



PEER Early Childhood Education Conference
5/24/16



Connecticut Office of
Early Childhood

The Neag PK3 Leadership Program

Leaders matter to ensure successful pathways to
high school graduation

UConn

NEAG SCHOOL
OF EDUCATION

Session Goals

- ◆ Explore 3 pillars of CT initiatives –PK-3, Standards, Leadership
- ◆ Share research regarding neuroscience and brain development with conceptual and practical framing
- ◆ Establish common ground and understanding of the importance of the PK-3 continuum
- ◆ PK3 Leadership
- ◆ Connecting and advocating

The CT Context

- ◆ Office of Early Childhood
- ◆ Birth to Grade 3 Leaders
- ◆ Standards –
 - ◆ Early Learning and Development Standards
 - ◆ K-3 Social, Emotional and Intellectual Habits
 - ◆ Connecticut Core Standards
- ◆ PK-3 Leadership

“...an effective principal is going to look at what’s not happening or what can happen differently in the teaching and learning process to support that child to grow.”

“I’ve seen elementary school principals who I can tell have never stepped into an elementary school, who come from middle school and high school, where their positions are highly regarded and come into an elementary school and, honestly, as bright and as smart as they are, and as much respect and regard I have for them, they have to work really hard to really understand the dynamics of young children, and the effectiveness that they can bring if they add more insight and knowledge to it.”

“I think that a lot of my colleagues have elementary school background and experience and probably a few more have secondary level experience, so I think early childhood background and experience is not a given.”

Starting at the End: What are we after?*

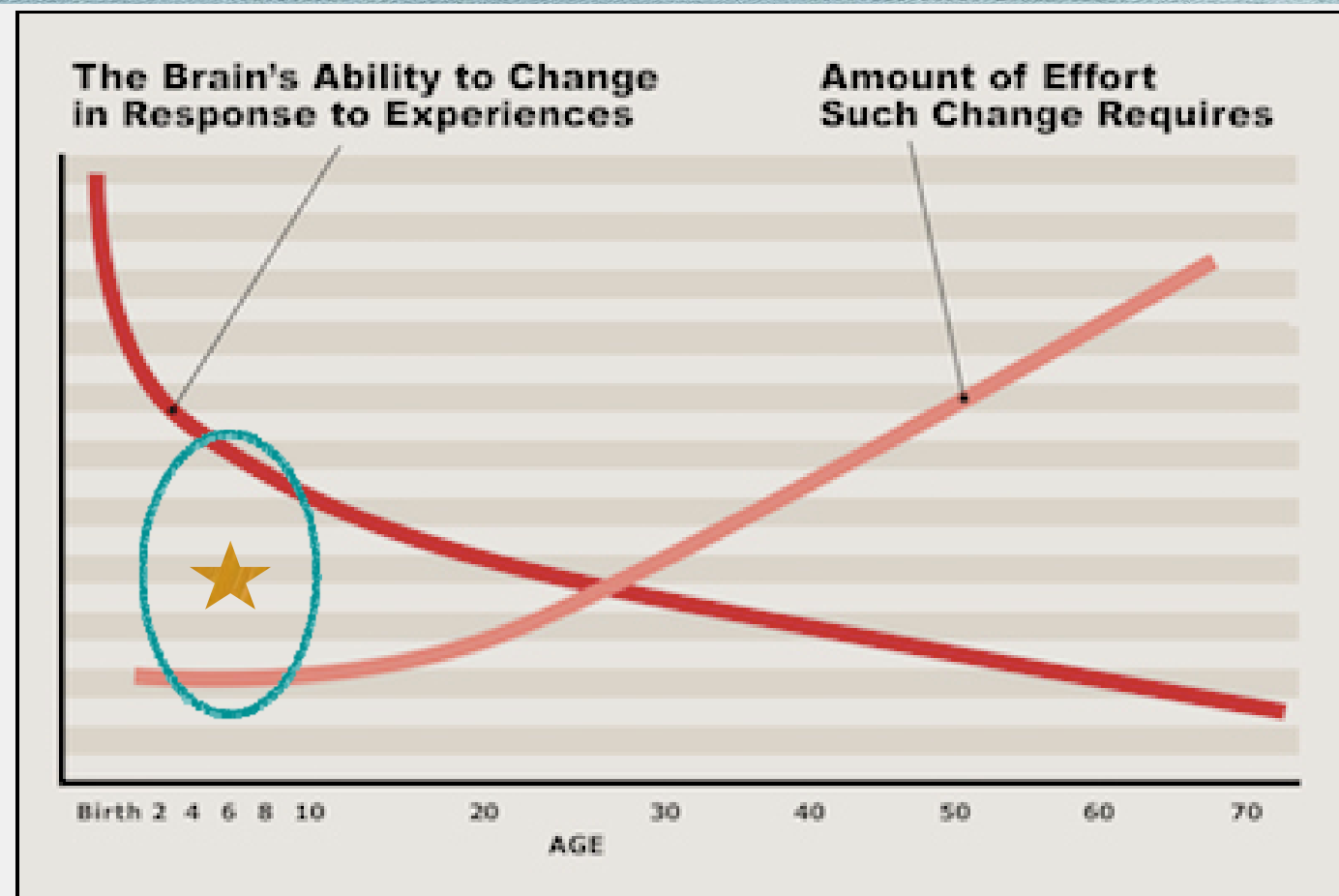
Better Outcomes for Children

- 1 Strong foundational cognitive skills (literacy/communication and mathematics)
- 2 Strong social and emotional competence
- 3 Consistent patterns of engagement in school and learning

* Kristie Kauerz Presentation 7.13.15

PK3 Leadership – what's important?

