

Super-Power WEBINARS

Making School Great for Young Children

Sharon Ritchie, Ed.D.

*Frank Porter Graham Child Development Institute,
University of North Carolina-Chapel Hill*

September 12, 2013



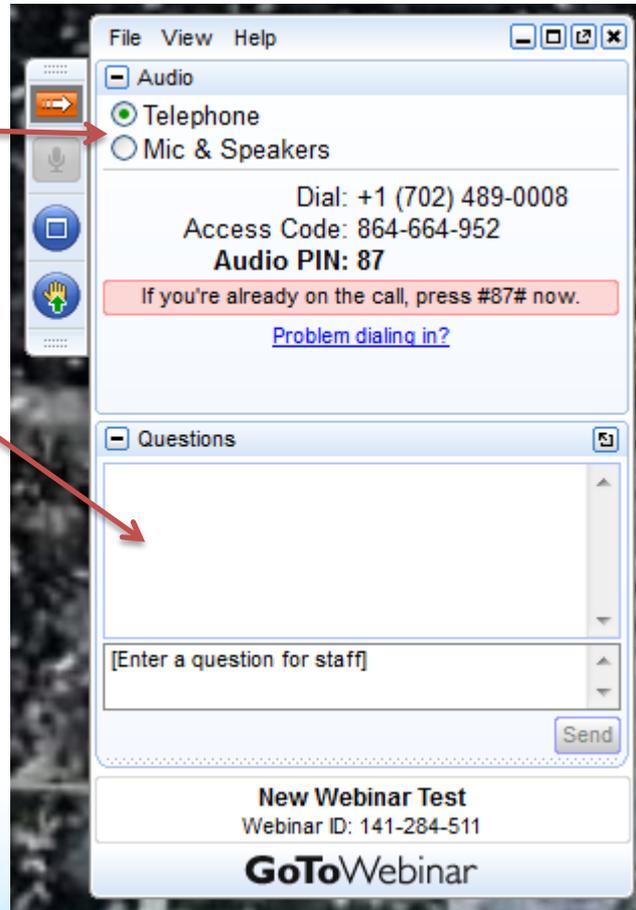
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Today's Speaker



Sharon Ritchie, Ed.D

Director of FirstSchool

FirstSchool

Making School Great for Young Children

Dr. Sharon Ritchie



Frank Porter Graham Child
Development Institute,
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Funded by W. K. Kellogg Foundation

Current State of Education



- * Persistent achievement gap
- * School-to-prison pipeline, especially for African American males
- * Tendency for schools with high minority and/or high poverty student populations to increase use of prescribed curriculum and emphasize skill-and-drill while decreasing opportunity for higher order thinking
- * Instructional practices not guided by current educational research and neuroscience
- * Children's educational trajectories are well-established during the first year or two of school.

Current Conditions - Teachers

The past decade has left too many teachers feeling burnt out, disrespected, and helpless. They see themselves as needing to lie low, and to tolerate mandates and programs that are visited upon them in great numbers, rather than feeling motivated to contribute their voice to key pedagogical decisions.



Current Conditions - Teachers

The data suggest that after just five years, between **40 and 50%** of all beginning teachers have left teaching altogether.

(Ingersoll R. 2003)

Each year **10,000 top teachers** leave their schools or stop teaching.

(The New Teacher Project 2012)

