To address these challenges, municipal leaders can bring together key stakeholders to improve early education and strengthen local schools, provide better alignment between community-based early education, and school-based learning, and improve transitions as children move from one level to the next. Key elements of this work include:

1. **Formal partnerships or governance structures** to develop common definitions and goals and take joint action to implement a high quality, aligned system with blended or braided funding from a variety of sources.
2. **Access to quality early education** in a variety of settings to ensure that young children enter school prepared to succeed.
3. **School quality and organization** to improve access to full-day kindergarten, support developmentally-appropriate room designs and teaching practices, and promote communication and collaboration among the early grades.
4. **Alignment of standards, curricula, teaching practices, and assessments** (with a focus on both social competence and academic skills) that build on what children have learned and how they have learned it from one level to the next.
5. **Communication and data sharing** to allow parents, early educators, teachers, and service providers access to common information that will improve how each supports the learning and development of the children in their care.
6. **Qualified teachers and administrators**, including efforts to ensure that early educators in all settings have a Bachelors degree and specialized early childhood training, as well as ongoing professional development.
7. **Parent engagement and family support** to develop shared educational goals for children, support parents in their role as a child’s first (and continuing) teacher and help children and parents access the full-range of services, including health and mental health services.
8. **Programs to facilitate smooth transitions to school** by making children and parents feel comfortable and welcome in the new school environment.
9. **Public awareness of the importance of the early education** to increase the value that parents and other members of the community place on high quality education from the earliest years through post-secondary success.
10. **Funding strategies** that help communities generate sufficient resources – in some cases by blending and braiding a variety of funding streams – to meet the needs of young children from birth through age eight.