Form a triad and identify three to five topics that are essential for leadership development of early childhood programs (PK through grade 3)



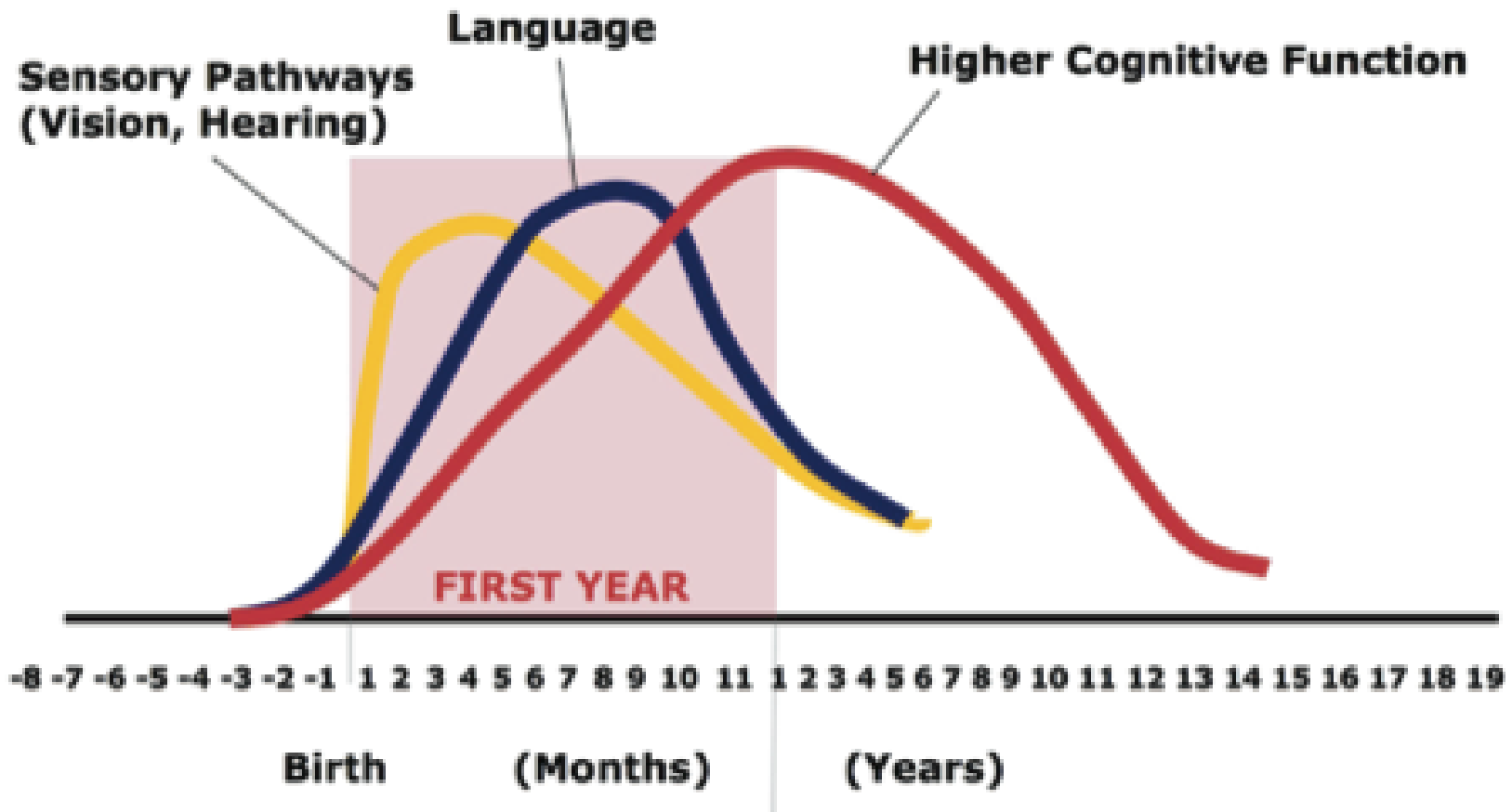
Source: Center on the Developing Child-Harvard University

Earlier is better!



