

AIAN Education Manager Webinar Series: December 2012

Vanessa Maanao French: Okay, we'll go ahead and get really, really started. I hope you feel welcomed, and I hope you continue to add to our welcome board. Thank you. So, again, good afternoon. My name is Vanessa Maanao French, and I'm the Program Manager for our AI/AN project, here at the National Center for Quality Teaching and Learning. And by way of welcome by language, "hafa adai," which is "hello," and "Si Yu'us Maase," thank you for being with us.

And I wanted to introduce the little person in my arms, if you haven't seen this picture from last time. This is my daughter, Cecelia, who will be turning two in two weeks, yay!

Sher'ee Maxwell: And she's adorable.

Vanessa: Thank you.

Sher'ee: And hello, everyone out there in Indian Country. My name is Sher'ee Maxwell. I'm the Tribal Liaison for the National Center on Quality Teaching and Learning. I'd like to say Hihana Was'te! And hello and welcome. We're happy to have you here today with us. I would also like to introduce my mother-in-law that you're seeing with me. She is 98, and as I was telling Vanessa earlier today, she corrected me this last weekend and said 98 1/2. She's a spry, strong woman, and she's been a strong, female role model for me in my life. She loves the work that I'm doing and we're doing here together with you, and she always asks for updates. So, I have to give her weekly updates. And she was a little embarrassed when I told her that her photo was out there for everyone to see, but --

Vanessa: She's beautiful.

Sher'ee: Yes, I think so. She's beautiful.

Vanessa: We've got women that span the generations on this one.

Sher'ee: That's right.

Vanessa: We want to introduce two more --

Sher'ee: Beautiful women.

Vanessa: Beautiful women. We've also got some young little faces there, too. We could not do this without them; so, we'll let Dawn and Susan introduce themselves.

Dawn Williams: Hello, this is Dawn Williams. I'm one of the Curriculum Specialists, here, at NCQTL and also the Project Manager for the webinars. And those are my two little girls there. They are two and four now. My two-year-old turned two on Thanksgiving. And in that picture they're one and three, so they look a little bit different, but --

Vanessa: They're adorable.

Sher'ee: Yeah, they are. Yay.

Vanessa: Thanks for sharing.

Susan Stewart: Hi, and this is Susan Stewart, and I am a consultant with the National Center on Quality Teaching and Learning. And if you have any audio issues or any technical issues, please type them in the question box, and I will respond to you privately, and we'll get those taken care of.

Vanessa: Great; thank you so much, Susan. And Dawn and Susan are our behind-the-scenes angels. They really are. So, definitely, definitely type in there, and they will assist you so quickly.

Sher'ee: So, our time together --what we'd like to do, today, is start by talking about just an overview of our offerings to you today. First, a time to reflect on the importance of school readiness in Head Start. And we also want to offer you resources to support the work that you're already doing. And last we want to learn from each other.

So, we want this time, this webinar time, to be a time when we come together and we're drawing on your knowledge and your experiences as well. And you'll have those opportunities to share that throughout this webinar.

Vanessa: So, let's get started.

Sher'ee: Okay, I'm ready.

Vanessa: So, when we talk about school readiness and we talk about Head Start, it really comes back to closing the achievement gap. And I know I'm not telling you anything new, when I say that a majority of our kids enter kindergarten behind their like-aged peers. That's what we know. That's our reality in Head Start. And that we know that we need to really push for higher gains in the course of a year to ensure our kids are ready for kindergarten.

Sher'ee: So, Vanessa, you're saying that a majority of our children enter behind their like-aged peers and that we need to support higher gains to close that gap. What more can you tell us about that?

Vanessa: Well, I can say that what we need to do is a lot in a year. We essentially need to make up for lost time for many of our kids. I know that you have stories like these of your own where you have kids that may enter your program never having an early childhood experience, never being with kids in groups like childcare. Kids, in my own experience, in my own classroom, in the past, kids who haven't held a crayon before, haven't been able to use scissors before, haven't been read to as often as they're going to be read to in Head Start. And so we've got to make up for that lost time. We've got to give them that extra practice, give them that extra exposure to make up for that time. And last webinar, we talked a lot about brain development and that critical time, prenatal to age five, and all the amazing things that happen. And so we've really got to maximize, especially for those kids that are with us for only one year before they go to school. We've got to make the most of that time.

