

Introduction to Training

Nevada Early Childhood Leadership Series

Session 1

Session Objectives

- Get to know the other leaders in the Leadership Series cohort
- Articulate why early childhood education from birth-five is a priority for Nevada and nationwide
- Orient participants to the goals and scope and sequence for the Leadership Series
- Establish group norms for all Leadership Series sessions

Agenda

Introduction and Icebreaker

Leadership Series Overview

Norms and Expectations

Having access to high-quality early learning experiences can change a child's life.

Research shows that students with even one top teacher...

are less likely to have children as teenagers...

are more likely to attend college...

earn a higher salary...

and save more for retirement.



Nevada has made a commitment to investing in early childhood.

Research shows that children living below the poverty line start kindergarten [already behind](#) their more affluent peers.

A quality early childhood program can put a child on a positive trajectory, resulting in higher educational attainment, economic performance, crime prevention, and health benefits [as far as 40 years into the future.](#)



Now that you know who we are, take some time to get to know the folks sitting at your tables.



Go around your tables and introduce yourselves. Share the following:

- ✓ Your name, you role, and your center
- ✓ How long you have been in early childhood education
- ✓ How long you have been in your leadership role
- ✓ What you are looking forward to in the Leadership Series
- ✓ One fun fact about yourself

Agenda

Introduction and Icebreaker

Leadership Series Overview

Norms and Expectations

KEY IDEA

We know that leadership matters. Research points to the pivotal role of strong instructional leadership in improving teaching and student achievement. The ability to identify, nurture, and develop teaching talent sits squarely with center leaders and coaches. **To have an effective teacher in every early childhood classroom, we need a transformational leader in every early childhood center.**

The leadership series is designed to support you in becoming a more **effective instructional leader.**

To inform the initial design of this Leadership Series, site visits were conducted at a representative sample of early learning centers and schools to understand the professional development needs of teachers and leaders in Nevada.



17

Centers and
schools
visited



52

Classrooms
observed



34

Teacher and
leader
interviews

Training Focus Areas – Leader Development

Focus Area 1: Defining a vision and expectations for excellent instruction for a center and investing stakeholders in that vision

✓ **Provide clarity:** Leaders construct a clear, cohesive vision for developmentally appropriate and rigorous instruction.

✓ **Invest staff:** Leaders ensure staff bring the vision to life by investing them strategically, providing them with training, and supporting them in realizing the instructional vision.

Focus Area 2: Prioritizing the development of teachers through effective observation, clear feedback, and coaching

✓ **Meaningful observations:** Leaders effectively observe teachers and identify targeted, bite-size areas for growth.

✓ **Clear communication:** Teachers know their development areas and goals, and know what to do to improve their instruction and student learning.

Training Focus Areas – Leader Development, con't

Focus Area 3: Facilitating adult learning and effectively leading professional development sessions for teachers

- ✓ **Meaningful training:** Leaders turn-key instructional content for teachers.
- ✓ **Instructional practice:** Teachers implement new instructional practices in their classrooms.

Focus Area 4: Using data collected through observations, leaders reflect on the changes in instructional practice in their centers and determine how to push teachers further

- ✓ **Collecting data:** Leaders collect meaningful data using observation strategies
- ✓ **Identifying trends:** Leaders analyze data to understand how instruction is improving and where teachers and students need to continue to grow.

Training Focus Areas – Teacher Development

Focus Area 1: Understanding a vision of excellence for early childhood and the developmental trajectory of students ages birth-five

- ✓ **Expecting excellence:** Teachers implement instruction that is developmentally appropriate and intellectually stimulating for all students and align their instructional practice to their leader's vision of excellence.

Focus Area 2: Building oral language skills in young children, including complex vocabulary through parallel/self-talk, open-ended questioning, and other strategies.

- ✓ **Promoting language:** Teachers have frequent, positive communications with students during all parts of the day.
- ✓ **Prioritizing vocabulary:** Students hear and use complex vocabulary regularly throughout the day.

