Using Standards to Achieve P-3 Alignment

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Using Standards to Achieve Alignment

Part I: The Context for P-3 Alignment Efforts

Part II: The Context for Standards: Different Traditions

Part III: Implementing P-3 Standards Today

Part IV: The Road Ahead: Multiple Challenges

Part V: Biggie “Think Abouts”
PART I

THE CONTEXT

FOR P-3

ALIGNMENT EFFORTS
The P-3 Focus is Not New

- Long regarded P-3 as necessary, but enigmatic
- Five decades of “transition” research
  - Much federally funded, when little $ going into research on young children
  - Much of it, then as now, focused on sustaining gains children made in preschool
- Important efforts
  - Project Follow Through (1967)
  - Planned Variation (1969)
  - Project Developmental Continuity (1974)
  - Basic Educational Skills (1977)
  - Head Start Transition Project (1987)
  - National Transition Study (1992)
The P-3 Focus is Not New

• Characterized by diverse foci
  – Creating pedagogical links by fostering the use of continuous curriculum and common pedagogy
    • Follow Through
    • Planned Variation
    • Basic Educational Skills
  – Comprehensive efforts that provided for linkages in areas of Administration and Leadership, Pedagogy and Curriculum, Professional Development, Family Engagement, and Services for DLL and “handicapped” children
    • Project Developmental Continuity
    • Head Start Transition Project
The P-3 Focus is Not New

• Lessons learned
  – Complex to implement
    • Achieved “Band-Aid” efforts
    • Different “Galaxy” phenomenon
  – Hard to Research
    • Methodological Challenges
      – Contaminated control groups
      – Hard to distinguish program effects from “transition” effects
  – Limited, but Telling, Effects
    • Little institutional change
    • Where effects, had quality pre-primary and primary programs.
    • The transition efforts were additive.
  – ECE and K-12 World’s Apart
    • Different institutions
    • Different values and traditions; needed to do more than activities
    • Enter STANDARDS!!
PART II

THE CONTEXT FOR STANDARDS:
DIFFERENT TRADITIONS
Standards Background:
A Complicated Landscape

Standards in General

K-12 Standards

Pre-Primary Standards
Standards in General

Bible (Ravitch, 1995)
- When shall we work and when shall we rest?
- How do we treat fellow men (and women)?
- What shall we give and what shall we keep?

Democracy
- Civic Behaviors: What will be law? Who will govern?
- Contour economic interchanges: Who will be paid what, and for what services?

Industrial Revolution
- Determine quality or adequacy: What are safe working environments?
- Provide sanctions or entitlements: Who should be paid what? For what work? Who can be a doctor, architect, or teacher?
Standards in General

• **Lead us to a point where we generally think standards are useful:**
  – As a means of securing agreement on important matters
  – As means of understanding and expressing commonalities.
  – To help define, expedite, and foster success
  – To provide evidence of quality
  – To ensure protection and safety
K-12 Standards

Early Intellectual Movers
- Bloom’s Taxonomy (1956)
- Mager’s Behavioral Objectives (1962)
- Popham’s Instructional Objectives (1969)

Theoretical Movers
- Glaser (1981) espoused integrated pedagogy in standards, assessments and curriculum
- Resnick (1983) more than mastery of content areas, advanced capacities of knowledge gathering, processing, and application
- Breur (1993) recognized role of cognitive sciences; more focus on early years

Stakeholders
- Business fought global competition and sought more from education
- Politicians used power to advance standards
K-12 Standards Trajectory

- A Nation at Risk (1983)
- National Education Goals Panel (1995)
- State Standards (Late 1990s-2000s)
- Common Core (2010)
- PARCC and SBAC (Onward)
Standards Background K-12: Divided Sentiment

Standards promote quality and equity [Ravitch, 1995; Jennings, 1995; Porter, 1994]. Standards expose students to challenging content and set a pathway to college and career readiness. Common Core adoption and implementation supports.

