

# Primary Education Quality Presented to NJASCD Early Childhood Summit

Shannon Riley-Ayers  
sayers@nieer.org



# Agenda

- Welcome and Introductions
- Primary education as part of ECE
- DAP and Rigor



# The Problem

As evidenced in the recent Institute of Medicine (IOM) and National Research Council (NRC) reports, the system of care and education for our youngest children is fragmented.

# The Results

## For teachers:

- this fragmentation looks like a push-down of expectations on our youngest learners.

## For administrators:

- this fragmentation creates a lack of alignment in curriculum and assessment practices.

## For children and families:

- this fragmentation leads to isolation, as engaging a disjointed system is confusing.

# Primary Education Partnership

- The National Institute of Early Education Research (NIEER) [www.nieer.org](http://www.nieer.org)
  - NIEER conducts and communicates research to support high-quality, effective early childhood education for all young children.
  - Independent research-based advice and technical assistance to policy makers, journalists, researchers, and educators.
- Graduate School of Education Rutgers University <http://gse.rutgers.edu/>
- New Jersey Department of Education <http://www.nj.gov/education/ece/rttt/>

# Kindergarten to Grade 3 Initiative

**First  
through  
Third Grade  
Guidelines**

Guidelines  
Third Grade

**Research  
Study K-3**

Study K-3

**Professional  
Learning  
Series**

Series

# First through Third Grade Guidelines



*Outline best practices in the primary years of schooling and to assist educators with fusing practices that are both **academically rigorous** and **developmentally appropriate***

<http://www.state.nj.us/education/ece/rttt/ImplementationGuidelines1-3.pdf>

# Academically Rigorous Practice

- Learning objectives
- Cognitively engaging activities
- Tied to standards
- Each student is expected to learn at high levels, supported to do so, and demonstrates such (Blackburn, 2013)

# 7 Myths of Academic Rigor

1. Lots of homework means rigor
2. Rigor is doing more
3. Rigor is not for everyone
4. Providing support means lessening rigor
5. Resources equal rigor
6. Rigor is taken care of by standards alone
7. Rigor is just one more thing to do

Blackburn, B. (2013). Rigor is not a four letter word. Larchmont, NY: Eye on Education.

