

District Leadership for P-3

Learning Tour





District Leadership for P-3: Learning Tour

TABLE OF CONTENTS

Introduction	2
Alignment	6
Transition	10
Enrollment / Data Collection	15
Family Engagement	19
Equity-Focused Decision Making	23
Instructional Leadership & Change Management	27
Curriculum, Instruction and Assessment Cycle	30
Professional Learning	33
Program Delivery Options	35
Funding P-3	38
Community Partnerships	40
Strategic Direction and Evaluation	43
District P-3 Outcome Planning Sheet	45

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INTRODUCTION

What is a P-3 Learning Tour?

A P-3 Learning Tour represents an important approach to gathering information and insights that can deepen understanding of practices and policies, perceptions, challenges, and opportunities related to the successful implementation of new or enhanced education initiatives in districts and schools. P-3 Learning Tours have been developed and used successfully as part of a broader landscape analysis or strategic planning process in a variety of settings. In each case the P-3 Learning Tour provides an opportunity to ensure new work is integrated into other efforts and is informed by the collective experience and wisdom of others.

What is the benefit of conducting a P-3 Learning Tour?

The purpose of a P-3 Learning Tour is to develop a clear understanding of interest, capacity, and core considerations for implementing new or enhanced educational programming. Information gathered from P-3 Learning Tours helps to maximize resources, ensure that what is planned and implemented reflects the local context and builds on existing efforts, and ultimately supports children and families.

What are the key components of a P-3 Learning Tour?

A district-level P-3 Learning Tour likely includes a number of targeted site visits, classroom observations, interviews, and focus groups, each designed to gather information from key stakeholders and deepen understanding of the current context at every level of policy and practice from classrooms and schools to the district offices. The P-3 Learning Tour is typically coordinated by the district leadership team, and can be conducted internally or by external experts/consultants. Information is gathered from district leaders and administrators, principals, teachers, families, and community providers.

How is the information from the P-3 Learning Tour used?

Information gathered through the P-3 Learning Tour can be compiled and analyzed to determine common themes, capture needs and priorities, and identify gaps and opportunities for next steps. P-3 Learning Tour information can be used as part of a larger data gathering effort to develop a comprehensive understanding of the current landscape.

GUIDE TO CONDUCTING A P-3 LEARNING TOUR

How is this Guide Organized

Learning Tours are generally conducted as a follow-up to the P-3 Needs Assessment. The purpose of the P-3 Learning Tour is to delve deeply into what it will take in a district to implement strong P-3 system approach. By gathering information and stakeholder input District leaders can develop a clear understanding of interest, capacity, and core considerations for implementing new or enhanced educational programming. The P-3 Learning Tour includes targeted focus groups and interviews, classroom observations, and data collection. Each element of the Learning Tour is designed to gather information from key stakeholders (e.g., principals, teachers, families, community providers, etc.) and to deepen school or district leaders' understanding of the current context within the district.

The P-3 Learning Tour Guide is aligned to the P-3 Self Assessment and organized according to the three key focus areas and twelve related strategic elements that characterize effective P-3 systems development. The Guide is divided into 12 chapters, corresponding to each strategic element. Districts may prioritize which focus areas and elements to address.

THESE INCLUDE:



Strengthening the P-3 Pipeline

- Alignment
- Transitions
- Enrollment/data collection
- Family Engagement



Improving Program Quality

- Equity-focused Decision-making
- Instructional Leadership & Change Management
- Curriculum-Instruction-Assessment Cycle
- Professional Learning



Increasing System-Wide Impact

- Program Delivery Options
- Funding
- Connecting with Communities
- Strategic Direction and Evaluation

PREPARING FOR THE P-3 LEARNING TOUR

To prepare for the P-3 Learning Tour district leaders should review results of the self-assessment to identify and prioritize focus areas to address through the P-3 Learning Tour process. By selecting targeted focus areas, districts can develop a customized plan that addresses only those elements of building an effective P-3 approach that may need a deeper more nuanced analysis of current conditions and contexts.

CONDUCTING THE P-3 LEARNING TOUR: Key Components



Focus Groups:

The purpose of a focus group is to gain a better understanding of the perspectives and experiences of stakeholders engaged in education across the P-3 continuum. Focus groups are an effective way to gather information from stakeholders who represent an important constituency engaged in or potentially engaged in P-3 work.

A common focus group introduction is included in each of the 12 chapters in the Guide and provides leaders/facilitators with the information they need to explain the purpose, introduce the process, and collect initial information from participants. Specialized questions addressing the strategic element and tailored to each group of respondents such as families, teachers, or principals are included in each chapter.



Key Informant Interviews:

The purpose of conducting interviews is to gather information from individuals who may play a specific role, oversee specific policies and procedures, or be engaged in decision-making related to implementing aspects of a comprehensive P-3 system. Interviews provide an opportunity to develop a more nuanced understanding of the context and conditions that can impact P-3 implementation.

A common interview introduction is included in each of the 12 chapters of the Guide and provides leaders with the information needed to introduce the purpose and specific focus of the interview.



Classroom Observation/Walkthrough:

Classroom walkthrough templates are provided for selected P-3 strategic elements where observations are most relevant and appropriate. Ideally, observations occur across learning levels as well as in multiple same-level classrooms.

Observations in classrooms and school buildings can provide meaningful insight into how various elements of a P-3 system are being implemented on the ground in daily practice. Looking at the physical environments, teacher-child interactions, instructional practices, and student engagement can be used to identify areas where environments and practices are well articulated and where there are gaps or discontinuities.



Data and Document Collection:

Collecting artifacts and documentation represents the final step in the P-3 Learning Tour. Data and documents are important tools in developing a comprehensive picture of district and school-level policies, procedures, and activities that support the implementation of a P-3 approach. Each chapter of the P-3 Learning Tour Guide includes a suggested list of documents or other evidence to collect to inform the final analysis. Leaders are encouraged to expand or adjust this list to reflect district context.

AFTER THE LEARNING TOUR: WHAT HAPPENS NEXT TO MOVE THE P-3 AGENDA

Once the P-3 Learning Tour has been concluded and input and information has been compiled and analyzed, district leaders can use the information to inform the development of a P-3 implementation plan designed to translate key findings and lessons learned into action steps and strategies. At the end of the P-3 Learning Tour Guide, a planning template is included that can be used to identify goals and objectives, timelines and action steps, needed resources and partnerships, and provisions for tracking progress.



ALIGNMENT

INTRODUCTION

What is Alignment and why is it important?

P-3 Alignment refers to the continuous interrelated nature of education programs and practices from preschool through third grade. When teaching and learning are aligned, children experience more consistency and learning pathways are stable, progressively building from one year to the next. An effective P-3 approach includes a system of aligned standards, curricula, instructional practices, and assessments. Policies and practices designed to facilitate data sharing and provide joint professional development and coaching for teachers across P-3 have also been identified as keys to creating aligned systems. Research shows that aligned learning systems across the P-3 continuum contribute to sustained learning and positive academic outcomes.

THIS SECTION INCLUDES:



ALIGNMENT FOCUS GROUPS

TEACHER (P-3) FOCUS GROUP QUESTIONS

QUESTION 1: How would describe the level of P-3 alignment in your school? Which elements of teaching and learning are well aligned, which are not? (curriculum, learning environments, instructional practices, assessments?)

QUESTION 2: How do you know what teachers in other grade levels are teaching? What do you know about learning environment, expectations, and teaching practices in the grade levels below and above you?

QUESTION 3: What opportunities do teachers across P-3 have to communicate and learn about each other's classrooms and work? (e.g. classroom visits, data sharing and vertical planning teams, etc.). How often are you able to connect?

QUESTION 4: How is data used and shared across the grades?

PRINCIPAL FOCUS GROUP QUESTIONS

QUESTION 1: How would describe the level of P-3 alignment in your school? Which elements of teaching and learning are well aligned, which are not? How are they aligned, connected, or coordinated? (curriculum, learning environments, instructional practices, assessments?)

