

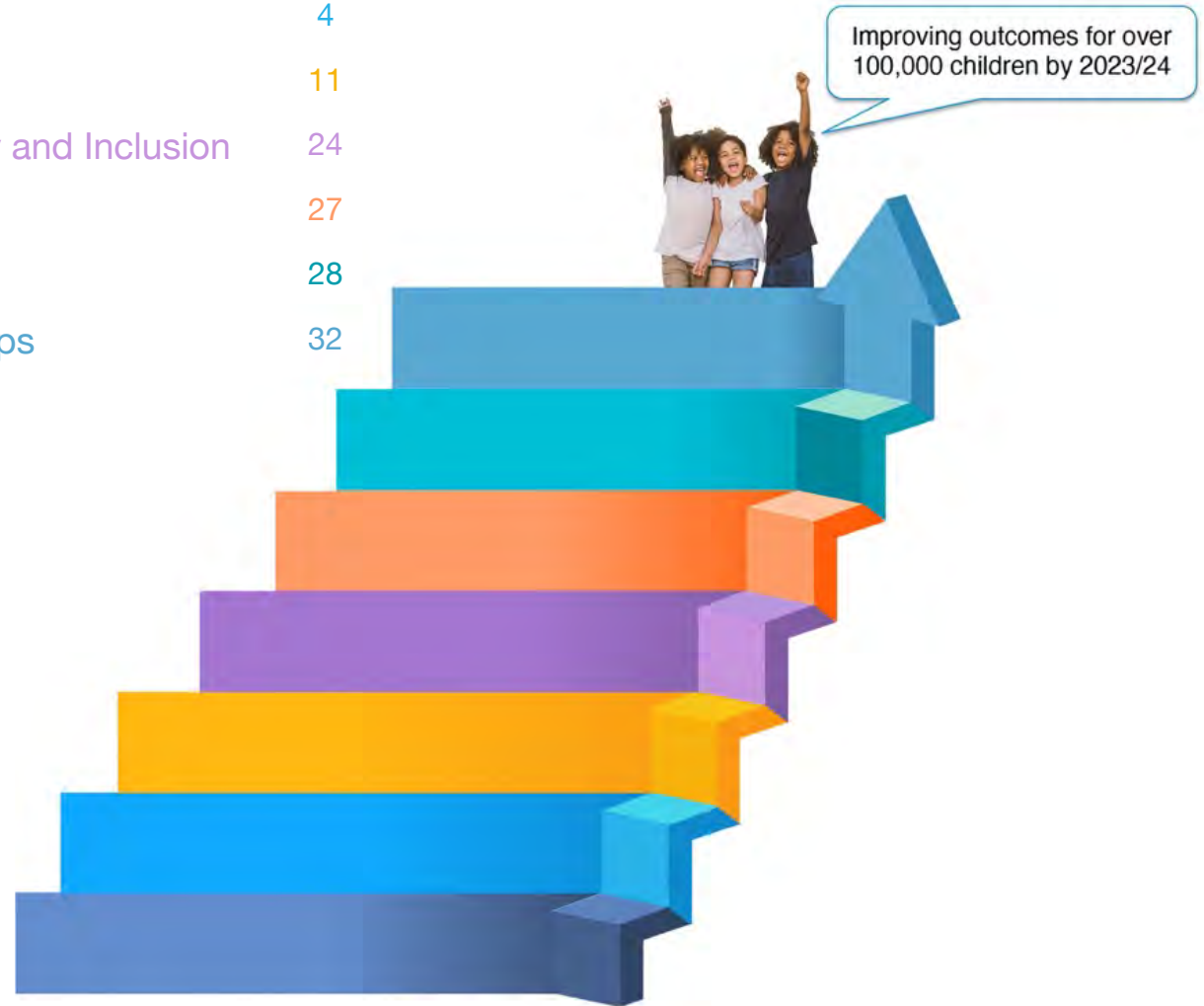


**TOOLS  
OF THE  
MIND**

# Annual Report 2019/2020

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# Letter from Leadership

## **Responding to COVID-19: New Routes to Increasing Impact**

The past 6 months have presented enormous challenges for schools, teachers, families and young learners—and, in turn, for Tools of the Mind in our mission to support them. The immediate needs of an abrupt shift to entirely at-home learning this past spring have been compounded by the enormous uncertainty and rapidly changing decisions, district by district, about school formats and health and safety policies for beginning the new school year.

We are proud of how the Tools team has risen to the challenges: highly responsive to changing needs, going the extra mile to be helpful to provide emotional as well as substantive support to our school partners; and creative in leveraging Tools' extensive prior investment in digital resources.

COVID-19 has forced us to think about the critical elements in Tools' pedagogy that underpin the program's impact and how to bring them to life beyond the classroom: how to support intentional play in a home environment; how to gain the benefits of working collaboratively when not seated next to a 'buddy'; how to enlist parents as partners in scaffolding learning so that it is tuned to each child's 'zone of proximal development' rather than a one-size-fits-all approach.

Amidst the challenges, we are heartened by the potential of the virtual approaches we have been developing to strengthen Tools' impact long after schools have returned entirely to in-person classes. Responding to COVID-19 has helped us envision the role that Tools can play in forging a powerful partnership between parents and teachers. Indeed, we believe that creating an integrated, aligned support system for each child that spans home and school represents a new vista for early childhood education that will meaningfully improve outcomes and could prove a breakthrough in closing the achievement gap.

## **Building the Foundations for Increasing Impact**

When COVID-19 struck, Tools was well along in the second year of a 3-year business plan to set Tools on a self-sustaining growth trajectory with the objective of improving outcomes for 100,000 children by FY24 and 400,000 by FY30. School revenues grew by 60% in FY20 and we had encouraging confirmations of Tools' impact in both Pre-k and K from district-wide data on year-end results, and a published randomized controlled trial.

FY20 was also Tools' first full year as an independent 501(c)(3) organization, with a strong, experienced Board in place. Financially, Tools had intentionally managed

FY19 to carry over an operating surplus that could be used to build up reserves. When COVID19 hit, Tools was able to make operating decisions and postpone hiring of additional roles to ensure we would finish the year with cash reserves equivalent to six months of operations, to prepare us for the uncertainties around school budgets for FY21. Thanks to a critical investment of one-time support from a major donor, and school revenues for FY21 that exceed FY20, we are able to start planning again for further growth.

While our COVID-19 response clearly represented a significant change, it builds on the core mission and vision of Tools, its foundational theory and neuroscience roots, and our business plan ideas for deepening and scaling impact: developing a stronger partnership with schools to build teachers' capability to deliver Tools with high levels of effectiveness, while pursuing data-driven improvement; innovating ways technology can build literacy skills while also strengthening executive functions; leveraging superior outcomes as the basis for the scaling strategy.

While specific initiatives and phasing will inevitably differ due to COVID-19, the fundamentals of our approach and strategy remain the same.

At a time when structural inequities have been so dramatically highlighted, Tools' ability to



# Our Mission & Vision

improve outcomes for low income, minority and English language learner students takes on even greater significance. We are energized by Tools' potential to transform early childhood education and deeply committed to ensuring it successfully scales.

Our continued progress towards our business plan objectives and the effectiveness of our COVID-19 response reflect sustained investment in research, innovative technology and organizational resilience. This has only been possible through the generous support of a number of committed foundations over many years and some very substantial new contributors, as well as the commitment of Tools staff, and the many teachers and administrators who partner with us in their schools.

We are grateful for all of your confidence and backing at a critical period in Tools' development.



**DEBORAH LEONG**

Co-Founder & President



**BARBARA WILDER-SMITH**

Executive Director & Co-Developer



**NATHANIEL FOOTE**

Chair of the Board

**OUR MISSION:** To help all children learn and develop to their full potential by applying developmental theory-based principles of learning to early childhood education.

Tools of the Mind is a proven, research-based early childhood program that embeds self-regulation and social-emotional skills development into all core content activities.

Informed by Vygotskian theory and the latest neuroscience about how young children learn, Tools builds the critical learning skills necessary for every child's success in school and life.

Tools classrooms are engaging, playful, and inclusive settings where children learn how to learn and help each other, and teachers enjoy their work as much as the children in their classrooms.



**OUR VISION:** To empower teachers with the understandings and tools they need to create positive classroom cultures, facilitate intentional, playful learning and support the development of self-regulated learners who achieve their full potentials.

Across more than 25 years of experience, Tools has been improving child outcomes in large urban school districts, suburban school districts, small rural programs, charter schools, and community-based and publicly funded programs serving children from low-resource families across the United States, as well as in Canada and Chile.

Tools' PreK and K curricula, and the PowerTools Integrated Literacy Learning System offer a comprehensive, results-oriented approach that improves outcomes for all students regardless of level or ability, and helps to close the achievement gap for the children most impacted by structural inequalities.

# What We Offer

## *Our portfolio of offerings includes:*

**Comprehensive PreK and Kindergarten curricula** that engage children in playful learning across all content areas, align with state and national standards, and include ready-for-implementation classroom materials kits available through Lakeshore® Learning.

**Professional development & customized support** are a core component of the Tools experience for both lead and assistant teachers, including in-person or virtual workshops and technical assistance.

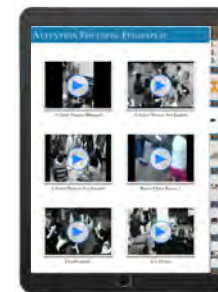
**Teachers are at the heart of our program**—we believe that when teachers have strong knowledge of child development, and are provided the tools and strategies they need to support today's children in today's world, each child will meet their full potential, and we can take a giant step forward in closing the achievement gap for our most vulnerable populations.

**The PowerTools Integrated Literacy Learning System** is a suite of digital writing and reading apps that embed Tools' approach to literacy development and self-regulation. These apps are designed to capture children's authentic work in and outside of the classroom, translating it into powerful data teachers use to understand learners and differentiate instruction.



## **An online subscription platform that includes:**

- **eTools**—a library of resources for teachers, administrators, coaches, and parents
- **iScaffold**—an on-demand professional development tool for teachers that provides in-the-moment support in implementing Tools activities and approach, with guidance for how to scaffold each individual child's growth
- **Data analytics dashboards**—with customized child and classroom literacy data from the PowerTools Integrated Literacy Learning System to support data-informed instructional decisions
- **And more to come in 2020-2021!**



# What Makes Tools Unique

Although Tools of the Mind has been in existence for over 25 years, today's challenges make Tools' program more important than ever. We are working to address structural inequities, support child development in the wake of altered school models due to the pandemic, and build an early childhood teaching force equipped to fill in gaps that may result from the extended disruption to schooling and stressors on families. Data from Adele Diamond's 2019 randomized control trial research study on the impact of Tools on *both* children and teachers, included in this section, confirms that Tools is a unique program well-poised to address today's challenges.

