

# Erikson Institute New Schools Project

## Data brief for 2012–13

### New Schools Project: A PreK–3rd Initiative

The New Schools Project partners with Chicago public schools to promote high quality early education, PreK–3rd grade.

The project targets five key elements of PreK–3rd:

- Caring, inclusive classroom learning communities
- High-quality teaching that is intellectually challenging
- Responsive practices and comprehensive curricula that support the development of the whole child, including social-emotional skills necessary for high levels of learning
- Continuous assessment to guide teaching and learning
- Family and cultural connections

We emphasize the alignment of all five elements from PreK through third grade.

### The New Schools Project professional development approach

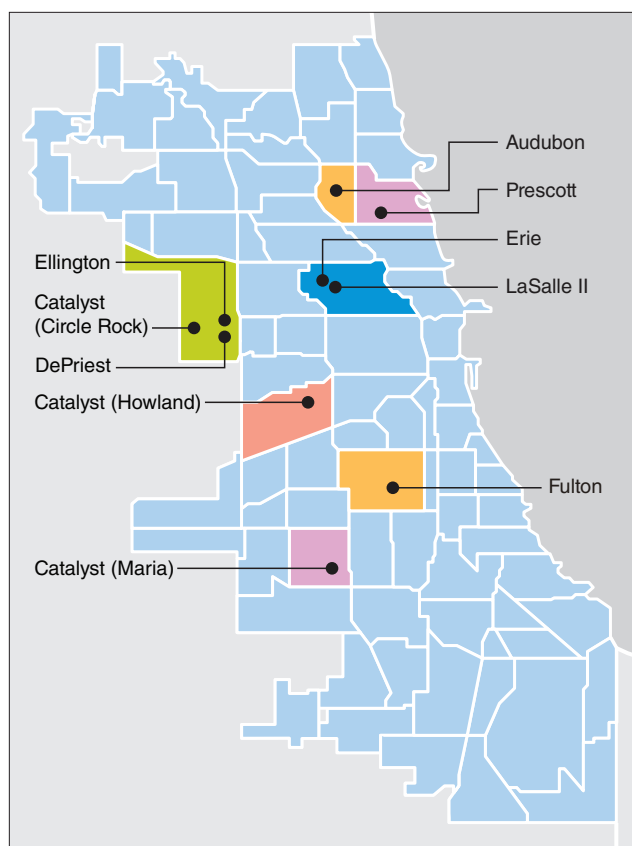
The New Schools Project provides coordinated professional development supports to increase early educators' knowledge and teaching skills and to build strong PreK–3rd professional learning communities. A facilitator serves on-site at each partner school to provide supports that include the following:

- Formal professional development
- Classroom observations
- Co-teaching to model new practices
- Teacher coaching
- Co-facilitation of grade-level and cross-grade-level
- Consultation for administrators

*“Our New Schools Project facilitator continues to provide the best professional development I’ve had in 14 years of teaching. The project is a huge asset to our school.”*

—Teacher, New Schools Project partner school

### Partner schools and locations



#### John Audubon Elementary School

3500 N. Hoyne Avenue

#### Oscar DePriest Elementary School

139 S. Parkside Avenue

#### Catalyst–Circle Rock Charter

5608 W. Washington Boulevard

#### Edward K. Ellington Elementary School

243 N. Parkside Avenue

#### Erie Elementary Charter School

1405 N. Washtenaw Avenue

#### Robert Fulton Elementary School

5300 S. Hermitage Avenue

#### Catalyst–Howland Charter School

1616 S. Spaulding Avenue

#### LaSalle II World Language Academy

1148 N. Honore Avenue

#### Catalyst–Maria Charter

6727 S. California Avenue

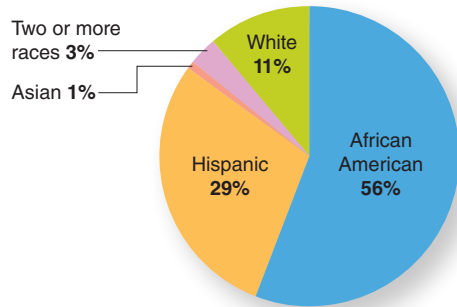
#### William Prescott Elementary School

1632 W. Wrightwood Avenue

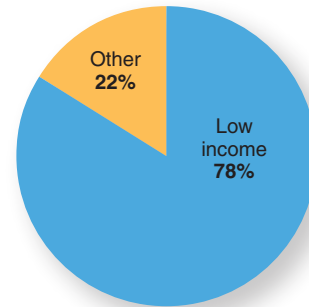
## Who are New Schools Project's students?

In 2012–13, the New Schools Project served more than 2,300 PreK–3rd grade students enrolled in racially and linguistically diverse partner schools in Chicago. A large majority of these students were from low-income communities.

