



FIRST THINGS FIRST

Ready for School. Set for Life.

azfff.gov



United Way of Tucson
and Southern Arizona



GREAT EXPECTATIONS Lead to New Community Initiatives

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Infant/Toddler Community of Practice
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Smart Start Conference – May 6, 2014

BEGINNING OF THE STORY

In 2009, funding from First Things First created the Professional Development Alliance that is...

- Building a new EC PD system for Pima County, including 2 Tribal Regions
- Resulting in 10 Communities of Practice (CoPs) that strengthen teachers' knowledge and skills and increase systemic capacity of well-prepared center-based, public school pre-k-based, and family-based educators

OUR GREAT EXPECTATIONS

We want to see the day when:

- Arizona has a culture that supports and understands the importance of high quality education for young children **and** their teachers.
- An early childhood education degree is the expectation and **NOT** the exception.
- It is the expectation that all early childhood teachers will have the opportunities and resources needed to earn a college degree.

VALUES AND PHILOSOPHY

- Research indicates that training does not make a difference in changing practice.
- Education:
 - is long-term, intentional, and sequential
 - provides opportunities for hands-on learning
 - allows time for reflection
 - changes behaviors and practices

Therefore, we only talk about education and/or learning opportunities; training is taboo.



VALUES AND PHILOSOPHY

All learning opportunities:

- ensure intentionality in all activities
- create and sustain a culture that supports higher education
- are sequential, developmental, and based on hands-on learning
- respect and value diversity

VALUES AND PHILOSOPHY

- Developmentally Appropriate Practice is the underlying foundation and philosophy of all our work
- Adult learners are taught the principles of DAP in developmentally appropriate ways based on adult learning research
- Adult learners then understand how to implement DAP in their own classrooms

COMMUNITY OF PRACTICE STRUCTURE

Each Community of Practice (CoP):

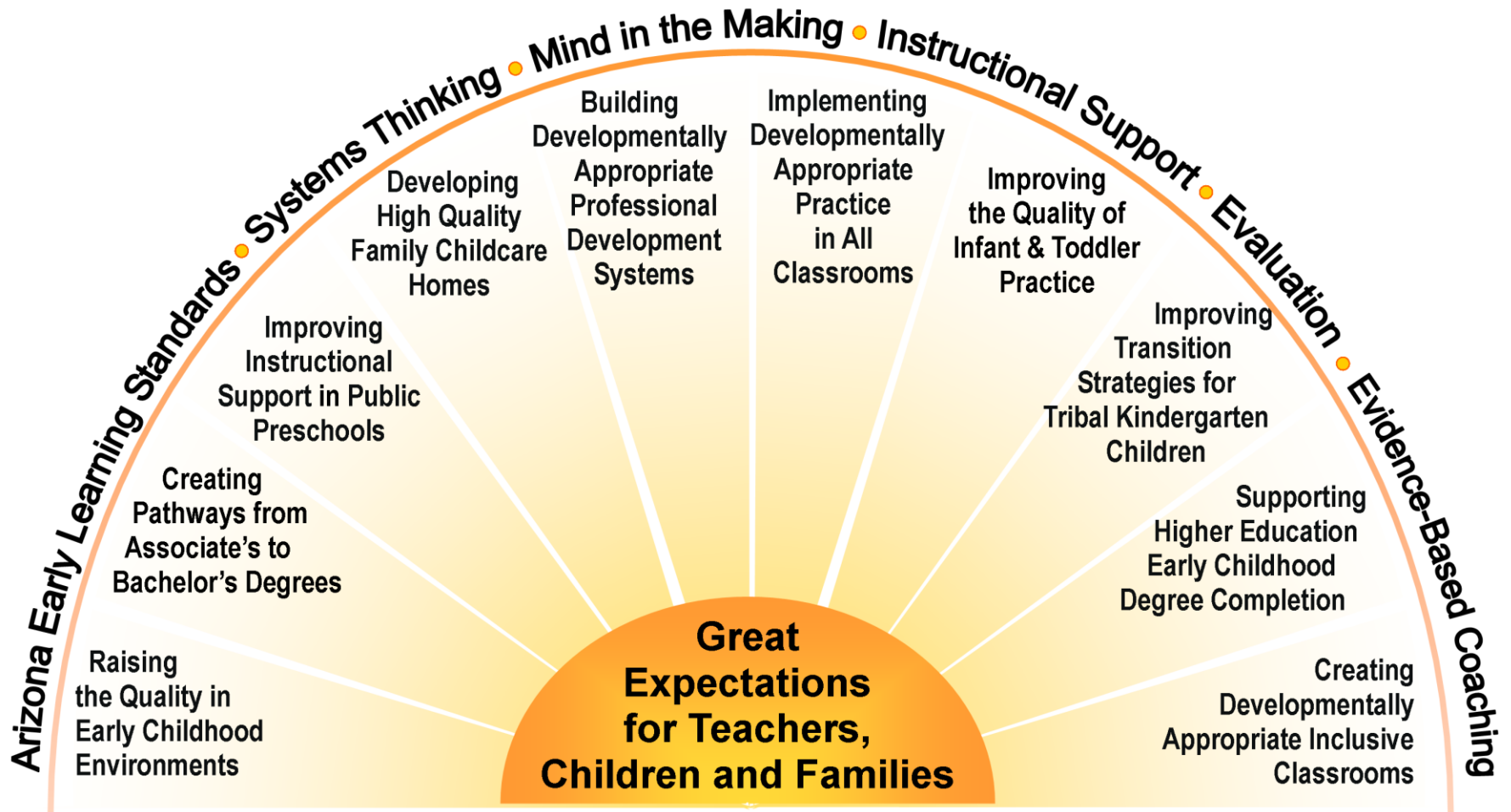
- Has at least 1 coordinator
- Meets on average 2 times a month
- Has a minimum of 20 members
(per cohort)

