

Strengthening Coherence and Impact in Early Learning

PACE Annual Conference
January 25, 2024



Table Introductions

- Name
- Organization
- Why you chose to come to this breakout session

Panelists



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San Rafael City Schools



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Let's Play, Let's Learn, Let's Align

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SAN RAFAEL CITY SCHOOLS | EQUITY, COMMUNITY, JOY



San Rafael City Schools:

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

SAN RAFAEL CITY SCHOOLS | EQUITY, COMMUNITY, JOY



Goal: Coherent experience for families and students

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

Building On

Early Childhood Success Grant (2012-2024)

- PK-3: preschool - elementary school partnerships
- Data, social emotional learning, SEAL content units and strategies
- Teacher to teacher communication and collaboration
- Professional development



Building On and Learning From

Partner Meetings and Collaborations (2021-22)

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



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

Building Within

Honor, affirm and teach (2022-current)

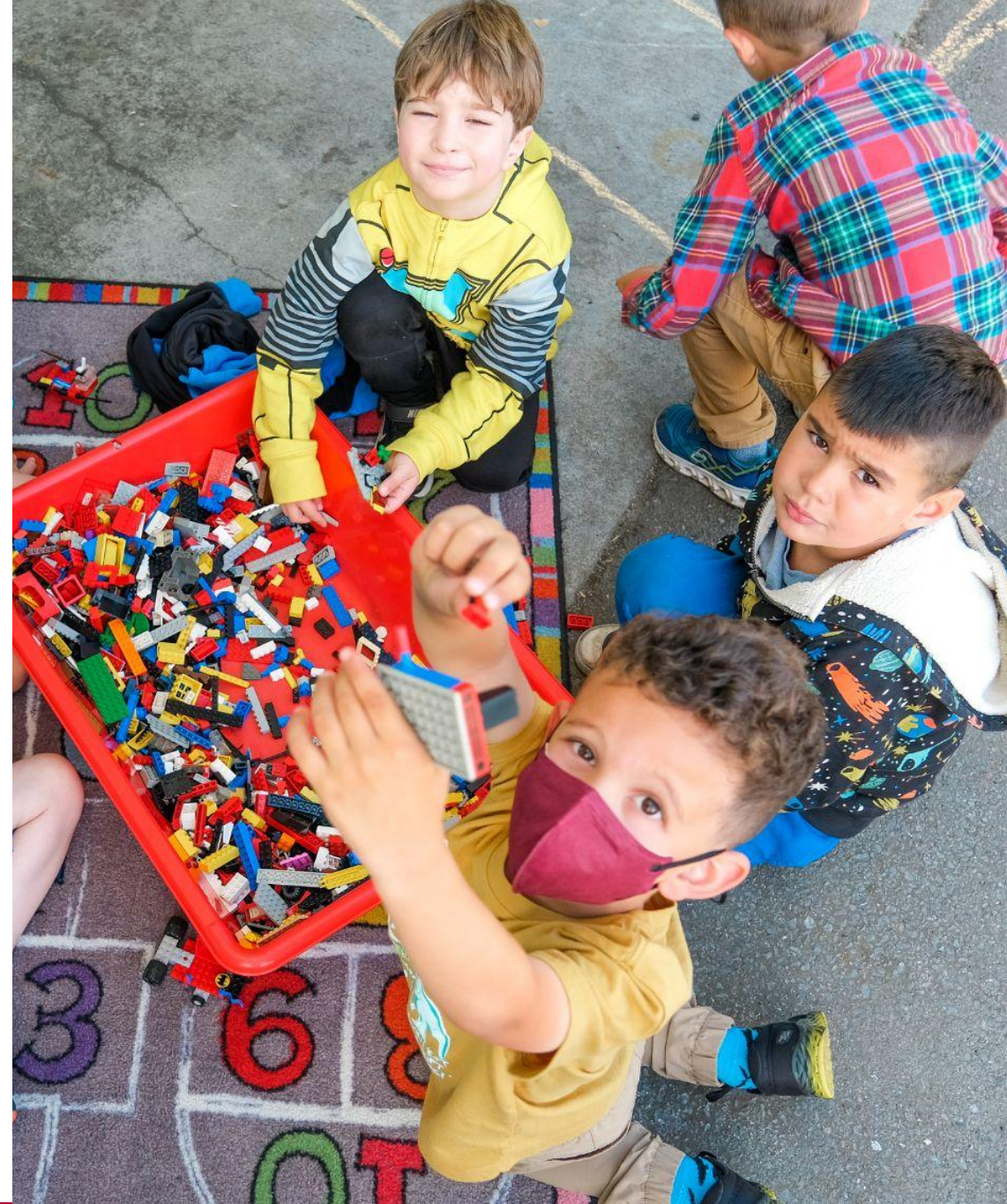
- TK at all schools
- Apply to be a TK Teacher
- PD structures
 - summer institutes
 - classroom set-up coaching and consults
 - monthly PD
 - coaching
- Second adult - teacher partnership



