



**EDUCATIONAL  
FIRST STEPS**

one childhood  
**ONE CHANCE**

**CONTACTS:**

Merriott J. Terry, President and CEO  
Educational First Steps  
(214) 824-7940 PH/(214) 824-7428 FAX  
Mterry@educationalfirststeps.org

Kristie Vento, InChorus Marketing & Promotion  
(214) 886-6953 PH  
Kristie@marketingthatperforms.com

**FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE**

**Preliminary UTD Study Confirms EFS Center Students Perform at a Higher Rate of Success in Public Schools**

**Dallas (August 27, 2008)** – Educational First Steps (EFS) today announced the results of a preliminary study led by Dr. Richard Scotch, Professor of Sociology and Public Policy at the University of Texas at Dallas (UTD). The research team compiled data about academic performance among students who participated in the EFS affiliate program, and the Phase I study results confirm that EFS students performed at a higher rate of success than students from the general Dallas Independent School District (DISD) population who had comparable personal characteristics. The study used test data and other measures of academic proficiency taken from administrative records of the DISD.

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The Study & the Preliminary Results:

- More than 1600 EFS center students who can be identified (and verified) in DISD and who had math and/or reading test scores were included in this first part of the study (a total of 6500 children will be tracked.)
- EFS affiliated students included in the study were in Kindergarten, 1st and 2nd grade.
- Compared to DISD students overall in 1st & 2nd grade, students coming into the DISD system from EFS affiliated preschool centers scored significantly higher (at least at the 95% level of confidence) in math and reading tests.
- EFS affiliated students scored 1.96 to 2.50 percentile points higher in math and 1.34 to 2.90 percentile points higher in reading.

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Dr. Scotch, the principal investigator for the research, stated that the findings confirm what other research has established, that high quality early childhood education programs contribute significantly to the educational development of children in low income communities. "While these findings are preliminary, and more comprehensive results will be available in October, it appears that EFS affiliated centers are making a significant contribution to the educational performance of their students as they progress into public schools."

"Only 1% of the students represented in the DISD population are EFS affiliate children, which reinforces the need for our community to support EFS programs and affiliate centers to bring more children into the program," says Merriott J. Terry, EFS President and CEO. "This proves now, more than ever, that EFS programs are making a significant impact on low income children in our community, and we invite the community to continue in its support of our efforts to impact even more children and families. The study will continue over the next 6 years, and we expect an increase in EFS student population as the study progresses."

**About Educational First Steps:**

Founded in 1990 by David Munson, Sandra Estess, Joyce Wright & Linus Wright, EFS has more than 18 years experience executing its mission to improve the quality and availability of early childhood education for economically disadvantaged children. EFS programs prepare children from low-income families to "thrive instead of survive" when they enter school. EFS serves more than 4000 low income children in its 68 childcare centers in the metroplex. As of 2008, 20 affiliate centers are accredited by NAEYC and NAC, which are the 'gold-star' measures for early childhood education in the USA. For more information on EFS and its programs, contact Merriott J. Terry at 214-824-7940 or visit [www.educationalfirststeps.org](http://www.educationalfirststeps.org).