

First School

UNITING THE BEST OF EARLY CHILDHOOD,
ELEMENTARY, AND SPECIAL EDUCATION

Leadership: Ensuring Developmentally Appropriate Teaching

March 16-17, 2017

Minnesota

Where we begin:

- Our schools are not perfect
- There is not “one weird trick”
- One thing at a time
- We cannot improve if we keep doing everything the same way
- There is no “we can’t.” There is only, “How can we solve this problem?”



Engaging Teachers in Communities of Practice

CI²

- Mindset First
- Continuous Improvement
- Collaborative Inquiry

Mindset

- Fixed vs. Growth
 - Outcomes vs. process
 - Good teachers vs bad teachers
 - Candy on the sly
 - The lunar cycle! Werewolves!
- Classrooms as laboratories

Discuss

- Parallel process: In your practice, what sorts of things support a growth mindset and what sorts of things support a fixed mindset?
- What kinds of things promote a growth mindset among teachers at your school?

Application

- Costs vs. Benefits
- The CI Cycle
 - Identification of issue
 - Gathering information
 - Try something new
 - Did it work?
 - Reflection
- Intentionality

Collaborative Inquiry

- Structures that Support Continuous Improvement
 - Autonomy (freedom within structure)
 - Creating rules in kindergarten
- Structures
 - Overcoming obstacles
- Expertise and Perspectives
- Support and Motivation
- Parallel Processes
 - Principal communities of practice

Planning Time

- What are your big takeaways?
- What might you change?
- What resources will you need? Whose support will you need?



Ambitious and Effective Curricula

What is curriculum?

- Turn and talk: What does curriculum mean to you?



A working definition

- What children are learning vs. how you are teaching
- Includes, but isn't limited to, standards
- Includes, but isn't limited to, that box with the puppets
- Curriculum should serve your vision; not the other way around

Step One: Knowledge

- Where were my kids?
- Where are my kids?
 - Post-its
- Where are my kids going?

Standards

- Form the foundation
- From ECIPs to The Highest Grade at Your School + X
- Mission Accomplished!



Knowledge in Schools

- The vertical meeting
- Moving from inauthentic to authentic
 - Personal relationships
 - Deep knowledge and understanding
 - Bonus greater support/collegiality

Discussion

- How do you facilitate cohesion among your staff members across grade levels in an authentic way?
- How do you make this a regular, ongoing part of your school's operations instead of an isolated, one time affair?

Applying Knowledge

- Prelude: Letter of the week
- Boxed curricula
- Connection
 - Going beyond the standards
 - Prior knowledge
 - Personal connections
 - Individualized instruction
 - Notecard transitions

Where do you Start?

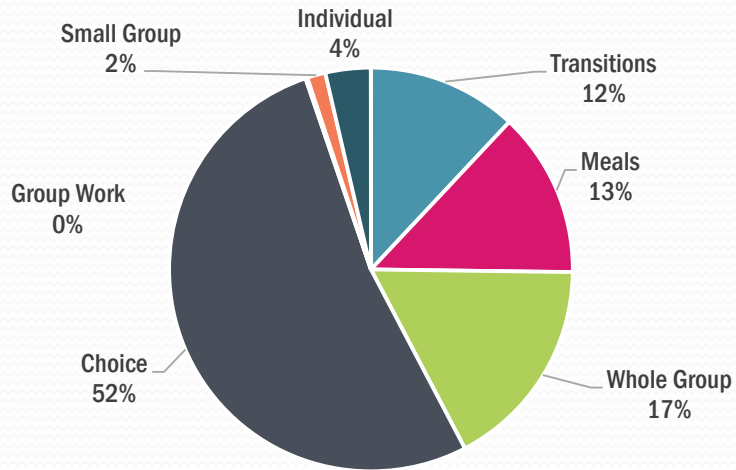
- Outside the classroom
- In the classroom
- Parallel process: Differentiate for teachers
 - How do you know what you know about teachers?
 - How does it impact where you push them?