Concern that standards set too high will encourage drop-outs; set too low, may lower expectations [Darling-Hammond, 1994]. Concern with limited focus on ELA and Math. Concerned about who would develop, implement and assess them.
Pre-Primary Standards

Theorists

- *Rousseau* (1762) wanted standards to protect vulnerable young children
- *Pestalozzi* advanced the standard that children learn best through doing
- *Froebel* advanced “gifts” in the form of learning tools and expectations

Attitudes

- Families had the right to determine what young children should know and do.
- Standards would impose rote learning and diminish a commitment to play-based learning.
- Confusion regarding need for standards, as programs had program standards for decades.
Pre-Primary Standards Trajectory

Discerning Different Kinds of Standards

NEGP Defining Content Areas for ECE

State Standards in Literacy and Math
Standards for 3-5s, and 0-2s

First and Second Head Start Standards
OSEP Functional Outcomes

Discerning How to Assess Alignment
Discerning Different Kinds of Standards

I. Early Learning & Development Standards
II. Family Competencies Standards
III. Teacher Standards
IV. Program/School Standards
V. Social Indicators
VI. Access to Services
VII. Systemic Effectiveness
Discerning Content Areas

National Education Goals Panel

- Physical development and motor skills
- Social and emotional development
- Approaches toward learning
- Language, literacy and communication
- Cognitive development and general knowledge
Pre-Primary Standards: Divided Sentiment

- Have greater understanding
- Have standards in all 50 states for Pre-Primary Age Children
- Have methodology for assessing and aligning standards
- Preliminary landmark work on assessment

- Organizations vehemently opposed to concept of standards
- Organizations opposed to content of Common Core for primary
- Extensive opposition to assessment
PART III
IMPLEMENTING P-12 STANDARDS TODAY
Implementing P-12 Standards Today

Standards in General

K-12 Standards

Pre-Primary Standards

P - 12 Standards
Implementing P-12 Standards Today

• **More Nuanced Understandings of:**
  • Social change processes
  • Systems thinking and systems development
  • Relationship between practice and policy

• **Different Attitudes**
  • Greater value accorded early childhood education
  • Pre-primary and Primary have something to contribute to one another:
    – The domains associated with pre-primary are important to K-12 (e.g., social and emotional development [CASEL]; approaches toward learning [collaboration, creativity]).
    – The focus on content associated with primary has important elements for early learning and development.
Implementing P-12 Standards Today

• Growing Appreciation for Standards
  – Standards have significant social utility
    • Promote *quality* programs
    • Foster *equity* for all children
  – Standards have significant practical utility
    • Foster clear intentions and guidelines for teaching goals
    • Have multiple uses that promote practice and policy integration across programs and services, including P-3rd.
Implementing P-12 Standards Today

- Improve Instruction
- Improve Parenting Skills and Behaviors
- Improve教师 Pre- and In-service Professional Preparation
- Improve Public Knowledge of Children’s Development
- Improve Curriculum
- Assessments for Monitoring Children’s and National Progress
- Basis for QRIS and High Quality Program Standards
Implementing P-12 Standards Today

Standards work is robust in here and abroad

- **K-12**
  - Common Core and widespread adoption
  - Assessments (PARCC and SBAC)

- **P-3**
  - Focus on analytic work (alignment)
  - One of most often requested areas for state TA is standards alignment
  - Emerging work on standards-based assessment

- **CREATING P-12**
  - Historic differences persist
    - P-3 States are “Bowling Alone
    - K-12 More commonality among states
  - Formidable challenges must be addressed before standards reach their full utility as elixirs of P-12 efforts.
PART IV