## Tools builds children's self-regulation:

From the classroom environment, classroom management and routines, to the design of each activity, Tools intentionally builds each child's physical, social-emotional and cognitive self-regulation.



*"The ability of my students to regulate their behavior and help those who still require some assistance has allowed me to be able to work with small groups as well as individually with specific students who require additional assistance. I have never been able to effectively do this with Kindergarten students before."*

— Tools Teacher Study Participant

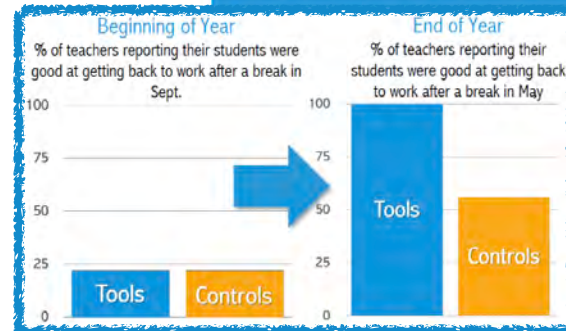
**Did you know? . . . Vygotsky believed intentional make-believe play is the activity with the most developmental potential in early childhood because it is the best activity for building self-regulation.**



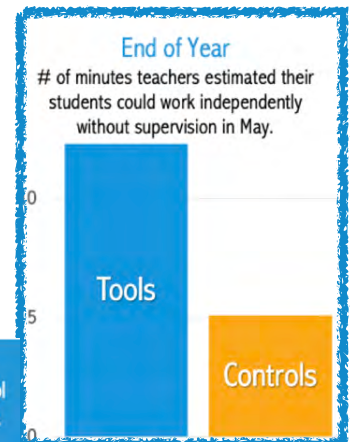
## Research-proven impact on self-regulation:

### Tools Improves Self-Regulation

**Attention Regulation and Self-Control:** By the Spring, Tools teachers were almost twice as likely as non-Tools teachers to think their children were good at getting back to work after a break.



**Ability to Work Independently:** By May, Tools teachers felt their children could be left to work without supervision for far longer than did control teachers, although teachers' estimates of this had been comparable in the fall.





# What Makes Tools Unique

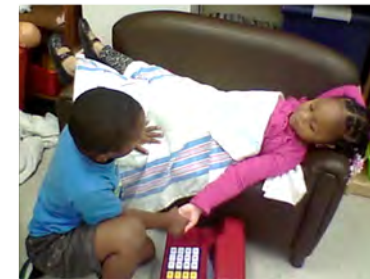
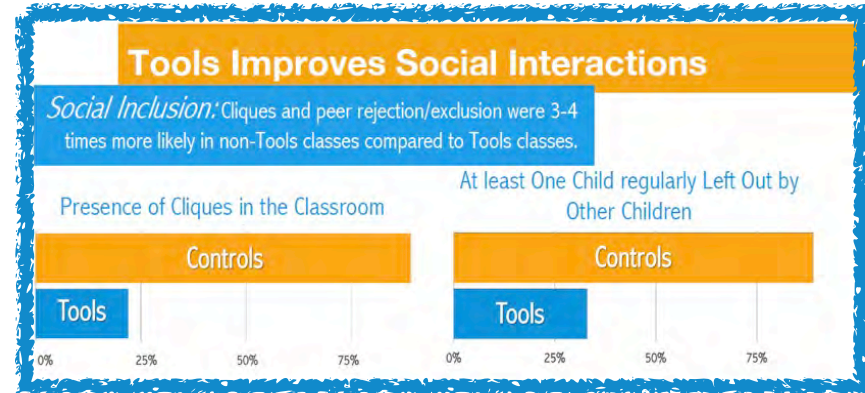
## Tools seamlessly integrates social emotional learning:

Tools weaves essential learning about how to manage emotions, physical behavior, and social interactions across core curriculum activities, classroom management approaches and classroom routines.

Tools core activities are intentionally designed to build social skill development. In the activity Buddy Reading, children learn to take turns and engage in positive interaction with a peer--partnering with a different child each day and every child in the classroom over time.



## Research-proven impact on social emotional development:



*"This year I have witnessed many students going to another student's aid. They offer help and assistance when needed without being asked and without belittling the struggling student. They look out for one another and ensure everyone has someone to play with or talk to."*

— Tools Teacher Study Participant

# What Makes Tools Unique

**Tools is proven to improve children's academic readiness, and core academic skills:**

Through building a foundation of self-regulation and social skill development, children have the tools they need to learn. In the unique context of a self-regulated classroom, Tools teachers can bring their skills in differentiating instruction using dynamic assessment to target each child's development of core academic skills.

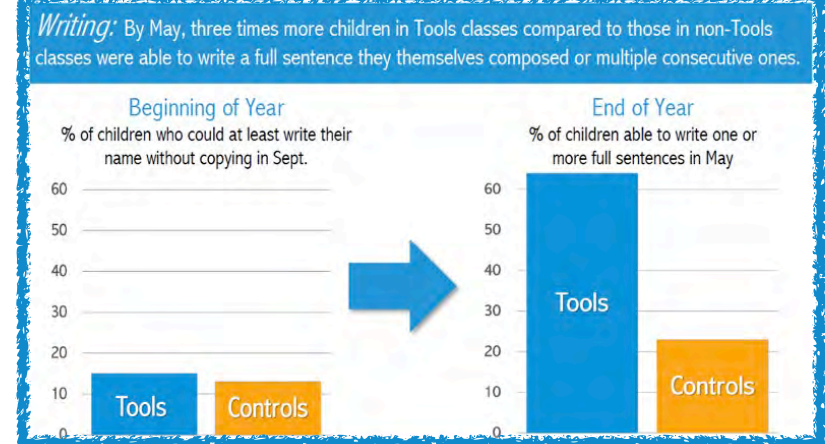
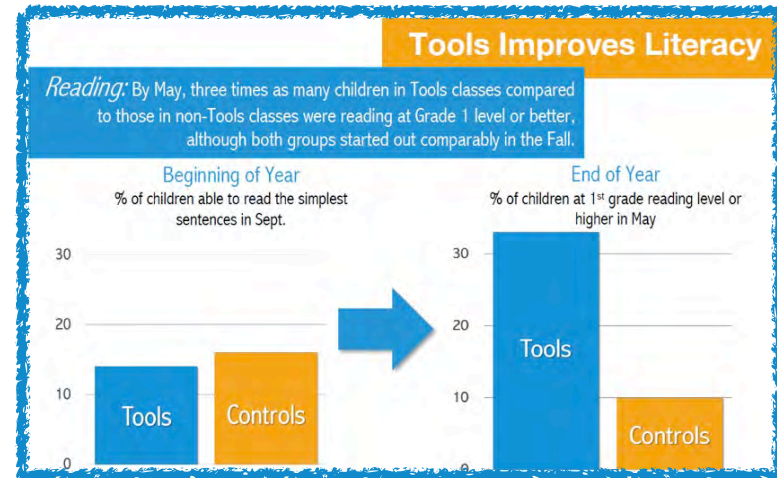
*"The advanced level of writing by children in Tools would astonish most Kindergarten teachers."*

*"The literacy level in the classroom is much higher than in past years."*

*— Tools Teacher Study Participants*



**Research-proven impact on core academic skills:**



*Tools teachers are masters of dynamic assessment and scaffolding— individualizing instructional interactions to meet each child where they are, target instruction and track and monitor their development.*

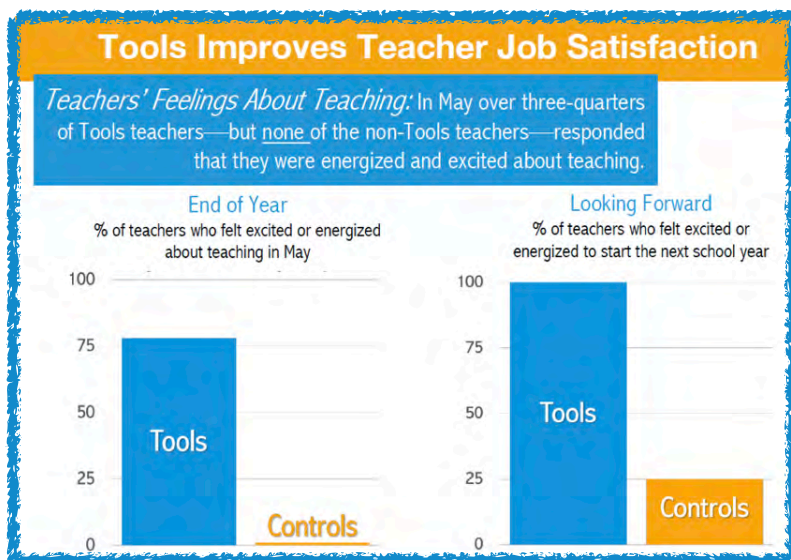


# What Makes Tools Unique

## Tools improves teacher job satisfaction:

Tools aligns with early childhood educators' values and empowers them with knowledge, skills and strategies to be the teachers they long to be. Tools improves teacher retention—many of our partner programs have Tools teachers that have been in their positions for 10+ years.

## Research-proven impact on teacher job satisfaction:



*"I have seen so much success in my students' learning that I can't wait to begin teaching again next year."*

— Tools Teacher Study Participant

## Tools is a dedicated learning organization:

From its very beginning, Tools of the Mind has been developed in partnership with teachers and administrators using fast cycle trial research and data from our partner programs and teacher feedback to continuously improve our program. We learn from and with our partners and continue to refine our approach, and add new activities and resources as we learn what is working where and for whom.



*A Tools teacher is the patient getting a shot from her student doctor who seems to know it's going to hurt!*

Want to learn more about the 2019 study on Tools impact?  
Visit: [bit.ly/DiamondToolsStudy2019](https://bit.ly/DiamondToolsStudy2019)

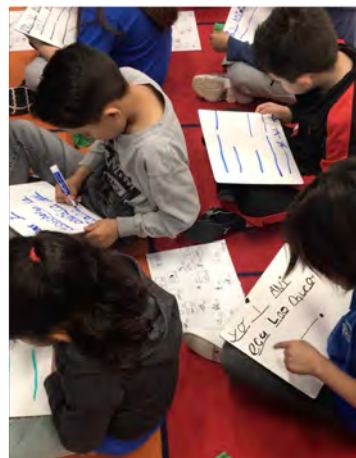


# What Makes Tools Unique

## Tools offers a powerful alternative to the pedagogy of poverty:

Tools avoids early assignment into ability groups and the use of 'drill and kill' practices that destroy young children's motivation, discourage persistence, undermine the development of self-regulation and lead to intellectual inequalities.