Sher'ee: Yes. Well, and speaking of maximizing the learning potential -- when we look at the numbers of days between the time a child is born and the first day of kindergarten, there are just 2,000 days. And we can see that here on this slide. "Every day matters" is the message here, right, Vanessa?

Vanessa: Absolutely. And depending on your perspective, 2,000 days may sound like a lot of time.

Sher'ee: Right.

Vanessa: But if we broke it down even more -- let's think about a typical Head Start part-day program. It's the majority of what our programs out there are. You know, it's a minimum of 128 days. We're typically going four days a week, four hours a day. So, if we do a little bit of math, looking at our calendar, looking at our days, looking at our hours, 512 hours per year. Now that, to me, says that not only does every day matter, but that every hour matters. And to go back to thinking about a year again, it's six -- six percent. 512 hours is six percent of a child's entire year before they go to kindergarten. I don't know about you, but that probably sounds quite shocking. But this assumes, of course, that we get all 512 hours, you know? That the bus doesn't break down, that the child doesn't get sick, that mom and dad can make sure they're there every day, that there isn't a power outage at the school, so you have to close down. There's all these things that can come into play. So, 512 hours is not a lot, but it could be less.

Sher'ee: Yes. So, we have just a quick couple of scratch paper activities for everyone out there, and we're asking the question: How many hours per year do you have in your program for your children? And we'll just give you a minute or so to do some calculations.

Vanessa: Time for math.

Sher'ee: Math time. Okay, so why don't we go ahead and look at this next slide that we have up here, which Vanessa and I put together, along with the help of Susan and Dawn, to look at the minimum number of days, in a part-day, four-times a week classroom. There's 128 days. That's three-and-a-half hours per day, or 448 hours per year. If we look at an extended day, it's 128 days, and you can look across the column up there and see -- or the row -- and see what the hours per year are, which is 768. A full-day program would be 200 days, eight hours a day, 1,600 hours per year. These numbers, as Vanessa said earlier, assume that the student is in class each day. And so we know with all the things that happen in life that our children are not usually in class every day, and so that these numbers here are even optimistic.

Vanessa: Okay, so now we'll shift gears. I don't know. Looking at the numbers and thinking about the amount of time we have, it could either make you feel --

Sher'ee: Panic.

Vanessa: Panicked. Or it could make you feel energized and motivated. And I think we're going to choose energized and motivated. And it fits well then with our topic, which is about school readiness resources, because that means we're going to make the most of every moment. We're going to make every moment matter. And school readiness helps us do that. We're going to be intentional; we're going to be purposeful, and we're going to be -- we're going to make a difference, right?

Sher'ee: Yes.

Vanessa: We're not going to, you know, dissect school readiness down to the littlest pieces. We're going to do a quick review. Because we do know that many of you out there have been talking with your ECE Specialists, that you've been going to school readiness summits, that you've had other ways about learning about school readiness. So, we're going to do a review that's paired with the resources that we feel will really help you maximize your planning and your effectiveness with your teachers. So, we know school readiness is those four steps of creating goals, creating a plan, gathering data three times a year, and then using data to really inform your changes that you make in your program to make them stronger and more successful.

So, let's start breaking these down. Here's our road to school readiness.

Sher'ee: I like that.

Vanessa: Isn't it nice?

Sher'ee: Very nice.

