

# **W.K. Kellogg Foundation 0-8 Final Evaluation Report Executive Summary**

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**Completed by:  
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Oakland, CA**

**Submitted to the  
Oakland Unified School District**

**MILLS**  
SCHOOL OF EDUCATION



“The full spectrum of the students, because we have the Pre-K, T-K and 1<sup>st</sup>...so it’s really nice to hear where they [the teachers across grade levels] are coming from, where they are, and where they need to get to...[cross grade collaboration] helps you backwards map, you know, plan what you are going to do, and be like, okay, this is the goal, this is the expectations that they have at the end of 1<sup>st</sup> grade, how am I going to help them, give them the foundation, so that they are strong enough in the foundation so that they can make it, and be successful in 1<sup>st</sup> grade.”

--TK Teacher, Participant in Balanced Literacy PLC

**Evaluation Team:**

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## Executive Summary

### **OUSD is Making Progress Towards the Goals Outlined in the District's Original 2010 P-3 Instructional Reform Initiative**

**An essential goal of the district's 0-8 initiative is that early childhood becomes institutionalized in OUSD; integrated, valued and invested in across all departments and programs within the school district.**

The district is striving toward developing coordinated, comprehensive and aligned and protected pathways from birth through 3<sup>rd</sup> grade for children and families across the district in full service community schools. Further, they are working towards aligning curriculum, instruction and assessment practices PreK- 3<sup>rd</sup> grade.

#### **Areas of Strength Highlighted in this Evaluation Include:**

- The inclusion of shared PreK-3<sup>rd</sup> language, goals and metrics in the district strategic plan and documents
- Increasing inclusion of ECE administrators on district leadership teams and committees
- The creation of the district's first PreK-1<sup>st</sup> PLCs that bring together early grades, early years teachers from across the district to engage in horizontal and vertical collaborative planning and professional learning time
- A strong emphasis on developmentally, culturally and linguistically responsive curricula and instruction that is child-centered and play-based and supports children's academic and social emotional learning

#### **Areas Needing District Attention and Further Development Include:**

- Increased and sustained funding to support the district's PreK-3<sup>rd</sup> reform agenda
- Commitment by all district administrators and principals to fund, plan and participate in PD on research informed practices that support young children's brain development, healthy attachments and relationships, optimal learning and development and the role of schools in building protective factors and resiliency among children exposed to toxic stress and trauma.
- Continuing to strengthen the integration of PreK-3 reforms with AAMA, DLL and SPED
- Improving data discussions to focus on students' learning and effective adjustments to practice
- Continued efforts to increase participation of local child care and early learning professionals into district PLCs and strengthening partnerships between OUSD, feeder schools & programs

**Beginning in 2012, OUSD created their first PreK-1<sup>st</sup> grade Professional Learning Communities [PLCs].** For the first time in the district, these PLCs allowed early years, early grades teachers to have horizontal (same grade) and vertical (cross grade) collaboration and professional learning time. Four PLCs were created emphasizing:

- A Balanced Approach to Literacy
- Socially Complex Play
- Dual Language Learning
- Visual Performing Arts



## Highlights of the Evaluation Findings

### District Goals for 0-8 Systems Change Initiative

#### BRIGHT SPOTS

*OUSD has made important progress integrating ECE into the district*

Data Highlights	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>◆ P-3 Instructional reform initiative passed by School Board</li><li>◆ District administrators working on PreK-3<sup>rd</sup> alignment (ECE Director, TK Manager, 0-8 Coordinator, PEC PreK Manager) are represented in district leadership committees and meetings.</li><li>◆ Shared PreK-3<sup>rd</sup> language, goals and metrics have been incorporated into the district's strategic plan and public statements.</li></ul>
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*PreK-1<sup>st</sup> Grade teachers—including Charter and Program for Exceptional Children PreK teachers—are coming together for the first time across the district for sustained horizontal (same grade) and vertical (cross grade) collaboration in Professional Learning Communities*