Building Up

Reflect, refine and align (2022-current)

- P3CC - learning labs
- Teaching Pyramid - Second Step and Kimochis
- SEAL content units
- Scope and sequence



Next Steps

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

Challenges

- Enrollment
- Tk Teacher workforce
- Budget
- Data systems
- Space



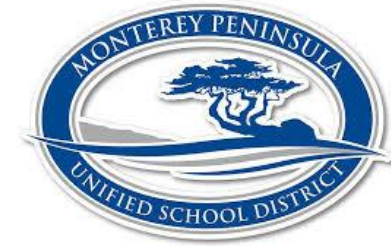
Demographics

10K Students	68% SED	27% Multilingual Learners	61% Latinx
3 Early Childhood Education Centers 6m-4yrs	7 (TK-6) 3 (TK-8) Elementary Schools	2 Middle Schools	3 High Schools 1 Ed Options 1 Adult School

Preschool to 3rd Grade Coherence

P3CC Pilot - CA Ed Partners (Math Focus) July 2020- June 2023	P3CC Pioneer (Literacy Focus) July 2022- June 2024
Improvement team(s) consists of teachers, site admin, district admin, and academic coaches	

Monterey Peninsula Unified School District



Strengthening Coherence and Impact in Early Learning

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The “Original” Why

- In 2015 Monterey Peninsula Unified School District (MPUSD) received data from First 5 Monterey County (F5MC) 2015 Kindergarten Readiness Assessment (KRA) conducted with a random sample of public elementary schools. MPUSD sampled over 550 students showing that only 27% percent of its students were prepared for kindergarten.
- The Kindergarten Readiness Assessment (KRA) provides a snapshot of school readiness for nearly 2,500 Monterey County children who entered public schools in the fall of 2015. The sample frame ensured representation based on both academic performance and geographic region of the county.

Exhibit 4. Percent of Children who Exhibited Comprehensive Mastery, by County Region⁸
(based on the average score across all items for each child)



All differences are statistically significant; $p < .001$

Exhibit 8. Source of Child Care During the Year Before Kindergarten*

	MPUSD 2015 (n=471) % Parents	Countywide 2015 (n=1,664) % Parents
From a relative other than a parent	34.4	48.9
In a private home from a non-relative	7.2	14.1
Head start	19.7	21.7
Public preschool	32.9	27.2
Private preschool	20.0	9.1
Transitional kindergarten	15.1	16.6
Other	4.0	3.8