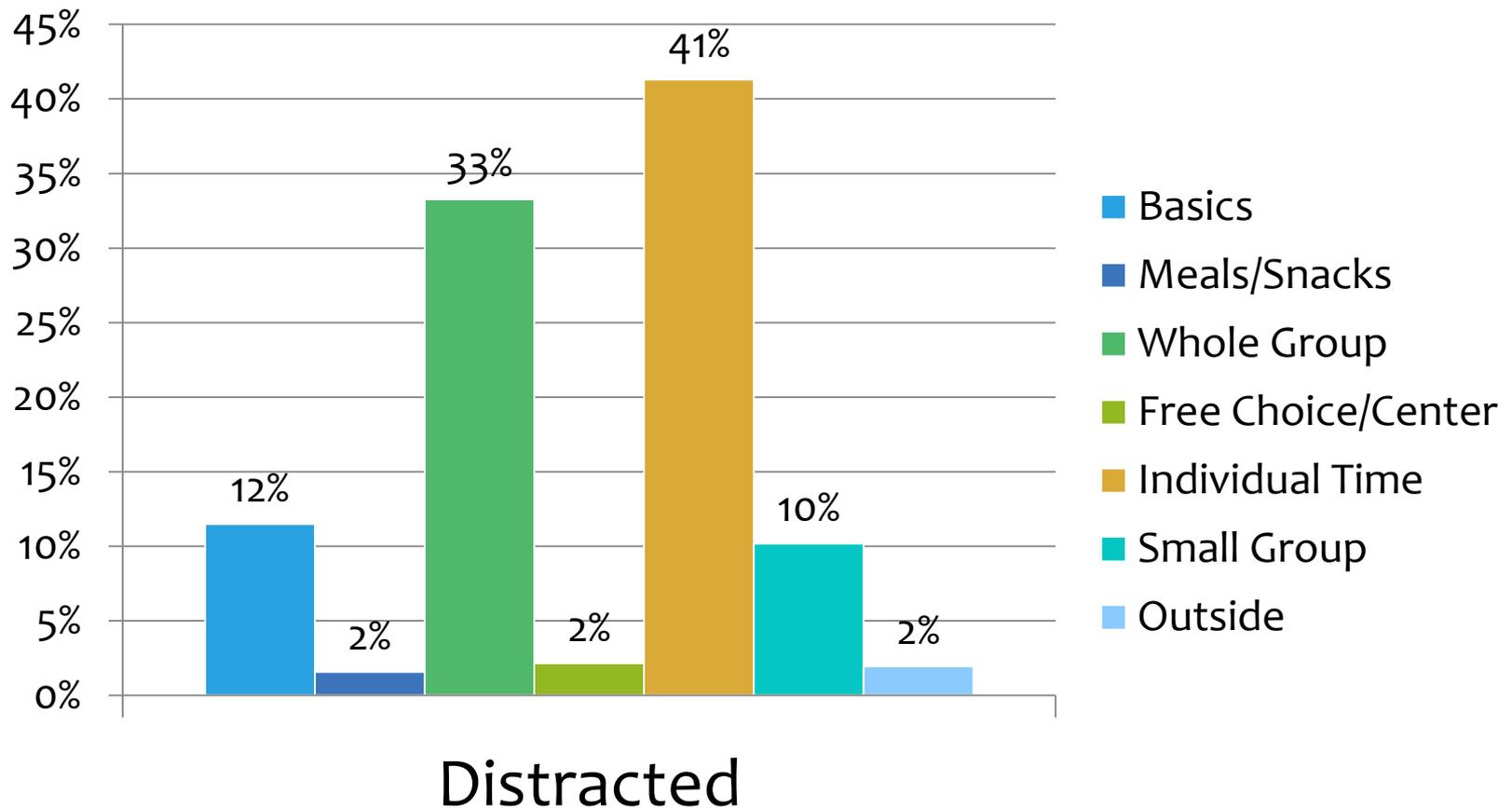




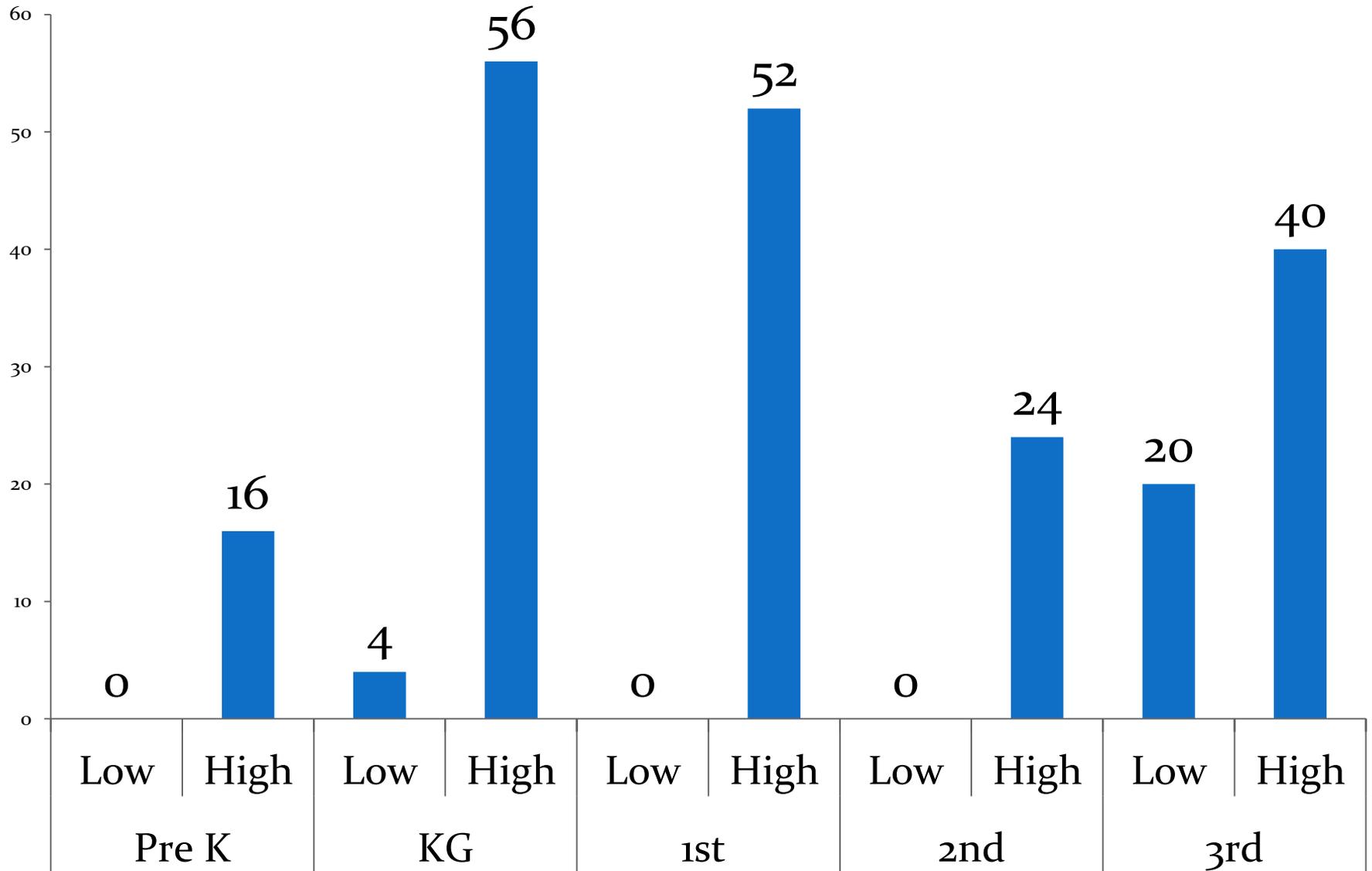
Current Conditions: Students

Early on, too many minority boys lose their sense of eagerness and excitement about school and adopt a position of passive or aggressive disengagement that often leads to later school dropout.

Snapshot Date: Minority boys – successes and challenges in remaining engaged



Snapshot Data: Time children are bound by arbitrary rules



Faced with these realities, we asked ourselves, “Could we

- * Facilitate the development of a culture of collaborative inquiry in programs and schools;
- * Provide educators with research and professional development on educational practices that lead to success for minority students and those living in poverty;
- * Present teachers with new lenses through which to view and improve their practice?”



FirstSchool

- * School improvement initiative focused on improving the school experience of Pre K- Grade 3 African American, Latino, and low income (AALLI) children
- * Staffed primarily by former educators
- * Envisioned by some of the best minds in the country for the purpose of developing high quality Pre K- grade 3 education
- * Piloted our work in 4 partner schools in NC & 3 partner schools in MI – work primarily with school leadership teams
- * Partner schools - all are high minority and/or high poverty with low student performance
- * Currently working at district level with Lansing, MI school system, Forsyth, NC school system, and with the Bertie/Martin Counties, NC district collaborative

Facilitating the development of a culture of collaborative inquiry

Reinvigorating professionalism to create a better workplace culture for teachers is a core component of our vision for PreK-3 reform and a prerequisite for meaningful action.

- * Value teacher expertise
- * Develop and sustain a mindset of continuous improvement
- * Move from evaluation toward inquiry
- * Move from a performance to a mastery orientation



RESPECT



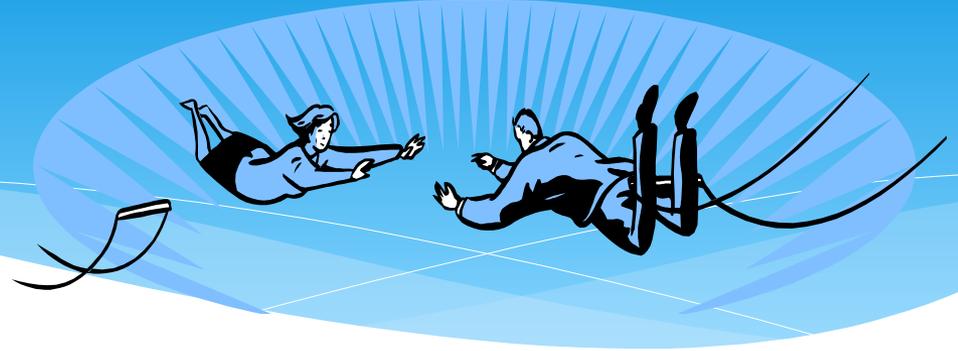
When teachers feel as if leaders are working *with* them to determine how to improve, instead of working *on* them to fix their instruction, the rules and regulations that govern school reform start to feel humanizing.



STRENGTH

- * When administrators develop a caring professional community, provide teachers with opportunities for meaningful participation in decision-making, and emphasize high expectations for both staff and students, they bolster individual and community resilience capabilities (Henderson & Milstein, 2003).
- * Within this atmosphere, intellectual curiosity, greater competence, openness and willingness to share, and an increased capacity to contribute can thrive.