Focus Area 3: Leading literacy instructional that is rooted in engaging students in complex texts in meaningful ways

- ✓ **Planning for complexity:** Students practice reading readiness and comprehension using complex texts, discussion, and emergent writing or drawing.

| MONTH | LEADER DEVELOPMENT STRAND | TEACHER DEVELOPMENT STRAND |
|------------------|--|--|
| SESSION 1 | Creating and Communicating a Vision for Instructional Excellence | Setting a High Bar for Excellent Instruction in Early Childhood Classrooms |
| SESSION 2 | Developing Teachers by Collecting and Analyzing Observation Data | Promoting Complex Vocabulary Using Self- and Parallel-Talk |
| SESSION 3 | Developing Teachers by Identifying Key Development Areas | Using Conversation to Promote Oral Language Development |
| SESSION 4 | Developing Teachers by Providing Effective Feedback | Choosing and Using Complex Texts in Early Childhood |
| SESSION 5 | Developing Teachers by Effectively Using Modeling and Practice | Engaging Students With Complex Vocabulary During Read Alouds |
| SESSION 6 | Developing Teachers Using Strategic Next Steps and Follow-Up | Close-Out Leadership Session: Putting It All Together |

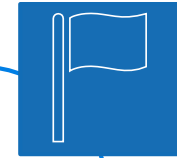
Agenda

Introduction and Icebreaker

Leadership Series Overview

Norms and Expectations

Training Norms



Focus on student outcomes

Stay present mentally and physically

Encourage and challenge one another's thinking and ideas

Seek to understand and be understood

Monitor your air time

Have fun!

What's learned here leaves here 😊

The Leadership Series will help you to hone your skill as a leader/coach in teacher development and provide you with the training tools to implement strong professional development sessions for your teachers.

We have limited time together and critical content to address in each training session. Therefore, your attendance at each session is vital. Please reserve the training dates and plan to attend each one. Multiple unexcused absences may result in the loss of your spot in the cohort.

Between training sessions you will be expected to:

- Complete pre-work for the next training session
- Deliver targeted professional development to teachers utilizing materials provided in training (see handout)
- Provide coaching to your teachers utilizing tools and strategies provided in training (see handout)
- Input your data into a tracker specific to the Leadership Series



Open your newspaper, engage with social media, or turn on the news and you'll undoubtedly hear rich conversation about early childhood education. As NAEYC put forward in a recent position paper—

“The demand for early childhood care and education programs continues to increase not only in response to the growing demand for out-of-home child care but also in recognition of the critical importance of educational experiences during the early years. Several decades of research clearly demonstrate that high-quality, developmentally appropriate early childhood programs produce short- and long-term positive effects on children's cognitive and social development.”

With this in mind, respond to the following questions:

1. Why did you make the choice to become an Early Childhood educator? If you don't come from an ECE background, how has your work in this realm impacted your perspective on education?
2. What reactions do you have to the quote above? What inspires and excites you about the work ahead of you?

Setting a High Bar for Excellence in Early Childhood Classrooms

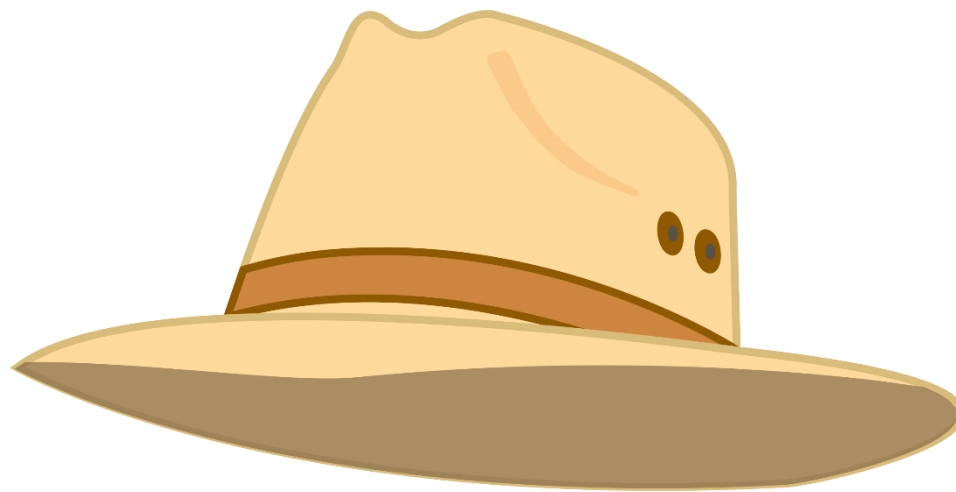
Nevada Early Childhood Leadership Series