Data Highlights	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>◆ Most teachers reported that the PLCs provided opportunities for them to work productively with colleagues in their same grade (93%) and those teaching across different grade levels (83%).</li><li>◆ For the first time, PEC PreK teachers were included in professional development with their PreK-1<sup>st</sup> grade colleagues from across the district.</li></ul>
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#### CHALLENGES

*OUSD needs to prioritize PD for all district Administrators and Principals on research informed practices that support high quality early learning environments*

Data Highlights	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>◆ To support district administrators and principals to work towards implementation of the vision and expectations for PreK-3 reform, professional learning opportunities need to be provided that focus on developmental science including early brain development, child-initiated curricula and instruction, the role of play and social emotional skills in children's academic learning, relationships with families in the early years, and the factors involved in validly and reliably assessing young children's learning and development.</li></ul>
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## Teachers' Learning in District P-1 PLCs

### BRIGHT SPOTS

*Teachers appreciate being treated as intellectual professionals where they are given agency to continuously inform the content and format of their professional learning experiences*

Data Highlights	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>◆ Teachers valued opportunities to develop and engage in Instructional Leadership sharing their ideas and experiences with their colleagues.</li><li>◆ Teachers liked the time they had to read research-based texts, to reflect, to listen to, and talk with, their colleagues, and the opportunity to develop their own inquiry questions to guide their professional learning.</li></ul>
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*Teachers reported learning about developmentally responsive curricula and instruction*

Data Highlights	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>◆ In the BAL PLC, highlights of the topics teachers learned about included balancing early reading, early writing, listening and speaking as essential components to the transition to the CCSS, supporting oral language in the classroom including academic conversations, arranging a classroom environment to support literacy learning, using inquiry and data to inform instruction, including children and families' home language and culture as part of the classroom community, and integrating meaningful student artifacts of learning into instruction.</li><li>◆ In the Play PLC, highlights of the topics teachers learned about included child development, how to support children's social skills including self-regulation development through play, the role of the classroom environment in supporting children's learning, and how to observe and document children's learning and construction of meaning through play.</li></ul>
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### CHALLENGES

*Strengthening facilitation of data discussions and use of data protocols is needed so teachers' discussions of student evidence can lead to effective adjustments in their classroom instruction*

Data Highlights	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>◆ Field notes suggest that teachers need support in learning to use protocols to examine student evidence and maintaining their focus on students' learning and understanding when sharing and discussing student evidence. Data discussions often shifted away from the evidence to focus on other topics (e.g., lesson planning, family engagement etc.) and rarely led to planning adjustments to curriculum and/or instruction that would better meet the individual needs of students.</li></ul>
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## District Priorities: A Balanced Approach to Literacy, Child-Centered Play Based Instruction and AAMA

### BRIGHT SPOTS

*PreK-1<sup>st</sup> grade teachers in the Balanced Approach to Literacy PLC reported that their understanding of early language and literacy development increased and the PLC led to changes in their literacy instruction.*

Data Highlights	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>◆ Teachers reported that the BAL PLC increased their understanding of early literacy (91%) and language (83%) development.</li><li>◆ The majority of teachers participating in the BAL PLC (91%) reported that the PLC led them to make changes in their literacy instruction.</li></ul>
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*PreK-1<sup>st</sup> Grade teachers in both the Play and Balanced Literacy PLCs recognize the role of play in children’s academic and social emotional learning and development*

Data Highlights	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>◆ Teachers agree or strongly agree that play improves children’s language and communication skills (94%), mathematical thinking abilities (92%) and development of thinking skills (93%).</li><li>◆ Most (93%) teachers agree or strongly agree that play helps children learn to express their feelings.</li></ul>
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### CHALLENGES

*Survey ratings and field notes suggest that teachers would like more guidance in learning how to effectively support their African American male students, Dual Language Learners and Children with Special and Exceptional Rights*