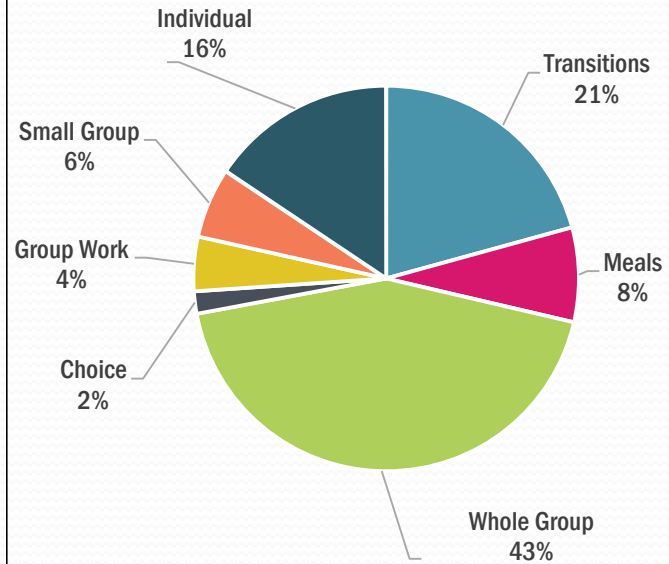
Relevant and Engaging Instruction

(Don't be boring.)

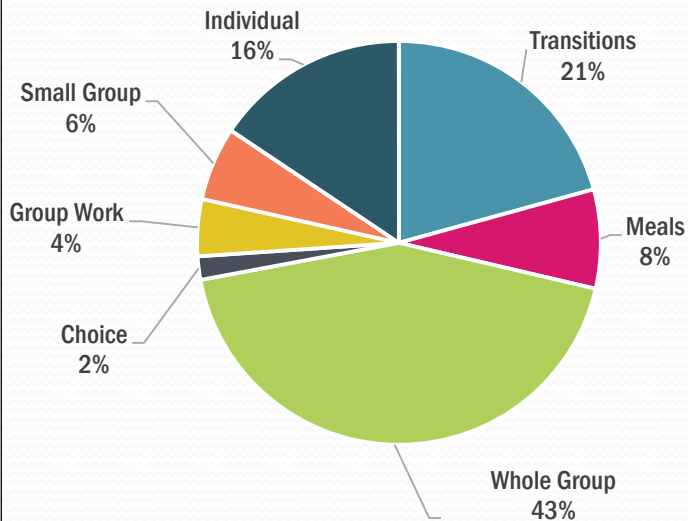
Pre-K Activity Settings



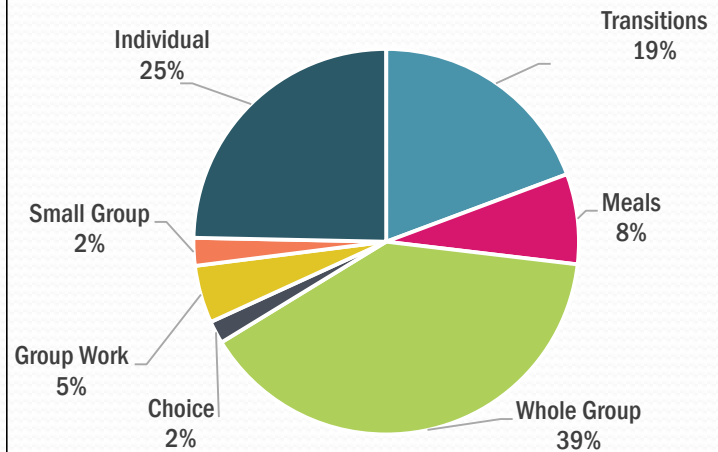
K Activity Settings



K Activity Settings



Grade 3 Activity Setting



Create an Activity

- Identify and name basic two- and three-dimensional shapes, such as squares, circles, triangles, rectangles, trapezoids, hexagons, cubes, rectangular prisms, cones, cylinders and spheres.
- Don't be boring.



What is Holding You Back?

- Why aren't all activities in your school like this one?
- What is stopping teachers from teaching like this?
 - Knowledge?
 - Permission?
 - Support?
- How do you overcome your obstacles?

