Strengthening Coherence and Impact in Early Learning

PACE Annual Conference
January 25, 2024
Table Introductions

• Name
• Organization
• Why you chose to come to this breakout session
Panelists

Stephanie Kloos
Executive Director of Elementary Education
San Rafael City Schools

Cresta McIntosh
Associate Superintendent, Educational Services
Monterey Peninsula Unified School District

Alix Gallagher
Director of Strategic Partnerships
Policy Analysis for California Education
Let’s Play, Let’s Learn, Let’s Align

Stephanie Kloos
Executive Director of Elementary Education
San Rafael City Schools
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San Rafael City Schools:

- Two districts: Tk-8 and 9-12 that share a Board, cabinet, and most students
- 7 elementary schools, 1 middle school, 2 high schools, 1 alternative high school
- about 7,000 students
  - 64% Ever ELs
  - 11.5% students with disabilities
  - 9 Tks, including DLI
  - Tk at all sites
Goal: Coherent experience for families and students

- Joyful play-based, developmentally appropriate classroom experiences
- TK as part of the school community
- Lever for equity
Building On

Early Childhood Success Grant (2012-2024)
• PK-3: preschool - elementary school partnerships
• Data, social emotional learning, SEAL content units and strategies
• Teacher to teacher communication and collaboration
• Professional development
Building On and Learning From

Partner Meetings and Collaborations (2021-22)
• City, state, HeadStart, private preschools
• Acknowledging the realities
• Asking for help: visits, schedules, environment
• DRDP (starting fall, 2023) and Teaching Pyramid

SRCS Transitional Kindergarten provides families access to high quality early learning programs the year before Kindergarten that will provide students the gift of time and help them build a strong foundation for future school success. SRCS Transitional Kindergarten classrooms will be language rich environments that offer spaces for joyful and curious learning through play while intentionally fostering social emotional growth and self-regulation skills. SRCS’ Transitional Kindergarten expansion embodies our values of community, equity and joy.
Building Within

Honor, affirm and teach (2022-current)
- TK at all schools
- Apply to be a TK Teacher
- PD structures
  - summer institutes
  - classroom set-up coaching and consults
  - monthly PD
  - coaching
- Second adult - teacher partnership
Building Up

Reflect, refine and align (2022-current)
● P3CC - learning labs
● Teaching Pyramid - Second Step and Kimochis
● SEAL content units
● Scope and sequence
Next Steps

• SRCS Early Learning Center
  • CBO preschools
  • Early intervention SDC classes and services
  • Tks
• Professional development
• Instructional alignment

Challenges

• Enrollment
• Tk Teacher workforce
• Budget
• Data systems
• Space
## Demographics

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Category</th>
<th>Percentage</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>10K Students</td>
<td>68%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>SED</td>
<td>27%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Multilingual Learners</td>
<td>61%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Latinx</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Category</th>
<th>Details</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>3 Early Childhood Education Centers</td>
<td>7 (TK-6) 3 (TK-8) Elementary Schools</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2 Middle Schools</td>
<td>3 High Schools 1 Ed Options 1 Adult School</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

## Preschool to 3rd Grade Coherence

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Program</th>
<th>Focus</th>
<th>Duration</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>P3CC Pilot - CA Ed Partners (Math Focus)</td>
<td>Math Focus</td>
<td>July 2020- June 2023</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>P3CC Pioneer (Literacy Focus)</td>
<td>Literacy Focus</td>
<td>July 2022- June 2024</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Improvement team(s) consists of teachers, site admin, district admin, and academic coaches.
Strengthening Coherence and Impact in Early Learning

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The “Original” Why

☑ In 2015 Monterey Peninsula Unified School District (MPUSD) received data from First 5 Monterey County (F5MC) 2015 Kindergarten Readiness Assessment (KRA) conducted with a random sample of public elementary schools. MPUSD sampled over 550 students showing that only 27% percent of its students were prepared for kindergarten.

☑ The Kindergarten Readiness Assessment (KRA) provides a snapshot of school readiness for nearly 2,500 Monterey County children who entered public schools in the fall of 2015. The sample frame ensured representation based on both academic performance and geographic region of the county.
Coherence Taking Shape

- MPUSD Board of Education adopted a policy in 2016 that Expanded TK. This allowed MPUSD to become one of the few districts to offer an expanded age range for children who are eligible to attend TK. As a result of the policy, all children turning 5 prior to March 1 of a school year would be eligible to attend TK (the state cut off date was December 1).
  - This served as an equity strategy and funded by LCFF $.
- MPUSD expanded its preschool to offer more full day preschool classrooms.
- MPUSD ensured that there are at least one TK classroom at every elementary school campus increasing both preschool and TK enrollment by over 300 students;
- A vision of developmentally appropriate early childhood education developed with the Motto - “Creating a Seamless Transition from PK-Kinder”
- Established a common assessment, curriculum, and essential standards.
  - Desired Results Developmental Profile (DRDP) & Creative Curriculum
The Fadeout is Real

Children that had gone through our PK/TK program would start off further ahead in Kindergarten using our local measures, by the time they get to 3rd grade, the gap faded out.

