First School

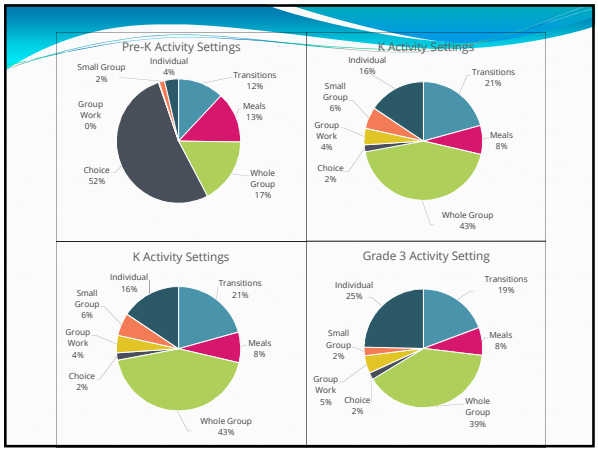
UNITING THE BEST OF EARLY CHILDHOOD, ELEMENTARY AND SPECIAL EDUCATION

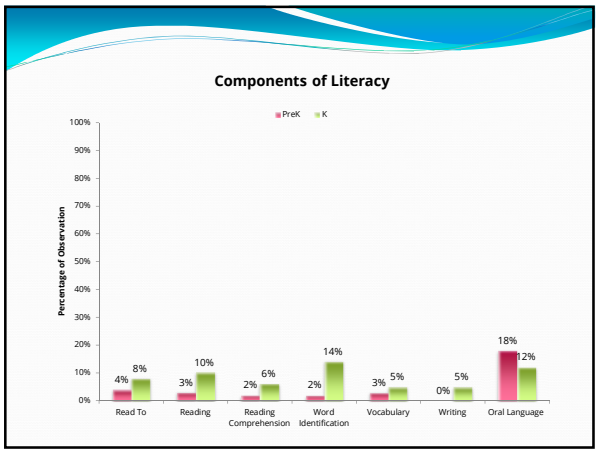
# Creating High Quality Learning Environments: Uniting the Best of PreK and K-3

October 24-25, 2016
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?"




Components of Literacy
PreK
K
Percentage of Observation
100%
90%
80%
70%
60%
50%
40%
30%
20%
10%
0%
4%
8%
3%
10%
2%
6%
2%
14%
3%
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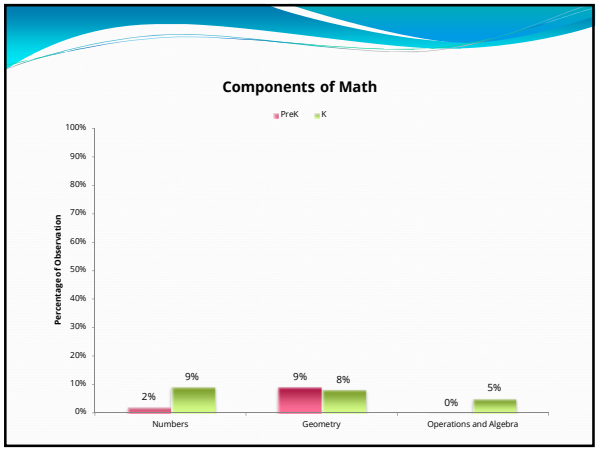
0%
5%
18%
12%
Read To
Reading
Reading Comprehension
Word Identification
Vocabulary
Writing
Oral Language


Components of Math
PreK
K
Percentage of Observation
100%
90%
80%
70%
60%
50%
40%
30%
20%
10%
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2%
9%
9%
8%
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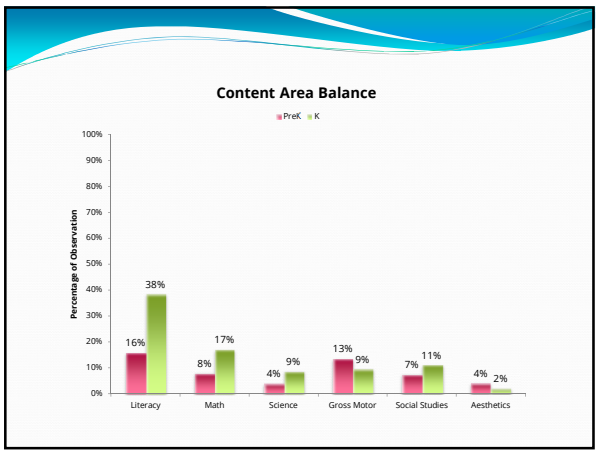
5%
Numbers
Geometry
Operations and Algebra


Content Area Balance
PreK
K
Percentage of Observation
100%
90%
80%
70%
60%
50%
40%
30%
20%
10%
0%
16%
38%
8%
17%
4%
9%
13%
9%
7%
11%
4%
2%
Literacy
Math
Science
Gross Motor
Social Studies
Aesthetics