Tools creates a highly engaging classroom culture in which children engage in motivating activities while working together in heterogeneous pairs and groups. In this context, children's self-regulation development flourishes. Tools explicitly teaches



children how to learn in the context of well-designed activities that have developmental breadth, accommodating the wide range of learners that are a part of every classroom today.



## Tools establishes strong and long-lasting partnerships with schools:

Tools is a partnership model, collaborating with schools and early childhood programs to address each community's unique needs, and improve outcomes for each program's students.

Working with Tools is not purchasing a box of curriculum materials, but is engaging in a partnership in which we work to understand your district or program's commitments and challenges, and plan with school administrators and educators how to work together to support implementation of the Tools curriculum and approach.

*"Since we began implementing the Tools of the Mind curriculum 8 years ago, our students move to Kindergarten and first grade better prepared for the academic and social-emotional challenges that are presented to them. Our classrooms are creative, joyful, engaged, and purposeful places of learning where both the students and teachers are seeing daily growth. Our Tools of the Mind trainer has become a personal friend of the school, helping to provide resources and answer questions in order to help us grow even further. Tools of the Mind has helped us to become better at our job of serving students and families in a way that is authentic, intentional, and fun. We can't wait to see what our students will do this year!"*

— Tools Administrator

# FY20 At A Glance: Increasing Our Impact

Each year, Tools of the Mind engages with schools and programs to support implementation of our Vygotskian, play-based curriculum, that builds self-regulation and social-emotional skills, and emphasizes learning how to learn as children develop foundational academic content. Here is an overview of our impact:

 **25+**

**years**

Tools has been improving child outcomes

**We have reached over**  
6,500 teachers  
86,000 children  
In US, Canada, & Chile

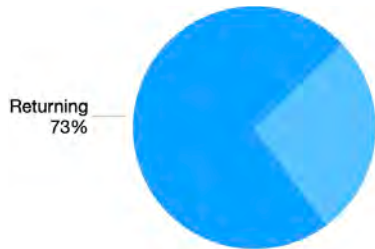


**SY19/20 Impact**  
850 teachers  
16,000 children

**1 in 3**

**PreK + K = Strengthened Outcomes**

**1 in 3 children served are in schools implementing Tools in both PreK & K,** building an even stronger foundation for long-term positive academic and life outcomes.

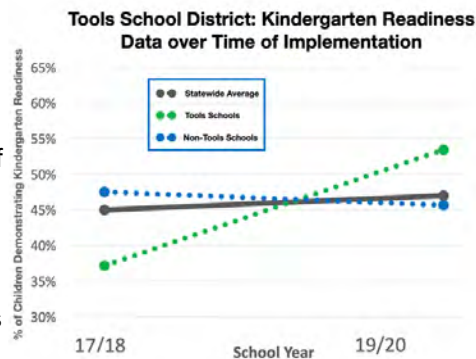


**Our hallmark** is long-lasting partnerships with districts to strengthen learning outcomes for all children.



## Proven Partner Outcomes

PreK children in a large urban East Coast district in its 2nd year of piloting Tools in 4 schools **exceeded district and state outcomes** on a Kindergarten Readiness Assessment.



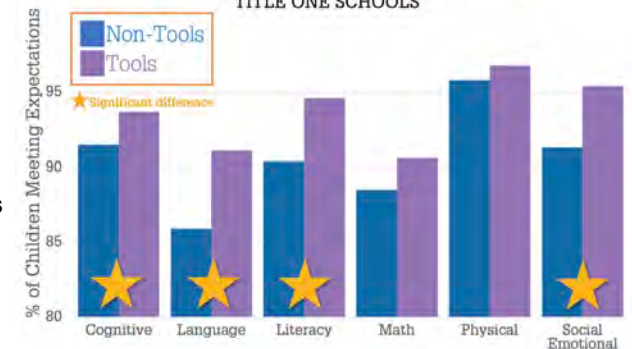
## Proven Partner Outcomes

In a large urban Midwest district using the TS GOLD assessment, **students in Title 1 Tools classrooms scored higher than non-Tools classrooms in every domain.**



## ECE TS-Gold Outcomes: May 2019

TITLE ONE SCHOOLS





# FY20 Highlights: Teacher Capability Staircase

## Optimizing value and impact for our Tools' partner programs

In 2019-2020, we invested in continued expansion of our teacher development staircase to deepen teacher understanding of the Tools curriculum and its central Vygotskian tactics and practices to amplify teachers' capability to positively impact student outcomes.



### New offering extending the Teacher Developmental Staircase: K Year 2

In 2019-2020, over 500 PreK and K teachers across the country participated in our in Year 2 professional development focusing on Tools' 5 core teaching capabilities.



### Workshop Reviews:

*"I was excited to have a better perspective on how to master Tools teacher classroom practices to support self regulation and development."*

*"I felt good when I left. It makes me excited about teaching and I feel like I am really getting deep into math and literacy concepts that hasn't also been happening in my past teaching."*

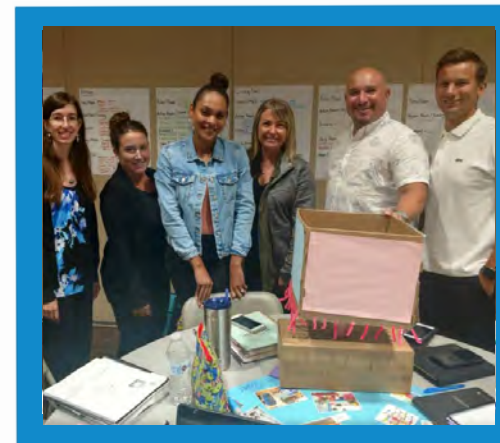
### Biggest ah ha

*"My biggest ah ha was on the importance of using mediators for just about everything!"*

### What was learned

*"Breaking out in case studies helped me have a better understanding of scaffolding that will be extremely useful."*

*"I love Tools of the Mind and am so happy to be part of this program. I want to go onto year three!"*



# FY20 Highlights: Endorsement

## Optimizing value and impact for our Tools' partner programs

### A new Endorsement Process and Year 3 professional development

—This past year, Tools of the Mind developed a new *Endorsement Process* and professional development workshop, launching the process with PreK teachers and coaches. This process is designed to engage teachers in deep, reflective practice, and strengthen masterful application of the Tools curriculum.

A teacher who successfully completes the Endorsement Process is someone who has completed our core professional development and gone on to earn the confidence of the Tools of the Mind organization, demonstrating masterful implementation of the core curricular components and Tools' approach.

### What's involved for teachers?

- Teachers submit classroom video and complete a self-assessment of their videos using our endorsement rubric
- Teachers reflect on the video of a peer from another district that is also engaged in the process, completing the endorsement rubric

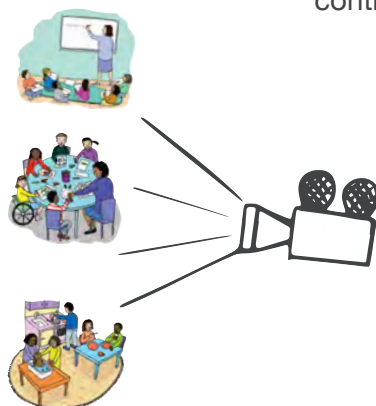
### A process for Tools coaches/master teachers

The Tools endorsement process for coaches and master teachers is designed to strengthen their ability to identify the key elements of high quality implementation of the Tools curriculum and approach. They also develop an understanding of teaching practices that conflict with the Tools' approach, and demonstrate and develop the ability to meet each teacher where they are and support their continued development.

A coach who successfully completes the process demonstrates masterful understanding of the Tools' approach and ability to apply the Vygotskian concept of ZPD to target teachers' skills on the edge of emergence.

### What's involved for coaches?

- Coaches view video and complete the endorsement rubric for three Tools teachers outside of their program, demonstrating strong understanding of what masterful Tools teaching and learning looks and sounds like
- Coaches engage in reflective practice to identify how they would support each teachers' development with the goal of strengthening teachers' ability to impact child outcomes through continuous improvement of implementation in their programs



*"The Tools of the Mind endorsement process has been an exciting journey for me. For the last 15 years, I have been a part of this curriculum, first as a para and then as a teacher. Having gone through the initial trainings earlier in my career the endorsement process became a fresh lens. I was able to look at my approach, not only as an educator but from the perspective of what my students see and experience through my understanding of the curriculum. The endorsement process awakened a love that I once knew earlier on in my career. Through my self reflections and video process I had the rare ability to see my students engaged and growing! I was able to see the fruit of activities that promoted self-regulation, self talk, independence, mature play, and a beautiful sea of 3, 4, and 5 year old's working within their ZPDs! Thus the process not only motivated me to continue reevaluating my fidelity of the curriculum but helped me see the 'Why' again!"*

— Tools Teacher

# FY20 Highlights: P3 Model Development

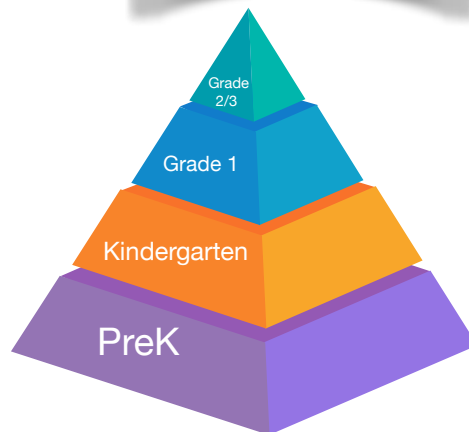
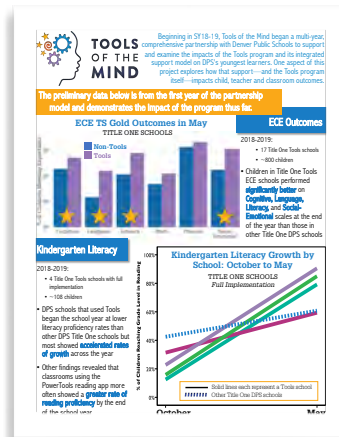
## Optimizing value and impact for our Tools' partner programs

### What is the Tools P3 Data Partnership Model?

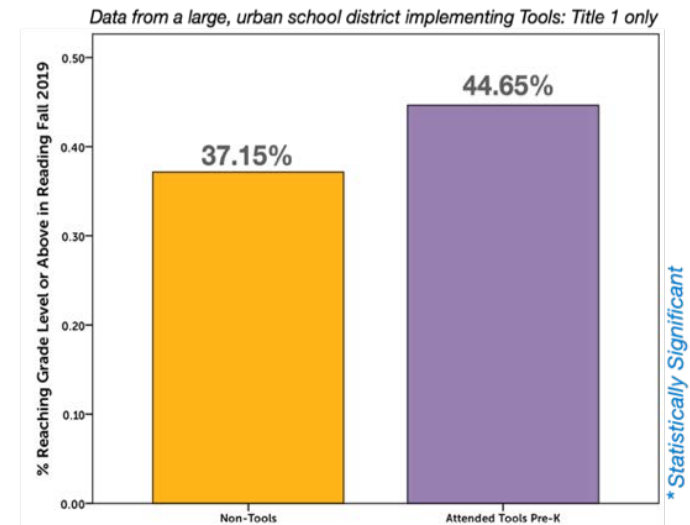
In this model, Tools works with interested districts to follow children through 3rd grade. Tools provides support in data analysis and the translation of data into actionable next steps for teachers, with the goal of getting all children on grade level in reading by the end of 3rd grade.