Vanessa: Susan did this one for us. Thanks, Susan! So, on the road to school readiness, the first stop is to create your goals. You want to adopt and align them. And when we think about goals, we need to remember that these goals are going to be broad statements. And I can give you -- I'll give you a couple examples of what a goal might sound like, as we move through these, if that's helpful. So, an example of a goal that's a broad statement is "children engage and maintain positive peer relationships." A nice broad goal, definitely tied to school readiness, and that's exactly kind of what you'd want to hear and see in your goal planning. There are also -- you know, talk about the skills and knowledge kids will need when they enter kindergarten, right? So, thinking about those skills and knowledge, here's another example of a goal. "Children will use their skills in remembering information and being aware of their

own thinking." That's an example of an approach to learning goal. And finally, goals also express really high expectations of our kids. You know, we want them to succeed, and these goals say this is where they need to be to be successful in kindergarten. And here's one more example of a goal. "Children will demonstrate persistence when working with materials, activities, and information." Those are some quick examples of goals, as well as a nice review of what a goal encompasses. But Head Start has some extra things added onto it, don't they?

Sher'ee: Yes, they do.

Vanessa: So, when we think about goals, here's a quick checklist to make sure your goals are meeting those expectations from OHS.

Sher'ee: Can I just jump in here and say: I love the checklist idea?

Vanessa: The checklist?

Sher'ee: Yeah, I'm a checklist maven, so this is beautiful. I love this right here, all in a few minutes.

Vanessa: Great. So, the first one is, as you know, they should be aligned to the Head Start framework. There should be one goal for each of those big learning domains. So, there should be at least five. And if your program needs more, you know, that's something your program decides, but the minimum is one in each domain. Your goals also are aligned with your state early learning guidelines is another. We do want to be sure that there's some nice communication, some nice relationship between what Head Start is doing at the national level but also what's happening in states. And then again, there's also being aligned with the expectations of what the kindergarten teachers are thinking kids are walking in with as well; so, this is the opportunity to have conversations in the community and with your local schools. Because really these are our children. Consultations with parents: I know you had feelings about this.

Sher'ee: I know. I feel very strongly. I'm so glad that this is included on the list. And that consultation with parents is, for me, an opportunity. We are giving an opportunity for our parents to practice advocating for their children. And this is a skill that will benefit them, as their children move into kindergarten and all the way through school. So, yeah, I'm glad that's on the list.

Vanessa: Me, too. And that consultation with parents may look very different from program to program, but again, like Sher'ee said, it's so critical. It's not just about the words on the paper. It's about what it does for families and for parents. Because, oftentimes, families leave the nurturing world of Head Start, and it can be different, going to kindergarten. So, all those skills and empowerment we can provide, the better.

Sher'ee: Well, and one last thing is: I know that parents, when they're consulted with, they feel like they've been heard. And then they know -- it's a way of showing them that you really care about their child and what is important for their child.

Vanessa: Absolutely. I couldn't say it better myself. And the last element on your checklist is to be sure that your goals are age-appropriate. So, thinking about not only is it good for kids where they're at in preschool, but if you have Early Head Start in your program, how do these goals fit birth to age five? Just making sure that it makes sense, being developmentally appropriate. And resources. We promised we were going to share resources with you at each step; so, let's pause here and we'll talk a little bit about two resources in particular from the National Center on Quality Teaching and Learning that are there for you. The first are example goals. And these goals have been developed to give you kind of a way to springboard your thinking. These are some ideas. And these are all aligned with the Head Start framework, and they're all aligned with the expectations or the early learning guidelines from states across the country. So, these are a nice place to start for sure. The other one has a really long name. "A Guide to Resources for Developing School Readiness Goals" is another fantastic resource. This one will help you find those state early learning guidelines, which I think is really important, as well as let you know if there is a QRIS system in your state, if there's a kindergarten readiness assessment in your state. It's just a great place to find out information about your particular state.

Sher'ee: Nice.

Vanessa: And, of course, the other national centers also have resources; so, thinking about Early Head Start, if you have young kiddos in your program, they also have example goals. And then the Parent, Family, and Community Engagement framework is a great place to go and to learn more about how do you engage your parents, especially when you're thinking about consulting for school readiness goals. And of course we've got to talk about our ECE Specialists. I just want to emphasize that there are so many resources out there, but your ECE Specialist is there to help you sort out which ones to use when and how and all that kind of good stuff.

Sher'ee: That's right.

