ALIGNING INITIATIVES: AN EXAMINATION OF EARLY CHILDHOOD

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Golden Rule

“Every child deserves what's good enough for a child you love”

David L. Kirp, Professor of Public Policy at the University of California-Berkeley, is the author of Kids First: Five Big Ideas for Improving the Lives of Children and America's Future.
Foundational question

What ought we do with children?
The standards are not a curriculum, but are the learning targets for a curriculum.
Activity 1

At “Back to School Night” your child’s teacher asks, “what do you want for your child this year?”

• How do you answer this?
# Domains of Readiness

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Domains of Readiness</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>• Language and literacy development</td>
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<tr>
<td>• Cognition and general knowledge (including early math and early scientific development)</td>
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<tr>
<td>• Approaches toward learning*</td>
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<td>• Physical well-being and motor development</td>
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<td>• Social and emotional development</td>
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http://www.state.nj.us/education/ece/guide/
Approaches toward learning*

- Attention, Engagement and Persistence
- Problem Solving
- Curiosity & Motivation
- Flexibility & Inventiveness
Why Approaches to Learning?

The way a child approaches learning is a strong predictor of later success in school (Blair & Razza, 2007; Diamond, et al 2011; Conn-Powers, 2006 and Hyson, 2005,2008).

School readiness includes the ability to tackle and **persist** at challenging or frustrating tasks, follow directions, take risks, make and learn from mistakes, and work as a part of the group.

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http://www.edweek.org/ew/articles/2012/11/14/12softskills_ep.h32.html?tkn=PMQFO6YZdxF1CY0fnrauvGQ0r2lHTodlQh&cmp=clp-edweek&utm_source=feedburner&utm_medium=feed&utm_campaign=Feed%3A+EducationWeekWidgetFeed+%28Education+Week+Widget+Feed%29
Standard 9.3: Children identify and solve problems.

How do teachers support this standard?

What will you see children doing?
2011 NJ adopts CCSS followed in 2012 with a Model Curriculum and Assessment for K-12 and in 2013 with a PK Articulation to the K-12 CCSS.

The standards are the "what" children should know

Districts and teachers to determine the "how"
Two Approaches

Curmudgeon - See the obstacles and barriers

Gold – Or, see the opportunities

Calkins, Ehrenworth, Lehman and Heineman, 2012
“Staircase” of increasing complexity with the goal that all children are college and career ready.

Clear design, central goals, common language and high standards

Standards are “what” -- districts and states decide on “how”

Cross-Curricular literacy teaching

Respects the professional judgment of classroom teachers. All teachers teach reading, writing, speaking, and listening across content areas and determine “how”

Media skills are integrated throughout teaching and learning in appropriate ways
Key Takeaways cont.

Reading – In ECE emphasizes both literature and informational text in equal balance

More emphasis on higher-level comprehension skills

Writing – has equal weight on reading and includes narrative, argument and informational.

Speaking and Listening – the ability to present and comprehend information and ideas working in one-on-one, small-group, and whole group settings

Language – emphasis on vocabulary acquisition through conversations, direct instruction, and reading
Common Core Math in Kindergarten: Primary Emphasis

Counting and Cardinality
- Know number names and the count sequence
- Count to tell the number of objects
- Compare numbers

Operations and Algebraic Thinking
- Understand addition as putting together and adding to
- Understand subtraction as taking apart and taking from

Number and Operations in Base Ten
- Work with numbers 11-19 to gain foundation for place value
Common Core Math in Kindergarten: Secondary Emphasis

Measurement and Data
- Describe and compare measurable attributes
- Classify and count the number of objects in categories

Geometry
- Identify and describe shapes
- Analyze, compare, create, and compose shapes
Core Goals in Kindergarten

Describing shapes and space

• Describing the physical world using shape, orientation, and spatial relations – geometric reasoning.

Representing, relating, and operating on whole numbers, initially with sets of objects

• More learning time in kindergarten should be devoted to number than to other topics
Common Core Math Standards for Mathematical Practice

**Problems solving and persistence**

- Reason abstractly and quantitatively
- Construct arguments and critique reasoning

**Attend to precision**

- Use appropriate tools strategically
- Model with mathematics

**Look for and make use of structure**

- Look for and express regularity in repeated reasoning

Shifting Gears 6/21/2013
http://www.bie.org/videos/video/project_based_learning_explained
Choosing a Project Topic

- Is the topic more concrete than abstract?
- Does it involve an abundance of first-hand, direct experiences and real objects that young children can manipulate?
- Is the topic easily related to their prior experiences?
- Can children represent what they know and learn about this topic by using skills and techniques appropriate for their age?
- Is this topic culturally relevant to the children and to their families?