COMMUNITY OF PRACTICE STRUCTURE

Each Community of Practice (CoP):

- Has a college credit option that will lead to a degree (Associate's, B.A., Master's, and/or Doctorate)
- Uses a research-based curriculum and/or develops an explicit program of learning
- Meets in an EC environment, on a higher ed campus, and/or at an agency
- Collaborates with other CoPs
- Focuses on building a piece of the system

Early Childhood Professional Development & Leadership System



Developmentally Appropriate Practice

Great Expectations for Teachers, Children, and Families
First Things First Professional Development Systems Building
Communities of Practice Descriptions for 2012-13

1. Building a Developmentally Appropriate Professional Development System (United Way of Tucson and Southern Arizona *First Focus on Kids*)
2. Improving and expanding the quality of infant and toddler practice (Child & Family Resources *Project Best*)
3. Creating Developmentally Appropriate inclusive early childhood education settings (Easter Seals Blake Foundation)
4. Implementing Developmentally Appropriate Practice (DAP) in classrooms by deepening teachers' understanding of DAP (Southern Arizona Association for the Education of Young Children *Las Familias*)
5. Improving public preschool teachers' understanding and competence in providing sustained and intensive instructional support to all children (Tucson Unified School District)
6. Linking center owners, directors and teachers who serve the most vulnerable children to resources and information that will raise the quality of the children's environments (Early Childhood Development Group *Linking Leaders*)
7. Developing family child care home providers' skills and knowledge about how developmentally appropriate physical activities and quality nutrition help to prepare healthy young children for school (UWTSA ¡*Muévete, Muévete!*)
8. Improving teachers' strategies for smooth Kindergarten transitions for tribal preschool children (Tohono O'odham)
9. Facilitating completion of Early Childhood Associate's degrees at Pima Community College (PCC) and smooth transitions to Early Childhood Bachelor's degree programs, with a special focus on using Department supports at PCC and the University of Arizona College of Education (Pima Community College *ENLACE*)
10. Increasing the number of students completing the Early Childhood Education Bachelor's Degree program or the Early Childhood Education Master's Degree program by reducing barriers and promoting alternatives that will lead to graduation (University of Arizona)

