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March 6, 2000

Dear Sir or Madam:

We hope that you will enjoy the enclosed report, *Ready to Learn*, just published by the French-American Foundation.

Ready to Learn: The French System of Early Education and Care Offers Lessons for the United States describes the French system of *école maternelle* as an inspiration for the United States and suggests how elements of the French system might be adopted in this country. French preschool is free, universal, and of high quality; though voluntary, nearly 100% of French children attend preschool between the ages of 3 and 5. The enclosed report came out of a study tour of 15 American experts on early childhood education sent to France last year, who returned with great enthusiasm for the French model. One member of the delegation, Delaine Eastin, California Superintendent of Public Instruction, summarized by saying "I do believe that America should have this preschool system as a goal. Our visit was an absolutely rousing endorsement of how wonderful and important it is for all kids."

Our report comes out at a time of increasing public and political support for better access to, and increased quality of, early childhood education. Our hope is that this report will be instrumental in helping educators, policy makers, and advocates to envision and adopt improvements in pre-K education in the United States. As we begin our major outreach phase for this report, we welcome any feedback or suggestions you might have, and would also appreciate being informed of any public debate, press coverage or policy initiatives it generates.

Thank you for your interest in our report. Please feel free to contact me with any questions.

Sincerely yours,

Shanny Peer
Director of Education Programs

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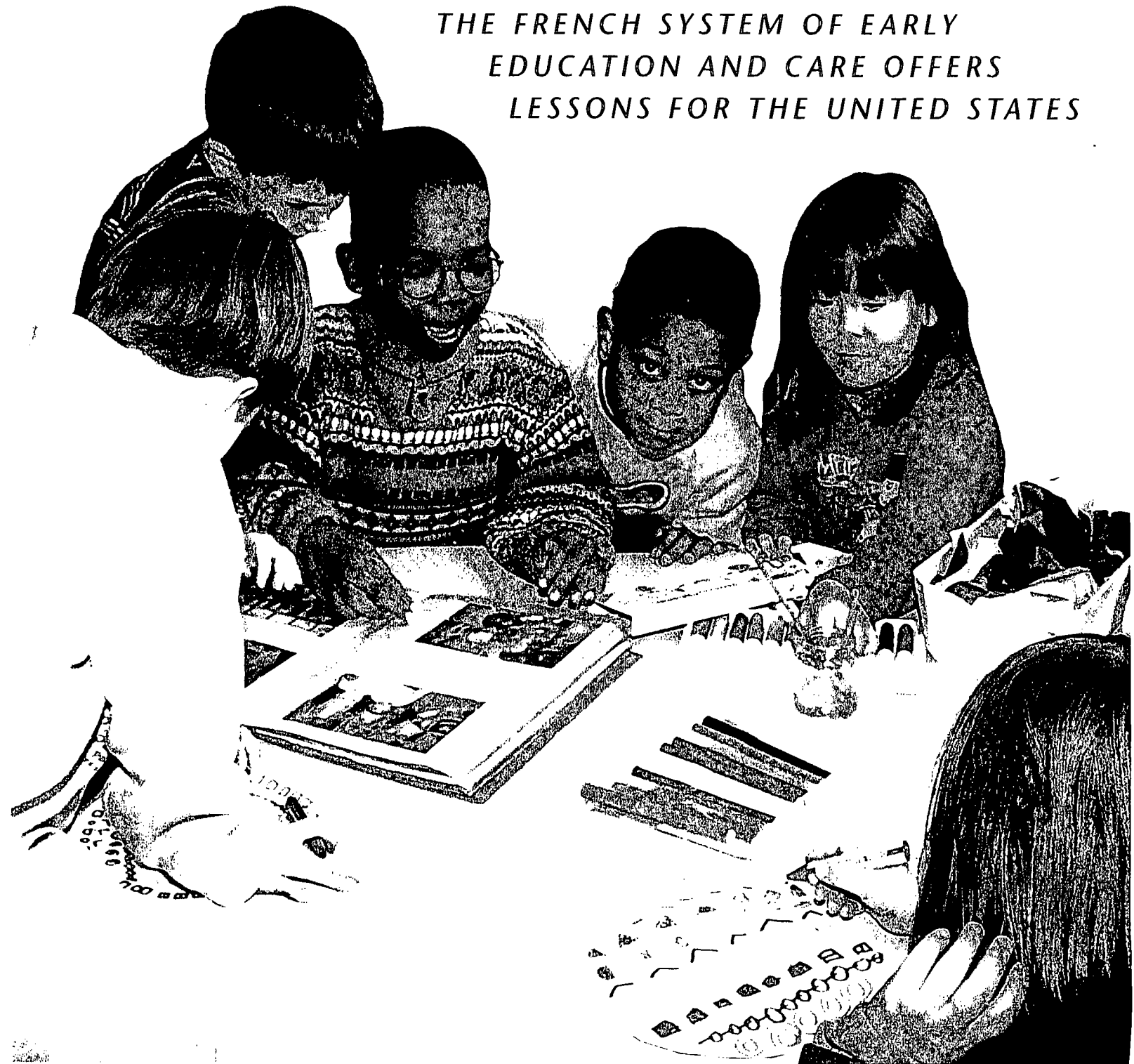
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A WELCOME FOR EVERY CHILD III



READY TO LEARN

*THE FRENCH SYSTEM OF EARLY
EDUCATION AND CARE OFFERS
LESSONS FOR THE UNITED STATES*



A REPORT OF THE FRENCH-AMERICAN FOUNDATION

Additional publications in this series available
through the French-American Foundation:

*A Welcome For Every Child I:
How France Achieves Quality in Child Care
(1989)*

*A Welcome For Every Child II:
How France Protects Maternal and Child Health
(1994)*

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