Session 1

Objectives

- Establish a common understanding of excellence in early childhood instruction
- Understand the developmental trajectory of students birth through five
- Describe how developmental levels influence classroom practice
- Understand the expectations for students as defined by the Nevada Infant and Toddler Early Learning Guidelines and the Nevada Pre-Kindergarten Standards
- Identify excellent practice in action by applying a Vision of Excellent Instruction to classroom videos

You and Your Hats



Agenda

Opening

Understanding Excellent Instruction in Early Childhood

The Developmental Trajectory of Early Childhood Students

Identifying and Planning for Excellence in Action

Closing

Having access to high quality learning experiences can change a child's life, and perhaps the future of a city and state.

In 2015 in Las Vegas, **26.5% of children** under 5 years of age were living in poverty. Statewide, **23.4% of children** under 5 years of age were living in poverty. (Las Vegas, Nevada Poverty Rate Data. 2015). <http://www.city-data.com/poverty/poverty-Las-Vegas-Nevada.html>

On average, **31 percent** of Nevada's 3- and 4-year-olds were **enrolled in public or private preschool** from 2011-2013. **Only 22 percent** of children from families with incomes under 200 percent **of poverty were enrolled.**¹

According to the Children's Defense Fund in 2015, **an at-risk child who lacks high-quality early childhood education is:**

- 25% more likely to drop out of school
- 60% less likely to attend college
- 70% more likely to be arrested for a violent crime

Improving the quality of early learning for Nevada's highest-need children is a critical component to ensure every child is kindergarten ready and college and career ready.

¹Source: Children's Defense Fund, Children in the States Factsheets, 2015

Having access to high quality learning experiences can change a child's life, and perhaps the future of a city and state.

In 2013 in Reno, **29% of children** under 5 years of age were living in poverty. Statewide, **25.3% of children** under 5 years of age were living in poverty. (Reno, Nevada Poverty Rate Data. (2015). <http://www.city-data.com/poverty/poverty-Reno-Nevada.html>)

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1. Why did you make the choice to become an Early Childhood educator? If you don't come from an ECE background, how has your work in this realm impacted your perspective on education?
2. What reactions do you have to the quote above? What inspires and excites you about the work ahead of you?
3. How does this quote connect to the statistics you just viewed?

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In a moment, we will watch excellence in action in [Ms. Davis' Pre-Kindergarten classroom](#).

As you watch the video, take notes on the following questions on page 9 of your handouts:

- Why is Ms. Davis' classroom a high-quality early learning environment?
- Why is this lesson a high-quality learning experience for students?

In a moment, we will watch excellence in action in an [infant classroom](#), as students explore a variety of materials.

As you watch the video, take notes on the following questions on page 9 of your handouts:

- Why is this classroom a high-quality early childhood learning environment?
- Why is this a high-quality learning experience for students?

Children learn and practice social-emotional skills.

To be ready for later grades and ongoing academic success, children need to develop key social-emotional skills such as self-regulation, peer interaction, problem-solving, patience, and perseverance. Teachers establish and facilitate relationships and design daily opportunities for children to learn and practice these skills and leverage in-the-moment opportunities to foster social-emotional growth.

Children are engaged in intellectually stimulating work that is developmentally appropriate.

Research indicates that all children, including the youngest learners, benefit from exposure to challenging content. Effective early learning classrooms create opportunities for young children to engage with complex academic work and participate in stimulating and engaging learning experiences in a manner that is appropriate for the developmental level of each child.

Children are engaged in an integrated and cohesive classroom experience that targets developmentally appropriate learning.

Children receive the supports they need to do the thinking.

Young children learn best by doing—learning through play, engaging with others and the environment, and exploring and thinking deeply about new concepts and the world. To facilitate this, teachers provide high-quality and thought-provoking work and materials and design an environment that support students in rising to the challenge with increasing independence.

Children practice and develop gross and fine motor skills.

Young children are constantly developing their motor skills. Teachers create environments that allow opportunities to move in different ways to practice and grow fine and gross motor skills.

Learn and Practice Social-Emotional Skills

Intellectually Stimulating, Developmentally-Appropriate Work

What does this tenet mean?

What examples of this tenet do you already see in your classrooms?