TRUST



Tackling whole-school reform is no small task! Administrators can ease their own burden by providing excellent teachers with the trust and space to share their skills and guide their colleagues and using teacher leadership to sustain change.

Improve the school experiences of minority children and those who live in poverty

- * Focus on teaching and learning
- * Stay current
- * Be in concert with other school efforts



Research-based Instructional Practices

Culture of Caring



Nurture Positive Relationships

Strengthen Self-Efficacy & Racial/Cultural Identity

Develop the Whole Child

Culture of Competence



Prioritize Communication

Promote Peer Interactions

Develop Self-Regulation

Encourage Independence

Culture of Excellence



Balance Teaching Approaches

Integrate & Balance Curriculum

Build Higher-Order Thinking

Research-based Instructional Practices



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Communication**

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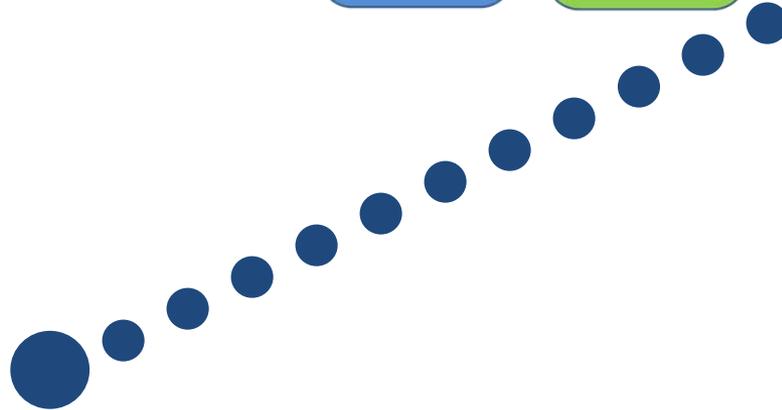
Culture of Excellence



Balance Teaching Approaches

Integrate & Balance Curriculum

Build Higher-Order Thinking



THE MISSING PIECE



Attachment



- * Positive teacher-child relationships are the foundation that allows children to explore classrooms and actively engage in learning opportunities.
- * Emotional quality of the classroom, including warmth of adult-child interactions and adults' ability to respond to children in a sensitive and individualized manner, is a consistent predictor of both reading and math skills.
- * Children show the largest gains in social skills and largest decreases in behavior problems when teachers reported warm relationships with children.

Benefits for Self-Regulated Individuals

As children develop self-regulation, they:

- * ignore distractions
- * focus and attend
- * delay gratification
- * persist in challenging situations
- * recognize that others have needs
- * ask for help
- * plan and think deliberately,
- * control emotions and express them appropriately
- * work toward their goals.

(McClelland, Acock, & Morrison, 2002).



Self-Regulation



It is essential that teachers recognize the contributions of self-regulation to learning and support its development by:

- * limiting arbitrary rules
- * promoting student choice in physical comfort and work experiences,
- * insisting upon physical activity and movement
- * soliciting and incorporating the perspectives and contributions of each child
- * routinely including opportunities for choice.

Some things we know about boys...

- * Resting brain of boys is sleeping.
- * Boys are more emotionally sensitive.
- * Young boys prefer real world connections and using their own imagination
- * Boys tend to prefer having space when they learn.
- * Movement helps boys manage and relieve impulsive behavior.



Utilize the Power of Classroom Observation



Classroom observation is a potent form of professional development. It helps teachers:

- develop their own reflective practice
- share their strengths and admit their challenges
- gain new ideas and fresh perspectives about teaching
- improve the quality of the learning experiences made available to students.

(Sheppard, Leifer, & Carryer, 1998)

Lenses for Examining Practice



- * **Snapshot:** Minute by minute view of child experience of activity settings, curriculum content, and teaching approaches
- * **CLASS:** Global view of child experience of emotional climate, classroom organization and instructional support

Incorporating a developmental perspective

Using data from the *Snapshot* and *CLASS* to view children's experiences across the PreK-3 continuum helps identify dramatic shifts in experience throughout a typical day or from grade to grade, as well as periods of static sameness that are unresponsive to children's developmental abilities and needs.

Getting children off to a good start: What teachers do really matters!

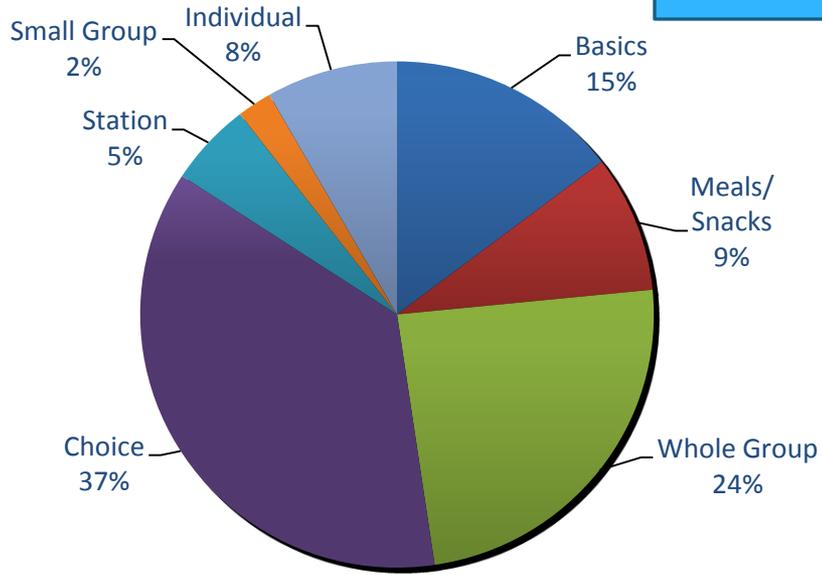
“If a bad year is compounded by other bad years, it may not be possible for the student to recover.”

(Hanushek, 2010).

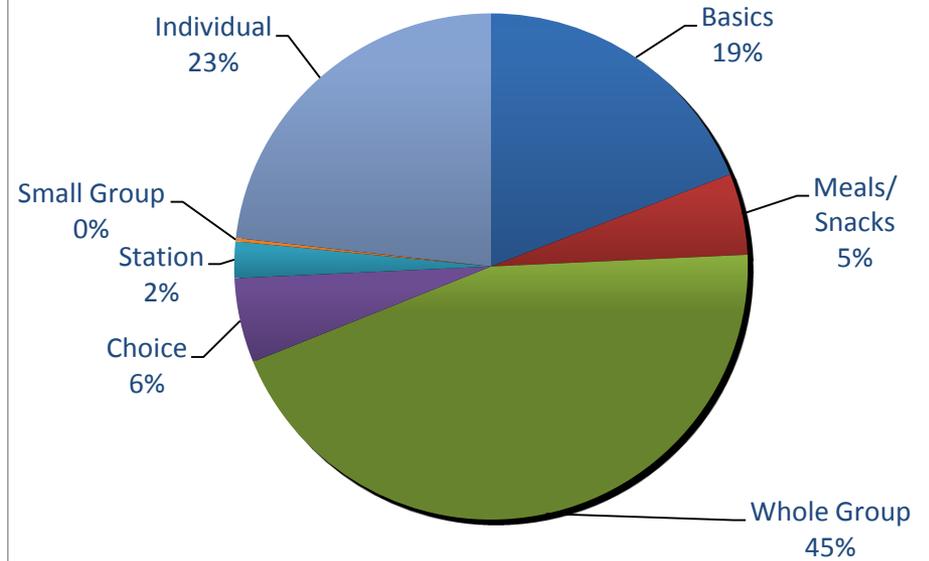
An effective teacher can have a stronger influence on student achievement than poverty, language background, class size, and minority status (Aaronson, Barrow, Sander, 2007; Darling-Hammond, 2000; Jacob, Lefgren, & Sims, 2008; Kane & Staiger, 2008; Nye, Konstantopoulos, & Hedges, 2004; Rivkin, Hanushek, & Kain, 2005; Rockoff, J., 2004; Rothstein, J, 2010).