Coherence Taking Shape

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



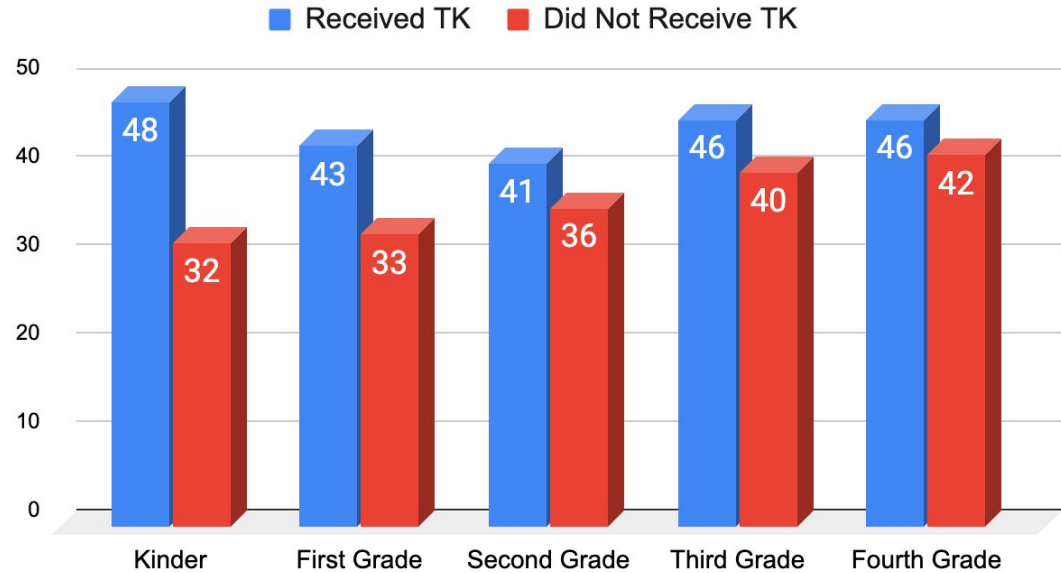
EARLY CHILDHOOD
EDUCATION PATHWAYS

Seamless transition from pre-K to kinder

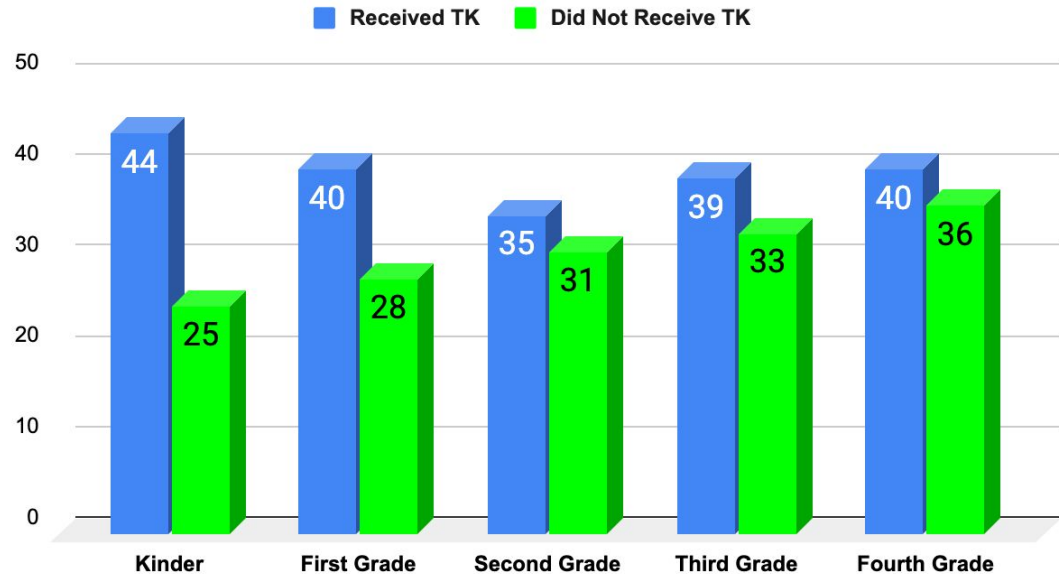
The Fadeout is Real

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

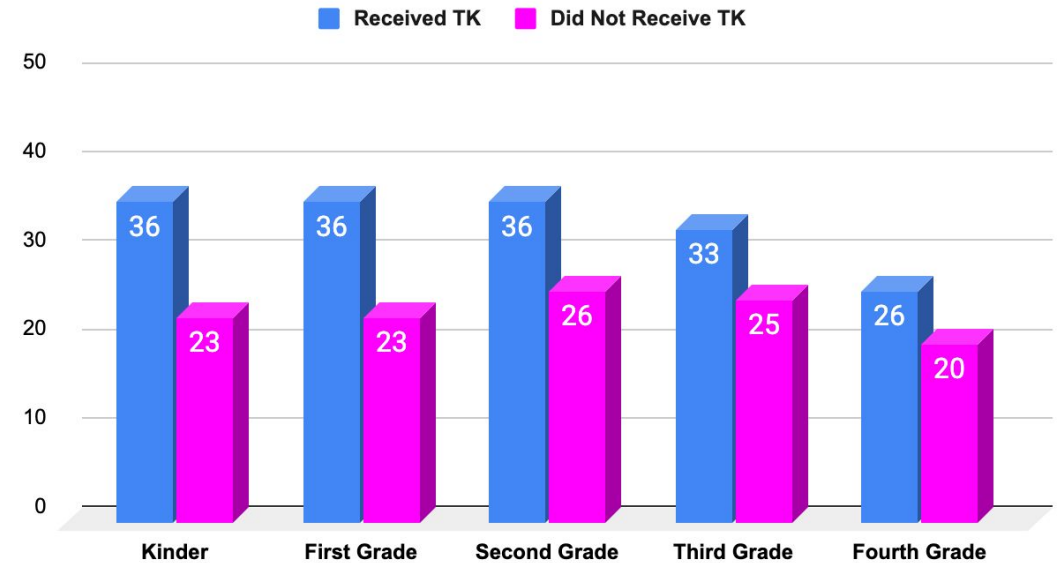
Average Percentile Earned on i-Ready Reading: Fall 2019