Human Brain Development

Neural Connections for Different Functions Develop Sequentially



Executive Function: Skills for Life and Learning



Center on the Developing Child
HARVARD UNIVERSITY

Executive Functions

Inhibitory control of actions and attention

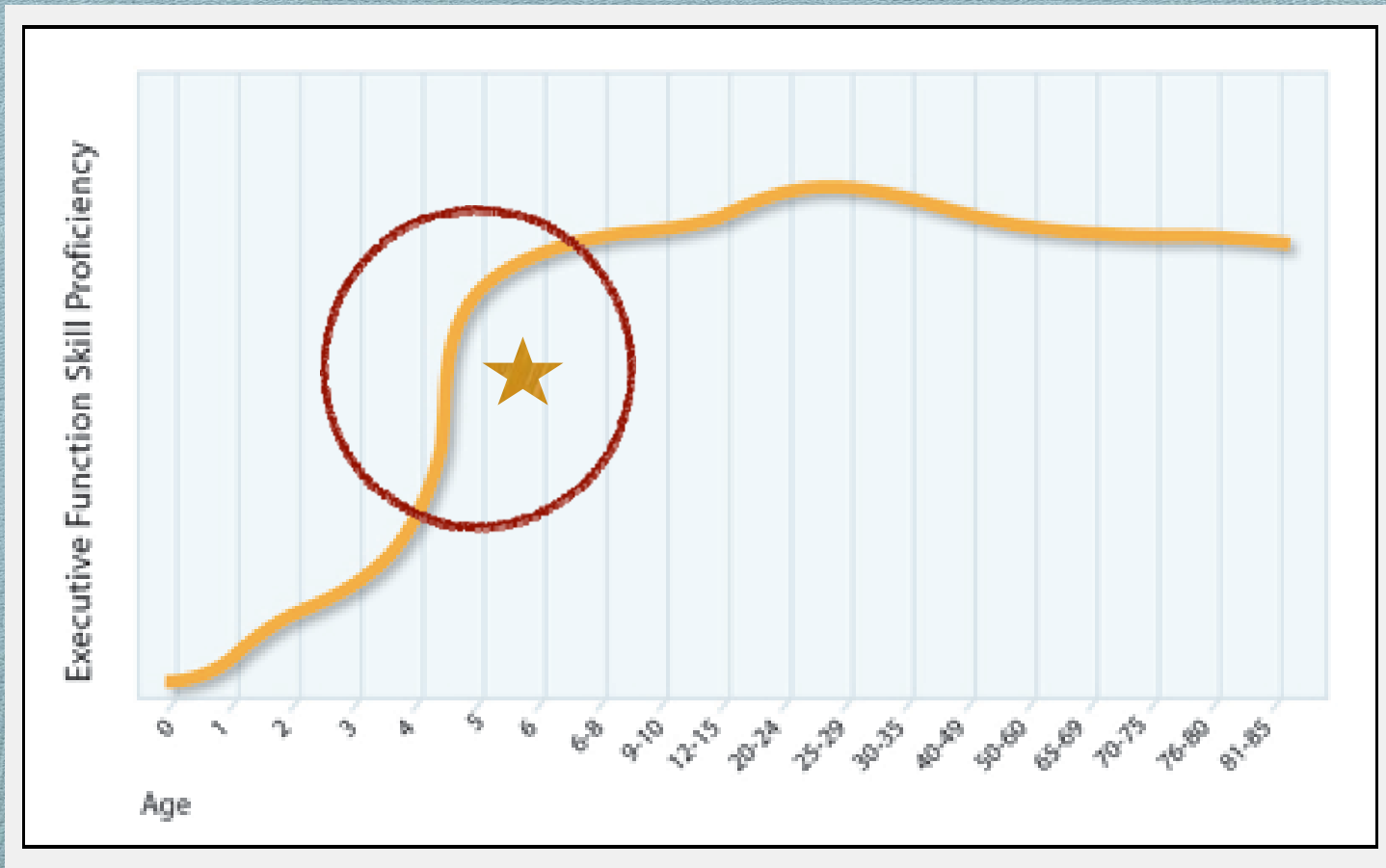
- ◆ self-control or discipline
- ◆ selective or sustained attention