Snapshot Data

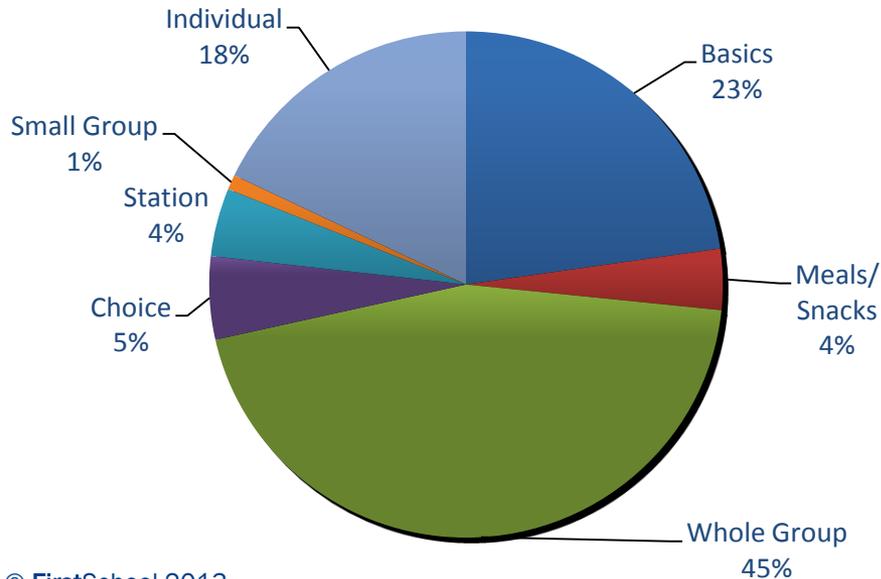
Activity Setting - Pre K



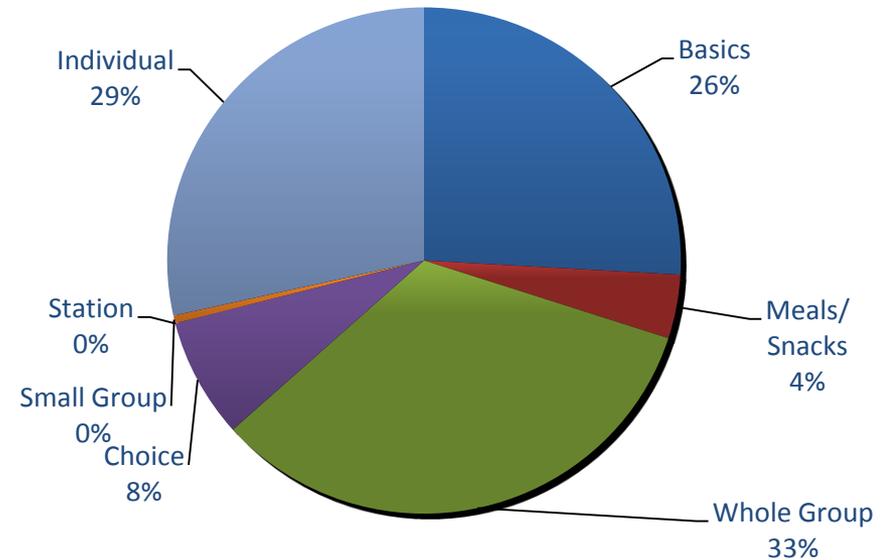
Activity Setting - K



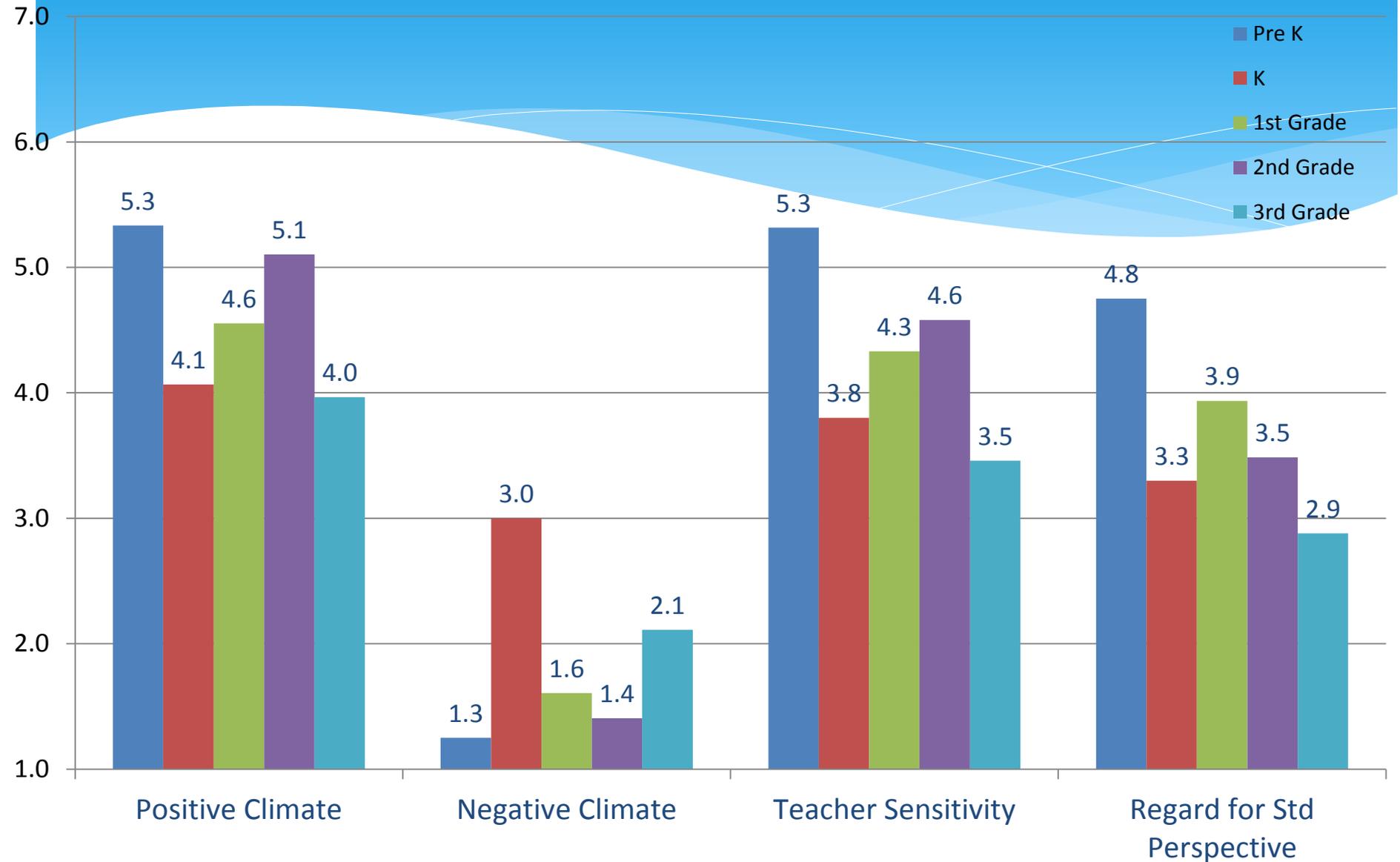
Activity Setting - 1st Grade



Activity Setting - 2nd Grade



CLASS Emotional Support

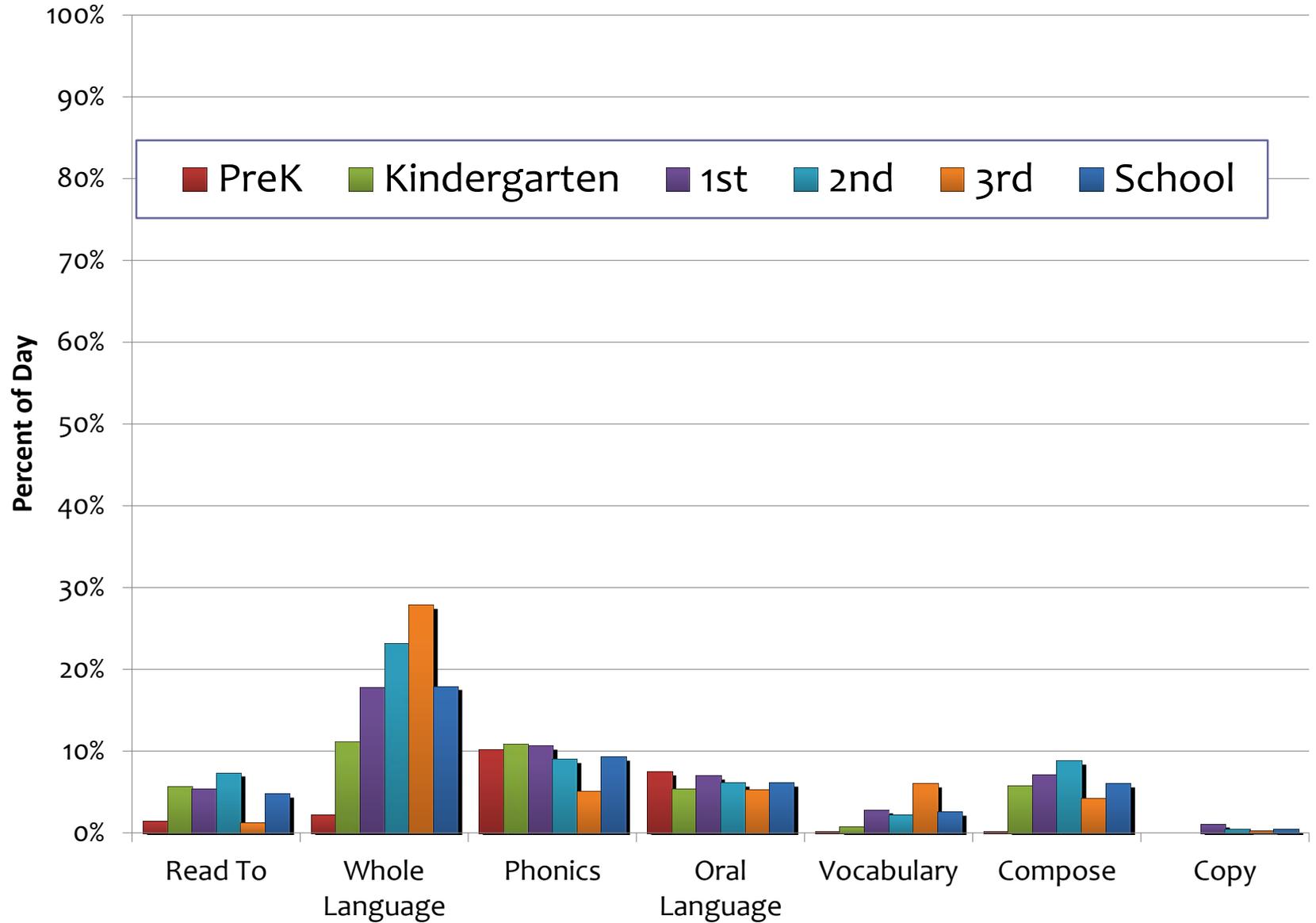


Using Research to Guide Practice: Ending the Culture of Silence

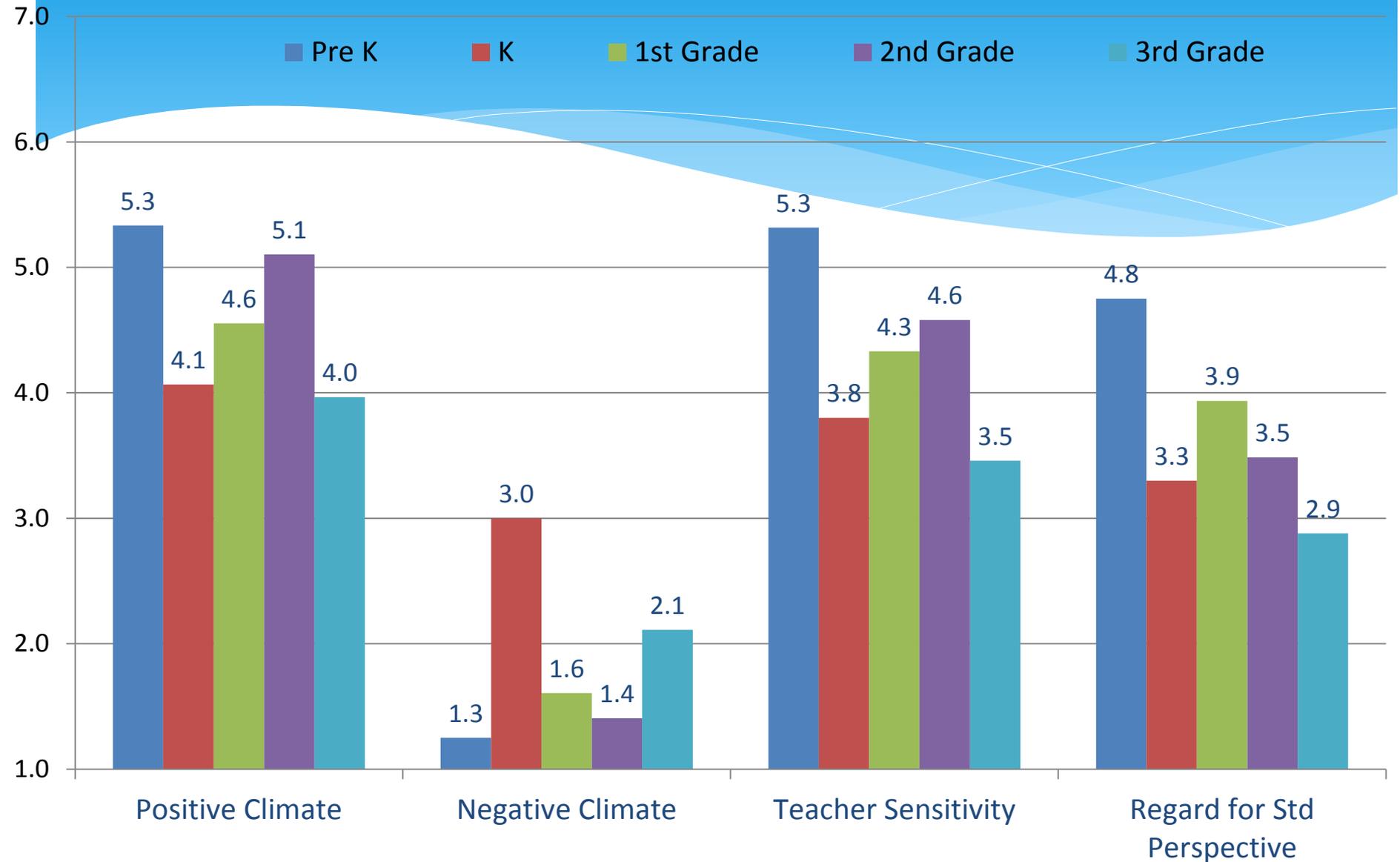