CONCEPTUAL FRAMEWORKS

- *Mind in the Making: 7 Essential Life Skills*
- CLASS™ with focus on Instructional Support and *Powerful Interactions*
- AZ Early Learning Standards
- Evidence-Based Coaching
- Systems Thinking
- Evaluation

NATIONAL EXPERTS

National Experts reinforce and connect conceptual frameworks

- **Sue Bredekamp and Carol Copple** – DAP
- **Luis Hernandez** – Cultural diversity
- **Rebecca Klemm** - **STEM** with focus on mathematic
- **Judy Jablon** – *Powerful Interactions*
- **Diane Craft** – Physical movement and learning

Also have had 3-day *Mind in the Making* workshops; 7 days of CLASS; Susan Ochshorn and Edith Goldenhar EC policies

Local experts on topics ranging from leadership to characteristics of ideal teachers

EVIDENCE-BASED COACHING

- Teaches and supports reflection
- Provides participants with strategies for improving their own classroom practices
- Supports leadership development

EVALUATION CHALLENGES

- Highly innovative aspects of the work
- Emergent
- On-going changes in systems, people, behaviors, policies, and practices
- Tracking and storing data = new website and database

SHOW AND TELL

- Select something you have with you today that is of great personal importance to you
- Share with a partner why this item means so much to you
- Let the person next to you handle and examine your item
- You will have 1-2 minutes each

HOW DID THAT MAKE YOU FEEL?

- With your partner, discuss how that made you feel
- How willing were you to give up your item?
- Who (if anyone) would you have trusted that item with?
Why?

WHAT MIGHT IT FEEL LIKE FOR A PARENT TO LEAVE A CHILD IN CHILDCARE?



WHAT MIGHT THAT FEEL LIKE FOR AN INFANT?



COMPETENT YET VULNERABLE

- Infants are competent yet vulnerable.
- Research tells us that social-emotional growth and first relationships are the foundations for all development during infancy.
- How do we support children's development through relationships so they can reach their greatest potential?
- Are there policies we can develop that would promote stronger relationships?

Every parent wants
her child in a
classroom with a
teacher who is a good
critical thinker.

-E. Galinsky

Why
this

matters

- Focus and Self-Control
- Perspective Taking
- Communicating
- Making Connections
- Critical Thinking
- Taking on Challenges
- Self-Directed, Engaged Learning

**Ellen
Galinsky's
7 Essential
Life Skills**

What is Systems Thinking?

