FirstSchool: Building the Capacity of Educators To:

- Develop a culture of **collaborative inquiry** and a mindset of continuous improvement
- Address **equity** by questioning practices that impact children of color and those who come from less advantaged homes
- Use **new lenses** through which to view and improve practice
- Focus on **research-based instructional practices** designed to foster classroom cultures of caring, competence, and excellence
- Arm yourselves with **research and data** to advocate for effective practice for their students
Collaborative Inquiry

• Active process of engaging with peers to identify common challenges, analyze relevant data, and test out instructional approaches.

• Alternative to traditional professional learning – both with its approach and its results.

• Educators actively construct professional knowledge through treating their schools and classrooms as places for investigation.
A culture of collaborative inquiry:

- values teacher expertise and insights
- provides teachers with opportunities for meaningful participation in decision-making
- conveys high expectations
- increases intellectual curiosity, competence, openness and willingness to share
- is a parallel process for exactly what we want for children
Growth Mindset Messages For Adults and Children

- Your intelligence is something that can and will develop, with effort, good strategies, and support
- You have a purpose—you can contribute to your family, your day to day work and to the world
- You belong here
- We will set high standards for you, and we will give you what you need to succeed
A Growth Mindset Promotes Belief …..for everyone

- I can succeed at this
- My ability grows with my effort
- I belong in this school community
- The work has value for me

Zaretta Hammond
High Quality Instructional Practices

Culture of Caring
- Nurture Genuine Relationships
- Strengthen Self-Efficacy & Racial/Cultural Identity
- Develop the Whole Child

Culture of Competence
- Develop Self-Regulation
- Promote Peer Interactions
- Prioritize Communication
- Foster Independence & Interdependence

Culture of Excellence
- Balance Teaching Approaches
- Integrate & Balance Curriculum
- Build Higher Order Thinking
A culture of caring needs to be in place before substantive learning can occur. It is foundational to child success as it ensures he/she feels safe, valued, and accepted.
A culture of caring needs to be in place before substantive learning can occur. It is foundational to child success as it ensures one feels safe, valued, and accepted.
Are we reaching them?
Drop Out Prevention Starts Early

We need an approach to the early school experiences of our children of color and those who come from less advantaged home that makes school a place where they find themselves smart and capable and knowing they belong.
Good Teachers are Critical to Children’s Success

Children form academic trajectories early in their school careers that tend to be stable and difficult to change over the course of their schooling

(Alexander & Entwisle, 1993)

Children’s negative perceptions of competence and attitudes become stronger and harder to reverse as children progress through school

(Valeski & Stipek, 2001)
Fulfilling Three Universal Needs

• Relatedness
  ▪ Connect with others

• Competence
  ▪ Experience success

• Autonomy
  ▪ Possess agency
CLASS: Emotional Support

- Positive Climate: Pre K: 5.3, K: 4.6, 1st Grade: 4.0, 2nd Grade: 5.1
- Negative Climate: Pre K: 1.3, K: 1.6, 1st Grade: 1.4, 2nd Grade: 2.1
- Teacher Sensitivity: Pre K: 5.3, K: 4.3, 1st Grade: 4.6, 2nd Grade: 3.5
- Regard for Std Perspective: Pre K: 4.8, K: 3.3, 1st Grade: 3.9, 2nd Grade: 3.5, 3rd Grade: 2.9
Activity Settings

PreK
- Meals: 18%
- Transitions: 12%
- Whole Group: 10%
- Small Group: 2%
- Group Work: 2%
- Individual: 8%
- Choice: 45%

Kinder
- Meats: 2%
- Transitions: 12%
- Choice: 8%
- Whole Group: 52%
- Small Group: 2%
- Group Work: 0%
- Individual: 24%
Developing the Whole Child

Percentage of Observation

PreK

2nd grade

- Literacy 34%
- Math 20%
- Science 9%
- Gross Motor 16%
- Social Studies 22%
- Aesthetics 14%

- Literacy 41%
- Math 14%
- Science 4%
- Gross Motor 7%
- Social Studies 10%
- Aesthetics 1%
If one of the primary goals of public education is to help develop good citizens why do we teach content but discipline behavior?
Attention and behavior problems that interfere with students’ ability to learn are often related to a diminished capacity for executive function, self-regulation, or metacognition (Kreppner, O’Connor & Rutter, 2001; Vuontela et al., 2013)
Redefining School Readiness

• Programs for children age 0-5 have a primary aim of helping children negotiate relationships, space and materials.

• As children develop and have the potential to become more proficient at self-regulation, educators actually block this development through adult regulation.

• Opportunities for choice when children are 4 are far more frequent than when they get older.