- * A classroom emphasis on oral language development has been identified as one of the premier instructional strategies for ensuring the success of children, especially those from low socio-economic communities (Mason & Galloway, 2012).
- * Oral language development influences vocabularies in young children (Snow, 2007) suggesting discrepancies in young children's vocabularies in prekindergarten may remain throughout their schooling.
- * Vocabulary proficiency is a predictor of academic achievement beginning as early as the third grade (Storch & Whitehurst, 2002).



Snapshot Data: Literacy Components by Grade Levels



CLASS Emotional Support

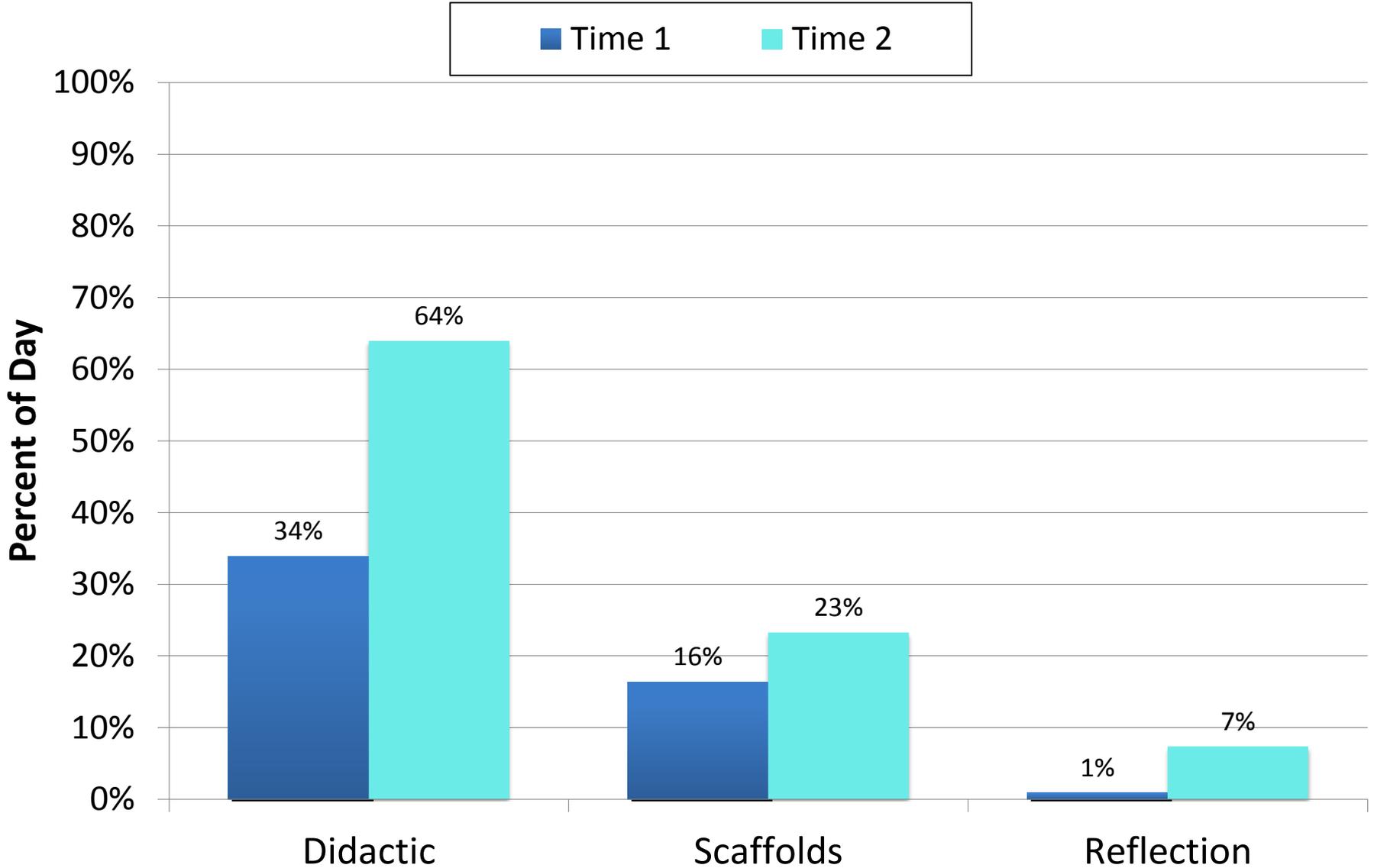


Small Changes Make a Big Difference

Let's take a look at a sample of the results that **FirstSchool** has been achieving.



Snapshot Data: Teaching Approaches



Time 1: Spring 2010

Time 2: Fall 2012

Small Changes Make A Big Difference... Let's Celebrate!!!