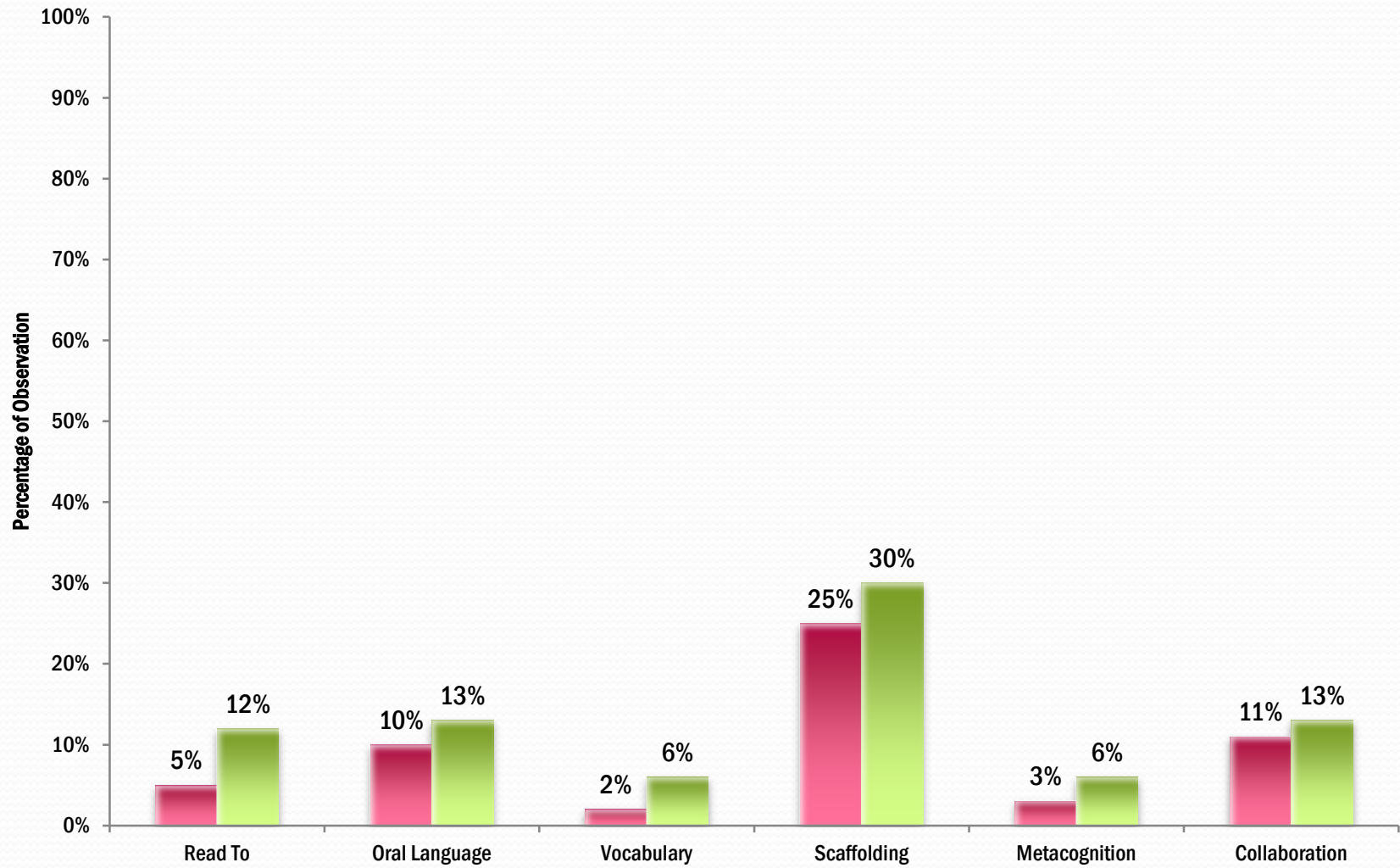
The Structure of the Day

- Recognize rich times and poor times
 - The power of read-aloud
 - Oral language
 - Vocabulary
 - Scaffolding
 - Metacognition
 - Collaboration