Working memory

- ◆ holding information in mind & working with it

Cognitive flexibility

- ◆ thinking “outside the box”
- ◆ adapt to different rules



Source: Center on the Developing Child-Harvard University

Executive Function Skills Build Throughout
Childhood and Adolescence

Executive Function Over School Age Development

Task Complexity and Performance

Orienting
Reactivity

Self-control
Cognitive Flexibility
Working Memory

Engagement
Persistence
Interest

Planning
Long-term Goal Setting
Motivation
Grit

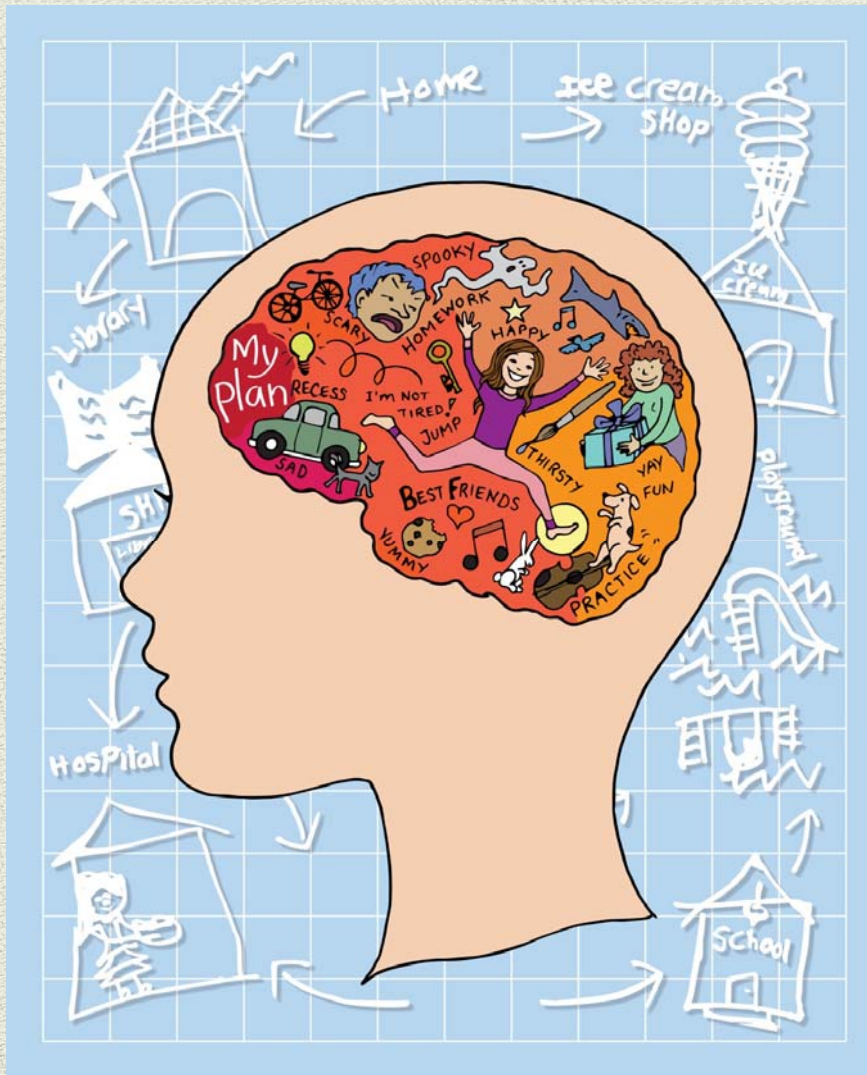
Birth to 3

Early
Childhood

Middle
Childhood

Adolescence

Supporting Executive Function, Language, Literacy and Mathematical Thinking



- ◆ Positive impact of specific strategies on:
 - ◆ Working memory
 - ◆ Reasoning
 - ◆ Math
 - ◆ Attention
 - ◆ Reading
 - ◆ Vocabulary

Classroom interventions can improve self-regulation

High levels of dramatic play improve self-regulation when children practice making the rules and then by regulating their own and their playmates' behaviors.

Blair and Raver, 2015,
Barnett et al, 2011,
Bodrova & Leong, 2003,
Vygotsky, 1977



Reflection

Does the research regarding brain development, executive function and play influence best practices in your organization?

How?

Why PK-3?

“Now if we are to prevent the achievement gap and develop a cradle-to-career educational pipeline, early learning programs are going to be better integrated with the k-12 system.”

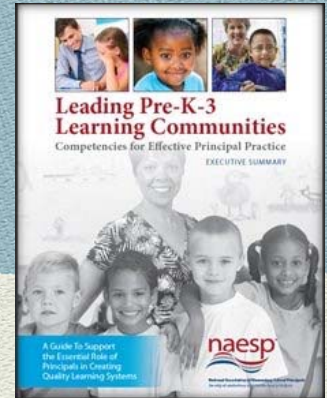
Arne Duncan
U.S. Secretary of Education
National Association for the Education of Young Children Conference,
November, 2009
Washington DC.



What is PK-3?

The continuum of learning that spans the traditional boundaries of prekindergarten (learning-based programs children experience before they enter school) and the early elementary grades (k-3).

Key Elements



- ◆ High-quality PK for all
- ◆ Full-day kindergarten
- ◆ Highly qualified teachers (with at least bachelor's degrees)
- ◆ Sharing, planning, and professional learning across grade levels
- ◆ Strong leadership
- ◆ Quality, developmentally appropriate, aligned curriculum and standards PK to third grade
- ◆ Shared Accountability (preschools, public schools, parents, community)

*Leading Pre-K-3 Learning Communities:
Competencies for Effective Principal Practice*
National Association of Elementary School Principals

Studies Informing PK-3

- ◆ Chicago Longitudinal Study
- ◆ Early Childhood Longitudinal Study, Kindergarten Class of 1998-1999
- ◆ Head Start Impact Study (Final Report-2010)
- ◆ National Head Start/Public School Early Childhood Transition Demonstration Study
- ◆ National Longitudinal Survey of Youth, 1979: Child Surveys
- ◆ National Institute of Child Health and Development (NICHD) Study of Early Childhood and Youth Development (SECCYD)

WHY?

- ◆ Issues of consistent quality in PK and K-3
- ◆ Lack of alignment within PK/K-3 and across PK/K-3
- ◆ The opportunity and achievement gaps start early...and continue...