Data Highlights	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>◆ Teachers would like to see more opportunities in district PD to combine discussions of content (e.g., literacy, play, academic discussion) with research and discussion on race, equity and trauma informed leadership and instruction</li><li>◆ The survey statement, “The PLC helped me to become a more effective teacher of African American male students” resulted in the lowest survey ratings with 41% of the participants in the BAL PLC and 46% in the Play PLC disagreeing.</li></ul>
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## Administrators' and Facilitators' Vision & Goals



### Addressing equity and sustainability are central goals for district administrators

"I have been charged with being really thoughtful around prioritizing the work pertaining to the AAMA initiative. How do we lead that work in early ed? I would say the **district sees Transitional Kindergarten and is now understanding preschool, and also, our after school age program as ways to really interrupt the equity gap...** if we address that at the very earliest opportunity, we will likely see long term results we are recognizing that very different results and for our kids, families and ultimately communities, if we stay invested. (TK Manager)

"One of the first data-stories I looked at coming into this role, in partnership with our Executive Director of African American Male Achievement (AAMA), was how many of our (AA) boys were reading on or above grade level by 3rd grade. I think the policy brief, Double Jeopardy, made an impact and when we looked at our own data, the statistics were alarming. In 2013, **CST data revealed only 22% of our black boys were reading on or above grade level in 3rd grade. As a district, I think we recognize the urgency these numbers present for our kids** and the need to institute intentional support systems of aligned learning prior to 3rd grade. Myself and my colleagues are deeply committed to seeing a swift turn around of outcomes for our children - **the challenge I think is getting to swift consensus on how, when, who and where. I believe these P-1 PLCs are a great place to start, especially with the onset of Common Core.**" (0-8 Coordinator)

### QUESTION | Describe the goals for the district 0-8 systems reform initiative

### Seeking opportunities to align systems, communication and instruction, birth through 3<sup>rd</sup> grade...moving out of or reconceptualizing traditional 'silos'

"The goals I was originally charged with were to seek opportunities to align systems, communication and instruction: Birth through 3rd Grade and beyond, as part of our Full Service Community School Partnership efforts in conjunction with our "Targeted Universal" focus for AAMA. Ultimately these goals became very simple, still very complex - but ultimately very simple: in what ways could Early Educators, particularly PreK - 1st grade teachers be lifted up as leaders and holders of privileged knowledge regarding child development and family engagement-empowerment? All too often our ECE teachers experience structural barriers and isolation. This initiative gave many of us, both inside and outside of the district, an opportunity to reconceptualize our "silos" or "silos of excellence" as Dr. Kristie Kauerz describes them and begin to work across traditional barriers in the hopes of building stronger foundations for our students, our teachers, families and our schools." (0-8 Coordinator)

### The district is emphasizing Transitional Kindergarten as a context for highlighting the importance of early education and quality early learning environments

"We are definitely focused on **aligning preschool and TK**, and we are definitely focused on improving the quality of our preschool programs, and we are really using Transitional Kindergarten as this opportunity to **highlight the importance of early educational experiences** and building an awareness, really building, creating some shared common language around what quality needs to be, what it looks like, and what it needs to be for our kids, and why it needs to be that way." (TK Manager)

## OUSD Teachers' Vision and Goals for the PLCs

**QUESTION | Describe your goals for participating in the district P-1 PLC**

**Teachers reported...**

**Appreciating opportunities to engage as Teacher Leaders supporting their colleagues through Instructional Leadership**

“She had us in different groups, so **I was doing a group on classroom management**, another TK teacher did the Teaching Pyramid [TP] and one did the GLAD and so the teachers got to go around and they were so happy, because, they learned about GLAD, they got to make and take the TP solution kit, which everyone should be using in TK, because it is so fabulous and then they got to come see pictures of my classroom and I showed them what I do for transitions, and it was like, okay, we can take something away.” (TK Teacher describing her description of a favorite PD she had attended)