QUESTION 2: What will it take to completely align teaching and learning across P-3? What policies or procedures are currently in place that support alignment across P-3?

QUESTION 3: Alignment can be both horizontal (meaning there is consistency across same-grade classrooms in a school or district) and vertical (meaning there is continuity from one grade level to the next). How would you describe the degree of horizontal alignment in your school? What makes it work or what gets in the way?

QUESTION 4: What is your role in supporting both horizontal and vertical alignment?

FAMILIES FOCUS GROUP QUESTIONS

QUESTION 1: Can you describe experiences your child has had in moving from one grade level to the next? What was different as your child moved to the next level? What stayed the same?

QUESTION 2: Were certain grade changes more dissimilar than others? If yes, which ones? How did they differ?

QUESTION 3: What carry-over did you see from one grade level to the next? (i.e. what practices, activities, or elements of the physical environment were carried over from one grade level to the next?)

QUESTION 4: How do teachers keep you informed about learning goals and activities?



ALIGNMENT INTERVIEWS

KEY INFORMANTS

- District-level Administrators:
 - Curriculum Specialists
 - Early Education Department Heads
 - Area Superintendents
 - Professional Development Specialists
 - Other District-level stakeholders
- School Board Members

INTERVIEW QUESTIONS: DISTRICT LEADERS AND SCHOOL BOARD MEMBERS

QUESTION 1: What has to happen at the District level to build aligned P-3 systems? How does the work you do directly impact alignment?

QUESTION 2: What structures or processes are in place now to support alignment of:

- Assessments
- Curricula
- Instructional practices

QUESTION 3: What resources are available at the District level to train and support principals in their role

as instructional leaders? What resources are available to train and support teachers to align their instructional practices?

QUESTION 4: Where do you think you are in the process of creating an aligned system across the district? (Not on our radar, just getting started, business as usual)

- If it's not yet business as usual, what will it take for the district to get there?
- If it is business as usual, what was the key to success?



DOCUMENTATION / DATA ELEMENTS

- | | |
|---|--|
| <input type="checkbox"/> Curriculum Maps/scope and sequence | <input type="checkbox"/> Assessments used across P-3 |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Professional Development Plans | <input type="checkbox"/> Individualized learning plan templates (for each level P-3) |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Grade level team rosters/vertical team rosters and meeting agendas | <input type="checkbox"/> Examples of data sharing procedures or data-based planning |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Standards documents | <input type="checkbox"/> Other: |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Articulation Policies | |



WALKTHROUGH

Focus Area: Alignment

Observation Checklist

Classroom/Grade level

- Pre-K K 1 2 3

Introduction: Your review of documents and input from focus groups and interviews has provided you with an understanding of the current level of curricula, instruction, and assessment alignment in the school/district. This walk-through helps inform understanding of what alignment looks like in daily classroom activities. Alignment occurs both horizontally and vertically. It is best identified by looking at and listening to what teachers and students do and say. While content and approaches to teaching and learning will vary to adapt to progressively higher levels of learning, some experiences should be available across the P-3 continuum. By looking within and cross grade level classrooms you will be able to assess both horizontal and vertical alignment.

Use the following template to collect and compare your general impressions of aligned practices and learning experiences across and within grade levels:

Classroom Observation:

- Describe a specific activity taking place in the classroom:
 - How are the students engaged?
 - What strategies is the teacher using?
- Describe specific curricula, resources and materials, and instructional practices used during the observation period:
 - What subject matter or curriculum content areas were addressed?
 - What resources and materials were available and in use by students?
 - What teacher-student interactions occurred?
 - What student-to-student interactions occurred?

Following are some additional teacher and student engagement characteristics to look and listen for that should be in place and tailored to age and ability of students within and across learning levels:

Teachers: within and across learning levels:

- Balance teacher-directed and student initiated activities and learning experiences
- Respond to student comments and questions in ways that expand learning and build comprehension and language skills
- Use instructional techniques that are individualized to the needs and interests of students
- Provide opportunities for students to interact with and support each other.

Students: within and across learning levels:

- Have access to materials that reflect subject matter content and support exploration and hands-on learning
- Are using materials in meaningful ways to inform understanding and concept development
- Have opportunities to engage in activities that encourage creative expression
- Have opportunities to interact with and communicate with each other to solve problems and exchange information
- Have opportunities to make choices.

TRANSITION

INTRODUCTION

What is Transition and why is it important?

Transition refers to the totality of experiences and opportunities a child encounters in moving from one program or setting to another. Opportunities and experiences that familiarize children and families with new settings, expectations and relationships can help make connections that ease adjustment, improve learning outcomes, and increase the likelihood that families will stay engaged in their children's learning. Effective activities are varied, occur over time, and are intentionally planned. Elements can be tailored to meet the needs of children and families and should be an integral part of the ongoing school planning and improvement process. Transitions can help children across the P-3 continuum but are most important as children move from Pre-K (or home) to kindergarten. Key connections that make transitions most effective include connections between children and schools, families and schools, public and community-based schools, and schools and community institutions and leaders.

THIS SECTION INCLUDES:



TRANSITION FOCUS GROUPS

TEACHER (P-3) FOCUS GROUP QUESTIONS

QUESTION 1: What do you do to support children's adjustment as they move from one level to the next? What do you see as the biggest "disconnects" for children as they move up each grade level?

QUESTION 2: What do you do to support or engage families in transitions? For K teachers, how are you able to connect with families whose children are in community-based programs or at home before entering K? (If this is a challenge, what could help?)

QUESTION 3: What school or district policies or practices are in place to support transitions? (e.g. School: transition teams, family liaison, vertical teaching teams, joint PD; District: Kindergarten Roundups, Summer Bridge Programs, Alignment policies, etc.)

QUESTION 4: What do teachers need to be able to support effective transitions for children and families?

PRINCIPAL FOCUS GROUP QUESTIONS

QUESTION 1: What does it take to create effective transitions across P-3? What do you see as your primary role in supporting transition?

QUESTION 2: What school-wide policies and procedures or mechanisms are in place to support transitions across Pre-K-K-1-2-3?

QUESTION 3: How do you support teachers across P-3 to plan and implement effective transitions?

QUESTION 4: What connections have you made to community-based programs and program directors? (Please describe any informal or formal practices in place to support transitions for children and families)

FAMILIES FOCUS GROUP QUESTIONS

QUESTION 1: Can you tell us about a transition experience you and your child have had (pre-K to K or across other early grades). Looking back on that experience, what made it successful? What else do you think could have helped?

QUESTION 2: What information were you given about the transition process and what to expect after transition? What information would be most helpful?

QUESTION 3: What transition activities or resources does your school provide? How helpful were they to you and/or your child? What would have been better?

QUESTION 4: Can you describe some of the ways you helped to prepare your child for transition? What guidance or information did you receive from the school/teacher to help you help your child to prepare?



INTERVIEWS

KEY INFORMANTS

- District-level Administrators:
 - Curriculum Specialists
 - Early Education Department Heads
 - Area Superintendents
 - Professional Development Specialists
 - Family or Community Liaisons
 - Other District-level stakeholders
- Community-based preschool program directors and/or teachers
- Local Early Childhood Council members
- Other municipal or community leaders

INTERVIEW QUESTIONS: DISTRICT ADMINISTRATORS

Please describe your position in the district and how the issue of transition impacts your work?

QUESTION 1: What policies and procedures are in place to support children's transitions across the Pre-K-K-1-2-3 continuum?

QUESTION 2: What policies and procedures are in place to support connections with community-based preschool programs to facilitate transitions into school? (Head Start, childcare centers, family childcare homes, etc.)

QUESTION 3: How does the district connect with families and the community at large? How does the district partner with community agencies and institutions to provide support for transitions?