Vanessa: So, a quick way to find these resources is online, and I love that things are online and I love "e-click," or ECLKC, depending on what part of the country you're in. And the "what's new in school readiness" page -- you can see our road to school readiness is there as well. But for each of the steps, there's a box that has links to all the resources that we're showing you here, today. So, if you find something that we mention, like, "Oh, that one sounds great," come back to this page, and I bet you'll find it there. And if you don't, let us know.

Sher'ee: I like that. Thank you, Vanessa. So, we have a poll question for everyone. And it is: Were the example goals for preschool and/or infants and toddlers helpful in the development of your program school readiness goals?

Vanessa: But we were not very efficient and we could've used a better action plan.

Sher'ee: Yeah, we had a map, but I think we needed that GPS.

Vanessa: I think so.

Sher'ee: Yes. Yes, yes. So, the plan should include professional development for staff and also activities to engage parents in school readiness and transition. All of this is driven by having and using data gathered from your parents, from the child assessments, and other sources of information that you have.

Vanessa: And you know, Sher'ee, I'm glad you mentioned using data in step two. When you think about the school readiness steps, it seems like we don't think about data until step four, but really to create a solid plan, you need to start from somewhere, and starting with data is the best way to do that.

Sher'ee: Mm-hmm, yep -- I agree. So, here in step two, we have our house, which Vanessa and I -- we will always show you the house each webinar. And just looking at the house and thinking about how it works, the framework for effective practice, we start with the foundation. This is what grounds us. And this is engaging interactions and environments. We also then have the pillars to our house. We have the research-based curricula and teaching practices, and we also have the ongoing child assessment. On the roof is the highly individualized teaching and learning that we offer our children and families. And, Vanessa, is there anything more that you want to say about that?

Vanessa: I think the only thing that I would say is --

Sher'ee: That GPS?

Vanessa: I think so.

Sher'ee: Yes. Yes. Yes. So, the plan should include professional development for staff and also activities to engage parents in school readiness and transition. All of this is driven by having and using data gathered from your parents, from the child assessments, and other sources of information that you have.

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Vanessa: I think the only thing that I would say is step two is about creating a strong house. We really want to fortify, make sure our foundation is strong, our pillars are really strong, and that that roof really, really is well planned and strong as well.

Sher'ee: Yes. So, there's the other gap that Vanessa and I talk about.

Vanessa: We talked about the achievement gap, but the other gap.

Sher'ee: The other gap. So, there's research and there's classroom practice. And what we know is the field of early childhood education is continuing to grow, and as new information from brain research and early learning theory adds to our knowledge base and strengthens strategies we employ in our classrooms. So, our role as leaders in our field is to bridge this gap, bringing the most relevant and effective strategies to our teachers in the form of training and professional development. Our work is to ensure that our children benefit from these types of instructional approaches, so that we make the most of those precious hours that we talked about earlier that we have with them each year.

Vanessa: So true. You know, and we're still talking about step two, and in step two, it really is about making every moment in the classroom, and that starts with preparation. And preparation, the first thing I think about is teacher training. And it's easy to go to the place of thinking about pre-service and first-aid training and bloodborne pathogens, and those are all important; those happen every year. But the preparation is beyond that. It's how do we give those – those things that you just mentioned, Sher'ee, about those latest practices, the newest things that are coming out in research, to our teachers to keep them inspired, to keep them engaged, to keep them energized and motivated?

Sher'ee: Yes, you're right. But inspiring them is not enough. We know that, from research, that in order for teachers to truly have that training stick and to truly embrace the learning, teachers really need that ongoing feedback and support in the classroom. Content knowledge will fade without this level of support. And support can come in many forms. It can include coaching, reflective supervision, peer consultation, self-coaching.

Vanessa: And all those things sound like they take time.

Sher'ee: They do.

Vanessa: But time is such a worthwhile investment, and I know in our programs every day, we're squeezing every moment out. But every moment matters, even in planning outside of the classroom. And the time spent outside of the classroom being reflective and planning, receiving feedback, pays dividends. Because then teachers are prepared, classrooms are ready for kids, kids are engaged, and learning happens. And you know, the question then becomes how do we know that these things are really making a difference? And thinking about time, I think we had a -- we met somebody yesterday who talked about time, and it was great. Why don't you share what he said about time?

