

High Quality PreK-3 as Educational Reform:

What Do School Administrators Really Need to Know and Do?

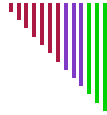
- Chris Maxwell, Erikson Institute, New Schools Project
- Cherie Novak, Fulton Elementary, Chicago Public Schools
- Valora Washington, CAYL Institute
- Martha Wheeler-Fair, Frances Starns Centers, Milwaukee Public Schools
- Cindy Osorto, Erie Elementary Charter School, Chicago
- Renee Blahuta, Prescott Elementary School, Chicago



Our Agenda

- PreK-3 as Reform: Why? What?
- Administrator Knowledge for PreK-3
- Lessons Learned from the Ground Level: What Administrative Actions Matter Most?
- Protecting a PreK-3 Vision





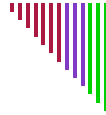
Mrs. Jones just took over as principal of Wildwood Academy. Wildwood serves 420 children, PreK-8th grade. Most are poor, and many are recent immigrants.

Teachers are stopping by to "bend" Mrs. Jones' ear:

- A 2nd grade teacher laments that all PreK and K must do is play - - - "Don't they know we have standards to meet here?"
- The 4th grade teacher wants her old PreK job back. "The new 4th grade teacher was so weak they shifted her to PreK and bumped me up to 4th."
- The kindergarten teacher shares the student learning portfolios she keeps. "These show how much progress our children make even though it doesn't always show up on the district assessments."


Are these situations that arise in the early grades?

What questions, or tensions, do they bring up for administrators, like Mrs. Jones, who want to build a high quality PreK-3 program?



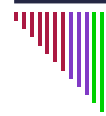
PreK-3 as Reform: Why?

- Educational outcomes for poor children of color
 - 4th-Graders below "Basic" in Reading (NAEP, 2009):
 - Chicago: 64% African-American; 53% Hispanic
 - Milwaukee: 71% African-American; 60% Hispanic
 - Childhood Poverty
 - Chicago 38% African-American; 23% Hispanic
 - Milwaukee 42% African-American; 23% Hispanic
- PreK important, but benefits fade (Brooks-Gunn, 2003)
- Multiple years of *quality* primary instruction make a difference, but often lacking (Stuhlman & Pianta, 2009)
- New knowledge about foundational learning (Dickinson, 2006)




PreK-3 as Reform: What?

- High Quality Teaching, Learning, Assessment Aligned from PreK through 3rd Grade - - - Comprehensive, Connected, and Challenging
- Informed by Knowledge of Early Learning and Development:
 - Relationships
 - Active, Interactive
 - Social, Emotional, Physical, *and* Intellectual
 - Flexible
- Partnerships with Families
- Collaboration and Continuous Learning Among Staff





PreK-3 as Reform: What?

- Bridging the Best of Early Childhood Education and Elementary Education (K-12)
- School administrators as *Leaders for Change* and *Knowledgeable Brokers of Culture*



What School (and other) Administrators Need to **Know** to Lead Pre-K to 3, Especially for Children Who Are Often Not Served Well by School



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Know How to Lead




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Know What We See



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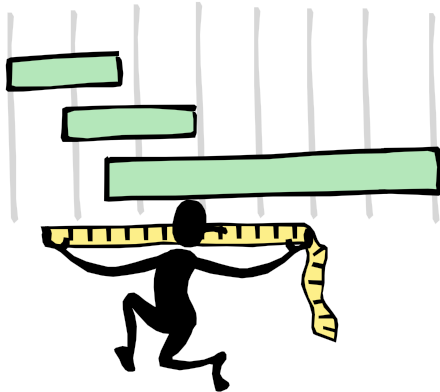
Know how to build community and family partnerships



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Know How to Measure Success



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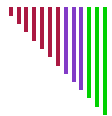
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Know How to Communicate and Build Community



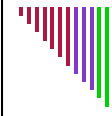
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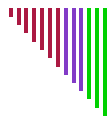
Leadership for PreK-3 (and up): The Journey

- The Frances Starms Centers, Milwaukee Public Schools
- The Start:
 - Starms Early Childhood Center, "Where We Play to Learn"
 - Readiness Initiative: Could Public Schools Do It Well?