[PK-3 Video, New America Foundation](#)

Watch What is PreK-3rd? About the Film Share

PreKindergarten - 3rd Grade

A New Beginning for American Education

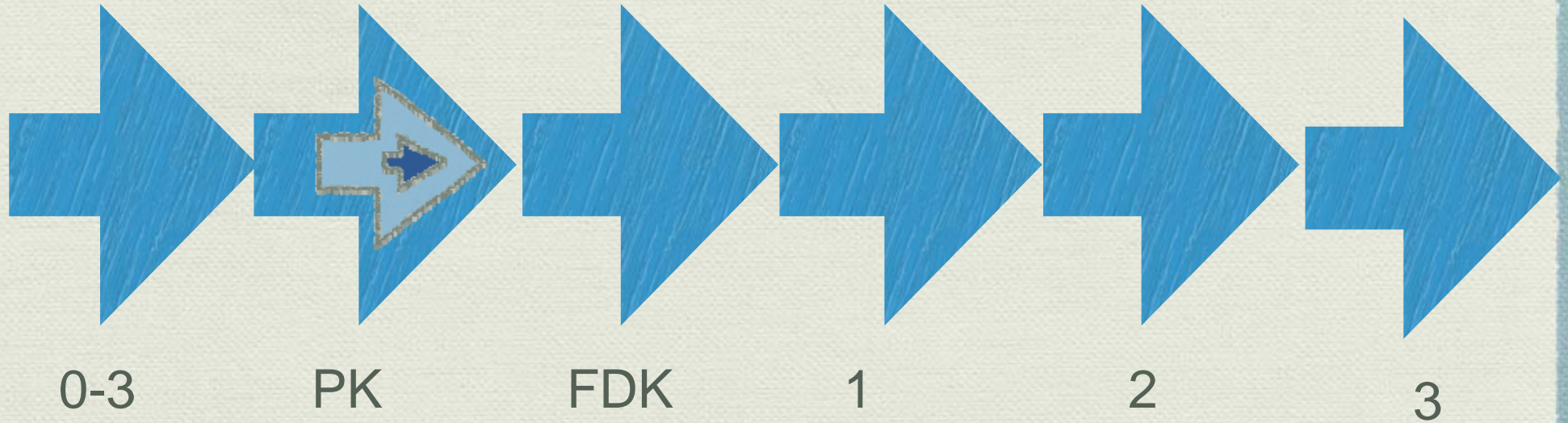


embed
share
HD
is on

00:00 00:00

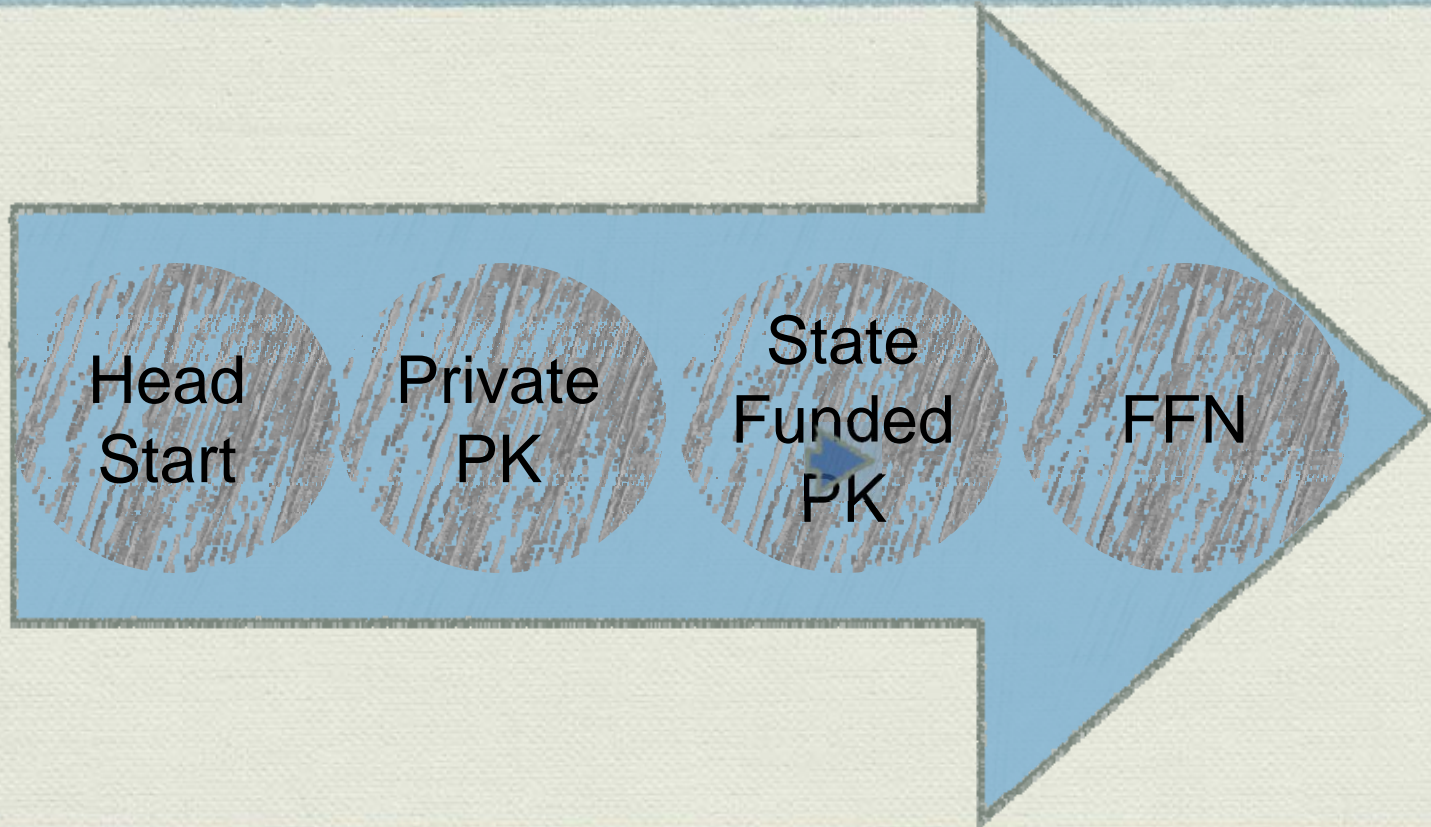
The image shows a video player interface. On the left, there is a large portrait of a young girl with braids, wearing a light blue top and a red jacket. To the right of this portrait is a video player. The video player has a teal header with the text 'PreKindergarten - 3rd Grade' and 'A New Beginning for American Education'. Below the header is a video frame showing two children sitting on a colorful mat on the floor, building a tall tower of wooden blocks. The video player includes standard controls: a play button in the center, a progress bar at the bottom showing '00:00' on both ends, and a volume icon. On the right side of the video player, there are three icons: 'embed', 'share', and 'HD is on'.