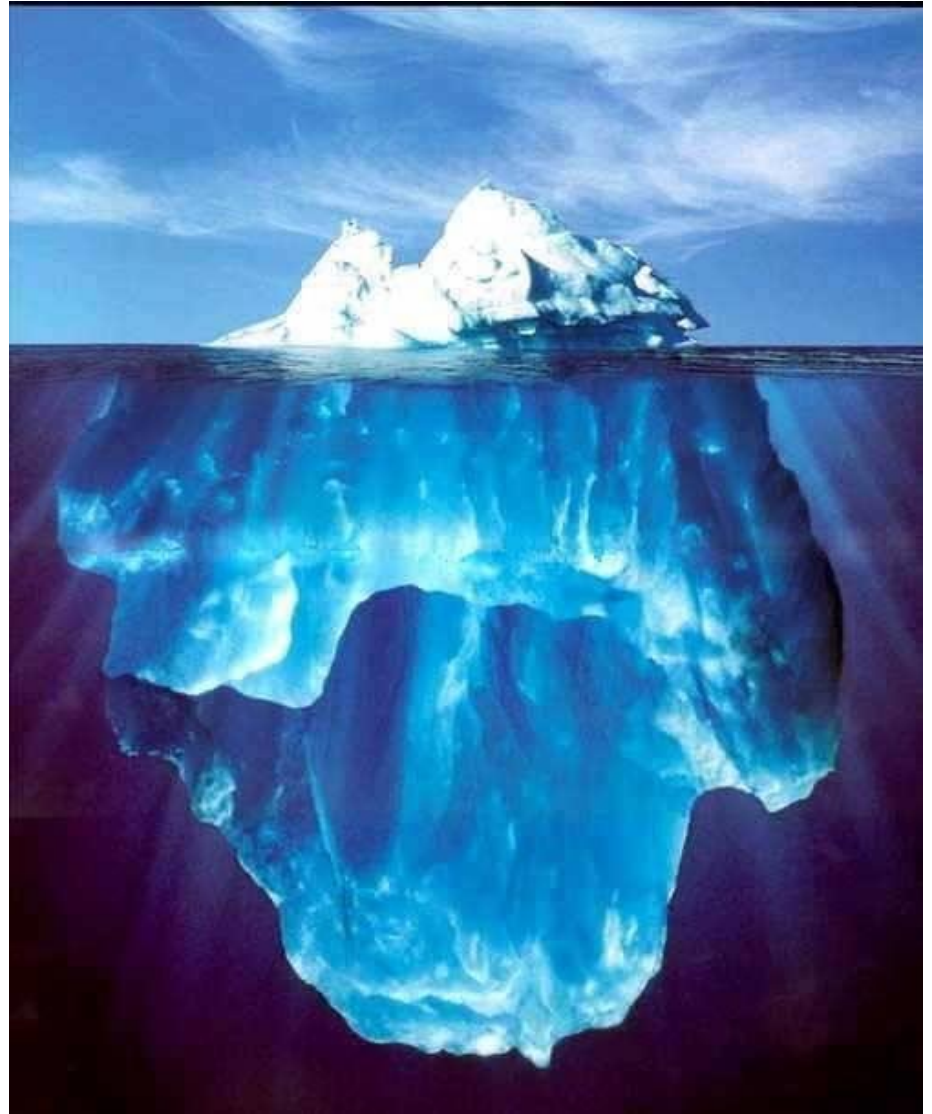
“Systems thinking is a vantage point from which you see a whole, a web of relationships, rather than focusing only on the detail of any particular piece. Events are seen in the larger context of a pattern that is unfolding over time.”