Read To Changes

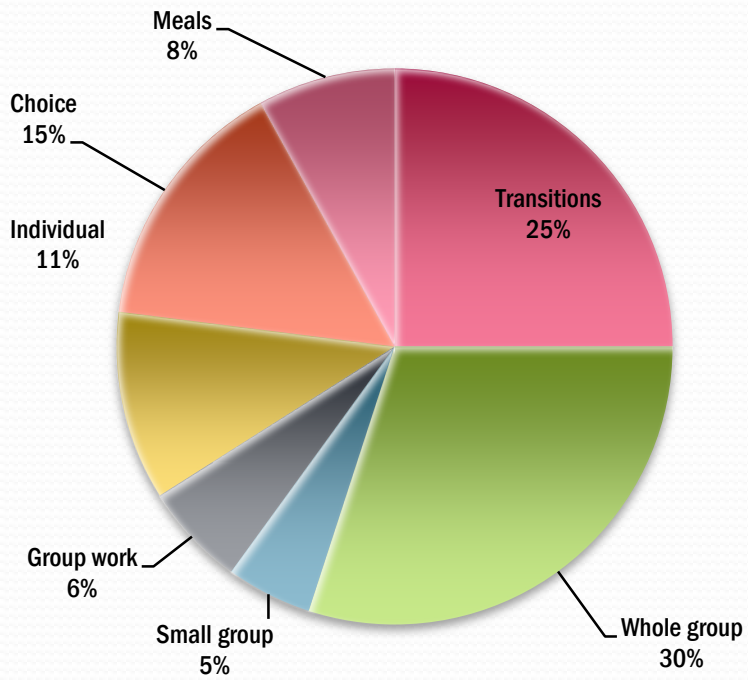
2015 2016



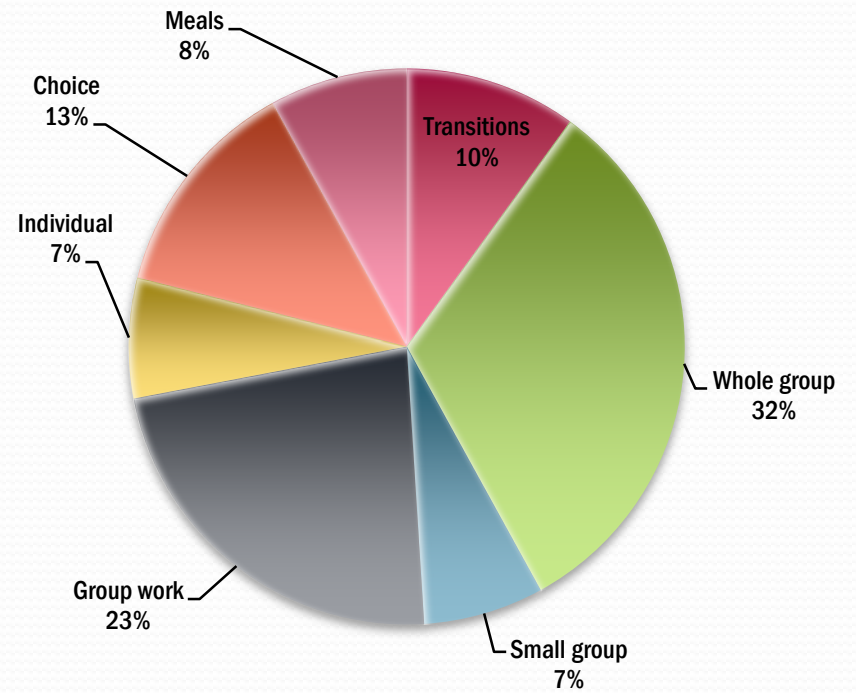
Minimize poor times

- Remember those notecards?
- Costs and benefits
 - Arbitrage
 - Take time from low quality and give to high quality
 - Transitions

Time One



Time Two



How Principals Lead

- Inspire!
- Plan, offer ideas
- Involve the whole school
- Create a culture of boldness

More Leading

- Instruction and Practice
 - Demonstration
 - Young Children article
 - Start small and expand
 - Coalition of the willing
 - The Pareto Principle (80/20 rule)

What are your First Steps?

- Take one thing at a time
- Go deep
- Create a map to success
 - Start
 - End
 - Points A, B, & C
 - Actions between

Almost There

- Thanks for your thoughtful participation!
- Please continue to think through and digest what we've talked about.
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The End

← Insert wild applause here