Getting Intentional about the Primary Years

Birth – Grade 3 Leadership Institute

Vincent J. Costanza, Ed.D.
Executive Director
Race to the Top-Early Learning Challenge &
Co-Administrator, Division of Early Childhood
Education & Family Engagement
New Jersey Department of Education
The Vision

We shouldn’t wait until children are in high school to fuse academic and social development.
The Nebraska Vision

“If we can maintain continuity through the end of third grade, children are more likely to achieve lasting success in school and beyond.”

Superintendents’ Early Childhood Plan
http://buffettinstitute.nebraska.edu/our-work/childhood-plan
The Problem

As evidenced in the 2015 Institute of Medicine (IOM) and National Research Council (NRC) report, the system of care and education for our youngest children is fragmented.

Institute of Medicine (IOM) and National Research Council (NRC). 2015.
The Results

For teachers:

- this fragmentation looks like a push-down of expectations on our youngest learners.

For administrators:

- this fragmentation creates a lack of alignment in curriculum and assessment practices.

For children and families:

- this fragmentation leads to isolation, as engaging a disjointed system is confusing.
The Nebraska Problem

“More than 42 percent of children age 5 and younger across the state are considered at risk for school failure due to poverty alone. This is a staggering statistic. But all the more staggering are statistics about the disproportionate representation of children of color.”

Superintendents’ Early Childhood Plan
http://buffettinstitute.nebraska.edu/-/media/bebi/docs/supes-plan-brochure-3-29-17.ashx
The Law of Initiative Fatigue

“When the number of initiatives increases while time, resources, and emotional energy are constant, then each new initiative—no matter how well conceived or well intentioned—will receive fewer minutes, dollars, and ounces of emotional energy than its predecessors.”

"Finding Your Leadership Focus: What Matters for Student Results" by Douglas Reeves
Systemic Supports & Learning Organizations

Without accompanying changes in the way that work gets done, only the potential for improvement exists.

https://hbr.org/1993/07/building-a-learning-organization
Kindergarten to Grade 3 Initiative

First through Third Grade Guidelines

Research Study K-3

Professional Learning Series
Primary Education Partnership

The National Institute of Early Education Research (NIEER) www.nieer.org

Graduate School of Education Rutgers University http://gse.rutgers.edu/

New Jersey Department of Education http://www.nj.gov/education/ece/rttt/

New Jersey School Districts

- An additional 20 next year
First through Third Grade Guidelines

- Define best practices in the primary years
- Assist implementation of academically rigorous and developmentally appropriate practices

As children interact with curricula, how should they spend their time?
The Ideal Day: K-3

- Whole group
- Small group
- Group work
- Individual
- Choice
- Transitions
- Meals
Purpose of Study

- Examine classroom quality in Kindergarten through third grade
- Guide the professional learning opportunities offered by NJDOE
- Detail efficacy of PD approach
**Study Sample**

**Overall N = 93 Across 20 Districts**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Grade</th>
<th>Count</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Kindergarten</td>
<td>29</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>First Grade</td>
<td>22</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Second Grade</td>
<td>19</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Third Grade</td>
<td>23</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Classroom Quality

EduSnap Classroom Observation

• Time *children* spend in:

  • activity settings (e.g. whole group, free choice, transitions)
  • content areas (e.g. reading, science, math)
  • student learning approaches (e.g. collaboration, meta cognition)
  • teaching approaches (e.g. didactic, scaffolds).
EduSnap: Activity Settings

Transitions
- Children are moving or waiting between locations or activity settings

Whole Group
- Children are engaged in teacher-led activities
- 50% or more of the children in the class

Small Group
- Children are engaged in teacher-led activities
- Less than 50% of the children in the class
EduSnap: Activity Settings

Group Work
- Children are engaged in joint assignments that are not teacher-led

Individual
- Children work on individual assignments

Choice
- Children are engaged in activities they selected from a variety of unassigned options.
EduSnap: K-3 Activity Settings

- Transitions: 16%
- Whole group: 44%
- Small group: 5%
- Group work: 3%
- Individual: 25%
- Group work: 3%
- Meals: 5%
EduSnap: Activity Settings by Grade Level

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Grade</th>
<th>Transitions</th>
<th>Whole group</th>
<th>Small group</th>
<th>Group work</th>
<th>Individual</th>
<th>Choice</th>
<th>Meals</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Kindergarten</td>
<td>2%</td>
<td>21%</td>
<td>19%</td>
<td>7%</td>
<td>5%</td>
<td>4%</td>
<td>42%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>First Grade</td>
<td>2% - 7%</td>
<td>18%</td>
<td>3%</td>
<td>6%</td>
<td>1%</td>
<td>2%</td>
<td>42%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Second Grade</td>
<td>0% - 7%</td>
<td>14%</td>
<td>23%</td>
<td>7%</td>
<td>6%</td>
<td>1%</td>
<td>49%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Third Grade</td>
<td>1% - 2%</td>
<td>13%</td>
<td>79%</td>
<td>5%</td>
<td>5%</td>
<td>5%</td>
<td>45%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Career Ready Practices

- Communicate
- Creativity & Innovation
- Critical Thinking
- Research Strategies
- Team work
Professional Learning Series

Video Series

Webinars

Online Community

Instructor Led

PLC: Academy
Academy: Theory of Action

“Never send a changed individual into an unchanged culture.” Michael Fullan
Implementing Projects

• Project-Based Learning Video

https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=MsdftlZECgo
Centers in Primary Education

Name______________________________ #____

Magnet Experiment

Take out all of the items in the container. You are going to test if each object is magnetic. If the objects pulls towards the magnet than it is magnetic.

Are these items magnetic?

- refrigerator  yes
- cotton t-shirt no
- toothpick____
- penny________
- plastic cup____
- safety pin____
- staples____
- rubber band____
- bobby pin____
- crayon____
- paper____
- thread____
- pencil (Use your own)____
- chalk board (in the front of the room)____
- white board (in the front of the room)____
- glass (Check the window)____
- scissors (Use your own)____
- screw____
- brass brads____
- fabric____
- plastic button____
- paper clips____
- tack____
- aluminum foil____
- nail____
- tin can____
- plastic figures____
What’s different here?
“It’s not children and families who create the achievement gap. It’s lack of access to learning opportunities. The question must be: **what actions can we take together to improve that access** ... to increase those opportunities, beginning in the earliest years of life?”

Christine Maxwell Director of Program Development Buffett Early Childhood Institute
Leadership Principle: “Culture is not the Culprit”

Standard 4:

Effective educational leaders develop and support intellectually rigorous and coherent systems of curriculum, instruction, and assessment to promote each student’s academic success and well-being.


https://hbr.org/2016/04/culture-is-not-the-culprit
Definition: INSPIRATION

1a: a divine influence or action on a person believed to qualify him or her to receive and communicate sacred revelation

b: the action or power of moving the intellect or emotions

c: the act of influencing or suggesting opinions

2: the act of drawing in; specifically: the drawing of air into the lungs

3a: the quality or state of being inspired

b: something that is inspired <a scheme that was pure inspiration>

4: an inspiring agent or influence