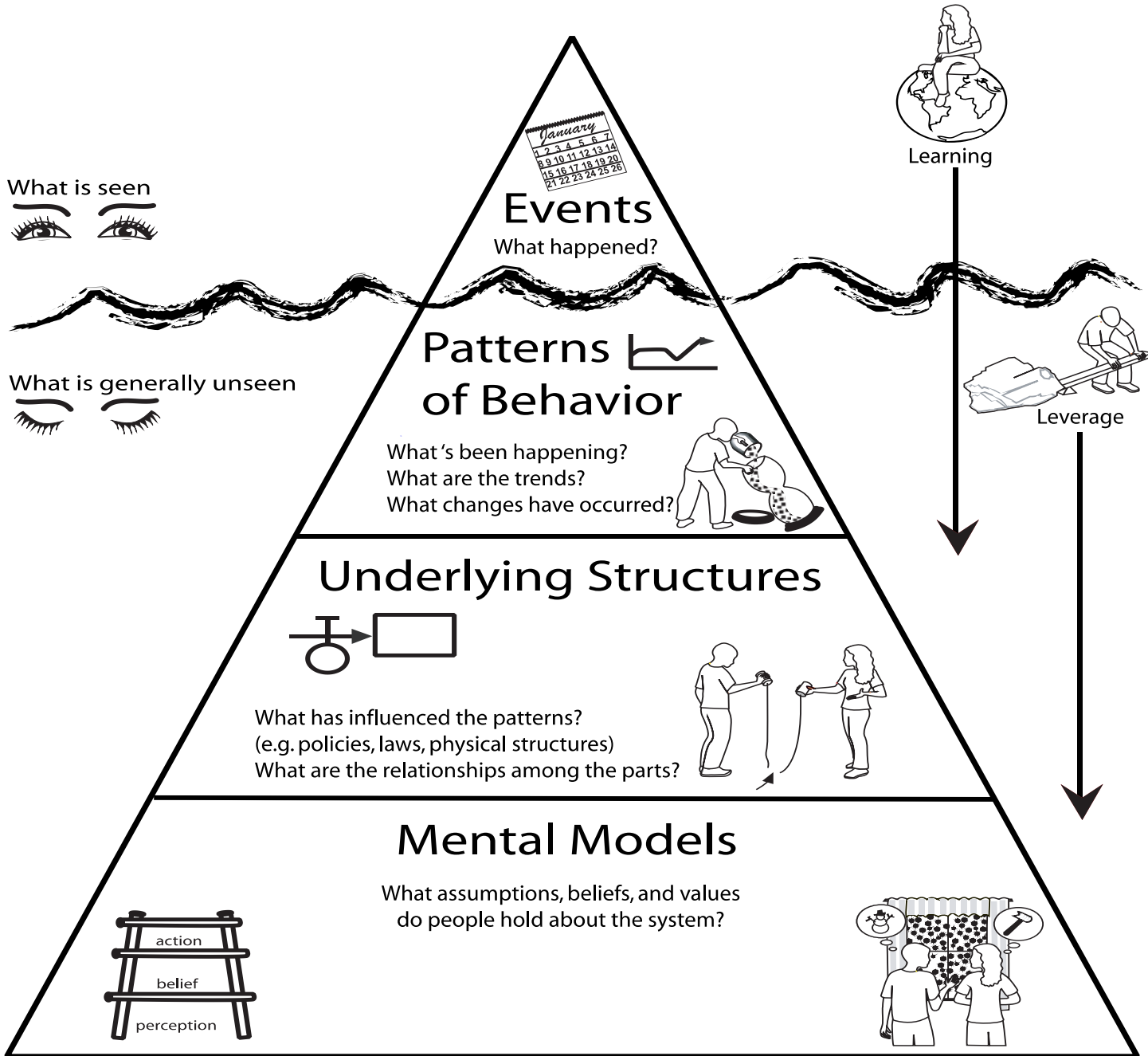
High Performance Systems,
now I see systems