### How does it work?

- In this model, our data and evaluation team work closely with the district's key stakeholders to determine the most relevant district data to analyze in concert with Tools' program data. This data partnership allows Tools to differentiate our support and approach to programs in a data-driven way.
- Tools' data and evaluation team analyzes and reports on the data to uncover significant trends and help programs better understand how Tools is impacting children in their schools.
- We then customize and individualize our support to help teachers meet the unique needs of children in the district in various ways, including **Technical Assistance Residencies**, and our **POP—Problems of Practice sessions**.



In SY 2019-2020, we had upwards of 1000 PreK and Kindergarten students in the second year of our pilot Urban P3 Partnership program.



PreK children in classrooms implementing Tools had significantly higher district literacy scores at the beginning of Kindergarten than their peers who did not attend PreK programs implementing Tools. This difference is even more staggering because, these same students, when assessed at the beginning of PreK, performed significantly lower than their non-Tools peers in the district. This growth across PreK into the beginning of Kindergarten is a very important outcome for districts and programs that already are or are interested in implementing Tools at both the PreK and K grade-levels and demonstrates the continued impact of Tools PreK into Kindergarten. Our ability to collect and analyze data this year was disrupted by COVID-19 but we look forward to continuing and extending these partnerships and following children into 3rd grade.



# FY20 Highlights: P3 Model Development

Optimizing value and impact for our Tools' partner programs



*What elementary grade level teachers participating in this pilot wanted to learn:*

*“What practices or activities can we implement now to build executive functions in 1st—5th grades?”*

*“Can we impact the outcomes of children with special needs with these approaches?”*

*“Can our implementation of strategies to support Executive Functions combat the effects of barriers beyond our control?”*

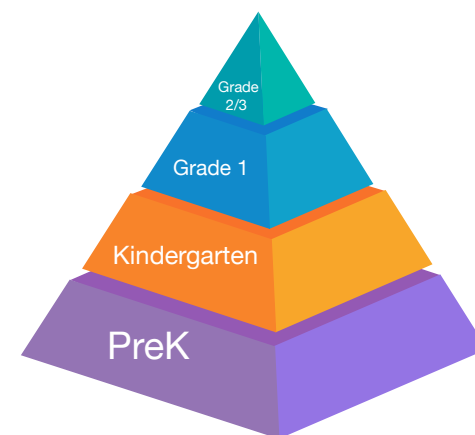
In FY2020, Tools piloted an approach to supporting self-regulation development *beyond* PreK and K, working with elementary grade level teachers to sustain strong PreK & K outcomes and support success in getting all children on grade level by 3rd grade.

**Development in process: Tools professional development opportunity for 1st-3rd grade (and beyond):**

Working with teachers in a school district implementing Tools in PreK & K, we identified common self-regulation challenges across the grade levels. Then, we worked together to develop a shared understanding of self-regulation and discussed teaching strategies to build classroom routines, management and culture to support self-regulation development in the elementary grades. We introduced teachers to the *Regulation Related Skills Measure (RRSM)*, developed jointly by the Harvard Graduate School of Education and Tools of the Mind, as a framework for assessing the impact of these new instructional approaches on student self-regulation.

This professional development emphasized how to integrate teaching practices to maintain and build self-regulation with older children in classroom contexts with multiple curricular and pedagogical approaches.

COVID-19 disrupted our plans to continue this work this year with follow up workshops. We look forward to returning to work more on this, and developing professional development opportunities we can offer to all our P3 Partner Programs.



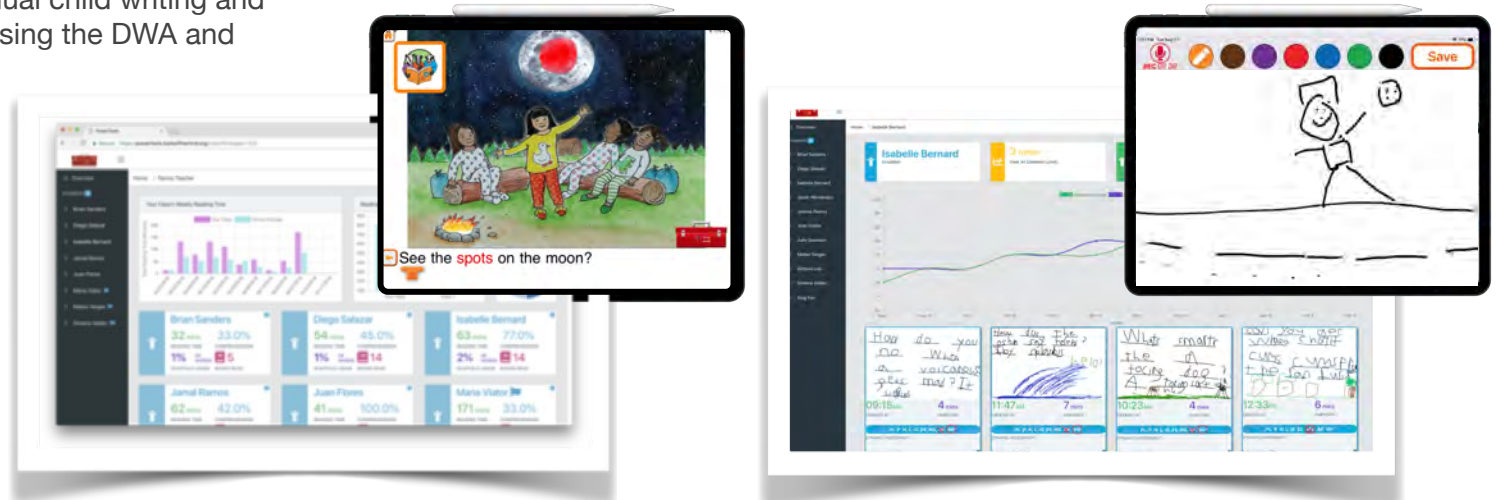
## Optimizing value and impact for our Tools' partner programs

**We developed a new single-sign in portal** to provide a streamlined single subscription resource for teachers that includes:

- 
- ## Your Professional Development
- Orange Grove Tools of the Mind Training
- 30 NOV**

**Orange Grove Tools Training PreK Year One Core W1**  
**zoom**  
 08:30AM - 03:00PM  
[Join Virtual Workshop](#)
- 10 DEC**

**Orange Grove Tools Training PreK Year One Core W2**  
**zoom**  
 08:30AM - 03:00PM  
[Join Virtual Workshop](#)
- ## Your User Accounts
- Administrator Tools  
Registration  
Manage Users  
Portal Help
- Portal Accounts
- You have 4 active users  
 Deleted Management > [View your users](#)  
 (Use different categories and filters to narrow results.)
- | Name                   | Email                   | Account Type    | Last Login             | Login Count | Actions                      |
|------------------------|-------------------------|-----------------|------------------------|-------------|------------------------------|
| Tina McNease           | tmcnease@orange-fl.org  | Lead Teacher    | Never                  | 0           | <a href="#">View Details</a> |
| Sam Sanders            | sanders.sarah@gmail.com | Lead Teacher    | 10/19/2020 01:40PM UTC | 6           | <a href="#">View Details</a> |
| Tara Delaplane         | tara@orange-fl.org      | Teacher         | Never                  | 0           | <a href="#">View Details</a> |
| Ella Seaton            | ella.seaton@world.net   | Administrative  | 10/17/2020 05:40PM UTC | 134         | <a href="#">View Details</a> |
| Portal Tester          | test@orange-fl.org      | Lead Teacher    | Never                  | 0           | <a href="#">View Details</a> |
| Another Tester         | another@orange-fl.org   | Account Teacher | Never                  | 0           | <a href="#">View Details</a> |
| Event Coordinator      | event@orange-fl.org     | Event Staff     | Never                  | 0           | <a href="#">View Details</a> |
| Account Security Admin | admin@orange-fl.org     | Lead Teacher    | Never                  | 0           | <a href="#">View Details</a> |
| Carol McNease          | carol@orange-fl.org     | Teacher         | Never                  | 0           | <a href="#">View Details</a> |
| Teacher W1 Test        | teacher@orange-fl.org   | Teacher         | Never                  | 0           | <a href="#">View Details</a> |
- Orange Grove Training PreK Year One Core W2  
**zoom**  
 08:30AM - 03:00PM  
[Join Virtual Workshop](#)



# FY20 Highlights: PowerTools Early Literacy

**A commitment to innovation, research & continuous improvement to strengthen child outcomes**

Tools strives to continuously improve our offerings and meet our goal of closing the achievement gap to ensure that every child becomes a successful learner. We develop the underlying cognitive, social and emotional skills children need to reach their highest potential.

**In FY20, we expanded our Kindergarten PowerTools Early Reading Literacy Solution by building an Integrated Literacy Learning System that extends from PreK to K, introducing the DWA—Developmental Writing Assessment**

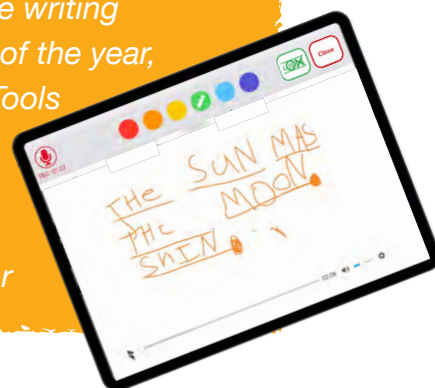
The DWA is a breakthrough tablet application that records and tracks children's Scaffolded Writing development while they draw and write on an interactive whiteboard. Through the DWA, teachers can track each child's development over time and use this data to inform individualized instruction for each child.

Together, the DWA & PowerTools provide unprecedented insight into each child's unique developmental trajectory to enable individualized instruction to meet children's specific needs.