![Average Percentile Earned on i-Ready Reading: Fall 2019](chart1.jpg)

**Average Percentile Earned on i-Ready Reading: Fall 2019**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Grade</th>
<th>Received TK</th>
<th>Did Not Receive TK</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Kinder</td>
<td>48</td>
<td>32</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>First Grade</td>
<td>43</td>
<td>33</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Second Grade</td>
<td>41</td>
<td>36</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Third Grade</td>
<td>46</td>
<td>40</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Fourth Grade</td>
<td>46</td>
<td>42</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

![EL Average Percentile Earned on i-Ready Reading: Fall 2019](chart2.jpg)

**EL Average Percentile Earned on i-Ready Reading: Fall 2019**

<table>
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<th>Grade</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Kinder</td>
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<td>23</td>
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<tr>
<td>Second Grade</td>
<td>36</td>
<td>26</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Third Grade</td>
<td>33</td>
<td>25</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Fourth Grade</td>
<td>26</td>
<td>20</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
PreK-3 Coherence Roadmap

High Quality Learning Experiences
- Student Assets
- Teacher Practice

Assessing Learning
- Formative Assessment
- Data-Driven Instruction

Adult Collaborative Learning
- Teacher Collab
- Oversight

Classroom

System
- Expectations
- Observations
- Resources
- Common Formative Assessment
- Data Accessibility
- Student Support
- Org Structure
- Family Engagement
- Professional Learning
Year 1 Math: Beginning our work

**Classroom**

- Brought district-wide vertical PLCs together to talk about PS-3 Coherence and math utilizing new found virtual platform - 160+ participants.

- Started talking about Teaching and Learning around high quality practices across multiple grade levels and multiple sites - highlighting PK & TK efforts.

- Brought in a book study, which allowed us to share experiences and learning in order to begin scaling.

**System**

- The power of vertical PLCs.

- Beginning to understand the components of system coherence.

- Adopted NEW math curriculum TK-8.
Year 2 Math: Deepening Our Work

**Classroom**

Continued district-wide vertical PLCs together to reinforce PS-3 Coherence and support district wide Book Study, capturing and sharing learning - 160+ participants.

Started aligning to 6 key high leverage pedagogical practices (HLPP) through both tasks and curriculum.

District-wide book study at each site.

Explored and enhanced professional development opportunities for teachers around high leverage practices and assessments.

**System**

Counting Collections and Choral Counting Book for each PK-3 grade teacher.

Each teacher received funding to build collections.

Established PK-8 grade mathematics vision that connected all work including implementation/integrity of curriculum and tasks.

Students will develop a positive math identity and achieve at grade level by the end of middle school, set up for math success in high school. Math educators will regularly engage students in authentic problem solving and mathematical discourse, relate math to students’ funds of knowledge, encourage discourse, welcome productive mistakes, and foster joy in their classrooms. All adults will demonstrate the shared belief that all students are capable of mastering grade level content, will acknowledge that our beliefs and biases shape student outcomes, and will commit to continual learning in service of improved instruction.
Year 3 Math: Scaling and Sustaining Our Work

Classroom

- **Continuing district-wide vertical PLCs** together to reinforce PS-3 Coherence and support exploring evidence of student learning aligned the high leverage pedagogical practices.

- **Utilizing 6 key high leverage mathematical pedagogical practices** support the development of site problems of practice through task development, curriculum delivery and planning, and assessment.

- **Developing leadership capacity** to create conditions for HLPP to thrive through planning opportunities and effective feedback.

- **Instructional rounds** focusing on student learning around the mathematical HLPP

- **Site-based vertical PLCs** analyzing student work

System

- **Teachers learning from other teachers** - Vertical PLCs or getting into each other’s classrooms learning from student thinking and learning.

- **Site-based empowerment**

- **Building Leadership Capacity**
Picture of the data system we have

- TK - 3 (EOY)
- Data free
- DRDP for CSPP only
- A -G and graduation tracking courses & grades
- CAASPP 11th
- Science (1 x HS)

- Annual CAASPP (EOY)
- Science 5th, 8th

PK3 PK4 K 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10 11 12 Post secondary
Data needed to realize our investment in UTK

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What’s wrong with that picture?

• At the state level, essentially $\frac{1}{3}$ of students’ time in the public school system is invisible

• At the district level, there are high stakes attached to how students do on CAASPP tests in 3rd-8th grade, but there’s no information on how students are doing until that point.
  • This decreases political incentives for superintendents/boards to ensure students have a good foundation, and
  • Makes it hard for districts to see how students progress through their system
Adding TK increases the need to know

- California is making a major new investment in Transitional Kindergarten
- Prior research suggests that program quality will matter for outcomes
  - High-quality learning opportunities that are play-based are better for students.
  - Vertical coherence with K-3 is critical; without it, positive effects of early childhood programs typically “fade out.”
What we need to measure

• The state should collect data on:
  • Who is enrolling in various early childhood programs
  • The central features of those programs (e.g., full-day/half-day, supports for MLL)
  • Student outcomes in PK, TK, and at kindergarten entry
• Districts should:
  • Collect and monitor data on student learning in kindergarten through 3rd grade
  • Analyze those data by subgroups and by early childhood programs
  • Understand which types of students are being more or less well-served by their system
Read more

Gallagher, Hill and Lafortune (2024)

Questions/comments:
agallagher@stanford.edu
Table Talk

• What questions or observations came up for you?
• What are ideas or action items you can take back to your organization?
• What statewide policies, structures, or supports are needed at this time?
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