Creating Common Ground: Transition and Alignment

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What Research Tells Us

- Neuroscience and Brain Development
- Disadvantage and Disparities throughout Childhood

Presentation to Denver’s Countdown 4
Kindergarten Readiness Summit. Denver, CO.
Brain Development

Experience Shapes Brain Architecture

Brains are Built from the Bottom Up (Skill begets skill)

Source: Center on the Developing Child

Cognitive, Social, and Emotional Development are Connected: You Can’t Do One Without the Other

Ability to Change Brains and Behaviors Decreases Over Time

Disadvantage and Disparities

Source: Center on the Developing Child, Harvard University

Average Nat’l NAEP Reading scores Grade 4 by Race/Ethnicity

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<th>Year</th>
<th>Asian/Pac Island</th>
<th>Black</th>
<th>Hispanic</th>
<th>White</th>
<th>Nat’l Avg</th>
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<td>2011</td>
<td>240</td>
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But Achievement Gaps Start Much Earlier

Growth of Achievement Gaps As Children Age

We Know What To Do


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P-3 Essentials

The P Part

**High quality** learning opportunities pre-school (‘P’) help children be ready for school.

FDK

**High quality** Full-Day Kindergarten is a transition year for all children.

Grades 1-3

**High quality** early grades sustain the gains and lay the foundation for later learning.

Changing Our Paradigm

Blocks

Pop-Beads

### Different Ways to Think About Pop-Beads

Alignment from:
- Year-to-year
- Program-to-program
- Person-to-person

### Transitions

- Is a conceptual approach, not a collection of separate activities.
- Provides possibility for push-up and push-down influence.
- Done well, change experiences not just for children...but also for families, teachers, and program administrators.

Ultimate Outcomes (Child)

1. Develop strong foundational cognitive skills (literacy/communication and math).
2. Develop social and emotional competence.
3. Establish patterns of engagement in school and learning.

But to get to child outcomes, adults must act in different ways.

**Adult Actors**
- District Leaders
- Principals
- Teachers
- Site Administrators
- Families
- Community Leaders

**CHILD-LEVEL IMPACTS**
http://developingchild.harvard.edu/resources/multimedia/videos/three_core_concepts/serve_and_return/

What makes this work so hard...

- 0-5 and K-12 are different galaxies (L. Wing)
- Lack of shared vocabulary
- Lack of trust/understanding
- We are accustomed to our Cylinders of Excellence
- The Undisciplined Pursuit of More (G. McKeown)
Questions to Ask Yourselves

| What will [this transition activity] accomplish for children? |
| ...for their families? |
| ...for teachers (both those in early learning and K-3)? |
| ...for the systems (cylinders of excellence) themselves? |

Always keep children at the center of our pop-bead thinking.

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