*"The writing in Tools is amazing. We have kids who come in with no letters, no sounds, and then are writing paragraphs by the end of the year, just because of PowerTools and the guidance that they have."*

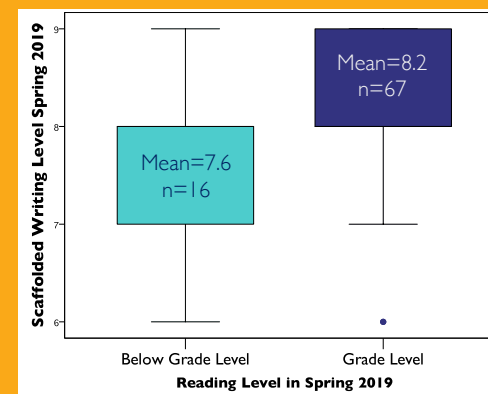
— Tools Administrator



## Did you know?

**Scaffolded Writing** (Bodrova, E. & Leong, D., 1995) is tightly linked to reading development and is a powerful foundation for early reading, embedding all of the foundational literacy sub-skills needed for reading success. In a Tools pilot study in one urban school district, we found that *children who reached higher levels of Scaffolded Writing by the end of the year were more likely to reach grade level proficiency in reading.*

The Correlation of Scaffolded Writing Development with Reaching Grade Level Reading Expectations in k





# FY20 Highlights: PowerTools Early Literacy Solution

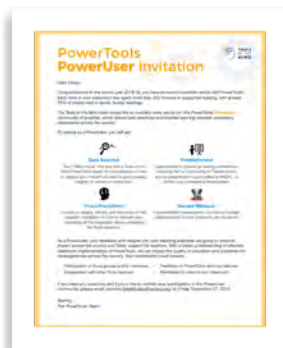
A commitment to innovation, research & continuous improvement to strengthen child outcomes

Tools strives to continuously improve our offerings and meet our goals of closing the achievement gap and ensure that every child becomes a successful learner, developing the underlying cognitive, social and emotional skills needed to reach their highest potential.

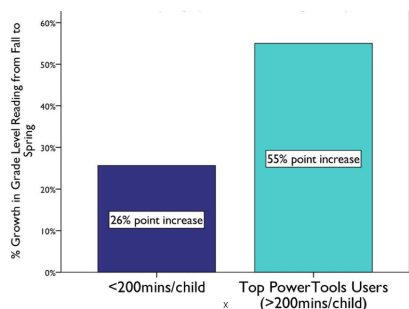
This year **400+** children actively used the DWA In classrooms in our 1st year pilot and **800+** children actively used PowerTools in K classrooms in 8 states to turbocharge their reading development before the COVID-19 disruption.

**Teachers inform the development of PowerTools enhancements**—In 2019-2020, we partnered with a group of teachers with strong PowerTools classroom usage and child outcomes from across the country. These PowerUsers were brought together to share learnings & experiences with Tools to further the impact of PowerTools.

**Research informed design improvement**—We revised the teacher PowerTools analytics dashboard based on teacher input and 2018-2019 usage and impact data. Now, teachers can track individual child and classroom weekly usage compared to the number of weekly minutes of PowerTools reading that correlated with strong child outcomes.



**Teacher Input + Child Data + Innovation = Increased Child Impact!**



**High PowerTools Use Leads to Higher Reading Level Achievement**

Percentage Change in Grade Level Reading from Fall-Spring by PowerTools Usage Groups



## Did you know? Both the DWA & PowerTools...

- Allow the naturalistic and automatic collection of data in the context of children's engagement in core classroom activities, increasing child time engaged in learning activities and opportunities for teacher scaffolding
- Embed Tools approach to support self-regulation development in the context of engagement in 'academic' or 'content-focused' activities
- Provide data for teachers to drive both classroom level and individualized instruction



# FY20 Highlights: Commitment to Research

A commitment to innovation, research & continuous improvement to strengthen child outcomes

In SY 2019-2020, Tools of the Mind partnered with Dr. Rebecca Treiman, the Burke and Elizabeth High Baker Professor of Child Developmental Psychology and head of the Reading and Language Lab at Washington University in St. Louis to study Tools' students' writing development and the correlation between children's Scaffolded Writing development and reading achievement.

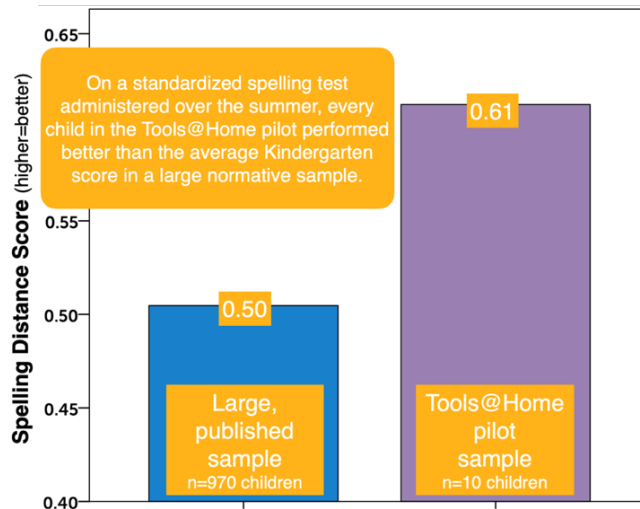
Dr. Treiman's work focuses on using Distance Scoring of children's estimated spelling -- computing a score for the distance between the conventional spelling of a word and the child's spelling, providing a way to assess and track a child's growing knowledge of the phonics system needed for reading and writing.

On a standardized spelling test administered over the summer, every child in the Tools@Home pilot performed better than the average Kindergarten score in a large normative sample.

To learn more about Tools@Home, see our Response to COVID-19 section.

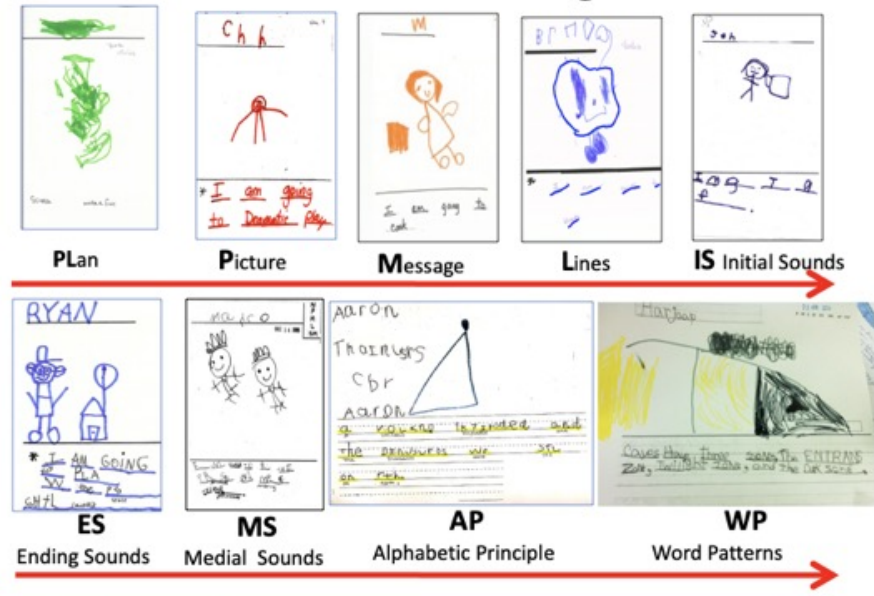
## Spelling Test Scores for post-Kindergarteners

Tools@Home Pilot compared to normative data published by Treiman et al., (2019)



Annual Report FY2019

## Research: Scaffolded Writing Pre-K & K



*In one of Dr. Treiman's longitudinal studies, end-of-year Kindergarten Distance Scores accurately predicted reading levels in 1st, 2nd, 4th and 9th grades.*

— Treiman, et. al., 2019



# FY20 Highlights: Building Organizational Capacity

## Building a Strong Team, Organizational Processes and Infrastructure to Support Scaling

In FY20 we added key personnel with depth and breadth of experience to deliver Tools to more programs, teachers and children. Building our organizational capacity to meet the increasing demands brought into focus by our growth continues to be a goal and we postponed some hiring this year in response to COVID-19. Here are some of the highlights:

- Prioritized growing our field team so that each school partnering with us has a dedicated team member providing professional development and technical assistance support across 21 states
  - Added 4 new Partnership Development team members
  - Created 2 new positions, Lead Partnership Development Managers, overseeing the success of large urban partnerships and promoted two of our experienced field team members to these roles
- Added a new **Business Development Specialist** role to build our capacity to respond to interested programs and meet our mission to reach more children

A significant initiative this year was to improve our systems and formalize internal processes to support growth. We worked to develop the maturity of our organizational capability and improve efficiency to support our continued growth and expansion. Here are some highlights:

- Redesigned and implemented a new customer relationship management (CRM) platform and internal work process flows, policies, and protocols to increase organizational efficiency and effectiveness to:
  - Support outreach
  - Track key steps in onboarding new partners
  - Track workshop feedback and program implementation to support agility and responsiveness to needs and challenges
  - Provide our field team with direct access to the data they need to effectively support partner programs
  - Integrate subscription activation (iScaffold, eTools, PowerTools & DWA)
  - Learn from successes and challenges





# FY20: Response to COVID-19

In the wake of the turbulent nationwide impact of Covid-19, the rapid shift to learning at home this spring, and impact on our school district and early childhood partners, Tools set to work to innovate solutions. We transformed our instructional delivery, developed new Learn@Home resources and worked with teachers in two states to pilot a new approach to partnering with parents to achieve strong outcomes.

**Our first commitment was to become an anchor of stability for our partners** experiencing complete upheaval due to the pandemic and to create resources for learning at home.

**For our school & program partners we created a Tools Teacher Resource Center with:**

- PreK & K *Learn@Home* kits in English & Spanish
- PreK & K Weekly Booster activities in English & Spanish



**Developed a new app version of our fluency I Have—Who Has Games** so that children could play at home and build fluency in key skill areas in PreK and K.

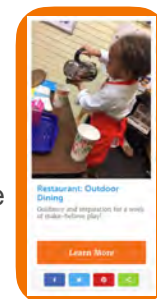
**Released PowerTools to families** so children could engage in supported reading practice at home. As COVID-19 continued, we connected parent

accounts with teacher analytics dashboards so that teachers could see children's reading data, hear their decoding checks and send personal messages to children on the app.

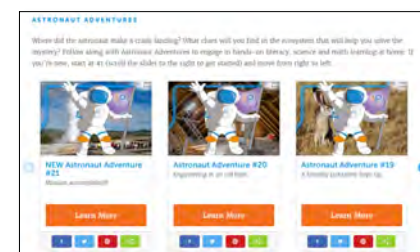


**Developed a Parent Resource Center with features including:**

- **A Supporting Self-Regulation at Home** webinar for parents in English and Spanish
- **PreK inspiration for make-believe play at home** with familiar themes like Restaurant and Hospital with a pandemic-era twist: Outdoor Dining, Telehealth Appointments and more. Daily guidance for parents-supported play for children at many stages of development while offering specific tips for role speech, props and sets, scenarios and story problems.