What parts of this tenet do you want to see more of this year?

Students Receive Supports to Do the Thinking

Practice and Develop Gross and Fine Motor Skills

At your tables, discuss:

- What elements of the videos and Vision of Excellence do you agree with? What would you add to the definition of “excellence” in your own center?

Agenda

Opening

Understanding Excellent Instruction in Early Childhood

The Developmental Trajectory of Early Childhood Students

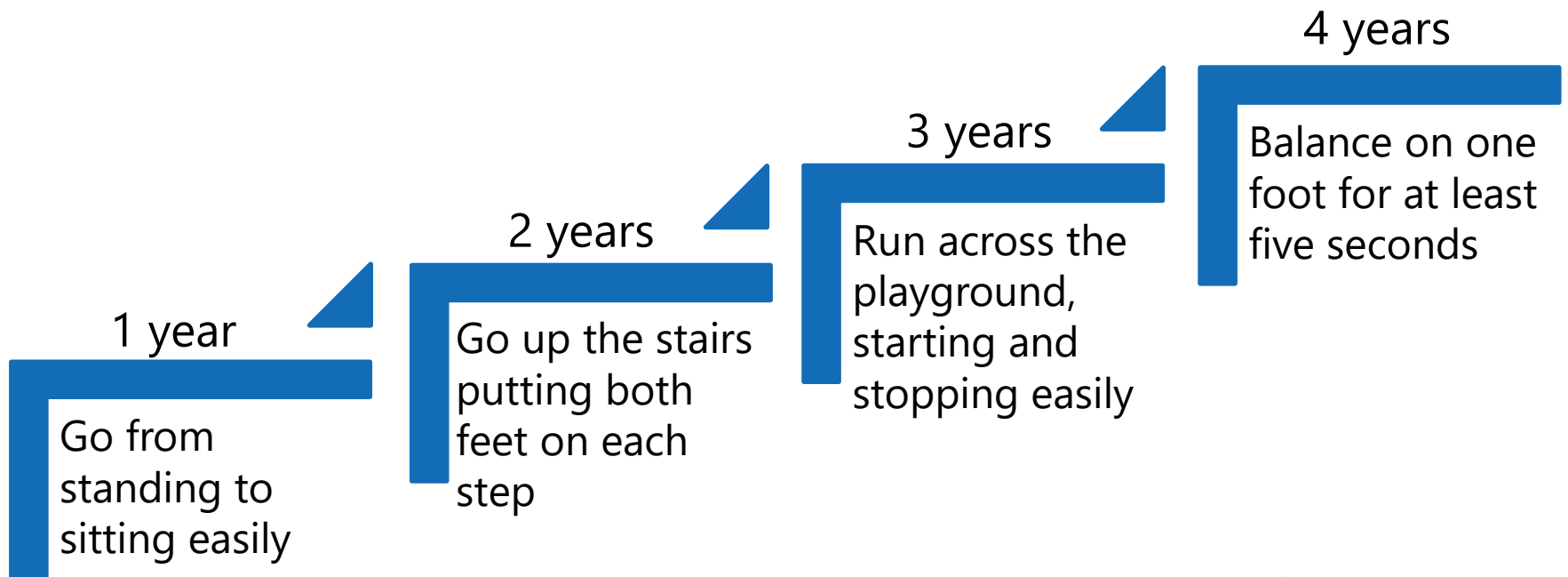
Identifying and Planning for Excellence in Action

Closing

Why Understand the Developmental Trajectory?