Grew Into the Frances Starms Centers:

- Early Childhood and Starms-Monumental:
 - Ages 3-5 years
- Starms Discovery Learning Center:
 - Ages 6-14 years
- The Children:
 - Total enrolled - 750
 - Free/Reduced Lunch - 86%
 - African American - 89%
 - Special Education Needs - 23%

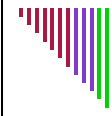


Leadership for PreK-3 in an Urban Public School: What Mattered Most

1. Listening to families and deciding to "build up" from early childhood to primary (and beyond)

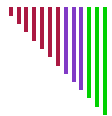


Starms Discovery Learning Center:
Where Learning is an Adventure



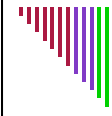
Leadership for PreK-3 in an Urban Public School: What Mattered Most

2. Organizing School around Non-Traditional Groupings:
 - "Families" - - Multi-age, Non-graded
 - Cross-Categorical Full Inclusion
 - Early Childhood, Primary, Intermediate, Upper Level
 - Team Teaching
 - Weekly Team Planning for Curriculum and "Kid Talk"



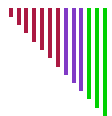
Leadership for PreK-3 in an Urban Public School: What Mattered Most

3. Investing in Resources to Support Active, Interactive Learning and Social Competence
 - People First
 - Staff
 - Focused Professional Development - - The Starms' Way
 - Long-term teacher development - growing our own
 - Materials and Experiences



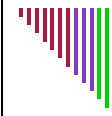
Leadership for PreK-3 in an Urban Public School: What Mattered Most

4. Establishing Time, Structures, Skills, and Expectations for Collaboration
 - Teacher teams, including specialists
 - Support Team
 - Family Outreach (e.g., Home Visits), Support, and Education



Leadership for PreK-3 in an Urban Public School: What Mattered Most

5. Sticking with it for the long-term
 - And then the kids came - - - then the standards - - then NCLB
 - Working it through on behalf of children, families, and staff
 - It's more than a notion, but well worth the journey



Robert Fulton Elementary

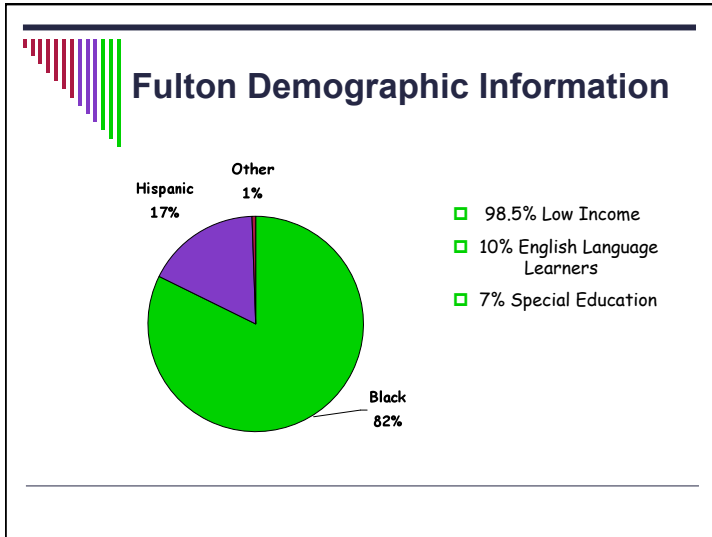
Principal: Cherie A. Novak
Asst. Principal: Takia J. Foster



Who is Fulton?



Area 29



Fulton Student Population

PK	PK	K	1 ST	2 ND	3 RD
28	36	59	44	44	65
2 Teachers		2 Monolingual 1 Bilingual	2 Monolingual 1 Bilingual	2 Monolingual 1 Bilingual	2 Monolingual 1 Bilingual

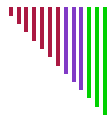
Administrative Decisions & Actions that Matter Most for PreK-3

- Heading into my journey
- Robert Fulton Elementary, Chicago Public Schools
- What are the high leverage points?

Decisions & Actions that Matter Most for PreK-3

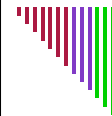
At Fulton, we...

- Organize PreK-3 as a Unit
- Work together weekly in PreK-1st & 2nd-3rd grade clusters
- Support ongoing, applied professional growth during cluster and WAM



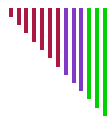
Decisions & Actions that Matter Most for PreK-3

- Provide individual teacher coaching support, including Erikson Partnership
- Promote continuity and continuous progress for children through cross-grade planning, and looping



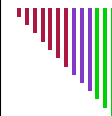
Decisions & Actions that Matter Most for PreK-3

- Link standards and "developmentally appropriate practices" as we construct curricula
- Emphasize formative assessments, including analyses of student work
- Hold ourselves to instructionally focused accountability



What Strategies Advance the PreK-3 Vision?

Administrative Trust and Support for New Practices: Looping



What Strategies Advance the PreK-3 Vision?

Prescott Elementary:
Using the Tension Across DAP and Standards as a Positive Bridge Toward Excellence





Strategies to Protect and Sustain a Vision for Pre-K to 3

29

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Strategies

- ▶ Partnerships
- ▶ Community
- ▶ Communication
- ▶ Site-based Initiatives



▶ 30

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