“I would **love to be able to share more of what I have learned** [about Balanced Literacy] and just from my experience with [my PreK colleagues] and encourage them. They are always very curious to know, how would you do this? A PreK teacher said, I just wish I could come and observe how you implement teaching a reading and writing workshop.” (PreK Teacher)

**Teachers appreciated the PLCs as environments where they could think deeply and reflect with their colleagues**

“I wanted a space where I would have **time to process** and actually, you know, **think deeply** about balanced literacy [where] reflective PLC people are working together to make their own understandings” (1<sup>st</sup> Grade Teacher)

“**Dig deep into the materials** that we have, understand the materials, and how I am going to structure my classroom, what I am going to have the kids do, I really need to have all of that in my head.” (Literacy Teacher Leader)

**Teachers appreciated feeling valued as professionals in the PLCs**

“Oakland Unified has a rich, rich talent of teachers, they are phenomenal and just **drawing from each teacher, getting information, pulling up one, helping one [in] the PLCs...** just knowing that someone says, ‘hey, could you please talk to the teachers?’, or ‘could you please give a demonstration,’ oh, that pats me on the back, and I am sure that’s with other teachers too... You know, you have been here for so long and **then you are feeling valued.**” (TK Teacher)



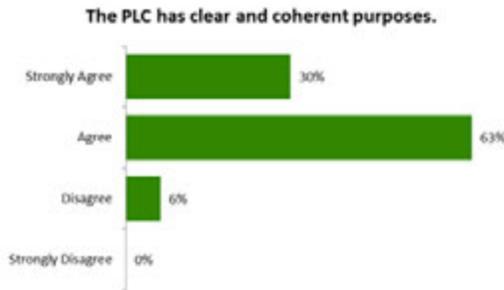
**One teacher explains how most of his district PD is top down and didactic, an approach he contrasts with the reflective and interactive nature of the BAL PLC**

“My other Professional Development (outside of the BAL PLC) has been this year, so far, telling teachers how they want us to teach, you know, so we get pedagogical changes, like the main shift in the district is to academic discussions, but there is not time to process it but just more like, this is what you are going to do... **tell us what to do meetings that are not of our choosing**” (1<sup>st</sup> Grade Teacher)

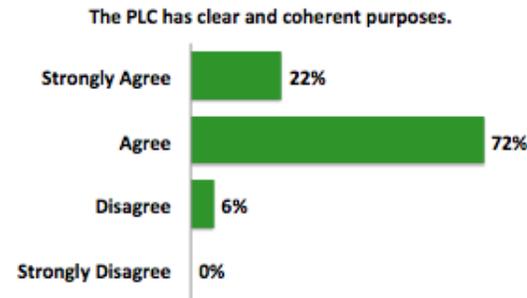
**2013-2014 OUSD Teacher Participants Reported:**

*Regarding their understanding of the goals and purposes of the PLC...*

**Balanced Literacy PLC (n=63)**



**Socially Complex Play PLC (n=18)**

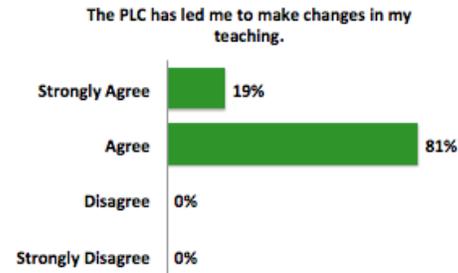


*Regarding their beliefs about whether the PLC led to changes in their instruction....*