Sher'ee: Yes, well, the trip that Vanessa and I were on earlier this week was wonderful. We met with a program. And Vanessa asked one of the managers if they had some extra time to work on something, and he said, "Yes, between 11:55 and noon." And we all enjoyed that, because it's true. Every minute seems to be filled up with something. So, you just have to take those moments and block out that time.

Vanessa: Yeah, thanks, Sher'ee. And so back to my question that I was asking you. So, we do these three things. How do we know that they've made an impact?

Sher'ee: Yes. Well, having an evidence-based observation tool like CLASS, provides one way of measuring the impact of these efforts, by looking specifically at what matters most, the quality of the interactions between children and their teachers.

Vanessa: Thanks, Sher'ee. So, I'll go ahead and wrap us up for step 2 with the resource list. And the two that I want to highlight from our national center are choosing a preschool curriculum and curriculum assessment and the Head Start framework and the alignment review tool. And this would be especially helpful for programs out there that are considering switching a curriculum, considering changing to a new assessment tool. I know that's happening a lot out there. But this would be a way to be able to sit with your team and really think through how that curriculum fits with your program, with the goals that you're setting for children, and to be sure, too, that that assessment tool measures what you want it to measure, which is how are kids doing on those goals and how tightly is that assessment linked with the curriculum? So, those are nice tools for you to consider, if you're thinking about a switch. The other -- or if you're not switching, to be sure that what you're currently using works well and is aligned. So, it applies both ways. The other national centers also have some great resources around step two; so, I would encourage you to look at those. Early Head Start has action steps for infants and toddlers, if you have Early Head Start. Parent, Family, and Community Engagement has some nice tools around integrating strategies for program progress. And, of course, Culturally Linguistic Responsiveness, their national center has some great things to ensure that whatever we're creating, programs we're designing really are responsive to the communities that we're in.

Sher'ee: And, of course, we're going to say it again: Please call your ECE Specialist, if you need help or support in getting these resources to you.

Vanessa: Absolutely.

Sher'ee: Maybe, that should be a mantra.

Vanessa: Yes. "And call your ECE Specialist." So, we have a poll question that we're going to start us off with, because we're going to lead into talking about child assessment as part of step three. So, the question is, which assessment tool does your program currently use to measure children's progress in Head Start? We have three choices and another; so, if yours isn't up there and you'd like to share what other tool you're using, please use the question box to let us know. So, here, it's kind of what I thought. Yeah, that's been my experience being out and around the country about Creative Curriculum, that it is quite a majority.

Looks like 80 percent of you all out there are using Creative Curriculum and Teaching Strategies GOLD. And we have quite a few "others." So, I'm curious -- you know, feed my curiosity; it's a good thing. If you'd like to add and to let us know what you're using, what you're using -- it'd be really, really interesting. Thank you, everyone. So, step three. We all know this, because we've been doing this part for a very, very long time in Head Start. We have been gathering child assessment data, and we've been doing it three times a year. That step's easy. But the other part of it is using that data and analyzing that data. So, it's not enough to just have the numbers. The next question is what we are going to do with it. And to be able to do something with it, you need a data collection plan. And so Sher'ee and I are kind of going to run through some of the big questions that you'll need to answer to be sure you have a solid plan to collect data. And the first set of questions are the what.

And this is probably the simplest question, right? It's what are you going to assess? What are those skills and knowledge that you want to be sure that you're figuring out where your kids are? But also within that "what" with relation to school readiness is how -- what are you going to measure within your school readiness goals? What is that going to look like? A lot of you are using TS GOLD. What are those objectives within TS GOLD that you're going to use to say, yes, our kids are meeting those goals?

Sher'ee: And next is how. The next set of questions is how will we assess the children? What tool will be used? Will it be paper or electronic? And do teachers have the tools that they need?

Vanessa: I know a lot of people are making switches, so training, training, training.

Sher'ee: Yes, definitely.