QUESTION 4: On-time registration is often cited as a major obstacle to smooth transitions, what strategies has district implemented to improve on-time kindergarten registration? What are the challenges to on-time registration in your district?

INTERVIEW QUESTIONS: COMMUNITY-BASED PRESCHOOL DIRECTOR AND/OR TEACHERS

QUESTION 1: What are the biggest challenges to establishing connections with schools for supporting transitions?

QUESTION 2: How are you supporting families and children to make the transition to kindergarten? Please describe any activities or practices that your teachers use to support transitions

QUESTION 3: What do your families need most to be prepared and help their children prepare for kindergarten? Are there any unique needs or characteristics of families that impacts transition planning?

QUESTION 4: As the district works to improve transitions for all children entering kindergarten, what would be most effective? What policies and procedures should be in place? How should schools and community-based programs be working together?

INTERVIEW QUESTIONS: COMMUNITY LEADERS

(e.g. Early Childhood Council members, municipal leaders,
family and child-serving agency representatives)

QUESTION 1: How are you or your organization/ agency engaged in supporting children and families in making the transition to kindergarten? (e.g. do you sit on school transition teams, support dissemination of information about transitions and kindergarten entrance?) Are families and children you serve engaged in making the transition to kindergarten?

QUESTION 2: What role do you feel community leaders and agencies could play in supporting transition?

QUESTION 3: From your perspective, what are the biggest challenges children and families face in making the transition to kindergarten?

QUESTION 4: Are you aware of any current practices and procedures in the district and/or schools that are effective and should be expanded? Are there other approaches or activities the district should be using?



DOCUMENTATION / DATA ELEMENTS

- MOU's with community-based preschool programs
- Announcements of Family Information Sessions on Kindergarten registration and K readiness
- Descriptions of Summer Bridge Programs
- Job descriptions: school-based or district family liaison/community outreach specialist
- Transition Team description - membership rosters and meeting agendas
- Examples of school transition plans
- Examples of Individualized Student Learning Plans
- Descriptions of joint professional development sessions (cross grade and school/community-based providers)
- Grade level team rosters/vertical team rosters and meeting agendas
- Examples of data sharing procedures or data-based planning
- Student portfolios
- Examples of commonly used transition activities
- Written policy statements regarding transitions
- Examples of ESSA plans addressing transition
- Evaluation protocols for monitoring effectiveness of transition plans
- Other:



WALKTHROUGH

Focus Area: Transition

Introduction: One of the major components of effective transition is continuity across settings. To that end, using the Alignment observation template will help determine similarities and differences in settings and experiences across the P-3 continuum.

To determine classroom practices and materials specifically designed to support preschool to kindergarten transitions, following are some elements to look for:

Observation Checklist

Classroom/Grade level

- Pre-K K

Pre-K to Kindergarten Observation Template:

- Classrooms/teachers are using the same books or songs in preschool and kindergarten
- Books specifically related to kindergarten transition are available to children in preschool and kindergarten classrooms
- Teachers in preschool classrooms are discussing going to kindergarten with children
- Announcements for transition related parent meetings or kindergarten classroom visits are displayed
- Lesson plans in preschool and kindergarten classrooms include activities and topics related to starting kindergarten



ENROLLMENT DATA COLLECTION

INTRODUCTION

What is Enrollment Data Collection and why is it important?

Data collected at school entry can provide important contextual information for educators, principals, and district leaders about children's prior experiences that can impact future learning and progress in school. By asking the right questions on enrollment forms and employing other data gathering strategies as well as partnering with families to gather important information, districts, schools, and teachers can acquire a more complete picture of children's background, strengths, and other features that make them unique. Comprehensive enrollment data can be used by teachers to effectively support children's learning and development in the classroom and by school and district leaders as a basis for broader policy decisions related to needed services and supports.

THIS SECTION INCLUDES:



ENROLLMENT DATA COLLECTION FOCUS GROUPS

TEACHER (P-3) FOCUS GROUP QUESTIONS

QUESTION 1: What information do you currently receive about the children enrolling in the school and entering your classroom? How do you use the information?

QUESTION 2: What additional data or information do you collect yourself about children or families? (e.g. initial meetings with parents to collect information, screening or assessment tools, etc.) How do you use this information?

QUESTION 3: What additional data points or information not currently collected on standard enrollment forms would be helpful to you? What else do you need to know and understand about entering children?

QUESTION 4: How are families engaged with you or the school at school entrance? How are culturally or linguistically diverse families engaged when their children are enrolled? What challenges have you encountered in engaging and gathering information from families?

PRINCIPAL FOCUS GROUP QUESTIONS

QUESTION 1: What information do you currently receive about the children enrolling in school? How do you use this information? How is this information shared with teachers?

QUESTION 2: What additional data points or information not currently collected on standard enrollment forms would be helpful to you?

QUESTION 3: How are you engaged with families at school entrance? What opportunities do you have to meet with or collect additional information from families?

QUESTION 4: What partnerships with community agencies and other schools including community-based preschool programs are in place to support the enrollment process? What data sharing agreements are in place?

FAMILIES FOCUS GROUP QUESTIONS

QUESTION 1: Other than filling out the enrollment form, are there any ways you are involved in the school enrollment process? Are there other opportunities available to provide teachers and principals with information about your family and your child? (e.g. family surveys, meetings with teachers or principals, etc.)

QUESTION 2: How were you able to get information about the school and school enrollment? (e.g. called the district, looked online, from my child's former school/provider, etc.)

QUESTION 3: What difficulties did you encounter in finding the information and getting the enrollment forms?

QUESTION 4: Are there any ways the school or district could improve how families can learn about schools and the enrollment process?



INTERVIEWS

KEY INFORMANTS

- District-level Administrators:
 - Data and Enrollment specialists/administrators
 - Early Education Department Heads
 - Area Superintendents
 - Family or Community Liaisons
 - Other District-level administrators
- Community-based preschool program directors and/or teachers

INTERVIEW QUESTIONS: DISTRICT LEADERS AND SCHOOL BOARD MEMBERS

Please describe your position in the district and how the issue of enrollment and data collection impacts your work?

QUESTION 1: Can you describe the current enrollment process: what information is collected, how is it collected (e.g. online, at schools, district office, etc.), and how it is shared with schools?

QUESTION 2: Other than information collected on the standard enrollment form, what other strategies or practices are in place to gather information about children and families? (e.g. family surveys, school- and classroom-based practices)

QUESTION 3: How is enrollment information used to inform policy and practices at the district, school, and classroom levels?

QUESTION 4: Is there other information not currently collected that would be helpful to inform the work you do?

QUESTION 5: What role do families play in the enrollment process? What challenges does the district face in disseminating information about enrollment procedures and collecting enrollments? What policies and practices are in place to support enrollment and engagement of diverse families and families of children with special needs?

INTERVIEW QUESTIONS: COMMUNITY-BASED PRESCHOOL DIRECTOR AND/OR TEACHERS

QUESTION 1: How familiar are you with enrollment process and procedures in the district(s) your children will be attending? What is most helpful for you to know about the enrollment process?

QUESTION 2: What are the biggest challenges families face in selecting schools and completing the enrollment process?

QUESTION 3: What child data or information do you share with schools and how is it shared (formal MOU's and data agreements, sharing portfolios, teacher to teacher meetings, etc.)

QUESTION 4: Overall, How could the enrollment process and other enrollment support practices be improved to support families and inform instruction of children?



DOCUMENTATION / DATA ELEMENTS

- Examples of current enrollment forms
- Enrollment summaries of disaggregated data (demographics, etc.)
- Examples of Family Surveys (and languages available)
- Written policies regarding enrollment and data collection
- Written enrollment policies regarding meeting the needs of special populations
- Descriptions of enrollment activities or resources designed to involve families
- Examples of MOU's and data-sharing agreements
- Examples of community outreach events designed to inform and increase enrollment
- Examples of how enrollment data is used to inform planning (District, school, and/or classroom)



FAMILY ENGAGEMENT

INTRODUCTION

What is Family Engagement and why is it important?