(Helm and Katz in *Young Investigators*)
Redefining Rigor: Myth 1

Old RIGOR: Rigorous education means a teacher is talking

• New RIGOR: Children are conversing, discussing, and collaborating. Content is integrating through use of meaningful projects.
Vocabulary and Achievement

Children with larger vocabularies at the end of preschool learn to read more easily. Knowing lots of word and word meanings is associated with …

Better phonemic awareness in kindergarten

Quicker word rec. in 1st gr.

Better reading comp. in gr. 3 & 4

Vocabulary is one of the strongest preschool predictors of later READING ACHIEVEMENT

Dickinson & Porche, 2011
Myth 2

Old Rigor: Basic facts come before deep learning (Or, students must learn the boring stuff before they can do the interesting stuff)

• New RIGOR: Providing engaging and relevant learning contexts with an emphasis on student-directed learning.
Myth 3

Old Rigor: Covering it means teaching it
(Teachers are often seduced by the idea that if they covered a concept in class, they have taught it.)

- New RIGOR – Concepts and ideas reinforced through reinforced through student-centered activities.
Myth 4

Old Rigor: Teaching to student interests means “dumbing it down”

• New RIGOR: Making connections between classroom topics and teaching to what students already know.
Myth 5

Old Rigor: Acceleration means rigor. (e.g. AP kindergarten)

• New RIGOR: Going deeper, not faster.
Myth 6

Old Rigor: A quiet classroom means good learning

• New RIGOR: A high quality classroom encourages “Language-Soaked Classrooms”
Myth 7

Old Rigor: Traditional schooling prepares students for school.

• New RIGOR: Learning to research, manage, create, evaluate, communicate and collaborate prepares students for the 21st century.
AND, one more...

Old Rigor: There is only one right answer with little opportunity for discussion, dialogue and feedback loops.

• New RIGOR: The teacher provides feedback and back and forth exchanges that expand and encourage children’s responses and prompts them to explain their thinking and rationale for responses and actions. Strive for 5!

http://www.washingtonpost.com/blogs/answer-sheet/post/seven-misconceptions-about-how-students-learn/2012/02/13/glQAenfECR_blog.htm
Curriculum is more than a collection of enjoyable activities. Curriculum is a complex idea containing multiple components, such as goals, content, pedagogy, or instructional practices.

(NAEYC 2009)
Aligned with the Standards

Provide methods for inclusion of students with disabilities

Have clear, research-based content and teaching strategies

Include significant content taught with focus and integration

Focus on maximizing child initiation and engagement

Are developmentally appropriate

Show evidence of benefits
Kindergarten Guidelines for Comprehensive, Standards-Based Curriculum

Scheduled to meet kindergartner’s developmental needs

Matched to the developmental level of kindergartners in teaching methods and content

Flexible enough to meet the needs and interests of the children in the class

Individualized enough to accommodate each child in the classroom;

Integrated to purposefully incorporate meaningful skills and concepts from multiple content areas in each learning experience

Part of an uninterrupted continuum of teaching practices and concept development for children in preschool through third grade.

http://www.state.nj.us/education/ece/guide/KindergartenGuidelines.pdf
Activity 2

What essential curriculum elements do you notice?

What would be difficult?

What are possible solutions?
Supporting Appropriate Assessment

The most important reason for assessing young children is to help them learn. To this end, assessments should be closely tied to the curriculum, developmental milestones and should be a natural part of instructional activities.

(NAEYC&NAECS/SDE, 2003)
Current Work: Acknowledgement that EC is different

Development of EC specific guidance, such as emphasis on portfolio collections.

- Gold® (pre-K, K)

NTGS & EC

- A teacher’s ability to meet or exceed his or her SGOs counts for 15 percent of the overall evaluation.
Steps for Districts

Focus on Evidence

SGO Development
What does evidence of a particular item look like given a district’s curriculum?

During center time in a K classroom, the teacher supports complex dramatic play by giving hints and cues as well as models behavior.

Danielson Ex. Teacher’s feedback to students is timely and of consistently high quality.
Agree on assessments that are inclusive of multiple domains*

- Are assessments in place?
- Do they need to be developed?
- Can they be purchased?
Age Appropriate Example

TS GOLD

Domains
- Cognitive
- Language

At least 70% of children will meet the Widely Held Expectation in the chosen domains

Assessment

Fall to Winter Checkpoint Comparison

Meeting Widely Held Expectations

- Mathematics: Fall 26.3%, Spring 70.3%
- Literacy: Fall 37.6%, Spring 76.0%
- Cognitive: Fall 55.0%, Spring 80.1%
- Language: Fall 36.5%, Spring 70.8%
- Physical: Fall 51.4%, Spring 72.2%
- Social-Emotional: Fall 70.0%, Spring 72.2%

Shifting Gears  6/21/2013
Your Turn