Students by race



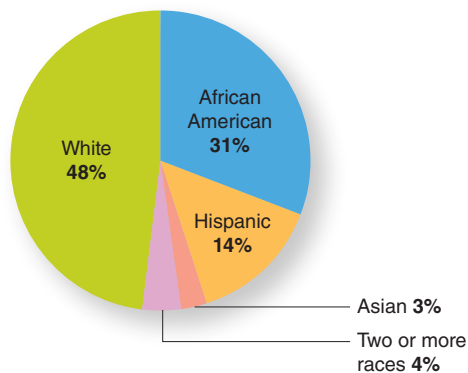
Students by income



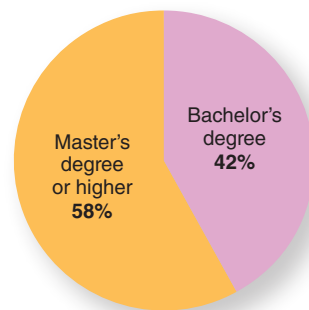
## Who are New Schools Project's teachers?

More than 150 teachers, teacher assistants, and content specialists received intensive professional development support. Teachers had an average of 9.7 years of experience. More than half of the teachers had advanced degrees. New teachers with less than three years of experience made up about 17% of the New Schools Project participants.

Teachers by race



Teacher education



*“The partnership with Erikson’s New Schools Project has been extremely beneficial this year. I feel as though I have significantly grown as an educator because of the support that I have received from this program.”*

—Teacher, New Schools Project partner school

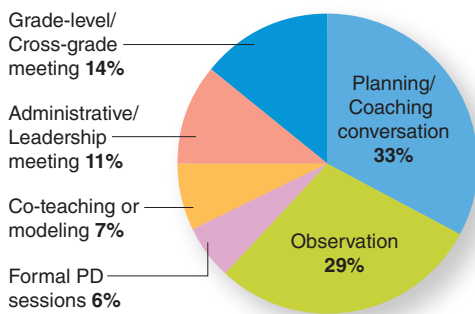
## What professional development did the New Schools Project provide?

### School-based support to teachers

New Schools Project facilitators provided more than 1,400 hours of professional development support to teachers.

The majority of this support was provided through one-on-one interaction between the facilitator and teacher, including coaching, classroom observations, and co-teaching.

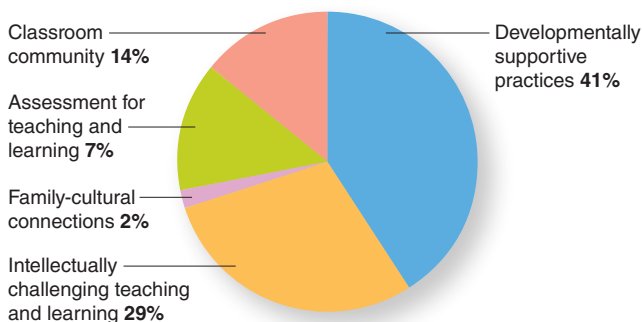
Facilitators also helped lead team meetings to promote the alignment of learning expectations, curriculum, instruction, and assessments across PreK–3rd.



### Content of school-based teacher support

The majority of professional development support to schools focused on implementing classroom practices that promote high levels of learning while supporting children’s development.

Formal professional development sessions addressed these and other key elements of high-quality PreK–3rd practice, including assessments to guide teaching and creating positive, inclusive classroom communities.

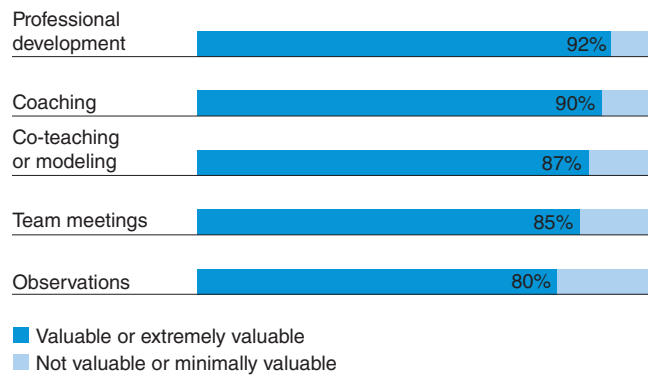


## Did school-based support benefit PreK–3rd teachers’ development?

### Perceived value of supports by teachers

Teachers rated how valuable each type of support was for their development as a teacher during 2012–13.

A large majority of teachers rated all types of support as valuable or extremely valuable.