Families' engagement in their child's learning both at home and at school has been linked to greater and more sustained academic and social-emotional skills for children – especially for children who live in less advantaged socio-economic settings and/or are from culturally and linguistically diverse backgrounds. When families are meaningfully engaged in their child's education across the P-3 continuum, transitions are more successful, children make quicker adjustments to new settings and expectations, learning outcomes are improved and chronic absence is reduced. Keys to engaging families include creating welcoming environments at the school, supporting meaningful relationships and communication between families and teachers, creating a variety of pathways or opportunities for families to be engaged, recognizing and accommodating cultural and linguistic diversity, and connecting families to resources and to each other. The Every Student Succeeds Act (ESSA) has placed a high priority on family engagement and developing strategies for families to contribute to their child's education.

THIS SECTION INCLUDES:



FOCUS GROUPS

TEACHER (P-3) FOCUS GROUP QUESTIONS

QUESTION 1: How are assessment data and instructional goals for students shared with families – including families who are culturally and linguistically diverse?

QUESTION 2: What strategies or approaches do you use to collect input from families and how is it used?

QUESTION 3: What supports or resources are available to you to help you develop skills to work with

families? Do you receive professional learning on how to provide culturally responsive supports to families? What supports or information do you need to effectively engage families?

QUESTION 4: How are families welcomed at your school and what supports or resources are provided to them to help them be engaged?

PRINCIPAL FOCUS GROUP QUESTIONS

QUESTION 1: How are assessment data and instructional goals for students shared with families and what is your role in the process?

QUESTION 2: What resources, mechanisms, or opportunities are available to families to help them access or receive information? What considerations are made to support culturally or linguistically diverse families?

QUESTION 3: What professional learning and other supports or resources are available to build staff capacity to communicate with and engage families in their children's learning?

QUESTION 4: What formal policies or procedures are in place to support family engagement? How are families welcomed at your school and provided supports they may need to be engaged?

FAMILIES FOCUS GROUP QUESTIONS

QUESTION 1: What kinds of information do you regularly receive from the school? How is it delivered? Is there other information you wish you had?

QUESTION 2: What opportunities do you have to share your opinions or provide input on school or classroom issues? (e.g. surveys, needs assessments, listening sessions with principal or teachers, etc.)

QUESTION 3: How are families welcomed at the school? How would you describe the overall atmosphere

in the school with regard to welcoming and involving families? Can you describe any spaces or designated areas in the school or classrooms that are specifically for families?

QUESTION 4: How does the school help you to learn about community resources and to connect with other families in the school?



FAMILY ENGAGEMENT INTERVIEWS

KEY INFORMANTS

- District-level Administrators:
 - Early Education Department Heads
 - Area Superintendents
 - Professional Development Specialists
 - Family or Community Liaisons
 - Other District-level stakeholders
- School Board Members

INTERVIEW QUESTIONS: DISTRICT LEADERS AND SCHOOL BOARD MEMBERS

Please describe your position in the district and how the issue of family engagement impacts your work?

QUESTION 1: What District policies and procedures are in place to support family engagement?

QUESTION 2: What resources or supports are available to teachers, principals, and other school staff to increase their capacity to engage families?

QUESTION 3: What kinds of input are regularly collected from families? How is the information used?

QUESTION 4: What policies or procedures are in place to support the engagement of culturally and linguistically diverse families?



DOCUMENTATION / DATA ELEMENTS

- Written policy statements on family engagement
- Agenda's and rosters of members of collaborative decision-making teams and other school- and district-based committees
- Announcements/descriptions of family events
- Examples of family surveys, needs assessments, and evaluations, etc.
- Job description for Family Liaison
- Examples of Student Individualized Learning Plans (indicating family involvement)
- School Improvement Plans
- Other:



WALKTHROUGH

Focus Area: Family Engagement

Observation Checklist

Classroom/Grade level

- Pre-K K 1 2 3

In the Classroom:

- Designated space for posting school and classroom information for families (e.g. announcements of upcoming events, weekly lesson plans and menus, school calendar, etc.)
- Print materials and posting available in multiple languages
- Displays focused on children and their families (e.g. family photos, world map identifying home countries of children and families, projects in which children focus on their family, etc)

In the School Building:

- Designated family resource room or area providing information on community resources, peer meeting space, etc.
- Designated space for posting school and district information for families (academic calendar, upcoming family events, etc.)
- Welcome message and directional signage at entrance to the building
- Print resources and postings available in multiple languages
- Family liaison on site



EQUITY-FOCUSED DECISION MAKING

INTRODUCTION

What is Equity-Focused Decision Making and why is it important?

An equity-focused approach to decision making ensures that all families are represented and have the opportunity to participate in school and district level activities and events. Educational equity can be defined as, “the recognition and undoing of historical and systemic injustices that occur within a system. Educational equity is the result of eliminating individual, organizational and institutional policies and practices that prevent the realization of children’s lifelong learning and self-actualization, regardless of racial, cultural, economic or any other social factor. ” Including families in decision-making has been identified as a foundational element of effective family engagement. Schools can build a culture of inclusiveness and develop strategies that ensure that all families feel welcome and are engaged in providing input and perspective regarding school and district policies and procedures.

THIS SECTION INCLUDES:



EQUITY-FOCUSED DECISION MAKING

TEACHER (P-3) FOCUS GROUP QUESTIONS

QUESTION 1: How does the cultural and linguistic backgrounds of your students influence your planning and instruction?

QUESTION 2: What strategies do you use to ensure all families have access to information and are able to participate in classroom-level events and activities?

QUESTION 3: What strategies do you use to engage families in shared decision-making and setting goals for their children? How do you engage with culturally and linguistically diverse families?

QUESTION 4: What resources or supports are available to you to increase your understanding of issues related to educational equity and culturally responsive family engagement?

PRINCIPAL FOCUS GROUP QUESTIONS

QUESTION 1: How do you define educational equity? Can you describe how decisions you make with regard to setting school policy or procedures might include an equity consideration? What strategies do you use to ensure decisions you make include multiple perspectives?

QUESTION 2: How are families engaged in school-wide decision-making? What considerations do you make in assembling decision-making groups that include families?

QUESTION 3: How do you support teachers and other staff to ensure they are making decisions and implementing practices that involve and engage all families?

QUESTION 4: What school or district policies or procedures are in place to ensure all families have access to information and opportunities to participate?

FAMILIES FOCUS GROUP QUESTIONS

QUESTION 1: How are you involved in making decisions about your child's learning goals?

QUESTION 2: What opportunities have you had to participate in school- or district-wide decision-making activities?

QUESTION 3: What is in place in the school building to welcome all families? How do you think families feel when they enter the school building?

QUESTION 4: What is in place in your child's classroom that reflects the cultural and linguistic backgrounds of your child and your family as well as other children and families?



EQUITY-FOCUSED DECISION-MAKING INTERVIEWS

KEY INFORMANTS

- District-level Administrators:
 - Early Education Department Heads
 - Area Superintendents
 - Family or Community Liaisons
 - Other District-level stakeholders
- School Board Members
- Community leaders
- Family leaders

INTERVIEW QUESTIONS: DISTRICT-LEVEL ADMINISTRATORS AND SCHOOL BOARD MEMBERS

QUESTION 1: Can you describe your position in the district and how you define educational equity?

QUESTION 2: What strategies or mechanisms are in place to collect input and consider multiple perspectives from family and community constituents before new policies or procedures are implemented?

QUESTION 3: What considerations do district administrators make in convening advisory and decision-making groups that include families and community members?

QUESTION 4: What policies are in place and what resources are available to ensure all communication from schools and the district is accessible to linguistically diverse families and families who may lack access to resources.