THE ROAD AHEAD: MULTIPLE CHALLENGES IN A SWEET TIME
# Candy Land as our Metaphor

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Standards</th>
<th>Candy Land</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Rich History</strong></td>
<td>One of the oldest, most-used metrics</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>One of the oldest, most beloved children’s games</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Clear Goals</strong></td>
<td>Robust, clear, and aligned standards</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Find the lost king in Candy Castle</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Complex Process</strong></td>
<td>Lengthily, circuitous, contextually driven, sometimes unpredictable; multiple players who have to give and take</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Twisty pathway and multiple obstacles; much give and take among players</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Disputes over “Domains”</strong></td>
<td><img src="https://via.placeholder.com/150" alt="List of domains" /></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Multiple Uses</strong></td>
<td><img src="https://via.placeholder.com/150" alt="List of uses" /></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Challenges</strong></td>
<td>8 distinct challenges at pre-primary and primary levels</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Licorice spaces: Landing here causes players to lose a turn</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
The Challenges: Multiple Road Blocks

**Pre-Primary Challenges**
- State Variation
- Solomon’s Dilemma

**K-12 Challenges**
- Expanding Domains

**P-12 Challenges**
- The Right Balance
- Learning Trajectories
- Standards for Diverse Populations
- Using Standards
- Standards and Formal Assessments
## Challenge 1: 
**State Variation at Pre-Primary**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Description</th>
<th>Questions to Consider</th>
</tr>
</thead>
</table>
| - Great variation in number and nature of pre-primary standards across the nation.  
  - For example, within the states’ early learning standards for mathematics, there are variations in:  
  - Number of mathematics standards (3 to 193)  
  - Emphasis of mathematics standards (operations, not processes) | - How much variation is wise?  
- How much standardization is wise?  
- Is it time to consider developing a basic set of early learning standards?  
- How could this be done? |
Challenge 2: Solomon’s Dilemma at Pre-Primary

<table>
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<tr>
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</table>
| • Our two national documents, the HSCDELF and Common Core, are not very well aligned. 
• Both documents are important and valuable to children and the field of early education. | • Do we need to reconcile such differences? 
• If so, how do we go about doing it, given that both sets of standards are well established and ensconced? |
### Challenge 3: Expanding Domains K-12

#### Description
- Pre-primary standards are developmental and include:
  - Social and Emotional Development
  - Physical Health and Motor Development
  - Approaches Toward Learning
  - Language, Literacy, Communication
  - Cognitive Process and General Knowledge
- Primary/secondary standards are disciplinary and include:
  - English Language Arts
  - Mathematics

#### Questions to Consider
- Are all the pre-primary domains necessary for primary and secondary-aged children?
- Which domains should be included, at which ages?
- How do we align developmental and disciplinary orientations?
**Challenge 4: The Right Balance P-12**

### Description

- **Balance data for most states shows that:**
  - As children’s ages increase, so does the focus on cognitive development
  - There is no clear direction for what the balance should be
- **At the pre-primary level:**
  - There is variation across the states
  - Some states focus far more on cognition
  - Other states focus on themes rather than domains (e.g., “involved citizens,” “competent learners”)

### Questions to Consider

- What should the balance of indicators be for each age group?
- How should the balance percentages change with different age groups?
- At pre-primary, should there be a minimum percentage that adheres across all age groups to foster a holistic orientation (e.g., the 10% “Rule of Thumb”)?
- How much variation should be tolerated across states?
Challenge 5: Learning Trajectories P-12

Description

• But the problem is not just across disciplines; we have no real learning trajectories within disciplines.
• Not a clear understanding of what experiences/skills are precursors to later skills in all domains.
• If we had learning trajectories, formative assessment and alignment work would be more precise.
• Common Core developed learning trajectories.