**Balanced Literacy PLC (n=62)**

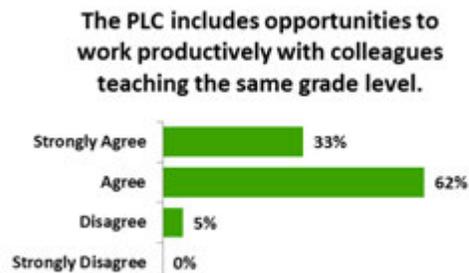


**Socially Complex Play PLC (n=16)**

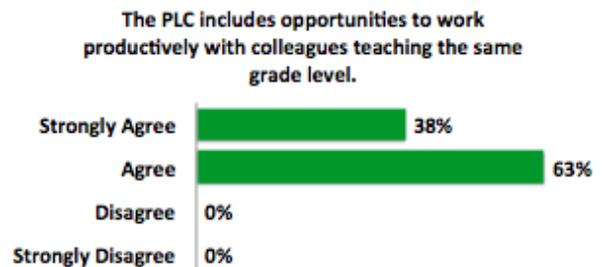


*Regarding opportunities to work productively with colleagues who are working at the SAME grade level (horizontal collaboration):*

**Balanced Literacy PLC (n=63)**



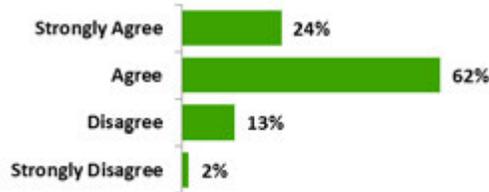
**Socially Complex Play PLC (n=16)**



**Regarding opportunities to work productively with colleagues working across DIFFERENT grade levels (vertical collaboration):**

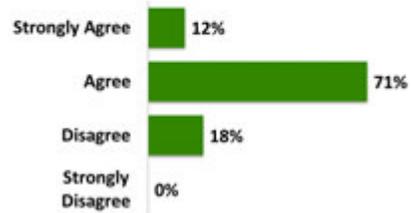
**Balanced Literacy PLC (n=63)**

The PLC includes opportunities to work productively with colleagues teaching across different grade levels.



**Socially Complex Play PLC (n=17)**

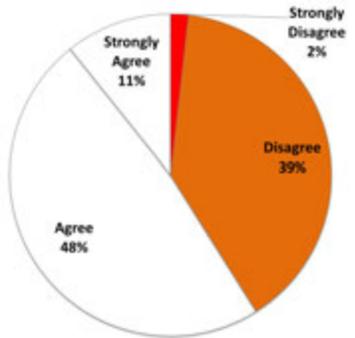
The PLC includes opportunities to work productively with colleagues teaching across different grade levels.



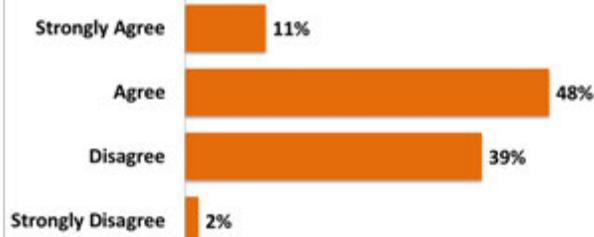
**Regarding how the PLC prepared them to work effectively with African American male students:**

**Balanced Literacy PLC (n=56)**

The PLC has helped me become a more effective teacher with African American male students.

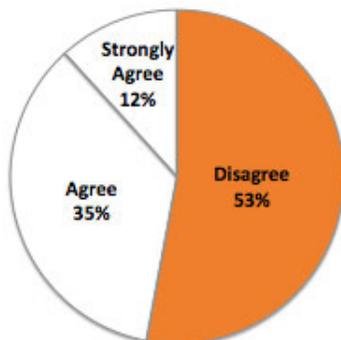


The PLC has helped me become a more effective teacher with African American male students.

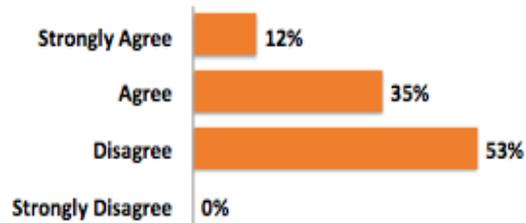


**Socially Complex Play PLC (n=17)**

The PLC has helped me become a more effective teacher with African American male students.