# Developmentally Appropriate Practice

- Individually appropriate
- Age appropriate
- Culturally appropriate

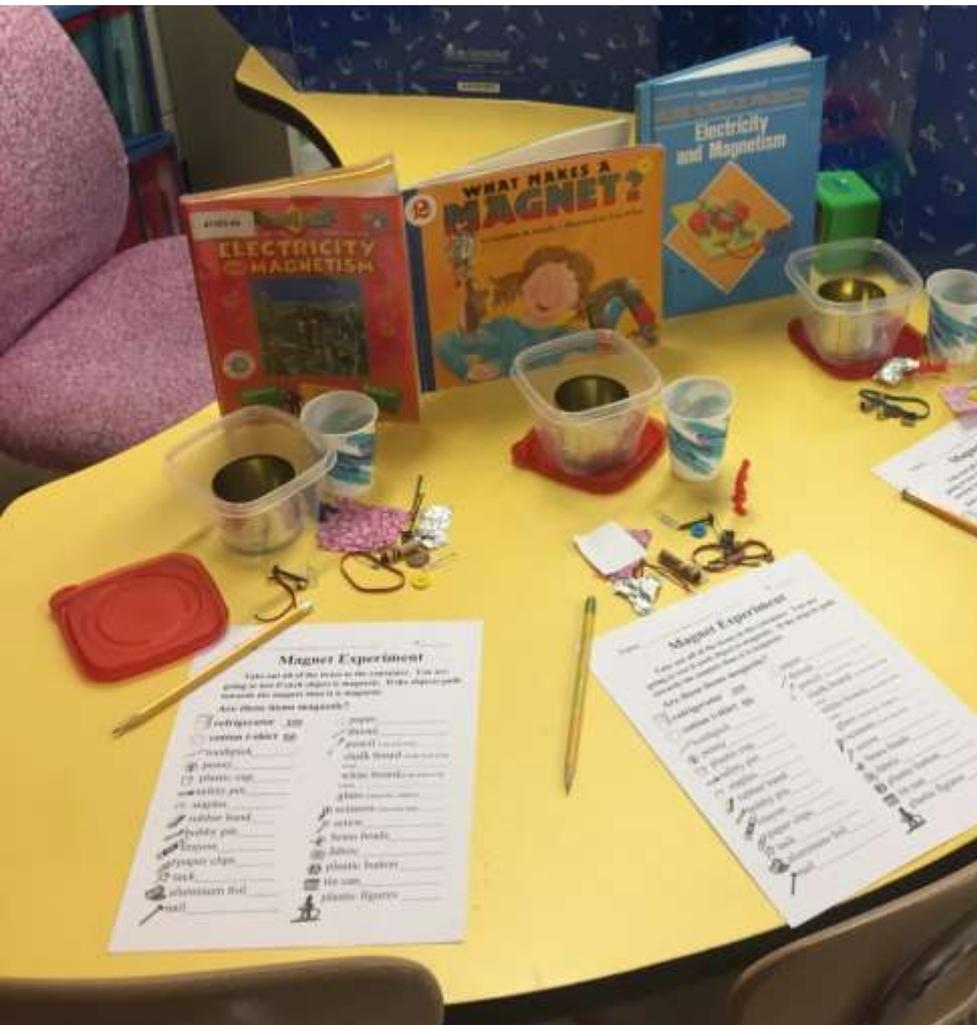


# DAP and Rigor

- Reaching all children
- Integrating content areas
- Growing as a community
- Offering choices
- Revisiting new content
- Offering challenges
- Understanding each learner
- Seeing the whole child
- Differentiating instruction
- Assessing constantly
- Pushing forward



# Centers in Primary Education



Name \_\_\_\_\_ # \_\_\_\_\_

## Magnet Experiment

Take out all of the items in the container. You are going to test if each object is magnetic. If the objects pulls towards the magnet than it is magnetic.

Are these items magnetic?

 refrigerator <u>yes</u>	<input type="checkbox"/> paper _____
 cotton t-shirt <u>no</u>	 thread _____
 toothpick _____	 pencil (Use your own) _____
 penny _____	chalk board (in the front of the room) _____
 plastic cup _____	white board (in the front of the room) _____
 safety pin _____	glass (Check the window) _____
<input type="checkbox"/> staples _____	 scissors (Use your own) _____
 rubber band _____	 screw _____
 bobby pin _____	 brass brads _____
 crayon _____	 fabric _____
 paper clips _____	 plastic button _____
 tack _____	 tin can _____
 aluminum foil _____	 plastic figures _____
 nail _____	

What's  
different  
here?



# Project-Based Learning (PBL)

- PBL is systematic teaching method based in standards.
- PBL uses a meaningful question to explore the curriculum and apply knowledge and skills.
- PBL is long-term, integrates content, and is student-centered.

# Why use PBL?

PBL:

- Enacts curriculum in an engaging and meaningful way.
- Provides students the opportunity to apply knowledge and skills tied to standards across content areas
- Includes a focus on approaches to learning such as student engagement, planning and problem-solving, initiative and creativity

# The Role of the Teacher in PBL

- Teach content knowledge and skills
- Provide structured lessons and explicit instruction
- Facilitate the inquiry process
- Guide and scaffold student learning
- Provide resources for learning
- Ask open-ended questions to extend student thinking

# Pitfalls of PBL

- Using PBL as the “dessert” of teaching
- Considering PBL a curriculum
- Excluding required content from PBL
- Excluding explicit instruction from PBL
- Using PBL with only a portion of your class
- Not planning enough time to complete a project or ending too soon
- Lacking resources to complete the project
- Lack of parental or administrative support

# Helpful Hints for Projects

- Let the instructional content drive the activity
- Tie the project to curriculum and standards
- Provide sufficient time to the project
- Set up timelines and project deadlines
- Work together with colleagues

# Key Elements of Projects

- Authenticity
- Academic Rigor
- Inquiry and Exploration
- Assessment



# Discussion

- What did you see that went well for this project? (authenticity, academic rigor, inquiry and exploration, assessment)



# Implementing Projects

- [Project-Based Learning Video](#)

**PROJECT-BASED LEARNING**



• Understanding children's learning and development

• Teaching of subject matter

The image shows two young girls sitting on a plaid rug in a library or classroom setting. They are both holding and reading books. The girl on the left is wearing a dark jacket over a pink shirt, and the girl on the right is wearing a striped shirt and striped pants. Bookshelves filled with books are visible in the background.