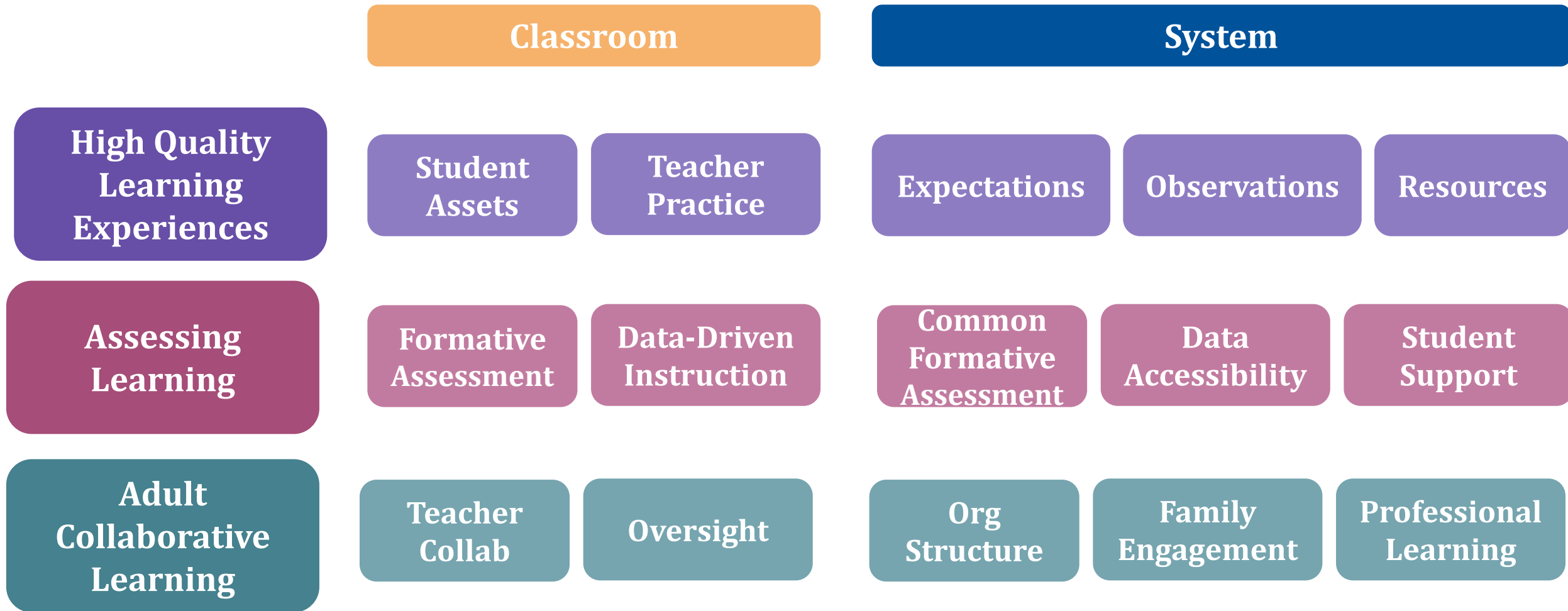
SED Average Percentile Earned on iReady Reading: Fall 2019



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



PreK-3 Coherence Roadmap



Year 1 Math: Beginning our work

Classroom

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

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

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

System

The power of vertical PLCs.