Horizontal Alignment




Alignment within each grade level

PK



State Funded PK



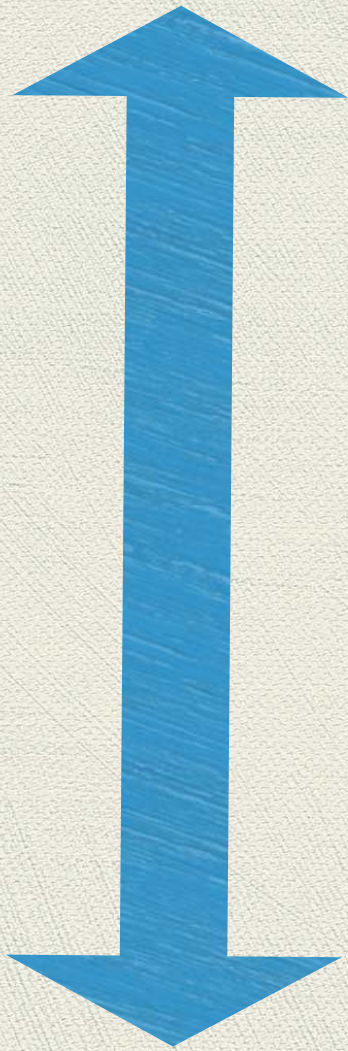
School
Readiness

Child Day
Care

Preschool
Development
Grant

Smart
Start

Vertical Alignment



3

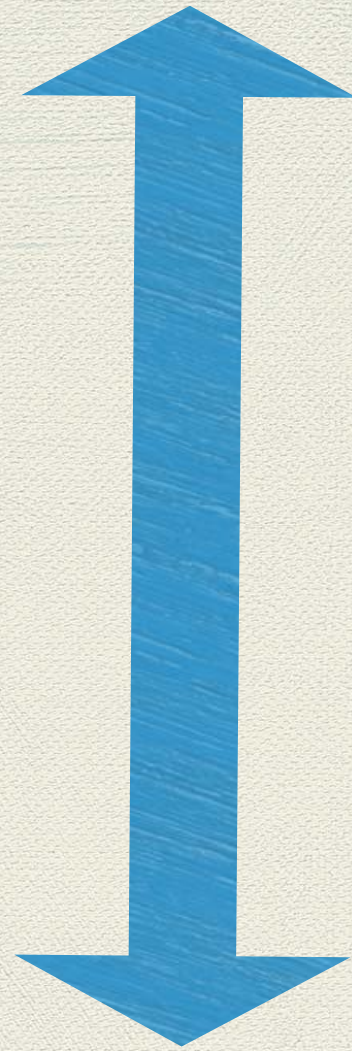
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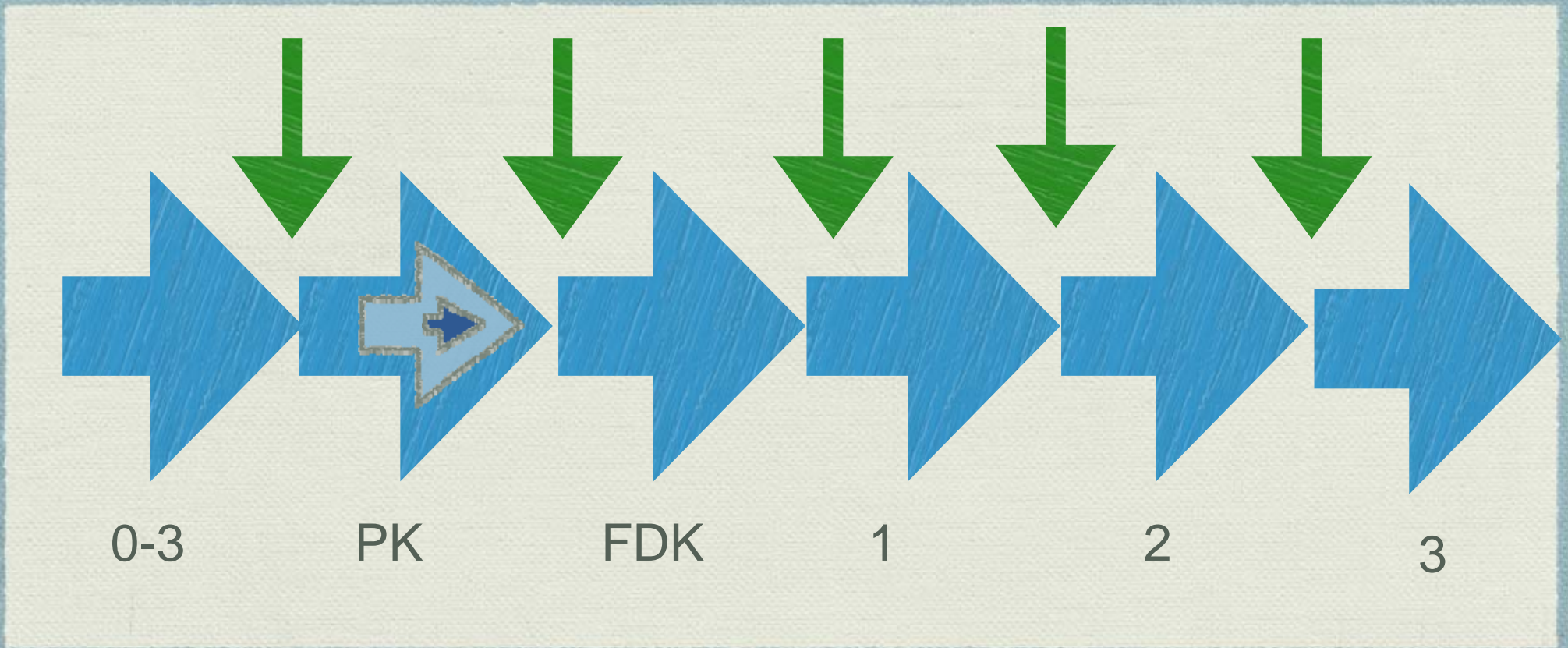
FDK

PK

0-3



Horizontal and Vertical Alignment



Improves EACH grade level
and
ACROSS grade levels

Effective PK-3 Systems

- ◆ Quality
- ◆ Rigor
- ◆ Reduce Opportunity and Achievement Gaps
- ◆ Equity
- ◆ Alignment and coherence
- ◆ There is a focus on children's pathways through the system

Reflection

Does the importance of the PK-3 continuum resonate with you? Explain.