- **An Astronaut Adventure series** to mirror key components of our K program and inspire make-believe play, writing and STEM activities at home. A



number of our K programs are in states where educators were prohibited from moving forward in curriculum after in-school learning transitioned to at-home because of equity in accessibility concerns. Responding to requests from teachers and parents, we extended our Family PreK and K support for engagement in make-believe play through the summer.

# FY20: Response to COVID-19

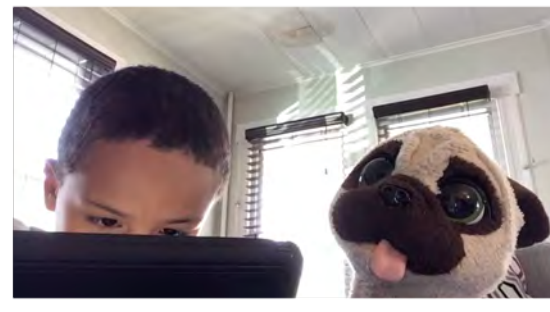
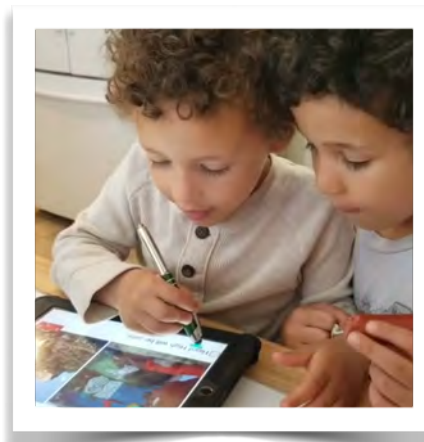
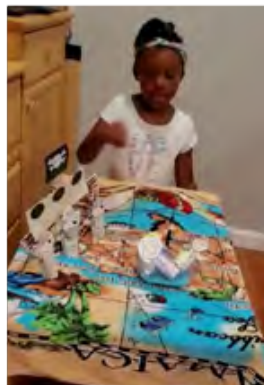
## Tools@Home K Pilot

To improve child outcomes as learning shifted from school to home, we partnered with teachers in two school districts to study the impact of applying the Tools approach to teacher:parent micro-coaching to support children's development.

**Our K pilot research questions:** Can we eliminate a COVID-gap & summer learning loss for children who were out of school March-August? Can we help parents scaffold learning at home the Tools way?

We partnered with a school district to release iPads to families and extended PowerTools and the DWA to at-home use to give teachers a window into children's writing and reading development and a way to provide direct scaffolding to children.

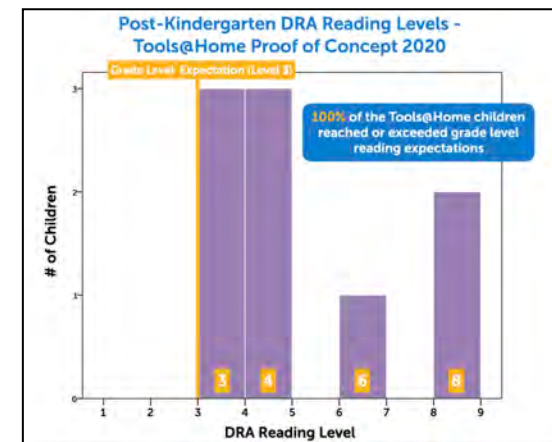
We designed a new portal for teacher:parent micro-coaching using cell phone text messaging in parents' native language and the sharing of video of learning at home.



A special DWA message for a teacher from a child learning at home.

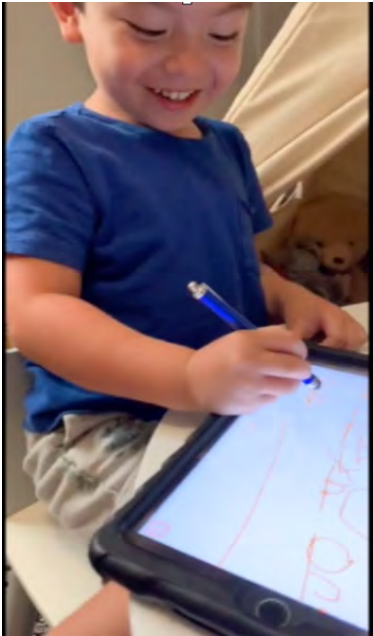
The encouraging answers to our pilot research questions:

# YES!



# FY20: Response to COVID-19

## Tools@Home PreK Pilot



**Our PreK pilot research question:** Can we extend our reach to help PreK parents effectively scaffold children's Make-Believe Play Planning & Play at home to preserve the key components of Tools that impact self-regulation development?

### PreK Tools@Home pilot

We partnered with teachers in a PreK program to focus on supporting self-regulation development through micro-coaching parents in scaffolding Play Planning (Scaffolded Writing ) and make-believe play. The district released iPads to families so that children could draw and write their Play Plans on the DWA, and the teacher was able to watch and listen to their writing and use what was learned to engage in micro-coaching families via text messaging in their native language. Families also texted video and photos of make-believe play and the teacher used this 'data' to partner with parents to support each child's make-believe play development.

**The encouraging answers to our PreK pilot research questions: YES!**

100% of parents strongly agreed that:

- The connection they made with their child's teacher was valuable and they felt supported by their child's teacher
- They felt successful at helping their child engage in make-believe play and create a Play Plan at home
- The ability to have their child draw and write their Play Plan on the DWA app and have their teacher view it was valuable

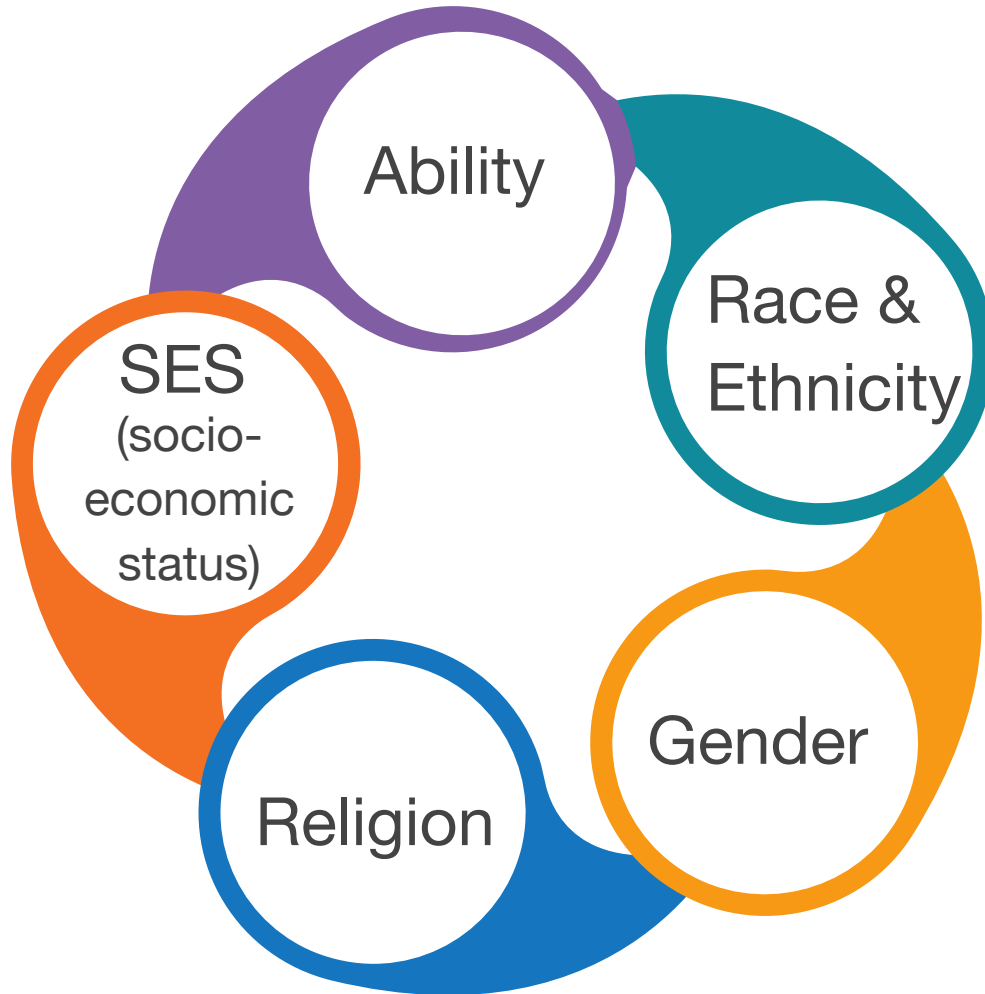


Through these pilots we have become convinced that it's critical to include families in the equation as we work with teachers and programs to transform child outcomes. Our program will be forever changed because of what we've learned with teachers and families this spring and summer.

We are grateful to have received funding from the Lego Foundation to fully develop and scale a Tools@Home offering and study its impact in the school year 2020-2021. As is the Tools' way, we'll be using teacher and parent feedback, and data on child outcomes to design future iterations of Tools@Home.



# A Visible Commitment to Diversity, Equity & Inclusion



From its beginning, Tools of the Mind was developed to address the systemic racism and inequities facing children in marginalized communities. Our objective was to create an early childhood program sensitive to diversity, promoting equity and emphasizing inclusivity in its core design through the application of social-constructivist Vygotskian theory.

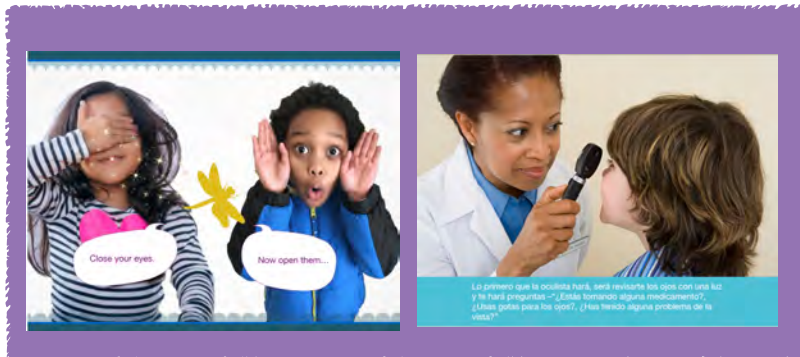
In our intrinsically motivating approach, children develop self-regulation while learning how to learn and how to engage in positive social relationships with every peer in the classroom. Tools sets children up for a lifetime of success in school, in the workplace, and in their personal lives.