The PLC has helped me become a more effective teacher with African American male students.



## Conclusion

School districts across the country are striving to close opportunity and achievement gaps through the creation of a comprehensive and aligned continuum of early childhood services and educational programs for children and families beginning at birth and continuing through 3rd grade (Bogard & Takanishi, 2005; Foundation for Child Development, 2006; Guernsey & Mead, 2010; Kagan & Kauerz, 2012). OUSD's 0-8 Initiative was created with an understanding that children's earliest years are critical for their brain development, for building the foundations of nurturing and healthy attachments and positive relationships, and for the development of cognitive, social-emotional and communication skills needed for successful participation in school and lifelong learning (NAESP Foundation Task Force On Early Learning, 2011). Central for OUSD is their focus on equity centered systems change where linkages, partnerships, and alignments are improved, early childhood becomes institutionalized across the district, developmentally, culturally and linguistically responsive practices are strengthened and expanded across schools and classrooms, and access to high quality early childhood services are increased for all of the district's children and families (P-3 Instructional Reform Initiative; Board Resolution #0910-0155).

**Evidence throughout this evaluation reflects progress being made in the pursuit of OUSD's 0-8 reform goals.** The development of a shared vision and district strategic plan for P-3, the hiring of a 0-8 Coordinator in 2012 and TK Manager in 2013, integration of ECE administrators working on PreK-3<sup>rd</sup> alignment into district leadership teams, incorporation of shared PreK-3<sup>rd</sup> language and goals into a wide range of publicly distributed district documents, and the creation of several PreK-1<sup>st</sup> professional learning communities that support both horizontal and vertical collaboration among district teachers are some important exemplars of the district's progress to date.

**Survey results and observations described throughout this evaluation suggest that OUSD's PreK-1<sup>st</sup> grade PLCs are professional learning contexts that are supporting teachers to strengthen important skills and knowledge required for transforming their teaching—a requisite foundation for improving student outcomes.** The P-1 PLCs were created by the district to be organizational routines that would be significant levers for systems change, that is, environments designed to tightly couple policy (e.g., 0-8 reform, AAMA, DCLR, teachers' increasing use of data) with the technical core in OUSD schools working to bring about desired



changes in teachers' practice. PreK-1<sup>st</sup> grade teachers participating in PLCs did report improved understanding of children's development, more knowledge of how they could design classroom environments to support children's learning, and increased clarity about the relationships between child-centered pedagogical strategies, students' academic achievement and their social emotional well being. Further, opportunities for horizontal and vertical discussions allowed teachers to learn about both same grade and cross

grade level developmental expectations for children’s learning and development and to begin to develop a common discourse for instructional dialogue across the PreK-1<sup>st</sup> grade continuum.

**Many teachers described the P-1 PLCs as the most meaningful professional development experiences they have participated in during their tenure in OUSD**

**Research highlights that teacher learning is maximized in professional learning environments where there is a strong focus on content, an inquiry orientation, collaboration among participants, alignment with district initiatives and policies, and opportunities for teachers to strengthen their agency in addressing students’ needs instead of simply acting in compliance to administrative directives** (Penuel, Fishman, Yamaguchi, & Gallagher, 2007; Whitford & Wood, 2010). Further, for teachers working in contexts where they face high pressure regarding accountability and improving student outcomes, as is the case in OUSD, teachers are most likely to be successful in professional learning environments where they have strong support from district administration and principals to participate, if in classroom coaching and mentoring is available, and they have opportunities to develop as instructional leaders (Yendel-Hoppey, 2010). Effective PLCs position teachers as experts who are best suited to address the learning needs of the students in their classroom; a political shift that recognizes teachers’ work as both intellectual and professional and teachers “actively, collaboratively, and systematically seek answers to their own dilemmas of practice and construct professional knowledge rooted, not only in educational theory, but also in lived classroom experiences” (Wood, 2007, p. 709).

