The PK-3/Leadership Nexus

- Growth of PreK in elementary schools and importance of quality ECE for later learning
  - Carson School Principal in Chicago: “I could not have done it without the PreK program”
  - Quality instruction, quality integration from 3 to 3rd requires quality school leadership, CBO leadership

- P-3 education and ed org leadership as key levers
  - Yet too often in separate conversations
  - The need for intentional cross-sector work (Kauerz & Collins; NAESP)
Within-school Improvement of Student Learning (applications to ECE)

Cosner, 2014; Gamoran, Secada, & Marrett, 2000; Bryk et al., 2006
Leadership Challenge to School Districts

NAESP: Leading PreK-3 Learning Communities--

• Embrace the Pre-K-3 Early Learning Continuum
• Ensure Developmentally Appropriate Teaching
• Provide Personalized Learning Environments
• Use Multiple Measures of Assessment of Learning Growth
• Build Professional Capacity Across the Learning Community
• Make Schools a Hub of PK-3 Learning for Families and Communities (Adult learning for staff and stakeholders)

WHY DISTRICTS? Quality ECE is a broader and more complex challenge than public schools; but districts need state support.
Implications for state systemic approach

Kauerz & Coffman (2014): Framework (Cycle) (also 8 NAESP policy recs--both raise leadership expectations at every step)

- Cross sector work (governance, strategy, funding)
- Administrator Effectiveness (licensure, support for P-3)
- Teacher Effectiveness (supporting adult learning in schools)
- Instructional Tools (state role in standards, assessments)
- Learning Environments (achieved only via adult learning)
- Data-Driven Improvement (creating local & state systems)
- Family Engagement (yet another of the 5 essential supports)
- Continuity and Pathways (multiple ECE paths to success)
Choosing Change Levers: Illustration 1

NAEYC Program Standards (for Families)

- **Standard 1**: Relationships
- **Standard 2**: Curriculum
- **Standard 3**: Teaching
- **Standard 4**: Assessment of Child Progress
- **Standard 5**: Health
- **Standard 6**: Teachers
- **Standard 7**: Families
- **Standard 8**: Community Relationships
- **Standard 9**: Physical Environment
- **Standard 10**: Leadership and Management
Choosing Levers for Change: Illustration 2


- Consistently implement P-3 literacy standards
- Provide the necessary PD for all P-3 teachers
- Build capacity of preschool leaders, elementary principals, and other ECE leaders to lead high-quality early literacy programs
- Engage and support families
- Collaborate in and support the needed research
OK—but how do we get there from here?

• “Change Agency in Our Own Backyards” Tozer 2015
• If we want ECE educators to change their practices, then we will have to be change agents too
• “Change agent”—Ken Benne et al in OD literature
• Not everyone signed up for change agency
  – Making a living
  – Making a difference
  – Making institutions change (“Changing the world”)
BUT: Your system, any system . . .

• . . . is perfectly designed to obtain the results you are obtaining (Carr, 2008)

• Some key steps in disruptive institutional change
  – Secure “senior support” for focus on selected lever
  – Convene stakeholders and adept process leadership
  – Collaboratively examine the data and shape diagnosis
  – Collaboratively recommend solutions & sustainability
  – Communicate recommendations strategically
  – Seek administrative and legislative implementation
J. Kotter (2012) on 8 Errors in Change Efforts

#1 Allowing Too Much Complacency
#2 Failing To Create a Sufficiently Powerful Guiding Coalition
#3 Understanding the Power of Vision
#4 Undercommunicating the Vision by a Factor of 10, 100
#5 Permitting Obstacles to Block the New Vision
#6 Failing to Create Short Term Wins
#7 Declaring Victory Too Soon
#8 Neglecting to Anchor Changes Firmly in Org Culture
Implications for all ECE LEADERS

• “Good leaders don’t build followers; they build leaders.”
• True for principals as it is for district and state leaders
  – Transformative ECE leaders need to build strong teacher leadership (but many don’t know how)
  – Effective district leadership needs systemically to build strong school and site leadership (many don’t know how)
  – Effective state leadership is necessary in multiple layers
• Current PK-3 disjunctures and misalignments must be addressed at the building, district, and state levels, “from the inside out”—even in times of resource scarcity
Questions and Comments

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