Supporting Learning in the Primary Years

Vincent J. Costanza, Ed.D.
Executive Director
Race to the Top-Early Learning Challenge &
Co-Director, Office of Early Childhood Education
New Jersey Department of Education

Rick Falkenstein, Ed.D.
CSA
Kingwood Township School
We shouldn’t wait until children are in high school to fuse academic and social development.
The Problem

As evidenced in the recent 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 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
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
Kindergarten to Grade 3 Initiative

First through Third Grade Guidelines

Professional Learning Series

Research Study K-3
First through Third Grade Guidelines

Outline best practices in the primary years of schooling and to assist educators with fusing practices that are both academically rigorous and developmentally appropriate.

Professional Learning Series

Video Series

Webinars

Online Community

Instructor Led

PLC: Academy
This was Kingwood...
Kingwood Now!

- Kindergarten Guidelines
- Transitioned from ½ Day to Full Kindergarten
- KEA beyond discrete skills
- PreK- coherence and whole child
- Special Area Teachers
- Literacy is monitored by a continuum and data meetings
- Coordination of supports with Hunterdon Medical Center
Intentional
Multiple Measures
Growth not Grades
Coherence
Outcome Driven
Purpose of Study

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

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Grade</th>
<th>N</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>
The Ideal Day: K-3

- Draw a pie chart that divides teacher contact time in K-3 into the following categories:
  - Whole group
  - Small group
  - Group work
  - Individual
  - Choice
  - Transitions
  - Meals
## EduSnap: Activity Settings

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Transitions</th>
<th>• Children are moving or waiting between locations or activity settings</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Whole Group</strong></td>
<td>• Children are engaged in teacher-led activities</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• 50% or more of the children in the class</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Small Group</strong></td>
<td>• Children are engaged in teacher led activities</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• Less than 50% of the children in the class</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
EduSnap: Activity Settings

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Group Work</th>
<th>• Children are engaged in <strong>joint assignments</strong> that are not teacher-led</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Individual</td>
<td>• Children work on individual assignments</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Choice</td>
<td>• Children are engaged in activities they selected from a variety of unassigned options.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
EduSnap: K-3 Activity Settings

- Transitions: 2%
- Whole group: 16%
- Small group: 3%
- Group work: 25%
- Individual: 5%
- Choice: 5%
- Meals: 44%

NAECS-SPE 6/8/17
Career Ready Practices

http://www.state.nj.us/education/cte/hl/CRP.pdf
“I always thought I was giving my kids choice when I would ask if they wanted the red paper or green paper”
Problem Based Learning

- Natural Setting
- Opportunities for Interactions
- Choice
- Cross Circular
- Collaborative
We got to developed so much understanding about child development and our students that no other way made sense.