**This research is mirrored in OUSD. Teachers reported the greatest learning opportunities and satisfaction with the PLC contexts where the facilitators supported them to create trusting collaborative relationships with one another, where they were encouraged to take ownership of their learning process and to co-construct knowledge with their colleagues.**

Learning how to construct inquiry questions based on challenges and questions that emerged from teachers’ practice and then constructing plans for collecting and analyzing data related to their inquiry questions was an experience that many teachers reported as a key lever for transforming their practice and increasing their feelings of both professionalism and efficacy. Although educators can feel extremely vulnerable making their teaching public for collective analysis and scrutiny in professional learning contexts, OUSD teachers reported that they found the PLCs to be environments that supported open dialogue and the sharing of diverse perspectives without any fear of retribution.

In contrast, one of the most significant barriers teachers’ described as impeding their progress in transforming their practice, was the lack of support they had from their principals. Many teachers described experiencing tensions with the lack of alignment between the curricula, pedagogy and use of inquiry and reflection championed in the district PLCs and their principals’ lack of understanding or awareness of the district’s 0-8 reforms and/or research informed best practices for early childhood. Teachers



also described the complexities they faced in being asked to simultaneously navigate multiple reform initiatives and face pressure to substantively change their practice without the requisite time and support necessary for deep and transformative learning to happen.

Until district administrators and principals have participated in 0-8 focused professional development, teachers are likely to continue feeling tensions in their desire and ability to take risks to transform their practice—shifting away from an era of scripted and teacher directed Open Court instruction towards an inquiry based, child-centered and critical thinking approach at the foundation of the Common Core State Standards.

**The progress made to date on P-3 alignment in OUSD is important to recognize. It is, however, also necessary to understand that a reform initiative this ambitious is extremely fragile in its early years of implementation.**

There are many factors impacting the 0-8 initiative in OUSD that make continued progression of this work particularly vulnerable. Sustained attention by district leadership to these areas, outlined below, will be essential so the gains and investments to date can continue to expand and strengthen:

- **The rationale and goals underlying the 0-8 initiative and P-1 PLCs need to be continuously communicated explicitly throughout the district and in all PLC meetings.**

If 0-8 reforms are going to become institutionalized within OUSD, *all* district stakeholders (administrators, principals, teachers, staff, families and children) need to have an explicit understanding why P-3 reforms hold promise for the city’s children and families. As there are changes in district leadership continuously emerging including a new Superintendent, clear and cogent communication about the goals and purpose for 0-8 system reform will be critical for its sustainability. Further, articulating the district administrators who are the primary individuals responsible for holding and advancing P-3 alignment work throughout the district will be essential as the district transitions out of having a 0-8 coordinator and towards greater expansion and institutionalization of P-3 work.

- **Teachers need space and time to construct meaning—to truly learn about the new ideas embedded within the 0-8 systems change initiatives.**

If the district wants teachers to take ownership for their own learning process, to engage in the hard work it takes to take primary responsibility for their students’ learning by striving to continuously improve the quality of their teaching, district administrators need to provide teachers with the requisite space and time to accomplish these goals. Administrators need to support teachers in protecting and promoting agency in their learning process so they can focus on improving the efficacy of their work.

Although the district’s commitment to systems change is opening up rich opportunities for the development of teacher professionalism and new and strengthened investments in ECE, it is also, ironically, this commitment to change that is impeding teachers’ ability to engage in the type of

deep sustained learning and reflection required for change to occur. Teachers and district administrators describe feeling very challenged by the sheer number of district initiatives being implemented simultaneously, experiencing a sense of overwhelm, and facing pressures to produce immediate changes without having time to process, to learn and to construct a deep understanding of the initiatives they are being required to embrace. These concerns need to be heard and addressed by administrators.