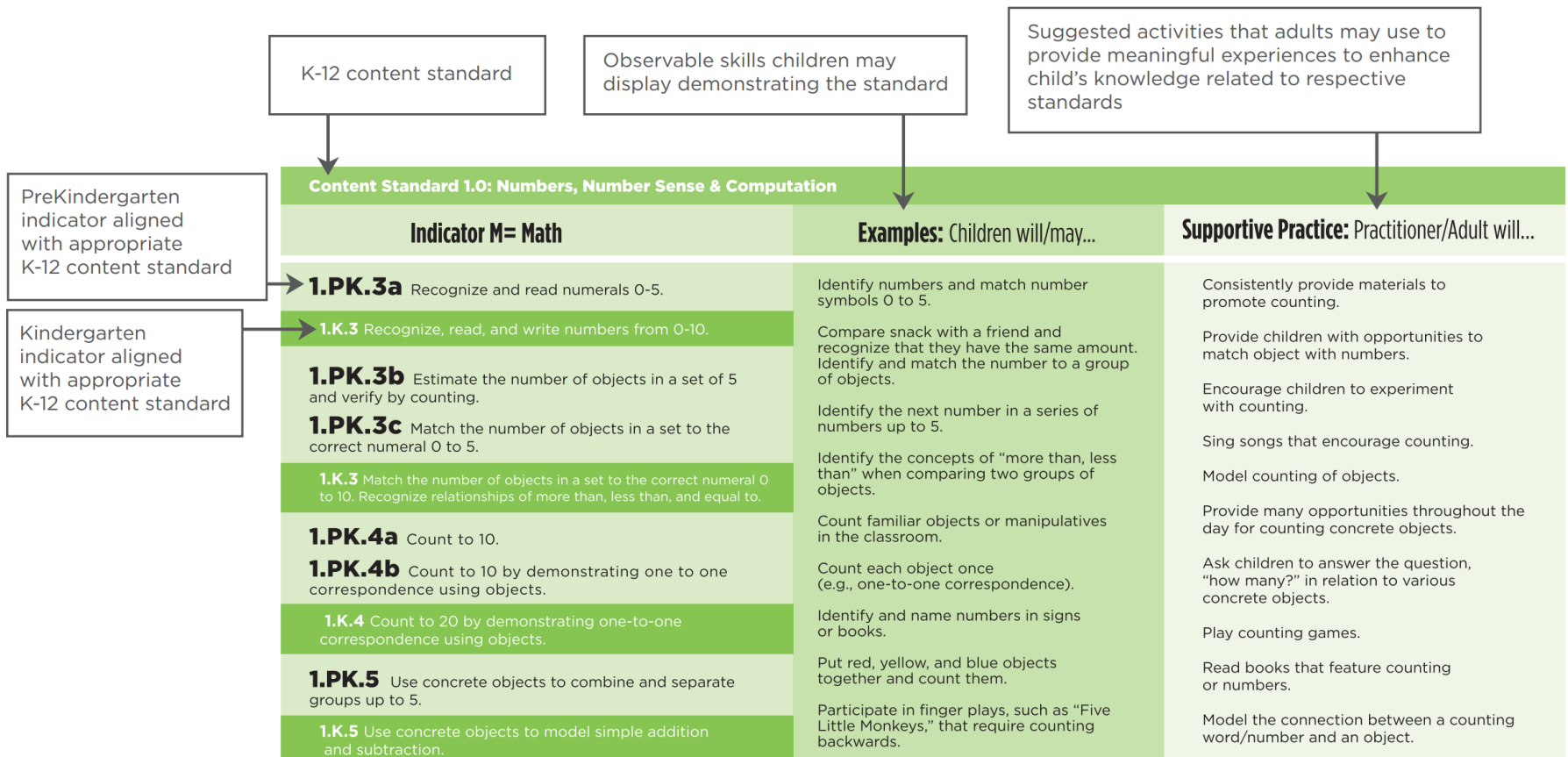
Key Idea: Students develop along predictable trajectories, more or less hitting milestones in a specific order and in specific age ranges. There is, of course, variation from child to child in their individual development, but overall we know what milestones students will reach at each age.

Sample Developmental Trajectory of Gross Motor Skills



Using the Standards as a Guide

The Infant and Toddler Early Learning Guidelines and Pre-Kindergarten Standards are built to address the major developmental milestones that students should hit each year. They provide what every student should know and be able to do in order to be successful in the next grade level.



Jigsaw Directions

1. Note the number that is in the center of your table. That number denotes which content area your table will investigate during this activity.
 - Table 1:** Oral Language Development
 - Table 2:** Reading Readiness
 - Table 3:** Speaking and Listening
 - Table 4:** Understanding and Responding to Text
2. Spend 15 minutes **independently reading the Infant and Toddler Early Learning Guidelines and Pre-Kindergarten Standards that are related to your content area**. Highlight any standards that you notice that directly support your development area.
3. Then, spend 15 minutes as a group **creating a poster that summarizes the major milestones** that students should hit at each age in your development area.
4. Each group will have **two minutes to share** their findings with the group. Take notes in your handouts for each age.