INTERVIEW QUESTIONS: COMMUNITY

QUESTION 1: How have you been engaged in decision-making efforts at the District- or school-level?

QUESTION 2: What considerations do district administrators make in convening advisory and decision-making groups that include families and community members?

QUESTION 3: What kinds of issues or activities have been addressed and how are decisions made?

QUESTION 4: Before a decision is made, can you describe the district's process for gathering input from constituents?

INTERVIEW QUESTIONS: PARENT LEADER

QUESTION 1: How have you been engaged in decision-making efforts at the District- or school-level?

QUESTION 2: How did you become involved? How were you recruited or asked to participate?

QUESTION 3: What kinds of issues or activities have been addressed and how are decisions made?

QUESTION 4: Before a decision is made, can you describe the district's process for gathering input from constituents?



DOCUMENTATION / DATA ELEMENTS

- Agendas and rosters of school or district committee meetings
- Written statements regarding policies and procedures for decision-making
- Written statements regarding policies and procedures for convening advisory committees and work groups engaging families and community in decision-making
- Examples of surveys or other documents designed to gather feedback and input from community and families regarding new policies or procedures



WALKTHROUGH

Focus Area: Equity-Focused Decision-Making

Observation Checklist

Classroom/Grade level

- Pre-K K 1 2 3

In the Classroom:

- Literature and other print materials are representative of the races and cultures of children in the classroom
- Displays of children and families reflect children and families in the classroom and the community
- Dramatic play centers include props and materials that represent a variety of cultures and settings
- Children are offered learning opportunities that are based on their prior experiences, interests and abilities
- Lesson plans include activities and resources tailored to individual children or groups of children
- Lesson plans include activities and learning experiences that relate to the culture and linguistic characteristics of the students in the class
- Teachers use a variety of approaches to instruction and interactions with children in the classroom.

Throughout the Building:

- When possible, teachers and school staff speak the home languages of the students and families.
- Signage is written in multiple languages
- Displays are representative of students and families in the school and community
- Photo's of committee meetings and school-sponsored events depict diverse participation
- School newsletters of the school Web Site include announcements or summaries of decision-making meetings.

INSTRUCTIONAL LEADERSHIP & CHANGE MANAGEMENT

INTRODUCTION

What is Instructional Leadership and why is it important?

As instructional leaders, principals visit classrooms, observe teachers, provide feedback that can support continuous improvement, and assist teachers in analyzing and using data to inform instruction. School principals today play a critical role in developing a school's culture, guiding classroom instruction, and promoting student success. Research shows that principals account for at least a quarter of a school's effect on student learning, second only to the role of classroom teachers. With the rapid expansion of PreK programs in elementary schools and a new focus on the importance of building aligned learning systems that span the years from preschool through third grade (P-3) principals must now develop a specialized set of skills and knowledge to effectively support teachers from preschool through the early grades. These include establishing a P-3 culture and continuum integrated into the broader school landscape, build relationships with families and community-based early education programs, and ensure effective and appropriate teaching and assessments.

THIS SECTION INCLUDES:



INSTRUCTIONAL LEADERSHIP AND CHANGE MANAGEMENT FOCUS GROUPS

TEACHER (P-3) FOCUS GROUP QUESTIONS

QUESTION 1: Can you describe the supervision you receive from the principal? How often does he or she visit your classroom? What kind of feedback or support is provided?

QUESTION 2: What specialized professional learning opportunities are available to P-3 teachers? What role does the principal play in selecting PD content? What role do you play?

QUESTION 3: What opportunities do P-3 teachers have to communicate and plan together?

QUESTION 4: How could principals be most effective in supporting you and in creating a P-3 "continuum or culture" within the school?

PRINCIPAL FOCUS GROUP QUESTIONS

QUESTION 1: When setting school-wide goals, what considerations do you make with regard to Pre-K and K-3?

QUESTION 2: What kind of training or professional learning opportunities are most important for P-3 teachers? What policies or procedures are in place to enable teachers across P-3 to work and plan together?

QUESTION 3: What kinds of assessments are used in preschool and the early grades? How do you support teachers in administering and using these assessments?

QUESTION 4: Can you describe your approach to providing supervision and support to teachers P-3? What challenges have you encountered?

FAMILIES FOCUS GROUP QUESTIONS

QUESTION 1: As a parent of a child in an early grades classroom, can you describe some ways the principal has been involved with you or with your child's school experience?

QUESTION 2: What information does the principal provide to you about teaching and learning in preschool and the early grades?

QUESTION 3: What whole-school events have you participated in? How did they relate to teaching and learning in preschool and the early grades?

QUESTION 4: To your knowledge, how are your child's sending and receiving teachers able to work together to support transition? What opportunities do you have to meet as a team (parent, sending, and receiving teachers)?



INSTRUCTIONAL LEADERSHIP AND CHANGE MANAGEMENT INTERVIEWS

KEY INFORMANTS

- District-level Administrators:
 - Early Education Department Heads
 - Area Superintendents
 - Professional Development Specialists
 - Curriculum and Instruction Specialists
 - Other District-level stakeholders
- School Board Members
- Community-based early care and education program directors

INTERVIEW QUESTIONS: DISTRICT-LEVEL ADMINISTRATORS AND SCHOOL BOARD MEMBERS

QUESTION 1: How would you describe the district-level perception of the importance of supporting effective P-3 systems in schools?

QUESTION 2: What supports and resources are available to elementary principals to build their knowledge of child development and how children learn and capacity to serve as instructional leaders for P-3 teachers?

QUESTION 3: What is the district policy on conducting assessments in preschool and the early grades? What assessments are required? How is the data used?

QUESTION 4: What provisions for teacher and principal professional development focused on P-3 are included in your ESSA plan?



DOCUMENTATION / DATA ELEMENTS

- Examples of principal observation and feedback forms used with P-3 teachers
- Descriptions of professional development sessions focused issues specific to P-3 teaching and assessment
- Descriptions of P-3 teacher vertical planning approach
- Examples of assessments implemented across P-3
- Descriptions of principal professional development sessions focused on P-3
- Written policies regarding teacher assignments P-3
- District ESSA plans: Professional Development goals for P-3 teachers and Principals



CURRICULUM, INSTRUCTION AND ASSESSMENT CYCLE

INTRODUCTION

What is the Curriculum, instruction, and assessment cycle and why is it important?

An effective approach to meeting the needs of today's highly diverse population of young learners across the preschool to grade 3 continuum includes a complex cycle of curriculum, instruction and assessment practices. High quality curricula are research-based, address all areas of learning and development, and actively engage children in inquiry and rigorous thinking. Instructional practices include the provision of intentional interactions, well-designed learning environments and individualized teaching. Assessments are strategic and purposeful and occur progressively over time. Overall, the cycle of curriculum, instruction, and assessment is a significant factor driving effective teaching and learning in early childhood classrooms. Key elements supporting this cycle in early learning contexts often include monitoring curriculum fidelity, aligning instructional practices to standards and curriculum, and ensuring the use of curriculum-embedded and authentic assessment.

THIS SECTION INCLUDES:



CURRICULUM, INSTRUCTION, ASSESSMENT CYCLE FOCUS GROUPS

TEACHER (P-3) FOCUS GROUP QUESTIONS

QUESTION 1: What curricula and assessments are you using? Please describe the focus areas and how you use the curriculum for planning and instruction.

QUESTION 2: What professional development and other supports have you received to implement the curricula and assessments? (e.g. training, coaching, fidelity assessments, etc.)

QUESTION 3: How are your day-to-day teaching practices and interactions with children monitored and assessed? What instructional and teaching supports and resources are available to you on a regular basis?

QUESTION 4: What policies and procedures are in place to measure classroom quality? How are these classroom quality measures used to inform data use and instructional practices?