- **District administrators need to work to stabilize teachers' participation in the PLCs from month to month and across years.**

If productive, trusting relationships are the foundation of effective professional learning communities, more stability must be created for the teachers' participation in the PLCs. The success of the PLCs will reside in the quality of the relationships built among teachers, the depth of learning they can engage in (building from month to month), the establishment of norms that value support and challenge for mutual work being done, and balancing community-building efforts with deep inquiry directed at improving teachers' practice. It is challenging to create and maintain a rigorous learning environment when teachers only meet once a month. Goals for teachers' learning are even more severely compromised when PLC participants change each month and when large numbers of teachers stop attending all together throughout the course of the year. If the PLCs are to actualize their intended purpose as foundational levers for systems change, teachers need opportunities to expand and deepen their relationships and administrators must work to prevent the multiple barriers that have led to teachers' waning interests and decreasing participation rates.

- **Efforts to share content and build community among teachers needs to be explicitly balanced with the work of improving teaching**

The quality of the work that can be accomplished within PLCs is directly impacted by the quality of relationships developed among the teachers within them and relationship building is the foundation of productive collaboration (Wenger, 1998). However, it is also essential that the PLCs keep a dual focus on building community among teachers and a strong commitment to the work of improving teaching by examining students' learning. As the 0-8 initiative aims to create learning communities where teachers are inspired to improve their practice in order to enhance their students' learning, there will need to strengthened connections between what is happening in the PLCs and individual student's learning in teachers' classrooms, use of student data will need to become even more focused and productive and teachers will need to continue to strengthen their shared understandings of their students' learning progressions from Prek-3<sup>rd</sup> grade. Additionally, OUSD teachers will need more professional development, coaching and mentorship in the areas of implementing culturally and linguistically responsive practice, adapting curricula for children with disabilities and knowing how to respond to children's challenging behavior with effective strategies including trauma informed pedagogies.

- **The district needs to allow the requisite time for the 0-8 systems change initiatives to be realized.**

To close opportunity and achievement gaps and realize the district’s PreK-3 instructional reforms, invested stakeholders must recognize that changes will need to occur in adult behavior and skills first—changes that will require an intentional commitment of time, funding, and support—before changes in child outcomes will be realized. Teachers and administrators need time to read, think, listen, dialogue with one another and construct knowledge in environments that value and balance risk taking, adults’ social-emotional well being and the maintenance of high expectations and sustained focus on desired goals. **It is essential to recognize that it takes time—a minimum of 3-5 years—to shift adults’ behavior and even more time to shift large and complex systems. OUSD is only in its second year of this long-term work (2012-13 planning, design; 2013-14 initial systems implementation).** It is important that the desire for immediate change be balanced with the realistic timelines for transformative changes to occur.

**A primary component of 0-8 systems change is the promise it holds for the prevention and dissolution of opportunity and achievement gaps. If OUSD wants to transform life trajectories including achievement outcomes for children, there must first be transformation in the systems in which children are educated.** This will include changes in governance, funding, curriculum, instruction, assessment, family engagement, leadership and the ways early learning and public school educators define and enact their work. This amounts to nothing short of a substantive change in the very culture of OUSD, the district’s schools, and the relationships the district builds with local child care and early learning professionals working within the diverse continuum of environments children experience prior to their entry into public school.

**Making continual progress towards the goals outlined in OUSD’s 0-8 initiative will require sustained investments from district administrators, teachers, families and a diverse group of community stakeholders.** Aligning traditional silos—early childhood and public education—into a comprehensive coordinated and aligned system is tremendously complex and long-term work. The results of this initial evaluation highlight the important progress already being made in this effort *and* the challenges and uncertainties that lie on the road ahead for everyone who continues to collectively work for systems to more equitably address the needs and rights of Oakland’s children.