How will understanding developmental milestones at each age influence classroom instruction?

How might this activity be helpful to your teachers? What might be challenging?

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Key Idea: A vision of excellence can't just exist on a piece of paper—it takes the entire team to bring these high, clear expectations to life. When an entire team is bought into a vision and works towards realizing it, students are able to consistently achieve at high levels across the building.

Read
3 minutes

- Spend 3 minutes re-reading the big ideas contained in the vision of excellence. Use your earlier notes and the vision itself. Consider which elements you would most want to adopt in your own center.

Reflect
3 minutes

- With a partner, discuss what this vision would look like, sound like, and feel like in your own center and classrooms.

Plan
10 minutes

- Using the template on page 12, begin to brainstorm how you will bring the vision of excellence alive in your own center and classrooms throughout each day.

After brainstorming, take 5 minutes to share your plan with your neighbor.

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Take the next several minutes to create a plan for how you will take this content back to your team.

- When will you deliver this content to your staff?
- How will you deliver content to your staff? (One whole-group two-hour professional development? Smaller groups? Smaller chunks of time? Direct facilitation vs. small group planning?)
- What challenges do you anticipate your staff may have with this content? How will you address those challenges?



What are your next steps for ensuring you are meeting the developmental and academic needs of all students?

What will it take to establish excellence in your center?

Next Steps for Leaders

Plan when and how you will share the content of this session to your staff. Put it in your calendar and hold yourself to it!

Next Steps for Teachers (EXAMPLE)

Use what you learned in today's session to finalize your plan for how you will incorporate the Vision of Excellence in your classroom. Send your plan to your leader by **PROVIDE DATE**.



Respond to the following questions:

1. Why is it important to have a clear vision of instructional excellence for your center?
2. How can a vision support improving instructional quality?

Creating a Student-Centered Vision of Instructional Excellence

Nevada Early Childhood Leadership Series

Session 1

Session Objectives

- Understand the important role a vision of excellent instruction plays in ensuring high quality ECE centers
- Draft an initial vision of excellent instruction for your center or that is student-focused
- Practice articulating your vision in a clear and compelling way
- Generate strategies for investing teachers in your vision

Agenda

What is a Vision?

Setting a Clear Vision for Student Success

Communicating a Vision to Key Stakeholders

Closing

KEY IDEA

As a leader, you should have a clearly-articulated vision that is **student-centered** and **aligned to a high bar for excellent instruction**.

A clear vision ensures that you, your teachers and other stakeholders are all **working toward the same goal**. And, having a strong instructional vision is essential for **attracting and retaining effective teachers**.

Your vision is only half the story; how you communicate it and invest others in it is just as important.

Strong instructional cultures foster great teaching...and great learning

Transformational
leaders



Effective
teachers



Children learn
and achieve

Elements of Successful Centers

Articulate a **CLEAR**
VISION of success

Ensure that vision is
SHARED by all teachers

SUPPORT teachers
in realizing that vision



VISION

When your center achieves its ideal state, what will it look like?

MISSION

What is the purpose of your center – who are you, what do you do, and for whom do you do it?

VALUES

What beliefs and core values about children, teachers, and the purpose of education do you hold?



As a transformational center leader or coach, you should have a clearly-articulated vision aligned to your values.

A vision for student success defines what your center is working toward.

Handouts, Page 18

A vision is “a picture of the future with some implicit or explicit commentary on why people should strive to create that future.”

AN EFFECTIVE VISION IS...

All-encompassing

Applies to all children you serve

Clear

Easy to picture when you read it or hear it

Shared

Stakeholders, including children, parents, teachers and community, answer consistently when asked what success looks like for students

Audacious

Bold, inspired, inspiring to people inside and outside the system

Read the vision statements on the next few slides, from companies that are outside of the education sphere. As you read, take notes on the following question:

- Though these are not education-specific visions, what makes these sample visions compelling?

Vision Statement #1: Warby Parker

Warby Parker was founded with a rebellious spirit and a lofty objective: to offer designer eyewear at a revolutionary price, while leading the way for socially conscious businesses.

Vision Statement #2: Life is Good

We see it when we believe it. Each one of us has a choice: to focus our energy on obstacles or opportunities. To fixate on our problems, or focus on solutions. We can harp on what's wrong with the world (see most news media), or we can cultivate what's right with the world. What we focus on grows.