PRINCIPALS FOCUS GROUP QUESTIONS

QUESTION 1: What curricula are currently being implemented in your P-3 classrooms? How was the decision made to implement these curricula?

QUESTION 2: What training and other supports are available to teachers to support curriculum implementation and instructional practices for all learners? What is your role in supporting and monitoring instructional practices across classrooms and grade levels?

QUESTION 3: What assessments are currently being used in preschool through third grade classrooms? What is the purpose of the assessments at each level (P-3)?

QUESTION 4: How are assessments linked to the curricula and used to inform instruction? What role do you play in helping teachers to collect and analyze assessment data?



CURRICULUM, INSTRUCTION, ASSESSMENT CYCLE INTERVIEWS

KEY INFORMANTS

- District-level Administrators:
 - Early Education Department Heads
 - Area Superintendents
 - Professional Development Specialists
 - Curriculum and Instruction Specialists
 - Other District-level stakeholders
- School Board Members

INTERVIEW QUESTIONS: DISTRICT-LEVEL ADMINISTRATORS AND SCHOOL BOARD MEMBERS

QUESTION 1: What policies or practices are in place to inform the selection of curricula for preschool, kindergarten and grades 1-3?

QUESTION 2: What professional development opportunities are available to teachers and principals to support curriculum implementation and fidelity?

QUESTION 3: What is the district policy on conducting assessments in preschool and the early grades? What assessments are required? How is the data used?

QUESTION 4: What policies or procedures are in place to measure and assess classroom quality?



DOCUMENTATION / DATA ELEMENTS

- Curriculum maps
- Assessment tools used P-3
- Examples of professional development topics focused on curriculum, instruction and assessment ?
- Descriptions of professional development focused on collecting and analyzing data
- Examples of assessments implemented across P-3
- Classroom quality assessments used in P-3
- Examples of coaching plans and logs



WALKTHROUGH

Focus Area: Curriculum, Instruction, and Assessment

Observation Checklist

Classroom/Grade level

- Pre-K K 1 2 3

The Classroom Environment

- Posted lesson plans include differentiated or modified activities and instructional approaches for individual children
- Planned activities and learning experiences align with curriculum goals
- Specific learning goals are identified as part of the posted lesson plans
- Available learning materials and resources reflect and align to curriculum and subject matter content

The Teacher

- Interactions and instructional approaches to working with children are differentiated and reflect the needs and interests of the children
- Teachers scaffold children's language and concept development by linking current activities to prior learning
- Teachers provide clear instructions and support children to complete learning tasks
- Teachers implement curriculum with fidelity
- Instructional practices are appropriate for supporting subject-matter content and curriculum goals and objectives
- Teachers are using observation and embedding assessment activities into students' learning experiences and activities

The Students

- Students are actively engaged in learning activities
- Students have opportunities to be engaged in activities focused on a variety of subject matter content throughout the day
- Students have opportunities to be engaged in activities that address all dimensions of development: language and literacy, cognitive, social emotional, physical, and approaches to learning
- Students are engaged in activities throughout the day that support problem solving and decision-making
- Students have opportunities throughout the day to interact with each other
- Students are given multiple opportunities and modalities for demonstrating learning

PROFESSIONAL LEARNING

INTRODUCTION

What is the Professional Learning and why is it important?

Effective professional development for teachers across P-3 improves and supports alignment of curriculum implementation and high-quality student-teacher interactions. P-3 professional learning is best accomplished through a targeted focus on continuous improvement linked to shared or collaborative planning opportunities and ongoing reflection on classroom practices. Professional development opportunities can include a variety of supports for teacher learning such as formal training sessions and workshops, coaching and mentoring, and participation in communities of practice (CoP) and professional learning communities (PLC). Studies suggest that training and workshops may be most effective when teachers can link learning to practical classroom application and training and when it is combined with ongoing individualized supports such as coaching or mentoring. Effective professional development has several key features. These include, but are not limited to: 1) support for improvement of knowledge, skills, and competencies; 2) regular in-classroom coaching that facilitates dialogue with an expert teacher; and 3) community-oriented professional learning experiences rather than stand-alone professional activities.¹

THIS SECTION INCLUDES:



PROFESSIONAL LEARNING FOCUS GROUPS

TEACHER (P-3) FOCUS GROUP QUESTIONS

QUESTION 1: What kinds of professional learning and development activities and opportunities are available to teachers? What types of activities have you found to be most impactful on your practice?

QUESTION 2: What policies or resources are in place to support P-3 teachers working and learning together in vertical and horizontal teams or in Communities of Practice/Professional Learning Communities?

QUESTION 3: What in-class/work-embedded professional development supports are available to P-3 teachers? What support is available to increase alignment across P-3?

QUESTION 4: Please describe the school or district approach to creating and implementing Individual Professional Development Plans?

¹ Adapted from: <https://www.newamerica.org/education-policy/policy-papers/indispensable-policies-practices-high-quality-pre-k/>

PRINCIPALS FOCUS GROUP QUESTIONS

QUESTION 1: What kinds of professional development activities and opportunities are available to teachers in the school? What training or support is available specifically focused on P-3?

QUESTION 2: What is your role in working with P-3 teachers to develop Individualized Professional Development Plans? How are goals and activities identified?

QUESTION 3: How are professional development topics identified? How are teachers engaged in the planning for professional development?

CLOSING QUESTION: What professional development or learning supports do you feel are most important to support a high quality P-3 system in the school?



PROFESSIONAL LEARNING INTERVIEWS

KEY INFORMANTS

- District-level Administrators:
 - Early Education Department Heads
 - Area Superintendents
 - Professional Development Specialists
 - Curriculum and Instruction Specialists
 - Other District-level stakeholders

INTERVIEW QUESTIONS: DISTRICT-LEVEL ADMINISTRATORS

QUESTION 1: What policies and requirements are in place at the District level regarding teachers and principal professional development?

QUESTION 2: What role do District leaders/specialists play in planning, delivering, or supporting professional development? How does the district support school-based professional development activities?

QUESTION 3: What policies or practices are in place to support job-embedded or classroom based supports for teacher development (e.g. coaching models, district supervision and training of coaches, etc.)?

QUESTION 4: What professional development opportunities does the District provide that are tailored specifically to P-3 teaching and alignment? What opportunities specifically tailored to principals in schools that include pre-K programs?



DOCUMENTATION / DATA ELEMENTS

- District or school Professional Development Plans (schedule, topics, requirements, etc.)
- Examples of agendas or goals for PLC's
- Examples of Individual Teacher Professional Development Plans
- Example of coaching plans and logs
- Job descriptions for coaches

PROGRAM DELIVERY OPTIONS

INTRODUCTION

What is meant by Program Delivery Options and why are they important?

Districts can consider a number of program delivery options in establishing P-3 systems in schools. These include offering part or full-day preschool programs for some or all four-year-olds or three and four-year-olds; establishing mixed preschool delivery systems and partnerships with community-based early learning programs; providing full day kindergarten for all 5 year olds, and offering enhanced services and supports for families. Such options can increase access, address needs and priorities of families, support higher quality across early learning settings, and improve student outcomes.

THIS SECTION INCLUDES:



PROGRAM DELIVERY OPTIONS FOCUS GROUPS

TEACHER (P-3) FOCUS GROUP QUESTIONS

QUESTION 1: You just heard the list of elements that could be considered as program options when establishing a P-3 system, which of those are currently available in this district? How have they impacted your work?

QUESTION 2: What advantages do you see in offering preschool to all children? And, what are the advantages in providing preschool to both 3 and 4 year olds? How, if at all, do you think the two years should differ?

QUESTION 3: For Pre-K and K teachers: What policies or practices are currently in place that support

partnerships with community-based preschool teachers? (e.g. community providers invited to attend school-sponsored PD, joint transition planning, etc.)

QUESTION 4: One way that schools and districts are diversifying programming is by taking on a stronger role as a “community hub” offering for example parent training and other non-academic resources for families. What kinds of additional services do you feel would most important to provide at your school?