## Uniting the Best of PreK-3

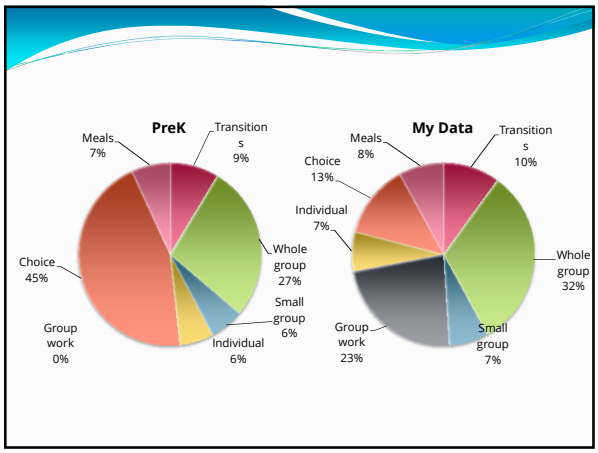
- Best of PreK
  - High engagement
  - Autonomy
  - Facilitation
- Best of K-3
  - Content
  - Integration
  - Higher order thinking skills

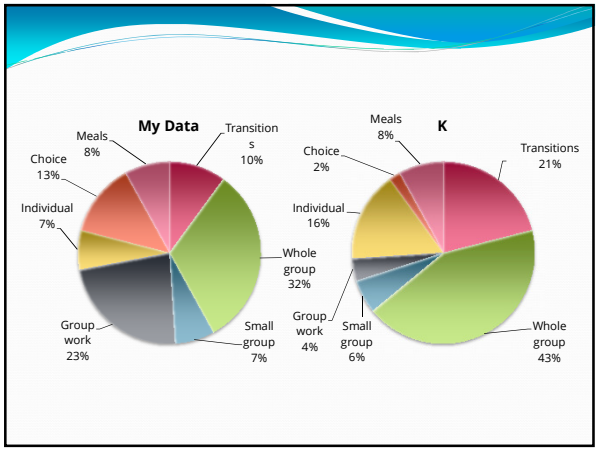
## How do we connect?

- What pedagogical techniques do you know of that maximize the following?
  - Content
  - High engagement
  - Self-regulation
  - Social skills practice

## Picking Two

- Playful learning
- Project-based learning




## Playful Learning

- Take some traditional play spaces
  - Playground
  - Developmental centers
- Add some content on purpose
  - Play plans
  - Tasks
- Maybe group based on criteria

## Let's Practice

- Here are some centers
  - Kapla blocks
  - Painting
  - Home living center
- Here are some objectives
  - Uses invented spelling to write words
  - Recognizes and continues patterns
  - Explains how objects are alike and different

## Implementation

- Vision and permission
- Work smarter
  - Using building or elsewhere
- Go beyond Pinterest
  - Not just cute
  - What are kids getting out of this?
- Formative assessment
  - Children demonstrating learning

## KWL

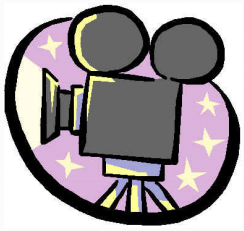
- What do you think you know about project-based learning?
- What have you tried?
- What do you want to learn about project-based learning?

## Project Based Learning

- Not theme of the month
- Pick an objective
  - Center on but don't limit to
- Think big. Then think bigger.
- Intentionality
  - Open-ended
  - Closed-ended

## Around Objectives

- Let's watch a video



## Around Activities: Animal Exhibit

- Trip to the museum
- Planet Earth
- Planning
- Execution
- Time frame
  - Nine weeks
  - A few hours each week

## Trip to the Museum

- Practicing observations
- Asking questions that exhibits bring up
- Classifying animals in exhibits
- Gathering ideas

## Planet Earth

- Writing sample
  - Choose an animal from the video and teach your audience about that animal.
  - Formative assessment

## Planet Earth

- Choosing a Biome: Class Discussion
  - Paideia-style
  - Teacher as facilitator
  - Choose an answer and defend
  - Counter others' points

## Planning

- Choose an animal and justify it
  - Draw your animal in habitat
  - Explain what features of the animal drew you to it

## Planning

- Making Books
- Designing the Biome
  - Venn diagram for plants and animals, alive and not alive
- Designing Costumes

## Execution

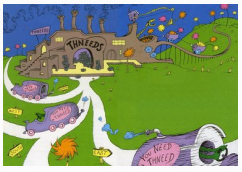
- Creating the Biome/Costumes
  - Small group, teacher-facilitated conversation
- Creating Scripts
  - Full writing process
- Presentation

## Let's do it

- MN Social Studies 2.2.4.5
- Individuals, businesses, and governments interact and exchange goods, services, and resources in different ways and for different reasons; interactions between buyers and sellers in a market determines the price and quantity exchanged of a good, service, or resource.

## Biggering

- Spread out
  - Go meet with people you don't know
- Share your project
  - Get help making it bigger
  - Go back to your groups
  - Incorporate ideas




## Overcoming Obstacles

- What are your obstacles?

## Thanks so much!

- Feel free to get in touch if you have any questions
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  - firstschool.us