That's why the Life is Good community shares one simple, unifying mission: to spread the power of optimism. Optimism is not irrational cheerfulness or "blind" positivity. It's a pragmatic strategy for approaching life. Optimism empowers us to explore the world with open arms and an eye toward solutions, progress, and growth. It also makes life a hell of a lot more fun.

Vision Statement #3: IKEA

At IKEA our vision is to create a better everyday life for the many people. Our business idea supports this vision by offering a wide range of well-designed, functional home furnishing products at prices so low that as many people as possible will be able to afford them.

Turn and Talk: Though these are not education-specific visions, what makes these sample visions compelling?

Now, read the vision statements from various schools on the next few slides. As you review them, jot notes on the following questions:

- What commonalities do you see between the non-education and education-specific visions?
- How do these visions meet our criteria of being all-encompassing, clear, shared, and audacious?

Vision Statement #1: PLUS School

The mission of the PLUS School is to provide a rigorous and individualized education that prepares all students to be 21st century thinkers. Our students receive a standards-based school experience that promotes academic success and also provides strong structures to support and educate the whole student. Curriculum is individualized for students to meet diverse needs and address personal talents, strengths, and preferences. Students explore and learn in a culture of high expectations where teachers, administrators, parents and community partners collaborate to ensure the success of each individual student.

Vision Statement #2: Oak Park

We are founded upon the belief that ALL STUDENTS, regardless of their background or circumstances, can achieve at the highest academic levels and erase the achievement gap within our community. Our unwavering belief in the power and potential of our students means that Oak Park's stakeholders are exceptional in who we are and how we act.

Vision Statement #3: Leadership Series Cohort 1 Participant

In our ECE classrooms, we strive to support students in building on their individual strengths to nurture children's curiosity and inquisitiveness, develop problem-solvers and decision makers, and prepare children with the skills and academic foundation to achieve success, not only in school, but in life. Our teachers actively engage children in our ECE settings through intentional teaching practices that guide each child's social-emotional, physical, and cognitive development, creating a joyful classroom environment that fosters cooperation and a sense of community.

Turn and Talk: What commonalities do you see between the non-education and education-specific visions? How do these visions meet our criteria of being all-encompassing, clear, shared, and audacious?

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Consider...



When your center achieves its ideal state,
what will it look like?

What do we want for the students in our centers?

What do our classrooms look like when students are on a
path to Kindergarten readiness?




I Write: In three years, when your vision is being realized, what does your center look like? Describe in the present tense the *sights, sounds, behaviors, and feelings of teachers, students and other stakeholders*. Do not describe the *how*, only *what* will exist in your center. You may want to refer to the sample visions to get you started.

“ *My center is a place of continuous learning. When I walk into classrooms, I see students who are happy to be learning and who are actively engaged in the work they're doing. There's no "sage on the stage" – teachers are supporting students' learning but not doing the thinking for them. The community is an asset to our center and families are partners in our work.*

→ Remember: describe your center as though *this is the present*.

Vision-Setting: Back to the Future Protocol (Modified)

Handouts, Page 21

-  Each person will have 4 minutes to share their vision and 2 minutes for their partner to ask probing and clarifying questions and give feedback. Then roles will switch.
-  Remember: describe your center as though *this is the present*.
-  Leaders: Push each other to be clear and compelling. Ask tough questions and provide critical feedback. Take on the responsibility of helping your cohort members refine their work. Refer to the guidance on an effective vision to help you provide feedback.

In a minute, you'll return to your draft vision and begin to think more specifically:

What are ten specific observations you would want a visitor to your center to make about teaching and learning?

Push beyond general observations such as

- *Students are engaged.*
- *Teachers create print-rich classrooms.*

Instead be specific:

- *Students use a developmentally appropriate combination of dictating, writing, and drawing about complex texts, using evidence from the text to answer text-based questions.*
- *Teachers create a language-rich classroom with multiple opportunities for students to build language skills and purposeful vocabulary through narration, conversation, and engaging with texts.*



Each person will have 3 minutes to revise their vision based on the feedback they received.



Each partner will then have 3 minutes to share their vision. Their partner will have 1 minute to provide feedback on the revised vision in the form of questions or statements.