SYSTEMS THINKING

SEEING WHAT'S
BELOW THE SURFACE



Iceberg... Seeing What's Below the Surface



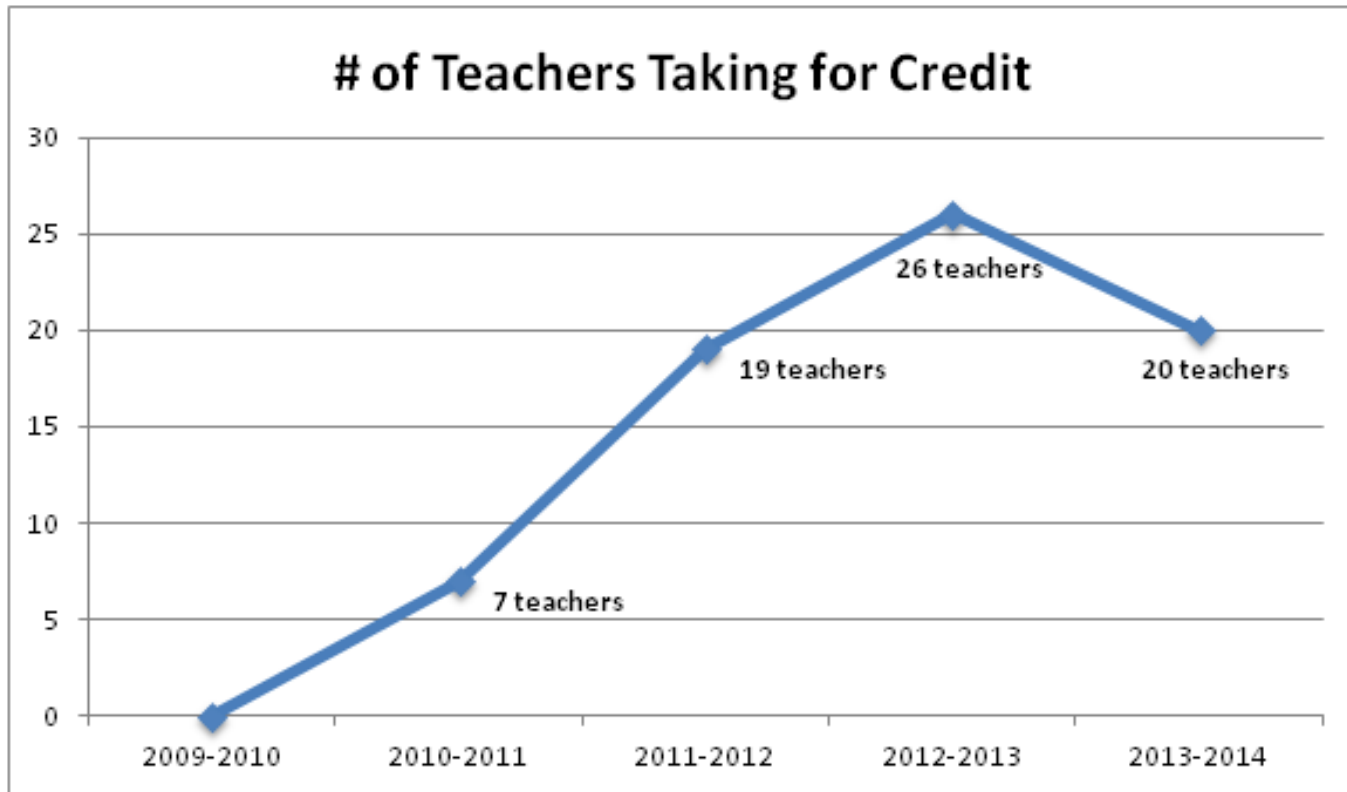
HOW OUR COMMUNITY OF PRACTICE RAISES THE QUALITY OF I-T CARE AND EDUCATION

- Develops cohorts that work intensely together for a year
- Meets one night a week for 12 weeks in the fall and 12 weeks in the spring
- Has Instructors who are certified through the Program for Infant/Toddler Care (PITC), a nationally recognized and evidence based program developed by WestEd
- Offers 6 college credit hours upon successful completion of the class (must have high attendance, complete various homework assignments, journaling, mid term, and final presentation)