Increase of 43% in amount of time spent teaching
(from 51% to 94%)

516 hours of additional teaching time per year

Increase in all teaching approaches:

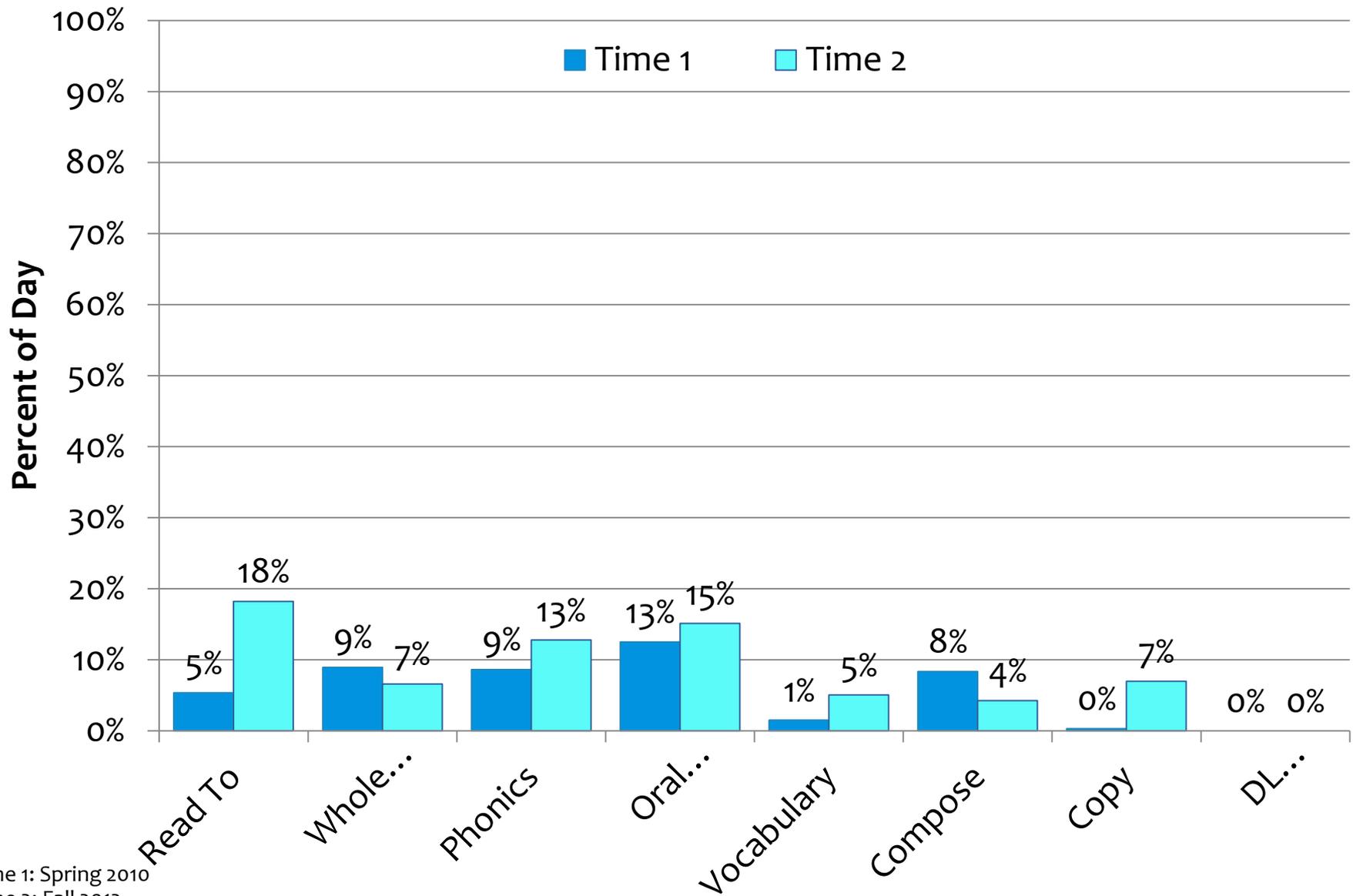
Didactic 34% to 64% (+30% = 360 hours/year)

Scaffolds 16% to 23% (+7% = 84 hours/year)

Reflection 1% to 7% (+6% = 72 hours/year)



Snapshot Data: Components of Literacy



Small Changes Make A Big Difference... Let's Celebrate!!!

Teaching Literacy +24%
(from 45% to 69% of day)

288 additional hours/year of literacy development!

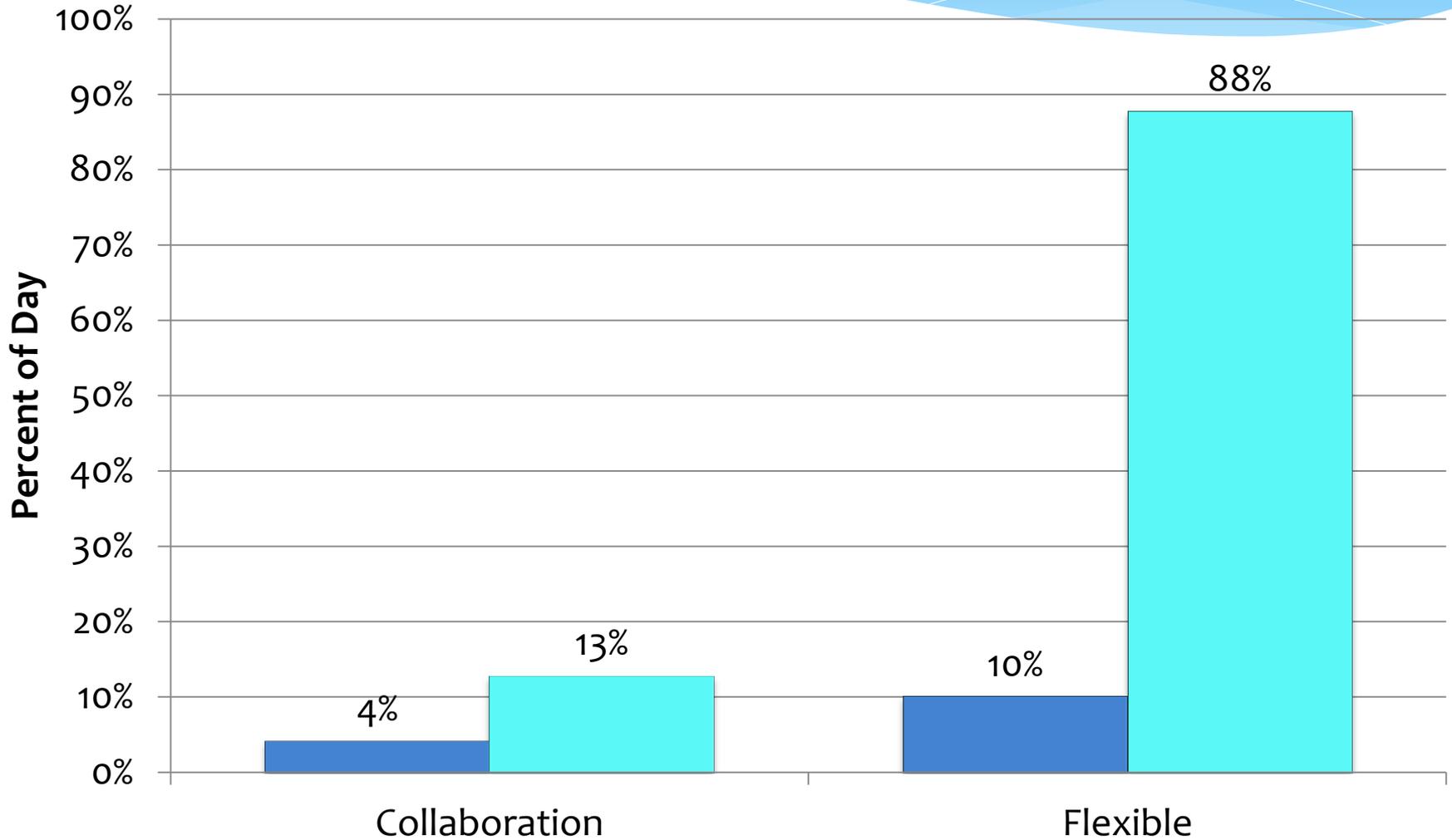


Noteworthy areas of increase:

