sources and coordinate existing programs and policies to serve children more effectively and efficiently. Besides the specific program and policy examples, this guide highlights emerging state strategies to align all school readiness efforts toward common goals for children. Links to additional electronic information are included throughout the publication.



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