Beginning to understand the components of system coherence.

Adopted NEW math curriculum TK-8.

Year 2 Math: Deepening Our Work

Classroom

Continued district-wide vertical PLCs

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

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

District-wide book study at each site. ●

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

System

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

Each teacher received funding to build collections.

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

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

Year 3 Math: Scaling and Sustaining Our Work

Classroom

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

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

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

Instructional rounds focusing on student learning around the mathematical HLPP ● ● ●

Site-based vertical PLCs analyzing student work ● ● ●

System

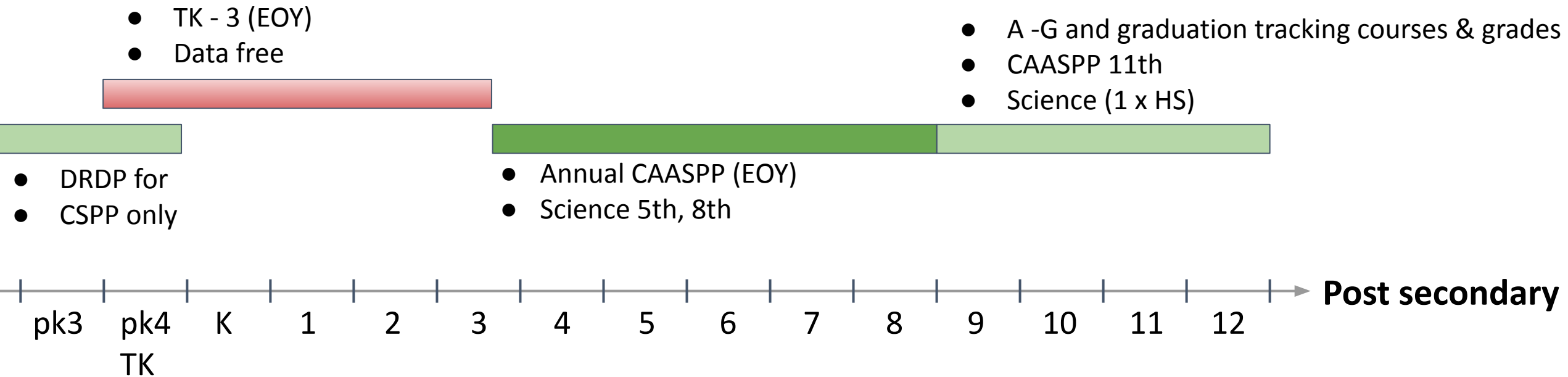
Teachers learning from other teachers - Vertical PLCs or getting into each other's classrooms learning from student thinking and learning.

Site-based empowerment

Building Leadership Capacity



Picture of the data system we have



Data needed to realize our investment in UTK

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What's wrong with that picture?



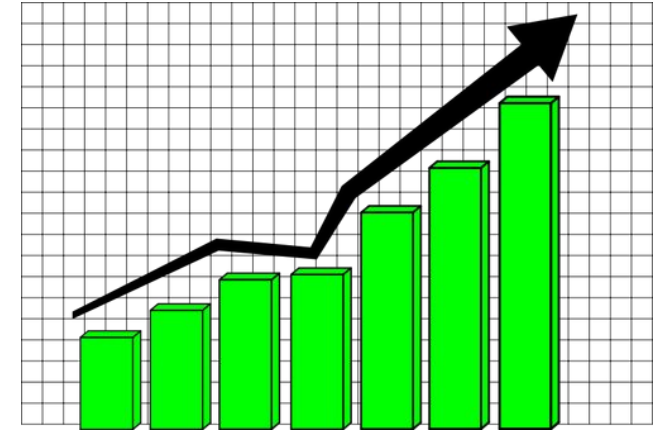
- At the state level, essentially $\frac{1}{3}$ of students' time in the public school system is invisible
- At the district level, there are high stakes attached to how students do on CAASPP tests in 3rd-8th grade, but there's no information on how students are doing until that point.
 - This decreases political incentives for superintendents/boards to ensure students have a good foundation, and
 - Makes it hard for districts to see how students progress through their system

Adding TK increases the need to know

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



What we need to measure



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

Read more

[Gallagher, Hill and Lafortune \(2024\)](#)

Questions/comments:

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Table Talk

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

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