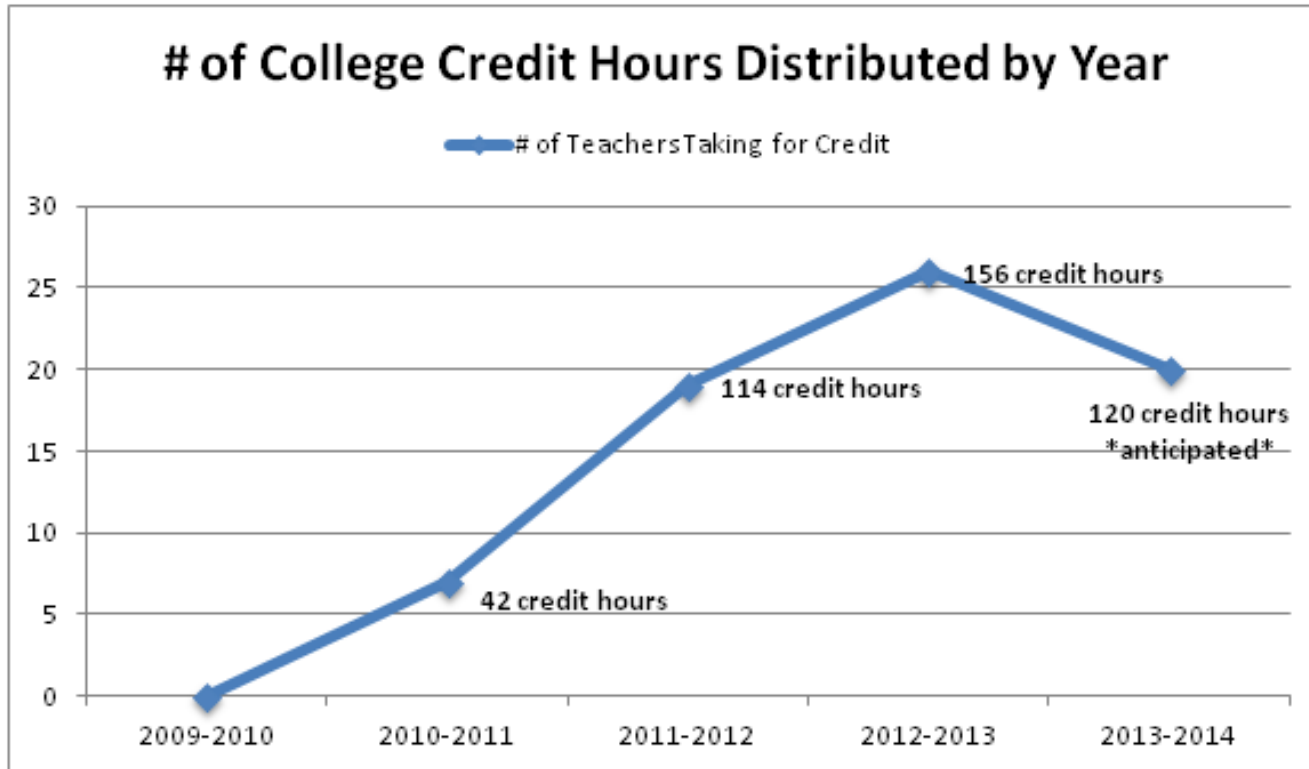
HOW OUR COMMUNITY OF PRACTICE RAISES THE QUALITY OF I-T CARE AND EDUCATION

- Delivers classes through use of the PITC curriculum and recommended practices
- Uses Developmentally Appropriate adult learning strategies with time for journaling and reflection
- Provides on-site coaching and mentoring year round
- Provides continuous support through email, phone, site visits, facebook group, and enrolling new staff the following year

HOW WE'VE GROWN OVER TIME



HOW WE'VE GROWN OVER TIME



432 Total Credit Hours Distributed

BUILDING THE SYSTEM: BIRTH TO THIRD GRADE

High quality Child Care programs can be important in improving the lives of children, but their accomplishments will be constrained by the quality of the programs themselves, by the larger environment, and by the quality of the schools that the children attend after their early childhood experiences.

*EARLY CHILDHOOD EDUCATION AS AN ESSENTIAL COMPONENT OF
ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT*

WITH REFERENCE TO THE NEW ENGLAND STATES

*Arthur MacEwan, Political Economy Research Institute, University of
Massachusetts, Amherst, January 2013*

BUILDING THE SYSTEM: BIRTH TO THIRD GRADE

- **Emphasis on Reading Proficiency**
- **Third Grade Reading Scores**
- **Implications for School Readiness**

READ ON TUCSON

- Build on the Early Years Successes
- Develop New Partnerships
- Use the Annie E. Casey Foundation Framework: The Readiness Gap, The Attendance Gap, The Summer Slide
- Strengthen the Ties between Pre-K and Elementary Schools