PRINCIPALS FOCUS GROUP QUESTIONS

QUESTION 1: You just heard the list of elements that could be considered as program options when establishing a P-3 system, which of those are currently available in this district? How have they impacted your work?

QUESTION 2: A number of states are creating mixed delivery systems for providing preschool services. What role do you see the schools playing in such a system? What barriers would you expect to encounter?

QUESTION 3: In an effort to create a more consistent level of quality across community-based and school-based preschool programs, a number of dis-

tricts and schools invite community providers to participate in professional development. What policies or procedures such as this are currently in place in the district?

QUESTION 4: One way that schools and districts are diversifying programming is by taking on a stronger role as a "community hub" offering for example parent training and other non-academic resources for families. Please discuss any ways your school has or could act as a "community hub".

FAMILIES FOCUS GROUP QUESTIONS

QUESTION 1: What advantages do you see in offering preschool to all children? What are the advantages in providing preschool to both 3 and 4 year olds? How, if at all, do you think the two years should differ?

QUESTION 2: A mixed preschool delivery system means that preschool is offered in a variety of settings including public schools and community programs. How would this kind of option be helpful to you?

QUESTION 3: What advantages do you see in offering full-day kindergarten to all 5 year-olds?

QUESTION 4: What role do you think the school could play in helping families to access community resources and supports?



PROGRAM DELIVERY OPTIONS INTERVIEWS

KEY INFORMANTS

- District-level Administrators and School Board Members:
 - District Superintendent and Asst. Superintendent
 - Early Education Department Heads
 - Area Superintendents
 - Other District-level stakeholders

INTERVIEW QUESTIONS: DISTRICT-LEVEL ADMINISTRATORS

QUESTION 1: A number of states and districts are utilizing a mixed delivery system to expand access to preschool. Is this system utilized in this District? If yes, what have been the advantages and the challenges? If no, what are the barriers to this option?

QUESTION 2: How would/does a mixed delivery system impact district-level policies and practices related to administrative oversight, professional development, teacher and program quality, etc.

QUESTION 3: Please describe current preschool and kindergarten programming in the district: length of program day, ages of children served, availability of wrap-around services, etc.

QUESTION 4: What policies or practices are in place to support the inclusion of children with special needs into P-3 classrooms?

QUESTION 5: What services and supports are offered to families through the district?



DOCUMENTATION / DATA ELEMENTS

- Examples of MOU's w/ community providers for mixed delivery
- District policies for full day kindergarten
- District policies for PreK program options (Full day, half day, hours of operation, etc.)



FUNDING P-3

INTRODUCTION

What does funding P-3 mean and why is it important?

Developing a P-3 financing strategy can be challenging and is complicated by the fact that multiple state and federal funding streams are involved in supporting programs across preschool and the early grades. While support for kindergarten through third grade is based on funding formulas and generated for the most part through state and local funds, programs serving children 0-5 are supported through a number of federal funding streams. As a result most P-3 financing strategies require efforts such as blending or stacking funds, leveraging public-private partnerships and identifying the most sustainable funding sources to reach scale. Funds can be used to increase access, improve program quality, support families, and build capacity of teachers and administrators. ¹

THIS SECTION INCLUDES:



FUNDING FOCUS GROUPS

PRINCIPAL FOCUS GROUP QUESTIONS

QUESTION 1: What additional costs do you anticipate will result from the creation of a P-3 system in the school/district?

QUESTION 2: What current funding streams could be leveraged to support a P-3 system? What funds are earmarked and which funds are flexible? What options is the district considering for stacking or blending funds?

QUESTION 3: What activities or procedures are in place at the district level now to plan for P-3 funding? What has the district done to identify and cost out elements of a P-3 system?

QUESTION 4: What innovative strategies are being considered to generate new or additional funds to support P-3?

¹ A useful tool for determining costs related to P-3 programming has been developed by the Foundation for Child Development and can be accessed at: <https://www.fcd-us.org/assets/2016/04/PreK3rd-WhatIsThePriceTag.pdf>



FUNDING INTERVIEWS

KEY INFORMANTS

- District-level Administrators and School Board Members:
 - District Superintendent and Asst. Superintendent
 - Early Education Department Heads
 - Area Superintendents
 - Other District-level stakeholders

INTERVIEW QUESTIONS: DISTRICT-LEVEL ADMINISTRATORS

QUESTION 1: Has a fiscal map of existing P-3 funding streams been conducted by the state or by the district? Have current gaps and duplication been identified?

QUESTION 2: What current funding streams could be leveraged to support a P-3 system? What funds are earmarked and which funds are flexible? What options is the district considering for stacking or blending funds?

QUESTION 3: What activities or procedures are in place at the district level now to plan for P-3 funding? What has the district done to identify and cost out elements of a P-3 system?

QUESTION 4: What innovative strategies are being considered to generate new or additional funds to support P-3?



DOCUMENTATION / DATA ELEMENTS

- Examples of fiscal maps and analysis
- Description of current funding sources and targets (state, federal, local)
- P-3 cost analysis by key element
- ESSA plans

COMMUNITY PARTNERSHIPS

INTRODUCTION

What are Community Partnerships and why are they important?

Community engagement has been identified as a key component of comprehensive school improvement planning. In many districts, partnerships between schools and community organizations and institutions are being established to increase access to services and resources and support academic and non-academic needs of students. Partnerships bring together diverse individuals and groups, including principals, teachers, school superintendents, school boards, community-based organizations, business, trusted community institutions, health and human service agencies, parents and other community leaders. Effective partnerships are built on shared leadership and a common set of goals and priorities. Community partnerships provide opportunities to share resources and expertise, connect students and teachers to broader learning environments, increase access to wrap-around supports and services beyond the school day and year, effectively link to comprehensive services, and increase family well-being and engagement in their child's education.

THIS SECTION INCLUDES:



COMMUNITY PARTNERSHIPS FOCUS GROUPS

TEACHER (P-3) FOCUS GROUP QUESTIONS

QUESTION 1: What community partners are engaged with your school and/or classroom and how are they engaged? (e.g. tutoring, adopt-a-classroom business partners, professional development sponsors, resource speakers, field trip sponsors, etc.)

QUESTION 2: What procedures are in place to identify and engage potential partners? What role do you play in developing or managing these partnerships?

QUESTION 3: What services and supports are being offered to families and children through partnerships with communities agencies and and what other kinds of supports do families need?

QUESTION 4: How do services and supports offered address the cultural and linguistic background of families and students?

PRINCIPALS FOCUS GROUP QUESTIONS

QUESTION 1: What procedures or practices are in place to assess the needs of the school community? How are families engaged in identifying needs?

QUESTION 2: What procedures or mechanisms are in place to establish relationships and identify goals, roles and responsibilities? (e.g. MOU's)

QUESTION 3: What community partners are engaged with your school? What services do they provide? What strategies do you use to identify and engage partners?

QUESTION 4: How do services and supports offered address the cultural and linguistic background of families and students?

FAMILIES FOCUS GROUP QUESTIONS

QUESTION 1: What community services or resources are available to you through the school? (Health, social services, adult education, tutoring, etc.) What role does the school play in connecting you to services or community resources?

QUESTION 2: How does the school involve families in identifying needed community resources and services? How would you like to be involved?

QUESTION 3: What services or community resources could the school provide that would be most helpful for you or to your child?

QUESTION 4: How do services and supports offered address the cultural and linguistic background of your family and other families in the school community?



FUNDING INTERVIEWS

KEY INFORMANTS

- District-level Administrators:
 - Superintendents and Asst. Superintendents
 - Early Education Department Heads
 - Area Superintendents
 - Family and Community Relations administrators
 - Other District-level stakeholders
- School Board Members
- Community stakeholders

INTERVIEW QUESTIONS: DISTRICT-LEVEL ADMINISTRATORS AND SCHOOL BOARD MEMBERS

QUESTION 1: Overall, what is the District's approach to community engagement?