PK3 Leadership – the design

Partnership

Core Development Team

Expert Advisory Panel

Executive Style Academy

Researchers and Practitioners

Cohort

Non-credit – resume builder

Program Goals

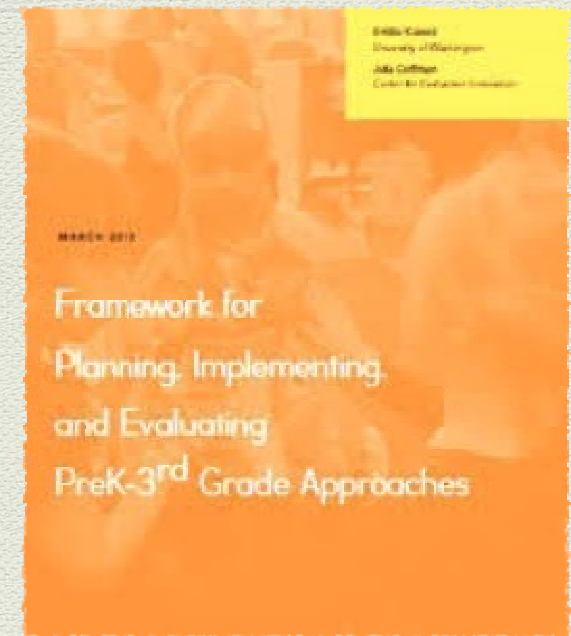
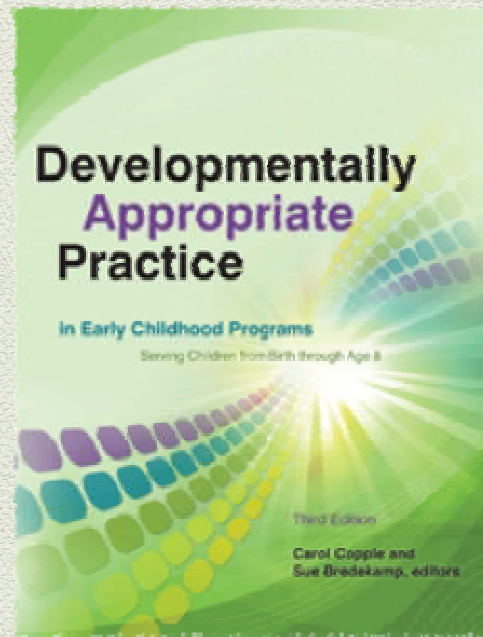
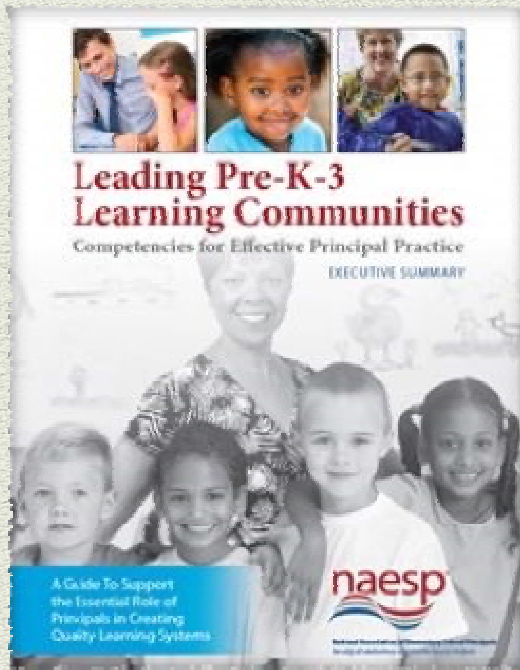
– as a result of participating in this program participants will:

- ◆ Know – standards, research, developmental approaches, best practices, systemic models, advocacy and communication strategies
- ◆ Understand – alignment, quality, rigor, intentional teaching, job-embedded learning, collaboration, change, partnerships
- ◆ Be able to do – approach challenges with a growth mindset, use effective adult learning, create an action plan, identify quality factors when observing teaching, lead for equity, communicate with credibility

Module Topics

- ◆ **Curriculum and Instruction – PK-3rd Grade** – standards, social & intellectual habits, intentional teaching, UBD, child development and exceptionalities, brain research, learning environment
- ◆ **Assessment Practices with Young Children and Evaluation of Teachers and Programs** – balanced approaches, TEVAL evidence guides, quality indicators for programs
- ◆ **Leading for Equity, Excellence and Early Success** – partnerships, family engagement, advocacy, politics, systems thinking, cultural responsiveness, cycles of inquiry and continuous improvement

Resources



LANGUAGE DIVERSITY AND LITERACY DEVELOPMENT RESEARCH GROUP

Increasing opportunities-to-learn for all // dedicated to the science of learning // informing research, practice, and policy



First School

Transforming PreK–3rd Grade
for African American, Latino,
and Low-Income Children

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Leading Anti-Bias Early Childhood Programs

—A GUIDE FOR CHANGE—

Louise Derman-Sparks
Debbie LeeKeenan
John Nimmo

Foreword by Mariana Souto-Manning
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HARVARD



GRADUATE SCHOOL
OF EDUCATION



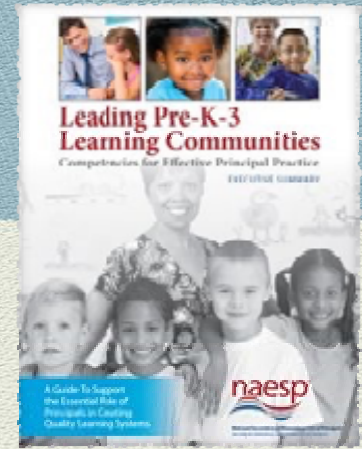
Collaborative for Academic, Social, and Emotional Learning

Google™ Custom Search

What can superintendents do?

- ◆ Keep it simple and focused
- ◆ Support joint professional development
- ◆ Focus on results (with appropriate time frames)
- ◆ Create a PK-12 culture where early childhood education is valued

What can principals do?



- ◆ Embrace the PK-3 early learning continuum
- ◆ Ensure developmentally appropriate teaching
- ◆ Provide personalized, blended learning environments
- ◆ Use multiple measures to guide growth in student learning
- ◆ Build professional capacity across the learning community
- ◆ Make your school a hub of PK-3 learning for families and communities

What can boards of education do?

- ◆ Provide resources
- ◆ Establish and support high-quality PK-3 programs
- ◆ Establish policies to create strong PK-3 alignment
- ◆ Ensure that PK is part of the district identity, language and decision making (PK-12)
- ◆ Advocacy

Life-long Kindergarten

[Mitchel Resnick – MIT Media Lab](#)

Action Plan

What can I do to initiate or improve PK-3 approaches
in my organization?

Q&A

Neag School of Education PK-3 Leadership Program





Connecticut Office of
Early Childhood

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