We express our commitment to Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion (DEI) by making thoughtful, deliberate decisions about the language and images we use in our curriculum materials for children and in our professional development offerings for teachers. We seek to make visible a wide range of social identities so all teachers and children feel acknowledged, valued, and empowered.

Here are a few, but certainly not all, of the social identities we keep in mind in our work with our school and teacher partners and children.

# A Visible Commitment to Diversity, Equity & Inclusion

In the last five years, we've deepened our commitment to DEI and sought to make it more visible in everything we do. As we update existing content and create new offerings, DEI is always at the front of our minds.



**Let's Pretend eBooks** are developed to reflect a wide range of social identities. Gender diversity in employment, families of color, children with disabilities, and socioeconomic diversity are all depicted. Offered in English and Spanish.



**Professional development workshops** are modified to include more diverse images of teachers and children of color, with disabilities, and of a range of religious and cultural groups.



A grant from the Kellogg Foundation allows us to capture **photos and video** in classrooms with **teachers and children of color** for use in training and print resources.



We update our **Lakeshore® kit Materials**, including Daily Schedule Cards, with new images depicting children of color, people of different sizes, and children with disabilities. Offered in English and Spanish.



**Interactive Read Alouds** are updated and created with images of women and people of color in leadership roles. Children of all races and cultures are included. Offered in English and Spanish.

# Continuing our Deep Commitment to Equity, Inclusivity, Diversity



Will you play with me?

**PowerTools Early Readers** are created and feature lead characters of color as well as gender-neutral characters.



## Tools Tips

### Diversity & Cultural Awareness

- Learning to say the stem in different home languages is a great way to build cultural awareness and connections between the children in your classroom. Teach children to play I Have—Who Has? using the home languages of children in your class to say the stem. For example, children might say the stem in Spanish (e.g., “Yo tengo B; I have B.... ¿Quién tiene M? Who has M?”). If English is the primary language of instruction in your classroom, have children use English to name the target skill (letters or sounds) to build fluency.

The **PreK Activity Manual** is again updated to **version 8.1**. The new version includes suggestions to boost equity and inclusion in the classroom.

## What's to come?

- Recommended Book List for Kindergarten, annual updates to PreK and K lists
- DEI Training for Tools Team
- Teacher Advisory Group focused on DEI to identify & prioritize our next initiatives & developments

2017



Rainbow Superhero  
I sort by color!  
(Fall)



The **PreK Activity Manual** is updated to **version 8.0**. Images, activity materials and language are updated to reflect racial and gender diversity.

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A **Tools Recommended Book List** highlights recently published picture books featuring children and families from diverse backgrounds (language, culture, race, etc.).

into the future



# With Gratitude: Celebrating Maggie Sullivan



## ***A career at Tools with far-reaching impacts on early childhood educators and children***

In 2008, Maggie was a Speech & Language Pathologist in a Massachusetts school district implementing Tools in their PreK program. Maggie came to all of the Tools workshops across the next two years, and was a significant supporter of teacher implementation in the

classroom. She shared articles and video of make-believe play in the classroom with our team, and set the course for our shared destiny, with her deep commitment and intelligence, sense of humor and generosity.

In fall 2011, Maggie joined our team as a coach in the NYU research project, learning our Kindergarten program and supporting teachers in multiple school districts. After her contributions in this project, her positive impact was felt in two key roles:

**Partnership Development**—Providing professional development and technical assistance support in programs across the U.S., including Massachusetts, Maine, Washington, D.C., Virginia, Maryland and Oregon.

**Content Development**—Capturing and editing video for our core professional development & iScaffold and authoring our Let's Pretend Books

**Videography**—Maggie is a masterful videographer. Her deep understanding of Tools approach and child development guides

her eye and camera to capture the most outstanding make-believe play, dramatization, Scaffolded Writing and classroom practice video we have. In the course of videotaping teaching and learning, it's no surprise that she became a valued supporter to the teachers in whose classrooms she was videotaping.

**Lead author of Let's Pretend books**—Maggie took the lead in developing a resource for PreK teachers to support Make-Believe Play Practice, building each child's background knowledge and

understanding of the roles, actions, interactions and role speech in each of our play theme centers.

Maggie's deep respect for and understanding of young children created the vision for these stories. Her background as a Speech & Language Pathologist supported the design focusing on building vocabulary and engaging children's active use of language in the process of reading the books. These books are now used in classrooms across the U.S., have been translated into Spanish, are offered to teachers outside of the Tools program on First Book, are shared with at risk families in a Save the Children initiative, and are now shared with Tools families as well.

Maggie officially retired in the spring of 2020. Her lasting impact will live on to improve outcomes for teachers and children, and she will always be a valued member of our Tools of the Mind family.

*"Maggie was incredible with kids. She could walk into a classroom and on day one jumped in to help. She didn't have to be asked, just instinctively knew who to help and how."*

— Tools teacher

*"Truthfully no one made better playground mittens than Maggie! I still have mine"*

— Tools teacher



# With Gratitude: Honoring Ruth Hensen

## *Ruth Hensen, a lifetime of contributions*



Back in 1995, when Tools of the Mind had just one activity, Buddy Reading, Ruth was the first PreK teacher with whom Deborah Leong and Elena Bodrova worked. In these critical years of Tools' curriculum development, Ruth helped develop the core aspects of Tools of the Mind—how content was taught, how the Vygostkian tactics would be used, and how children would be paired or grouped.

Ruth made each activity something that was implementable within a classroom so that the classroom flowed, and Tools became more than a collection of activities—it became a comprehensive program that flowed through a day.

Ruth was fearless in her willingness to try something that she thought would help young children. Elena and Deb had developed Scaffolded Writing for the First Grade and Second Grade classrooms they were

working in. Ruth was convinced she could get her PreK children to do it and that was the birth of Play Planning. No one could believe that PreK children could write like that. To the right is Ryan's plan from that first year.

In 2000, Ruth came to work for Tools full-time and continued to be a true co-creator of activities, helping us develop our Kindergarten program. She was a trainer of trainers and teachers, and Tools' first multi-media star. Ruth was our first videotaped teacher, demonstrating how to implement an activity with children. She could walk into a group of children she didn't know 5 minutes before taping, learn their names and get them engaged in the activity the first time with the camera rolling.



## A pioneer for Tools of the Mind

“Ruth pioneered the theory-to-practice translation of how to help children with special needs become full participants in make-believe play. I will never forget the mother of an autistic child standing outside the playhouse with tears running down her face as her son played cashier in the grocery store. The little boy was beaming as children handed him their boxes and he scanned them and put them in a bag and took their credit cards. Ruth had coached him and the other children on what to do and had gradually over the course of a week stepped back as he was able to participate on his own. He wasn't a bystander watching the other children but a full participant. His mom said she thought she would never see him really playing with other children. Building on that experience we figured out how to help teachers create an inclusive classroom where all children are accepted and participating.” — Deborah Leong

# With Gratitude: Honoring Ruth Hensen

**Contributions to development of Tools K program**— Ruth also helped develop a lot of the Tools materials. She was the person that chose the Magic Tree House Books for Kindergarten and helped us to figure out how to leverage dramatization of the story to make play a reality in a grade that had already begun to ban play. She also did all the background research and supported the development of the Kindergarten Background PowerPoints, which evolved to become our Interactive Read Alouds.

**Trainer of Trainers**—As Tools evolved beyond a university research project to become a comprehensive PreK & K curriculum, Ruth was our first Trainer of Trainers. As the Tools staff grew, Ruth took a lot of us under her wing. It was an apprenticeship model where staff trained alongside Ruth and learned from working with her how to lead workshops and provide technical assistance. Her experience, understanding of Vygotskian theory, and openness and collegiality brought something special to the early Tools team and helped Tools evolve into the program it is now.

*“Ruth helped establish a culture I knew I wanted to be a part of as I began my work with Tools as a coach in a research project. She welcomed and loved tough questions, and we’d have long discussions about video and scaffolding interactions and how to support children and teachers. She loved thinking through ways to support children with a wide range of abilities and had a confidence and wisdom that supported my growth and development as a Tools trainer.”*

— Barb Wilder-Smith, Executive Director

Since retiring in 2015, Ruth has continued to be a sounding board and advisor for our content development, continuous improvement and innovation, not to mention a valued friend.



**To honor Ruth’s enormous contribution to Tools, we are establishing a scholarship in her name which will be launched in the 2021-2022 school year and will be awarded to a deserving teacher each year.**

**Thank you, Ruth, for 25 years of significant contribution to Tools of the Mind;** for your partnership with Deborah Leong and Elena Bodrova translating theory to practice, guiding Tools evolution to become a successful curriculum; your mentoring of our team; the development of many of our professional development and curriculum resources. We are grateful and excited to honor you each year with this new scholarship.

**THE RUTH HENSEN SCHOLARSHIP**  
**Inaugural year 2020-2021**



# With Appreciation to Our FY20 Funders



# Board of Directors



**Nathaniel Foote**

**Director and Board Chair**

Nathaniel Foote is Chairman of TruePoint, a consulting firm, and a founding Board member of the Center for Higher Ambition Leadership, a 501(c)(3) non-profit. He also serves as a Senior Fellow of the Center on the Developing Child at Harvard University. From 2014-2018, he served as Chairman of Activate Healthcare, a private equity-backed healthcare venture that nearly tripled in size during that period, while achieving industry leadership on patient outcomes, cost control and customer satisfaction. A former partner at McKinsey & Co., Mr. Foote brings 35 years of experience helping organizations improve performance and accelerate growth through sharpened strategic direction, greater organizational alignment, and increased leadership team effectiveness.



**Ellen Galinsky**

**Director**

Ellen Galinsky is the chief science officer at the Bezos Family Foundation where she also serves as executive director of Mind in the Making. In addition, she is a senior research advisor for the Society for Human Resource Management (SHRM). She also remains president of Families and Work Institute. Her life's work revolves around identifying important societal questions as they emerge, conducting research to seek answers, and turning the findings into action. She has written more than 100 books and reports and over 300 articles, and has received a wide array of honors, including being elected as President of the National Association for the Education of Young Children; being elected as a member of the National Academy of Human Resources.



**Elsa Holguin**

**Director**

Elsa Holguin is President and CEO of Denver Preschool Program (DPP), which champions, funds and increases access to quality preschool across the City and County of Denver. Previously, as senior program officer at Rose Community Foundation, she directed the Foundation's Child and Family Development area, which supports the development and improvement of early childhood education, parent education programs that help strengthen families. Ms. Holguin was appointed in 2015 by Colorado Governor John Hickenlooper for a second term as a commissioner for the Early Childhood Leadership Commission. She currently chairs the board of Early Milestones Colorado and serves on the board of the National Early Childhood Funders Collaborative.