Questions to Consider

• Do we need learning trajectories for young children?
• Are they equally necessary in all domains or are some domains more essential than others?
• Do we have the scientific knowledge to develop them for all age groups across all disciplines?
• How would we go about developing them?
**Challenge 6: Standards for Diverse Populations P-12**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Description</th>
<th>Questions to Consider</th>
</tr>
</thead>
</table>
| • Some populations need special consideration  
  • Dual language learners  
  • Children with disabilities  
  • Foster and immigrant children  
  • Irregular or patterned attendees  
  • We come to standards with a classroom-based, 35 hours-per week perspective, but not the case in ECE settings. | • Should we be developing standards for **ALL** children?  
• How do we best go about creating standards for diverse children?  
• Should there be “accommodations” and if so, what should they look like?  
• Are the “accommodations” the same or different for diverse populations?  
• Should the diverse social contexts alter expectations?  
• How do we align these standards with those of OSEP/HSCDELF? |
**Challenge 7: Using Standards P-12**

<table>
<thead>
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<th>Description</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>• Many other countries have developed their standards with an eye toward their utilization.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• To date, America has focused on getting the standards “right”</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• As a result, much time is spent on standards analysis</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• This is good, but we need to turn to implementation</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Some international examples might be helpful in using standards for:</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Curriculum development</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Instructional improvement</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Professional development</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Parenting education</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Challenge 3: EXAMPLES

LEARNING STANDARDS

Curriculum Development

Instructional Improvement

Professional Development

Parenting Education and Engagement
## Challenge 7: EXAMPLE: Curriculum Development

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Description</th>
<th>Questions to Consider</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>• Australia and England:</td>
<td>• To what extent can and should we use standards to guide curriculum development?</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Learning outcomes and curriculum are integrated into a single document,</td>
<td>• How does this work in a diverse country that favors program choice?</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>leading to organic synchronization of the two.</td>
<td>• How do we know that all curricula are equally potent in addressing the standards?</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Chile, China, and Malaysia:</td>
<td>• How can and should we expect curriculum to meet the diverse kinds/set of standards</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Existence of a curriculum framework provided the impetus for the</td>
<td>that exist in the US?</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>creation of standards, due to a recognized need for identifying</td>
<td>• How do we overcome concern that standards eviscerate creative pedagogy or that they</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>precise learning outcomes.</td>
<td>defy a play-based approach to ECE?</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
## Challenge 7: EXAMPLE: Professional Development

### Description

- Some countries have developed various PD tools based on their standards documents
  - England and Australia: Teacher handbooks
  - Macedonia: Guides to accompany modules in the In-Service Training Curriculum (ISTC)
- Many countries use their standards specifically to guide in-service PD
  - Common in countries looking to develop PD rapidly
  - Common in countries with limited financial or human resources, preventing a focus on infrastructure development
  - Favored in Cambodia, Macedonia, and Vanuatu

### Questions to Consider

- Should and how can we use standards for reframing teacher education?
  - Standards accompanied by a revamping of teacher training curriculum in IHE’s.
- Should and how can teacher certification be altered to accommodate early learning standards?
  - Also accompanied by a clear focus on revamping teacher credentialing and requirements.
- Singapore, Malaysia, England: Higher minimum qualifications were introduced in the last 5 years.
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Description</th>
<th>Questions to Consider</th>
</tr>
</thead>
</table>
| • Sharing information about the standards and/or curriculum  
  • Australia: A parents’ guide accompanies the Early Years Learning Framework  
  • Providing parenting education programs  
  • Macedonia: Standards have been used to develop 15 training modules for parents  
  • Advancing the inclusion of parents in policymaking  
  • Norway: Framework document is written into national law through the kindergarten act, which mandates parents-staff coordinating councils | • To what extent does using early learning standards for parenting education, “standardize” these efforts? Is this desirable?  
• Should early learning standards be used to guide parenting education efforts?  
• Should early learning standards be used to evaluate parenting programs? |
**Challenge 8: Standards and Formal Assessments**

### Description

- Need to clearly distinguish between formative and summative assessment.
- Need to use standards as the basis for both.
- “Formal or Summative” assessment at pre-school is being addressed quite gingerly in most countries, although interesting practices are emerging at the pre-primary level, especially through the use of observation.
- In US, primary is ahead of pre-primary, though there are several options emerging at the pre-primary level:
  - Collaborative Option
    - [MD and OH developing KEA]
  - Single Option within Individual State
    - Usually keyed to own standards
  - Multiple Assessments within an Individual State
    - [MA and PA] Calibrating to own standards
  - Primary efforts (PARCC and SB) Models?