READ ON TUCSON STRATEGY DEVELOPMENT

- Use the Partnership to develop Proven Strategies to improve Child Outcomes
- Decide on Criteria and Select Schools
- Pick the Strategy Options



Read On Tucson

**Volunteer Reading
Tutors**

**Building Personal
Libraries**

**School Day
Attendance
Campaign**

**Public Preschool
Instructional
Support**

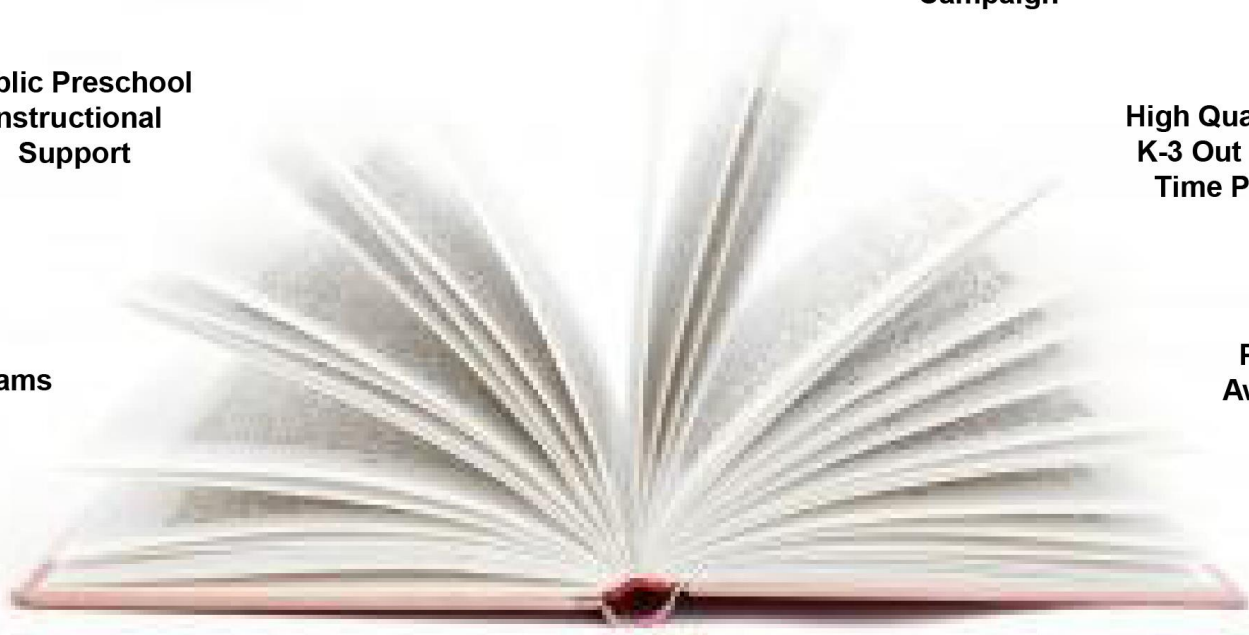
**High Quality ECE &
K-3 Out of School
Time Programs**

**Summer
Kindergarten
Readiness Programs**

**Parent and Public
Awareness for Early
Literacy**

**Extended School
Day for struggling
Readers**

**Innovative
Opportunities**



**United Way Third Grade Reading Proficiency Initiative Addressing the Gaps
in Kindergarten Readiness, Attendance and Summer Learning Loss**

TIE THE SYSTEMS' WORK TOGETHER: ONE EXAMPLE

- Read On Pre School Success Strategy in Public Preschool
- Great Expectations Preschool Instructional Support
- Both focused on CLASS Instructional Support Elements
- Change recorded in Classrooms

HOPES AND DREAMS

- Children are Ready for Kindergarten
- Kindergarten is Ready for Children
- Parents and Teachers Know How to Make What's Best for Children a Reality
- Children Learn, Grow & Thrive

Contact Information:



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