

The First Five Years Impact Success in School and Life

Every year 40 percent of children walk into kindergarten one-to-three years behind.

These students struggle to catch up. Sadly, most of them never do.

There is something YOU can do to help children succeed.

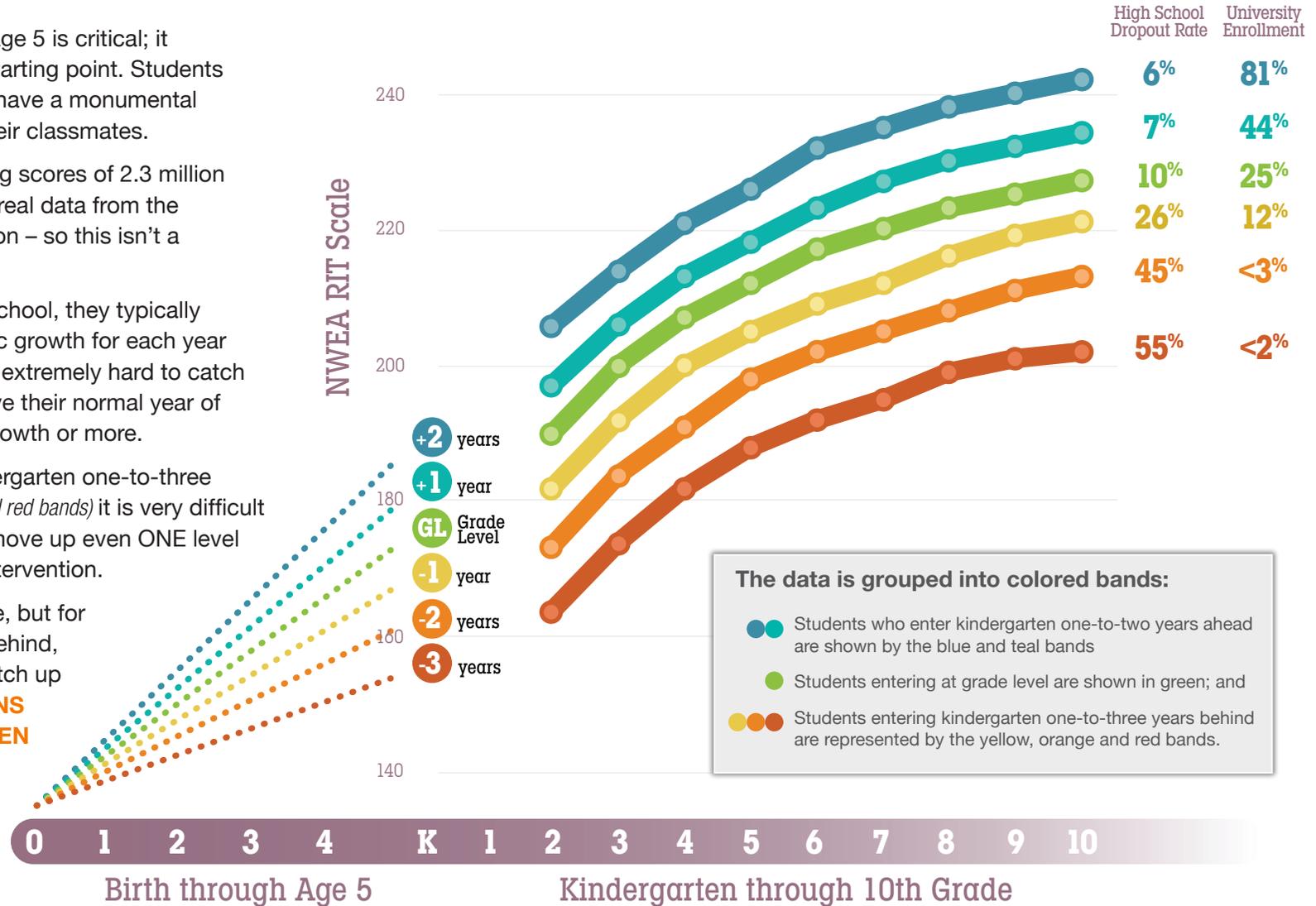
A child's learning from birth to age 5 is critical; it determines their kindergarten starting point. Students who enter kindergarten behind have a monumental undertaking to catch up with their classmates.

This chart represents the reading scores of 2.3 million students nationwide, based on real data from the Northwest Evaluation Association – so this isn't a projection.

As students progress through school, they typically only make one year of academic growth for each year in school. For those behind, it's extremely hard to catch up because they need to achieve their normal year of growth PLUS another year of growth or more.

So for students who enter kindergarten one-to-three years behind (the yellow, orange and red bands) it is very difficult to make sufficient progress to move up even ONE level without a massive amount of intervention.

All children can and will improve, but for those who enter kindergarten behind, around 75 percent will never catch up to their classmates. **THIS MEANS EACH CHILD'S KINDERGARTEN STARTING POINT MATTERS!**



Birth to Age 5: Preparing Children for School Success

WHAT YOU CAN DO

IF YOU ARE IN CHARGE OF PREVENTING READING, MATH AND SCIENCE FAILURE IN YOUR SCHOOL, DISTRICT OR STATE, WHERE DOES THE DATA SUGGEST YOU SHOULD START? BIRTH TO AGE 5!

From birth to age 5 a child learns at a speed unmatched the rest of their life, and the skills they learn at an early age develop the strong brain connections that help them thrive and succeed in school.

Schools aren't alone. An effective model of how school districts can partner with existing community entities to encourage parents to read 20 minutes each day with their child is available at: www.ReadingFoundation.org.

In addition to the local Reading Foundation chapters, school districts should also consider focusing on early learning from birth to age 5, and redirecting preschool and Head Start programs toward the basic academic skills children should achieve before entering kindergarten. This can be accomplished through the READY! for Kindergarten® program. It provides training and tools for parents and caregivers, equipping them to nurture a child's development in ways that foster essential early literacy, math and social emotional skills. To learn more about appropriate age-level learning targets for children at each age from birth to 5, and more info on starting a READY! program, visit the READY! website at:

www.ReadyForKindergarten.org.