### Questions to Consider

- How do we create formal/summative assessments based on diverse sets of standards?
- How do we create formal/summative assessments based on diverse students and quickly changing skills?
- What is the role of families in developing and using instructional assessments?
- How does the new Gordon Commission Report impact our thinking?
PART V
BIGGIE “THINK ABOUTS”
## Candy Land as our Metaphor

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Biggie “Think Abouts” as We Reach Our Goal</th>
<th>Standards</th>
<th>Candy Land</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>• Our goal is maximizing positive child outcomes and reducing achievement gaps.</td>
<td>• Players goal is to get to Candy Castle and win.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• To do so, need to think about three P-3 biggies.</td>
<td>• To do so, need to think about the biggies:</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• Rainbow Trail</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• Gumdrop Pass</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Biggie “Think Abouts”

“Think About” 1

How much longer can pre-primary exist without core standards?

“Think About” 2

Do we need standards to evaluate systemic effectiveness?

“Think About” 3

Is evaluating P-3 the same as evaluating programs?
“Think About” 1

How much longer can pre-primary exist without core standards?

- Standards are the cornerstone of pedagogy, curriculum and assessment, so shouldn’t there be some commonality across the states?
- Have press from Common Core and PreK-3rd efforts.
- Makes solid efficiency and effectiveness sense.
- Need to make them voluntary, with room for state adaptation
- Short of pre-primary core standards, need to consider ways states can collaborate more effectively on standards work.
Do we need standards to evaluate systemic effectiveness?

• In considering improving pre-primary services, may need to consider developing standards to achieve what we hope consolidated governance is yield:
  • More effective services for all children
  • More efficient access for all parents/families
  • More cost-efficient programs generally (e.g., economies of scale, coordinated buying, cross-program professional development)

• In considering P-3, we need to consider developing standards that would provide concrete benchmarks of what we expect:
  • Comparable personnel qualifications
  • Comparable per child public investments
  • Aligned learning standards, curriculum, assessments
  • Coordinated leadership
“Think About” 2:

I. Early Learning & Development Standards
II. Family Competencies Standards
III. Teacher Standards
IV. Program/School Standards
V. Social Indicators
VI. Access to Services
VII. Systemic Effectiveness
“Think About” 3

Is evaluating P-3 the same as evaluating programs?

• Need to understand that conventional program evaluations are designed to determine the quality of individual programs or sets of common programs.
• Not a proxy for systemic alignment.
• Quality P-3 = Quality Programs + Quality Alignment
• How can we best evaluate PreK-3rd efforts?
• What should actually be evaluated?
• How is good P-3 policy different from good programs?
• How much evidence is needed before we move to comprehensive policy?
Standards and Candy Land

- We have taken a close look at
  - The complicated landscape
  - The twisty path
  - The internationalities of different players
  - The road blocks
Standards and Candy Land

• We’ve seen
• Standards are one, albeit one very important, way to achieve a P-3/P-12 system that enables all children to meet or exceed the college and career ready goal.
• Standards in pre-primary and primary have very different histories, and hence face some similar and some different challenges, but we need a full continuum of P-12 standards.
Standards and Candy Land

• Nothing, but nothing, parallels children’s joy and anticipation when they “play” to learn.
• The time has never been better.
• Change begins by looking reality straight in the eye.
• Hopefully, our work together will build on:
  • Children’s vitality/excitement, even if we aren’t in Candy Land
  • Today’s opportunities that build on the past; and
  • New understandings of our collective challenges and the zest to head them straight on!