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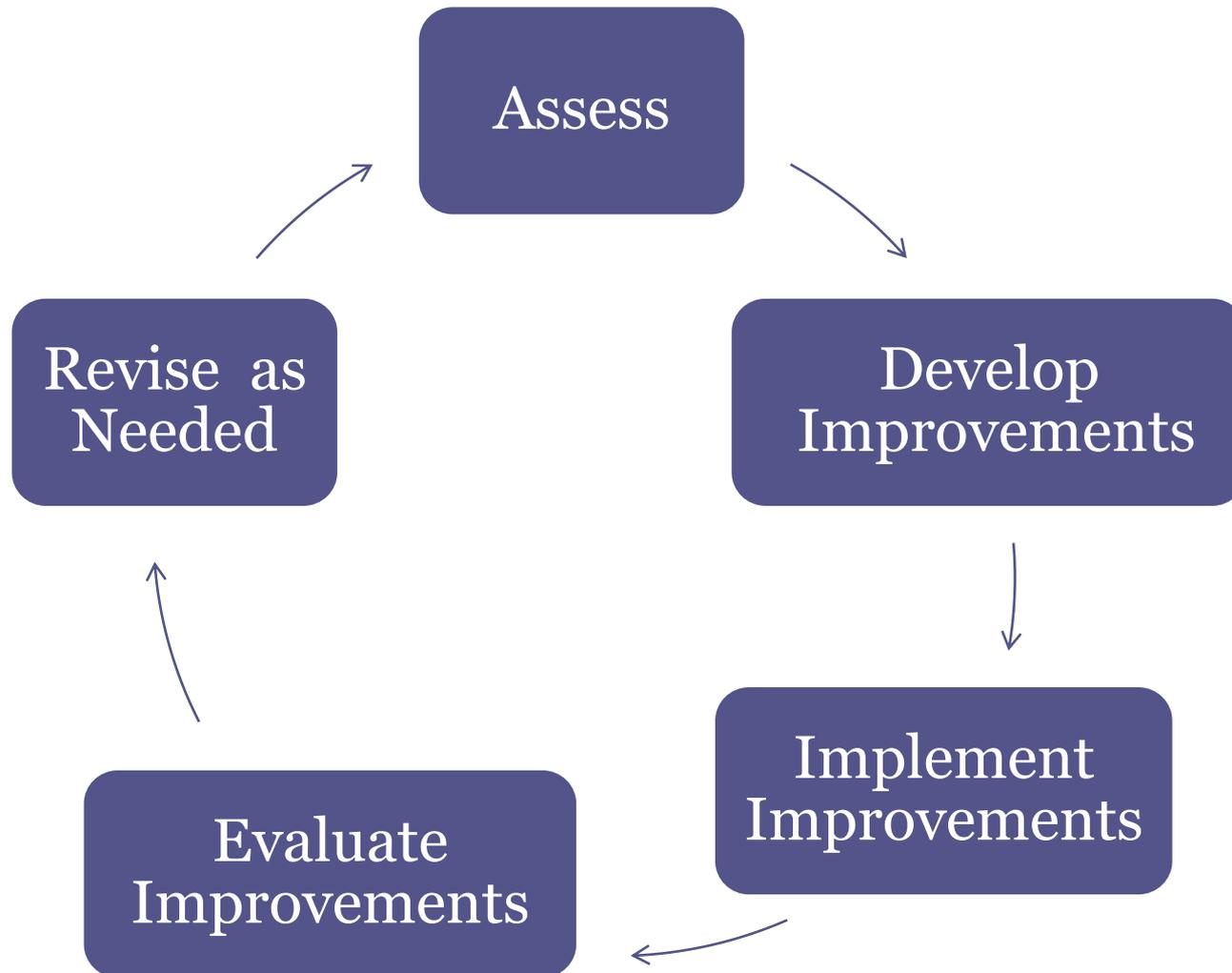
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# Continuous Improvement Cycle



# Conceptual Framework Continuous Improvement Cycle

Constructs	Findings
Leadership	Leaders must be strong, committed, inclusive, and participatory
Analytic capacity	Analytic capacity is necessary and should not be assumed
Commitment of resources for professional development	Leaders must prioritize and commit time and resources to the data use effort
Culture of collaborative inquiry	An organizational culture of learning facilitates continuous data use
Continuous process of data use	Data use for quality is a continuous process
Environmental context and organizational context	The environment matters and it is complex and dynamic

DATA USE FOR CONTINUOUS QUALITY IMPROVEMENT: WHAT THE HEAD START FIELD CAN LEARN FROM OTHER DISCIPLINES. A LITERATURE REVIEW AND CONCEPTUAL FRAMEWORK Derrick-Mills, et al., 2014.

# Purpose of Study

- 
- Examination of quality of classrooms in Kindergarten through third grade in aggregate
  - Guide the professional learning opportunities offered by NJDOE
  - Provide evidence of the impact of the professional learning provided to teachers