  (Deci & Ryan, 2002; Otis, Grouzet, & Pelletier, 2005)
Self regulation cannot develop when adults regulate behavior

As children develop self-regulation, they:

• ignore distractions
• focus and attend
• delay gratification
• persist in challenging situations
• ask for help
• control emotions and express them appropriately

(McClelland, Acock, & Morrison, 2002).
SHAPING STUDENT BEHAVIOR

**Intrinsic Motivation**

Learner-driven: None of us succeeds unless all of us succeed.

Learner-centered: Communal celebrations for work & effort; no one is “in trouble”; logical supports are in place; growth mindset

**Extrinsic Motivation**

Adult-centered: Behavior modification systems of punishments and rewards for groups

Adult-centered: Behavior modification systems of punishments and rewards for individuals
Culturally Relevant Teaching

• Individualism fosters and promotes independence, individual thinking, individual achievement, self-expression, and personal choice.

• Collectivism fosters and values interdependence, group success through adherence to norms, respect for authority, and group consensus.

(Trumbull, Rothstein-Fisch, & Greenfield, 2000).
Who Matters?

What do the children and families see in the hallways, on the classroom walls, and in the bookcases?

• Do they see pictures of themselves as individuals and members of their families and communities?
• Do they see their own work predominantly displayed?
• Do they see diversity honored through visual images of people of color living and achieving in a variety of ways?
• Do classroom and library books depict and tell stories of people from multiple racial and cultural backgrounds?
• Are languages other than English evident in speech, books, posters and classroom print?
Becoming a Citizen of the World

For white children, classrooms that support the positive identity of diverse populations:

• broaden their view
• provide more balanced exposure to the strengths and contributions of people of color
• better prepare them to navigate an increasingly diverse world
A culture of competence ensures each child is a productive, successful, and contributing member of the classroom.
Culture of Silence

* A classroom emphasis on oral language development has been identified as one of the premier instructional strategies for ensuring the success of children, especially those from low socio-economic communities
  
  (Mason & Galloway, 2012).

* Vocabulary proficiency is a critical predictor of academic achievement beginning as early as the third grade
  
  (Storch & Whitehurst, 2002).
Student Voice: Let the Children Talk with You

• Student talk promotes learning and student success. Learning how to express one's thoughts and ideas is critically important for:
  • adult-child relationships
  • Identity-self efficacy
  • cognitive development
  • formative assessment

(McCaslin & Good, 1996)
Student Voice: Let the Children Talk With Each Other

Research tells us collaborative learning gives children the opportunity to learn to work with a variety of individuals with different personality types, approaches to learning, and social skills. They are able to add their own perspectives based on a variety of differences, including experiential and cultural.

African American and Latino students learn more and prefer learning experiences that allow them to interact with others. (Dill & Boykin, 2000).
Gradual Release Instructional Model: Let the children talk with each other!

Fisher & Frey, 2007
Strength-based Approach

• African American’s **oral-narrative skills** may be a unique area of strength that may promote later success in reading achievement (Gardner-Neblett, Pungello, & Iruka, 2012; Gardner-Neblett, N., & Iruka, I. U. (2015)).

• African American children’s engagement is supported by instruction and activities that are **relevant to their lives** (Cohen et al, 2009).
Student Voice

49% = 196 minutes devoted to student voice

18% = 72 minutes devoted to student voice

Student experience and sense of self worth are very different in these two classes.
A culture of excellence enables each learner to excel beyond minimal competencies.

Culture of Excellence

Balance Teaching Approaches
Integrate & Balance Curriculum
Build Higher Order Thinking

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Executive Function

The development of executive function helps children:

• move between their own perspective and the perspectives of others
• recognize that others have needs
• organize their own learning
• thrive in a variety of learning environments
Metacognition

Metacognition requires students to be able to think about their thinking with the aim of improving their learning and social development

- ability to cite evidence or justification for thoughts and ideas
- awareness of their strengths and weaknesses
- ability to identify and correct errors or problems
- ability to pick the best plan to accomplish a specific goal or activity

(Bransford, Brown, & Cocking, p. 67)
Looking for Balance

Percentage of Observation

Scaffolds: 9%
Didactic: 42%

Scaffolds: 34%
Didactic: 24%
Teachers feel compelled to impart as much knowledge as possible in the limited time frames they are given.

Unfortunately, while the amount of information imparted is greatest when teachers lean heavily on didactic teaching, retention is not.

(Zull, 2002).
In the spirit of continuous improvement... what are you doing........

To honor the lives of the children, families and communities you serve?

• To ensure a climate of collaborative inquiry and growth mindset
• To ensure that children are independent and collaborative learners?
• To ensure the children’s voices are honored and valued?
• To smooth transitions-big and small
Make the commitment to making explicit the responsibility of education professionals to broaden their repertoires and hone their skills to create schools and classrooms in which all children maximize their potential by providing teachers and providers with the knowledge and ability to prioritize at least two things: Be Nice and Let the Children Talk
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