QUESTION 2: What strategies are in place to identify potential partners? What mechanisms or strategies are used to survey community resources?

QUESTION 3: What strategies or mechanisms are used to identify school and family needs that could be supported through community partnerships?

QUESTION 4: What provisions for increasing community partnerships and collaboration are included in your ESSA plan?

INTERVIEW QUESTIONS: COMMUNITY STAKEHOLDERS

QUESTION 1: How have you and/or your organization been involved in schools or with the district? Please describe.

QUESTION 2: How would you describe your experience? What worked? What could have been better?

QUESTION 3: In your opinion, does the district do a good job of partnering with the community? Does the district take full advantage of opportunities and resources

in the community? If yes, what successful strategies are used to engage and sustain partnerships? If no, who else could the district be partnering with?

QUESTION 4: What processes or procedures are in place to establish agreements, set goals, outline activities, and provide feedback?



DOCUMENTATION / DATA ELEMENTS

- Examples of MOU's or other formal agreements with community partners
- Examples of family needs assessments or other tools used to determine community partnership needs.
- List of community partners
- Examples of community scans or other tools used to map available community resources
- District ESSA plans: focus on community engagement

STRATEGIC DIRECTION AND EVALUATION

INTRODUCTION

What does Strategic Direction and Evaluation mean and why is it important?

As districts undertake efforts to implement P-3 systems in schools, it is important to address the complexities of the work with a targeted and comprehensive strategy and a framework for tracking progress, measuring outcomes, and making midcourse corrections. The following statement made by Kauerz and Coffman (2013) in their introduction to the *Framework for Planning, Implementing, and Evaluating PreK-3rd Grade Approaches*, captures both the scope of the work as well as the potential outcomes that can be realized. “The vision for PreK-3rd grade approaches is to improve the quality and coherence of children’s learning opportunities, from the experiences children have before they enter the K-12 system and extending through elementary school. Ultimately, comprehensive PreK-3rd grade approaches hold the potential to improve child outcomes and to prevent or close achievement gaps. Effective instruction, instructional coherence, and meaningful learning opportunities are central to comprehensive PreK-3rd grade approaches. PreK-3rd grade reforms are similar to systems change efforts in that they are complicated and complex. They cross the traditional boundaries of early learning (also known as birth-to-five) and K-12 education. They cross multiple grades and have multiple elements. They aim for practice and policy changes in many areas (e.g., leadership, professional development, data) and at multiple levels (e.g., classrooms, schools, districts). They aim for multi-faceted changes in multiple groups (e.g., children, families, teachers, education leaders, community members).”¹

THIS SECTION INCLUDES:



STRATEGIC DIRECTION AND EVALUATION FOCUS GROUPS

TEACHER (P-3) FOCUS GROUP QUESTIONS

QUESTION 1: What do you consider to be the most important elements of an effective P-3 system? What is your role in supporting the P-3 implementation process?

QUESTION 2: How will you know the P-3 implementation process is successful? What outcomes would you expect to see for yourself and for your students?

QUESTION 3: What data is currently being collected (student, teacher, school, etc.) that could help measure progress or success?

QUESTION 4: What would an ideal P-3 system look like in your school? What would need to be in place at the District and at the school levels?

¹ https://depts.washington.edu/pthru3/PreK-3rd_Framework_Legal%20paper.pdf

PRINCIPAL FOCUS GROUP QUESTIONS

QUESTION 1: What do you consider to be the most important elements of an effective P-3 system? What is your role in supporting the P-3 implementation process?

QUESTION 2: How are you currently gathering information on current P-3 practices that are in place? How are you identifying gaps?

QUESTION 3: How will you know the P-3 implementation process is successful? What outcomes would you expect to see?

CLOSING QUESTION: What would an ideal P-3 system look like in your school? What would need to be in place at the District and at the school levels?



STRATEGIC DIRECTION AND EVALUATION INTERVIEWS

KEY INFORMANTS

- District Superintendent and Asst. Superintendent
- Early Education Department Heads
- Area Superintendents
- School Board Members
- Other District-level stakeholders

INTERVIEW QUESTIONS: DISTRICT-LEVEL ADMINISTRATORS AND SCHOOL BOARD MEMBERS

QUESTION 1: What do you consider to be the most important elements of an effective P-3 system? How is the District supporting the development of P-3 systems in schools and classrooms?

QUESTION 2: To what extent are there elements in place? What else needs to be accomplished or addressed? What do principals and classroom teachers need to implement the elements of P-3?

QUESTION 3: How are you currently gathering information on current P-3 practices that are in place? How are you identifying gaps?

QUESTION 4: How will you know the P-3 implementation process is successful? What outcomes would you expect to see?



STRATEGIC DIRECTION AND EVALUATION DOCUMENTATION/DATA ELEMENTS

- P-3 strategic plans
- P-3 implementation resources and guidelines
- Examples of P-3 in other states and districts
- Examples of professional development plans focused on P-3

District P-3 Outcome Planning Sheet

STRENGTHENING THE P-3 PIPELINE

ALIGNMENT
TRANSITIONS
ENROLLMENT/ DATA COLLECTION
FAMILY ENGAGEMENT

IMPROVING PROGRAM QUALITY

EQUITY-FOCUSED DECISION-MAKING
INSTRUCTIONAL LEADERSHIP & CHANGE MANAGEMENT
CURRICULUM-INSTRUCTION-ASSESSMENT CYCLE
PROFESSIONAL LEARNING

INCREASING SYSTEM-WIDE IMPACT

PROGRAM DELIVERY OPTIONS
FUNDING
CONNECTING WITH COMMUNITIES
STRATEGIC DIRECTION AND EVALUATION

1

Look at the areas of focus from the P-3 Needs Assessment and P-3 Learning Tour

Which of the three key focus areas are most aligned with the District overall priorities?

Once the area of focus is selected, In which strategic components is the District "Getting Started"?

Strategic Components

After selecting the strategic component, consider the following questions as you examine the associated indicators for progress and success from the P-3 needs assessment.

How does your District philosophy align with these policies and practices?

How do your supports (for teachers, school leaders and families) support implementation of new policies and practices on these specific areas?

Based on your reflections, use language from the tool to set a SMART goal.



S.M.A.R.T.

Based on your reflections, use language from the tool to set a SMART goal for the next academic year.



GOAL

Create a set of action steps to reach your District Goal.



CONSIDER

.....
Current AY:

.....
Summer:

.....
Next AY:

Your support strategies for continuous improvement.

Resources, both human & financial.

Messaging your goals to your stakeholders.

What methods will you use to determine progress?

What does success look like in this time frame?

WORK WITH US

Children are at the center of what we do.

Through our partnerships, School Readiness Consulting integrates our expertise in strategic thinking, best practice and evaluation to transform early learning and affirm the right of all children to thrive. We work to promote equitable early learning experiences that support each child's success, leading to a better world.

We impact the lives of young children

and the adults who support them by partnering with states, cities, school districts, non-profit organizations, and foundations in pursuit of improving school readiness. By working at the intersection of three critical areas - evaluation, practice and systems – we bring the context, leverage, and influence to develop innovative solutions that build our partners' capacity to support high-quality early learning. Our comprehensive approach integrates our commitment to social justice and our expertise across practice, strategy, and evaluation to build equitable systems for young children, birth through third grade.

Our team has supported P-3 efforts

throughout the nation. Our experiences working with states, school districts, charter schools, child care and family child care, and Head Start programs allow us to align priorities of stakeholders, language being used to create systems, and the strategic and practical action items that improve early learning for children birth through third grade.

Contact our team to learn more

about how we support leaders through the process of needs assessments, learning tours, action planning, resulting in a comprehensive and actionable strategy for P-3 in your district or school.

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