- * Read-aloud 5% to 18% (13% = 156 hours/year)
- * Oral language development 13% to 15% (2% = 24 hours/year)
- * Vocabulary development 1% to 5% (4% = 48 hours/year)

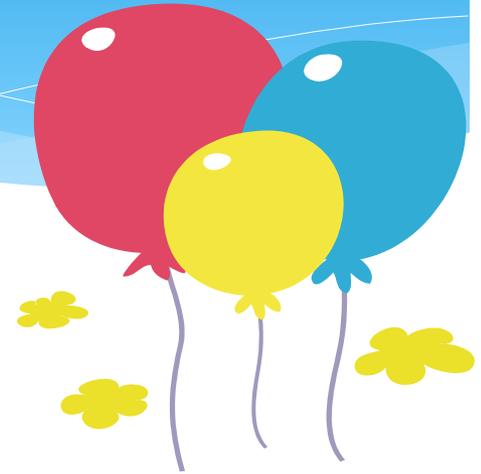
Snapshot Data: Collaboration & Autonomy

■ Time 1 ■ Time 2



Time 1: Spring 2010
Time 2: Fall 2012

Small Changes Make A Big Difference... Let's Celebrate!!!



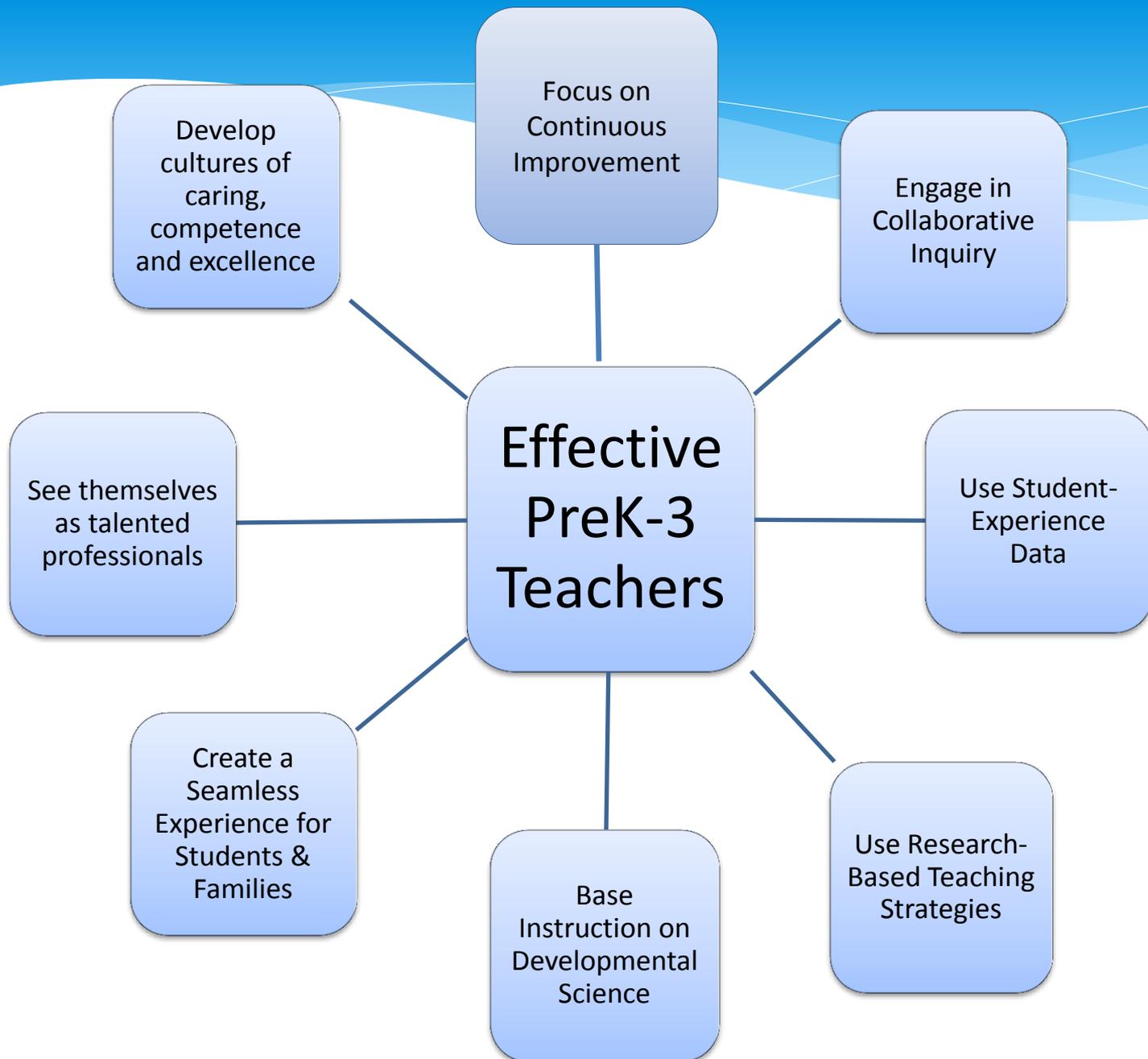
Collaboration: 9% increase (from 4% to 13%)
108 more hours/year of children
intentionally talking & working together

Flexible: 78% increase (from 10% to 88%)
936 **less** hours/year of children subjected
to arbitrary rules



Sample of Project Findings

- * The average amount of time students spent in transitions decreased from 21% of day to 17%. This works out to 2,880 minutes of additional time spent in instruction per year per year per classroom.
- * Teachers increased the amount of time spent teaching math (*Numbers* increased 9% = 6,480 minutes/year, *Geometry* increased 2% = 1,440 minutes/year, *Algebraic Thinking* increased 1% = 720 minutes/year, & *Time* increased 2% = 1,440 minutes/year)
- * T1= children were interacting with a teacher 50% of the time. T2 = 70%. This adds an additional **36 days** per school year of instructional time in each classroom.



FirstSchool

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FirstSchool

Please feel free to contact us
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- * W. K. Kellogg Foundation grant
- * Race to the Top – Early Learning Challenge Grant
- * University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill
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Questions?



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