Integrating Project Learning into the Early Childhood Classroom

Becky Weiss
Katey Reynolds
Mary Beth Pistillo
· Guiding question(s)
· Student-directed learning
· Learning integrated through all academic areas
· Meet state and district standards through hands-on learning
Project-Based Learning

- Parent/community involvement
- Culmination of learning
- Field visits
Degree of child initiation and decision making in different approaches to teaching

- Single Concept
  Teacher instructs,
determines content;
single skills, or concepts

- Integrated Concepts
  Teacher instructs,
determines content,
integrates skills and content

- Units
  Teacher instructs,
determines content;
unified exploration of several content areas on a narrow topic

- Thematic Teaching
  Teacher instructs,
determines content;
or child initiated,
learning experiences integrated over a broad topic

- Teacher Directed Inquiry
  Thematic approach with teacher directing and planning in-depth research and exploration by children

- Projects
  In-depth investigation; may be child or teacher initiated, research focused on finding answers to student questions, direction follows children’s interest

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Less child initiation and decision making

More child initiation and decision making

Year 1

- Administration initiated
- Short introduction PD
- Online resources provided
- Teachers were welcome to do their own research
Year 1 Projects

Severe Weather
Famous Historical Figures

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Less child initiation and decision making

More child initiation and decision making

Year 2

- BECI-Superintendent’s Plan
- In-depth Professional Development
Professional Development Plan
Year 2
Fall
Project
Year 2
Spring Project
Year 2 Reflection

Invited parents to project culmination
Allowed for more student choice
Integrated learning into all subject areas
Year 3

- Kindness
- Musical explorers
Year 3 Reflection

New grade configuration
Took a step backwards
Teacher directed
Year 4

Goals