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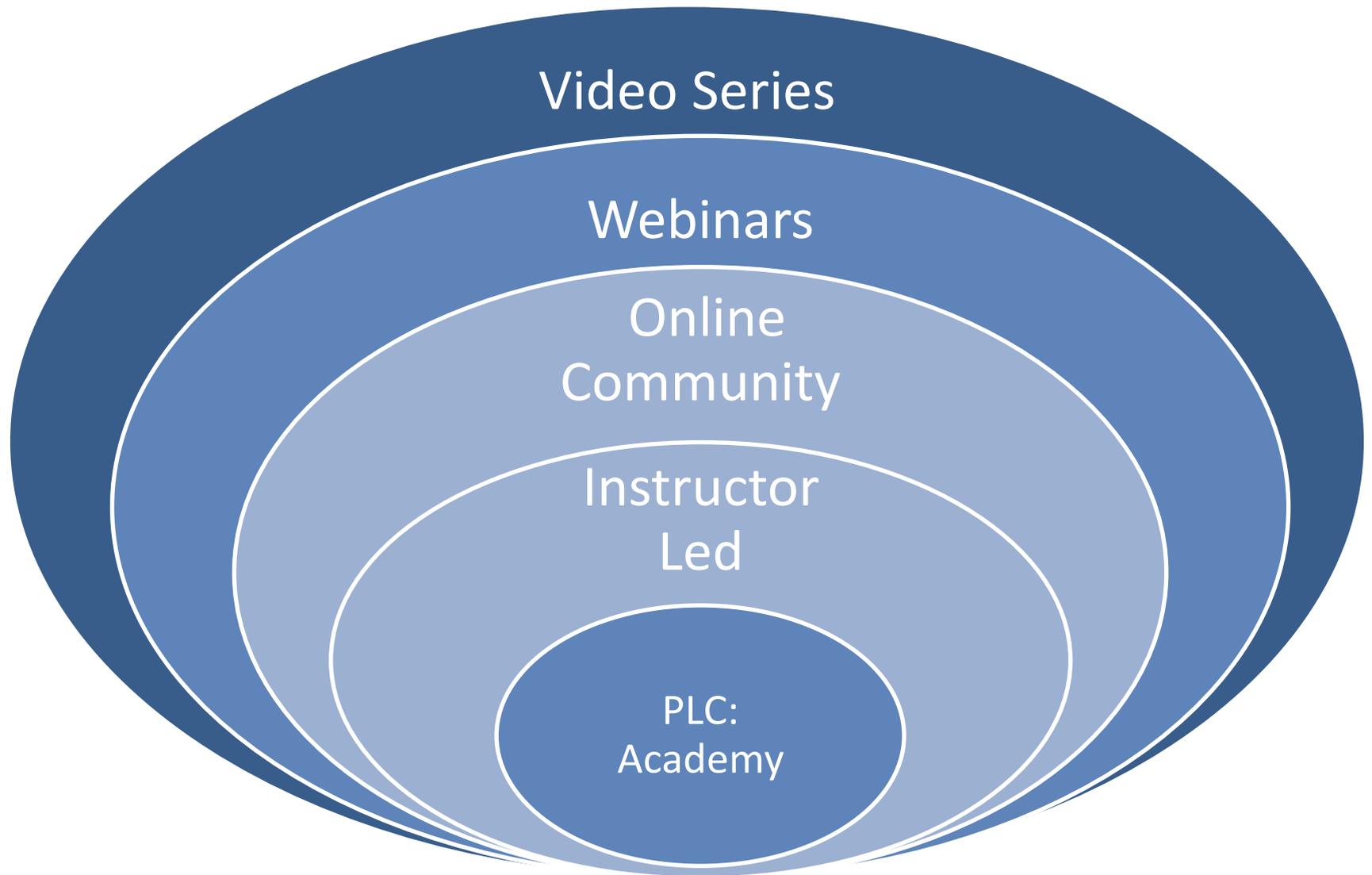
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# Professional Learning Series



# Training Evaluation Quotes:

## *Concepts Learned*

“Students need to be engaged, explore and feel invested in learning.”

“How to make centers more authentic and integrated.”

“Planning instruction that is developmentally appropriate and academically rigorous.”

“Different ways to go about giving choice to students and the different ways to reach each child.”

# Training Evaluation Quotes:

## *Application in Classroom*

“Think about each lesson and center to make sure they are developmentally appropriate.”

“I will look at all tasks prior to assigning to my students to see if there is a way to address the same standards in a more authentic/engaging way.”

“I will incorporate some ideas like: giving choices to students and morning meeting.”

“I am going to use ideas I learned to ramp up one center until I feel more comfortable.”

# Training Evaluation Quotes:

## *Additional Comments*

“This changed my mindset and encouraged me to implement a more authentic, hands on, exploratory based center.”

“Great first session. I'm excited to try more of this in my class!”

“I am a little anxious about how my principal is going to react to me having to deviate from following our current curriculum...”

# Moving Forward

*“Staff in all five programs reported that guiding teachers to change their practices (e.g., incorporating student-initiated learning) can be difficult, and teachers and principals suggested addressing this challenge through in-depth teacher training, staff voice in choosing to implement new practices, additional classroom resources, and effective leadership.”*