**Jacqueline Jones**

**Director**

Jacqueline is President & CEO of the Foundation for Child Development, where she is responsible for developing and implementing its strategic vision and goals. Prior to her tenure at the Foundation for Child Development, Dr. Jones served as a Senior Advisor on Early Learning to Secretary of Education Arne Duncan and as the country's first Deputy Assistant Secretary for Policy and Early Learning in the U.S. Department of Education. Prior to her position in the Obama Administration, Dr. Jones served as the Assistant Commissioner for the Division of Early Childhood Education in the New Jersey State Department of Education and as a Senior Research Scientist at the Educational Testing Service in Princeton for over 15 years. Dr. Jones has been a visiting faculty member at the Harvard Graduate School of Education and a full-time faculty member at the City University of New York. She received both her Masters and Ph.D. degrees from Northwestern University.



**Deborah Leong**

**Director, Co-founder, and President**

Deborah Leong is a leading authority on the development of executive functions, Vygotskian approach, and early childhood assessments, and author of numerous books and articles on the topics. She is a Professor Emerita of Cognitive Developmental Psychology at Metropolitan State University of Denver, where she taught for 36 years, and a former director of Auraria Early Learning Center. Dr. Leong developed the Tools of the Mind approach with Dr. Bodrova with whom she has written numerous books, articles, and educational videos on the Vygotskian Approach to Psychology and the development of play. She received a BA in Psychology from Stanford University; a MEd from Harvard University; and a PhD in Psychological Studies in Education and Developmental Psychology from Stanford University.

# Management Team



**Barbara Wilder-Smith**

**Executive Director & Co-Developer**

Barbara Wilder-Smith has more than 30 years of experience working with early childhood educators and programs across the country. She is a former teacher, teacher-educator, coach, program director, researcher and Tools program trainer. Ms. Wilder-Smith was promoted in March 2018 to lead the overall execution of Tools strategy and operations and the management and development of all staff. She has led the Tools program's Content Development Team since 2013, developing the 7th edition PreK and K manuals and the Tools program's technology resources including iScaffold, PowerTools and the DWA. She managed the Tools program in the New England region, and staffed and managed two IES research studies. She received a BA in Education from Elizabethtown College and a EdM from Harvard University Graduate School of Education.



**Megan Siebert  
Spacciapoli**

**Director of Evaluation and P-3 Partnerships**

Prior to joining the Tools program, Megan Siebert Spacciapoli served as Early Childhood Researcher at SRI, and as a Research Manager in D.C. Public School's Office of Early Childhood Education. She has 13 years of experience in design, implementation, management, and evaluation of large-scale curricula and assessment systems. She received a PhD in Applied Developmental Psychology from Fordham University.



**Moira S. Rodgers**

**Director of Special Initiatives**

Moira S. Rodgers has broad experience across education sectors. From public schools, to the MA Department of Education, to educational publishing, Moira brings a unique set of skills to the team. Over the past 25 years, she has been a teacher, curriculum developer, elementary curriculum director, director of professional development, and a principal. She brings significant grant writing, project management, and communications experience to the organization. Moira has a long history with Tools of the Mind, having led its implementation in her school system, and using it as a focus for her doctoral thesis. She has both a BA and an MBA from the University of Massachusetts at Amherst, an MEd from Boston College, and an EdD from Northeastern University.



# Management Team



**Oliver Saunders Wilder**

**Lead Technologist and Product Development Manager**

Over the past 10 years, Dr. Saunders-Wilder has been responsible for the creation and development of a number of technology solutions that are major products for Tools of the Mind, including iScaffold and PowerTools. He has also served as a Simons Postdoctoral Fellow at the MIT Media Lab and the Simons Center for the Social Brain at MIT. He previously served as Product Manager at Affectiva, and helped to found the business with a faculty member from the MIT Media Lab. While there, he was responsible for taking the iCahn technology from a university prototype to a high-quality commercial product, and holds 12 patents related to this work. He has a Ph.D. in a joint program between the College of Computer and Information Science and the Bouve College of Health Science at Northeastern University, and a BA from Harvard (cum laude) with a concentration in Psychology and a citation in Engineering.



**Cyndi Cadigan**

**Manager of Finance and Administration**

Cyndi Cadigan joined Tools in June 2019, after serving for 17 years as a Grants and Finance Manager for Third Sector New England, where she managed a portfolio of Fiscal Sponsor clients, and also headed federal compliance initiatives within the accounting department. Previously, she was an auditor with PriceWaterhouse Coopers. She received a BS and an MBA in Accounting from the Indiana University



**David Brooke**

**Creative Development Manager**

David Brooke has been leading the content team for the past five years, working on major grants, developing new video of classroom activities for iScaffold, designing professional development slides, contributing to the design and creation of our PowerTools application, and even serving as the voice of the badger in our PowerTools videos. Previously, David was a Media Production Specialist for a big-data corporation developing animation and video skills leveraging his BS in film and screenwriting at the University of Massachusetts Dartmouth.



**Elena Bodrova**

**Co-Founder and knowledge Advisor**

Elena is a leading authority on the Vygotskian approach to education and she is the co-founder of Tools. She began her work at the Center for Preschool Innovations in Moscow, Russia where she worked with Vygotsky's direct students. She was a visiting faculty member at Metropolitan State University of Denver and then a senior researcher at McREL International for 14 years. She and Deborah Leong have co-written books and articles on Vygotskian theory, play, child assessment, and child development. She holds a Ph.D. in Child Development and Educational Psychology from Russian Academy of Pedagogical Sciences and M.A. in Child Development and Educational psychology from Moscow State University, Russia.

# Our Team

## The Tools of the Mind Family



### David Brooke

Creative Development Manager

### Cyndi Cadigan

Finance and Administration Manager

### Carol Carol

Partnership Development Specialist

### Susan Coopersmith

Partnership Development Specialist

### Evan Eisenberger

Business Development Specialist

### Carolyn Erhart

Program Assistant

### Luis Gallego

Partnership Development Manager

### Ashton Hankins

Technology Specialist

### Shawn Krehbiel

Tools of the Mind Coach

### Jasmine Lam

Tools@Home Project Manager

### Tatianna Plefka

Partnership Development Administrator

### Aisha O'Donnell

Partnership Development Manager

### Jennifer Martin

Partnership Development Manager

### Leslie Pekarek

Lead Partnership Manager

### Angela Robinson

Content Specialist

### Moira Rodgers

Director of Special Initiatives

### Alina Russo

Partnership Development Manager

### Oliver Saunders Wilder

Lead Technologist

### Megan Siebert Spacciapoli

Director of Evaluation and P-3 Partnerships

### Jillian Sullivan

Lead Evaluation & Data Specialist

### Mara Viana

Program Manager and Systems Design Lead

### Barbara Wilder-Smith

Executive Director & Co-Developer

### Kim Wilson

Partnership Development Manager

### Co-Founders

Elena Bodrova  
Deb Leong

# Business Advisory Group

## Thomas Aaro

Thomas Aaro is the founder and Managing Partner of BlueBlack LLC, an independent marketing agency that provides strategic and promotional consulting, training and implementation to consumer packaged goods (“CPG”) companies, marketing agencies, marketing services and digital marketing companies. Previously, he served as the Partner/Chief Executive Officer of Marketing Drive-MGR, an integrated promotional marketing agency and as Chief Marketing Officer/Consultant for a number of technology-oriented companies, including Supermarkets Online, a division of Catalina, a CPG internet savings site, and Wavetel, a startup wireless Internet Service Provider in North Carolina. He is an Independent Director of Wallmine.

## Margaret Covell

Margaret Covell is an Executive Fellow at the Center for Higher Ambition Leadership where her work centers on long term economic and social value creation within the Private Equity / Private Investing arena. Working both in the Private Equity space and in management consulting, Ms. Covell has spent over thirty years helping for-profit companies and not-for-profit organizations to develop winning business strategies and to build the

underlying capabilities required to deliver the strategies. At Pinnacle Search Partners, Margaret’s role enables her to tap into her broad network to help companies find executive talent that are the right cultural fit for their companies.

## Peter Dunn

Peter Dunn was the Co-Founder and Co-CEO of Activate Healthcare, which he built from concept into an industry leader with over 150,000 patients served and best-in-class levels of patient engagement and customer satisfaction. Before founding Activate Healthcare, Peter served as CEO/President of Borden Foods and of the Steak ‘n Shake Restaurant Company. Peter brings a strong consumer goods marketing background, with a focus on innovation and new product development, and was responsible for launching ‘Lunchables’, the most successful new food product of the 1980s. He has also served as Chairman of the Board of Feeding America, which distributes over 3 billion pounds of food via the national food bank network.

## Chris Richmond

Over the last 40 years, Chris Richmond has led or advised on numerous high growth

businesses and ventures, most recently as a Director at TruePoint. Previously, Chris ran three separate businesses within General Electric Capital Corporation as CEO over an 11-year period. Between 1994 and 2001, he built the Commercial Equipment Financing business from a U.S.-focused business into the largest business in GE Capital, with \$75 billion in portfolio assets and \$30 billion in annual sales in 18 countries. In 1997, Chris was appointed an Officer of the General Electric Company. He was also active in teaching at GE’s Leadership School. Chris’s earlier experience includes three years as President and COO of Syska and Hennessey Engineers, Executive Director of a large Public Authority in New York and CEO of a software firm. Chris is a Board member and immediate past president of a Boys and Girls club in Boston and is on the Board of Interise, a not for profit organization helping small businesses build capability and grow in inner cities throughout the U.S.



# Scientific & Technology Advisory Group

## **Susan Athey**

Stanford University School of Business  
Artificial Intelligence Modeling of Human  
Decision Making Processes

## **Linda Espinosa**

University of Missouri  
English Language Learners

## **Phil Fisher**

University of Oregon  
Executive Functions and Bio Measures of  
Stress

## **Roberta Golinkoff**

University of Delaware  
Oral Language Development and Effects  
of Playful Learning

## **Jim Gray**

Massachusetts Institute of Technology  
Technology and Child Development

## **Daryl Greenfield**

University of Florida  
Scientific Concept Development

## **kathy Hirsh-Pasek**

Temple University  
Oral Language Development and Effects  
of Playful Learning

## **Dana McCoy**

Harvard University  
Executive Functions Development

## **Luke Miratrix**

Harvard University  
Causal Inference Methods

## **James Radner**

University of Toronto  
Data-driven Outcomes Improvement

## **Catherine Snow**

Harvard University  
Reading Development, Lead Author of  
Preventing Reading Difficulties

## **Rebecca Treiman**

Washington University in St. Louis  
Writing Development

## **John Willet**

Harvard University  
Statistical Modeling of Longitudinal Data



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100,000 children by 2023/24