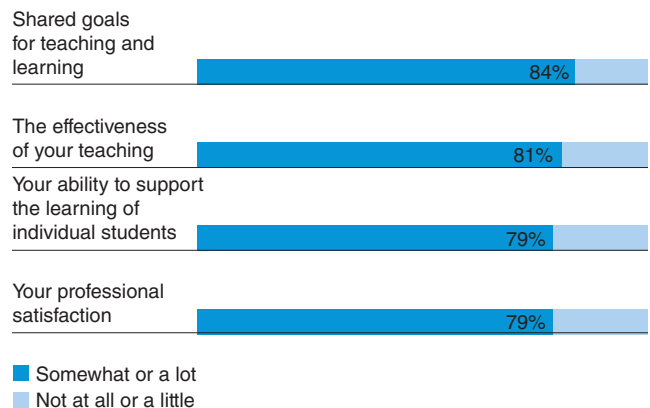


## Did the professional learning communities benefit PreK–3rd teachers’ development?

### Perceived contribution of PLC

Teachers rated how their professional learning community (PLC) and collaborative teamwork with colleagues contributed to their professional development.

A large majority of teachers perceived that the PLC benefited their professional development somewhat or a lot. The largest number of teachers reported that the PLC improved both their ability to share goals for teaching and learning and the effectiveness of their teaching.



## Did teachers engage in teacher leadership opportunities?

### Teacher participation in new leadership opportunities

A 2012–13 New Schools Project goal was to increase opportunities for teachers to engage in shared professional learning and leadership for high-quality PreK–3rd practice. Teacher leadership can help build a productive professional learning community and in turn support sustainable change within schools.

Facilitators encouraged teachers to become involved in PreK–3rd leadership opportunities. Sixty-two percent of teachers participated in at least one leadership activity.

Gave a presentation at a Conversations That Matter event hosted by the New Schools Project	16
Mentored Erikson Institute student teachers	10
Led a professional development session	8
Participated on the Erikson PreK–3rd leadership team at my school	7
Provided ongoing mentoring or coaching for other teachers	7
Hosted cross-school observations	6

*“Our facilitator has truly helped me develop more academic creativity and rigor with my students. I am eternally grateful to her. She authentically cares about student academic learning.”*

—Teacher, New Schools Project partner school



Conversations That Matter

## What network-wide activities did the New Schools Project support?

The New Schools Project supplemented school-based support with network-wide PreK–3rd professional development activities.

### Summer Institute

Sixty-six teachers from New Schools Project partner schools participated in summer professional development



workshops to prepare for the 2012–13 school year. The Summer Institute, which launched the school year’s professional development cycle, covered topics including balanced

literacy, intellectual rigor in writing, building classroom learning communities, and PreK–3rd curriculum alignment.

### Conversations That Matter series

Conversations That Matter is a five-part event series focused on fostering discussion across New Schools Project network schools about PreK–3rd teaching. The series also enabled teachers and student teachers to engage in teacher leadership opportunities by sharing their work and giving presentations to their colleagues.

#### 2012–13 Conversations That Matter

- Kick-Off Celebration of PreK–3rd Partners
- One Classroom for All: Using Differentiated Instruction to Successfully Teach Writing to All Students
- Addressing Linguistic Diversity in PreK–3rd: Practical Strategies for Supporting Language Development and Literacy for All Students
- Families and Teachers as Allies: How Do We Get There?
- A Room Full of Mirrors: Using Literature to Make Connections Between Young People’s Lives and the Content We Teach

### Network conference

Thirty-four teachers participated in *A Celebration of PreK–3rd Learning*. This academic year-end conference featured instructional presentations and professional sharing by teachers in the New Schools Project network.



New Schools Project network conference

*“With guidance from the New Schools Project, we have strengthened our school’s community of learners. PreK–3rd teachers are sharing our knowledge and skills to learn from each other.”*

—Teacher, New Schools Project partner school

## Conference presentations

New Schools Project facilitators and faculty advanced new ideas and shared lessons learned about PreK–3rd through an array of presentations. Highlights from regional and national conferences included the following presentations:

- Dennis, S., Maxwell, C., & Mitra, S. (2013, March). *Integrating Rigor AND Developmentally Appropriate Practices in Writing Instruction*, Illinois Reading Council Conference, Springfield, IL.
- Epley, P. (2013, June). *Family Needs Assessment*, Chicago Metro Area Association for the Education of Young Children, Chicago, IL.
- Maxwell, C. (2013, June). *Developing Practices PreK–3rd Grade*, Featured Speaker Panel, National Association for the Education of Young Children Professional Development Institute, San Francisco, CA.
- McNamee, G. (2012, November). *Common Core State Standards and Early Childhood Education*, Featured Panel, National Association for the Education of Young Children, Atlanta, GA.
- McNamee, G. (2012, November). *Standards in Preschool and Kindergarten*, 92nd Street Y Wonderplay Conference, New York City.

*For further information, please contact*

Chris Maxwell, Ph.D., Director  
New Schools Project  
Erikson Institute  
(312) 893-7204  
cmaxwell@erikson.edu

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**New Schools Project**  
451 North LaSalle Street  
Chicago, IL 60654-4510  
[www.erikson.edu](http://www.erikson.edu)

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