Leaders: Push each other to be clear and compelling. Ask tough questions and provide critical feedback. Take on the responsibility of helping your cohort members refine their work.



Take a few minutes to reflect individually about the following questions:

- How has your thinking about “excellence” at your own center evolved over the course of this exercise?
- How can you use your new/revised vision to drive student and teacher success at your center?

Agenda

What is Vision?

Setting a Clear Vision for Student Success

Communicating a Vision to Key Stakeholders

Closing

The vision is only half the story - how you message it is as important.

Handouts, Pages 24-25



What does Chancellor Henderson do to communicate her vision effectively?

Tips for Communicating Your Vision

- Consider including an anecdote, story, or quote
- Connect to your mission as a center and/or your student achievement goals
- Articulate and emphasize the key tenets (words or phrases of your vision) and explain each:
 - What does it look like? How will you all know if you are successful?
- Describe the system: What will you do? What will staff do? What will students do? What is the intended outcome?
- Be concise
- Use “we” instead of “I” or “you”
- Manage expectations by articulating how you will keep your vision front of mind moving forward and what teachers can expect
- Smile

Vision-Setting: Other Strategies for Investing Stakeholders

Handouts, Page 26

- ➔ Articulating your vision is only the first step in investing stakeholders in it and making the vision a driving force in your center.
- ➔ In table groups, brainstorm other strategies for investing your teachers in the vision, e.g. eliciting feedback on it, using the vision to drive staff development, having teachers think about how the vision looks in their own classrooms, etc.

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What are you excited about in terms of creating and communicating a vision of excellence?

What do you think will be challenging?

What are your next steps to turn your vision into reality at your center?

Closing and Reflection

Nevada Early Childhood Leadership Series

Session 1

Session Objectives

- Reflect on key concepts learned during the day
- Articulate the next steps to take prior to next month's Leadership Series session
- Provide feedback on the day's sessions

Agenda

Reflecting on the Day

Looking Ahead to Session 2: Next Steps

Self-Assessment and Feedback Survey

Today we dug deeply into what excellence truly looks like in early childhood classrooms and setting student-centered visions that drive towards excellence.

What are your biggest take-aways from the content that was covered throughout the day today?

What will you do to make sure that you “live the learning” from today’s session? What will you do next week? Next month? Throughout the rest of the year?

Find an Accountability Partner

One of the most valuable resources that you have throughout the Leadership Series is **each other**! Over the course of these trainings, we will ask you to connect formally and informally with your colleagues.

- Please take the next **two minutes** to connect with one or two colleagues you would like to use as an “**accountability partner**”. Exchange names, phone numbers, email addresses, and commit to touching base periodically between Leadership Series training sessions.
- We encourage you to seek out a partner or partners who are working in settings slightly different from your own, and don't let geography hold you back from becoming partners—most of how you will interact (at least through the Leadership Series) will be done virtually.

Agenda

Reflecting on the Day

Looking Ahead to Session 2: Next Steps

Self-Assessment and Feedback Survey

Prior to next month's Leadership Series training:

Refine and finalize your vision:

- Revisit your draft vision and make any additional revisions.
- Connect with your accountability partner for additional support finalizing your vision.
- **Email your updated vision to >Insert Facilitator< by >insert due date (prior to next month's session)<. You will receive feedback within 2 business days.**

Invest teachers/staff in your vision:

- Finalize your speech or other presentation for investing teachers in the vision.
- Share your vision with teachers **by next month's training and be prepared to share reflections on your experience.**

As soon as possible (no specific deliverables due):

Schedule in your calendar when and how you will present the content from the Teacher Development Session, "Setting a High Bar for Excellence in Early Childhood Classrooms" to your staff. Put those dates in your calendar and on your staff's calendar to hold yourself accountable!

Invest other stakeholder in your vision

- Tailor your presentation to other key stakeholders (students; parents/families; external stakeholders such as funders/board members, etc.).
- Determine when you will communicate the vision to each set of stakeholders.

Agenda

Reflecting on the Day

Looking Ahead to Session 2: Next Steps

Self-Assessment and Feedback Survey

Providing Feedback



Please take the next ten minutes to complete the self-assessment and feedback survey for today's sessions.

Please also hand in your lists of teacher names and email addresses!