Vanessa: So, the next set of questions then are the when. When you're going to assess. We know it's three times a year, but then also the other question around the when is when is that information going

to be turned around and given back to teachers? When is that information going to be shared with families in the community? So, think about those "when" questions.

Sher'ee: And finally, who. Who will assess the children? Will it be only lead teachers? Lead and assistant teachers collecting the data? And once it's collected, who will gather the information? Who will be a team to look at the data? And who will the information be shared with? We have a slide of resources that we have to offer you, and these are some of our in-service suites that we discussed earlier. We've created these suites, and they're directly related to collecting and analyzing child outcome data. So, these trainings are just ideal to use at the beginning of the year, as your teachers prepare to collect assessment data, as well as, any new staff who join your program throughout the year. And I'd just like to point out really quickly that the one we have up there this time is the "Extending the Conversation: Thick and Thin," which is a webinar that we did last month.

Vanessa: Last month, yes.

Sher'ee: Yeah, I love that one, yeah.

Vanessa: And of course, your ECE Specialist is the person you can connect with around the suites as well. So, I did this last time, and I'm going to do it super quick this time. It's going to -- to show you where you can find it online. And I will tell you, it's good to visit our website frequently. We were rehearsing this this week, and we realized, hey, four more of these in-service suites were added, sometime between last week and this week. So, things are happening. So, if you go to our page on "e-click," you'll find 15-minute in-services. Click there, and then you'll get to this page, and you'll see we now have five -- we're so excited -- in-service suites that are ready for you. On this page, right as it stands right now, this is great for teachers. If you want to have them come on to this page, and they can view these videos that are about 10 to 15 minutes of video watching and activity; there's things to download that they can use in their classrooms, reminders for their practice. You can do that very, very quickly.

But for you, again, as a review, there is a trainer version. And the trainer version is exciting, and you can find it right there on the page, one click away, and you'll get all of this. You'll get a PowerPoint with video embedded, presenter's notes so you're knowing what to say, when to say it, when to insert those learning activities. And those learning activities are there, too, as handouts for you. So, you're not making anything up. It's all there to pull off the shelf and go. Those handouts that are tips for teachers are included for you to download. Resources, if you want to extend, expand this training. And then tools for you, which I think are so critical. So, you can take this and you can use it in your supervision with

teachers, when you observe them in the classrooms. Each suite has a different set of tools that you can use and employ, both for yourself as well as for your teachers.

Sher'ee: Well, and what's nice about this is that you can make it as short or long as you would like. It can be an all-day in-service training that you do with your teachers, or just, as you said earlier, a 15-minute little time to sit down and look at one of the in-service suites.

Vanessa: Absolutely. And we just showed you there are five on assessments you could do. It could be a full day. There are five on conversations; you could have a full day. And really maximize the time you spend with your teachers with these resources.

Sher'ee: Okay, so we're going to move on to step four, utilizing data to guide plans for improvement. And step four is all about being a data-informed decision maker. The ways in which we pull information from our child outcomes data, CLASS, and other program data creates a bigger picture to help us understand our program strengths and the areas to grow. In thinking about our child data, we can look at the numbers in different buckets. Yeah, buckets. The first bucket is by age. How do your young fours compare to those who will be transitioning to kindergarten next fall? Having this information and really looking at the data allows the opportunity to see if there maybe might be ways to leverage resources. Also to see where resources can be reprioritized and to measure the impact of making such changes. Another bucket. Another way to examine data is by looking at the rates of attendance. If a child misses an average of five days per month or more, does this have an impact on your child assessment scores?

Vanessa: That's such a great way to think about it. The other thing I think about, too, Sher'ee, is child absence is one way. Also think about teacher absence.

Sher'ee: You're right.

Vanessa: If a teacher's gone for long periods of time for whatever reason, does it have an impact? Is there a difference in scores from last year in that person's classroom versus this year with a substitute teacher?

Sher'ee: Absolutely. Well, and another bucket is perhaps there are language groups you want to separate out. Are there differences there? Is there a difference in scores between your full and part-day classroom? Are your classrooms stronger than others? Are some classrooms stronger than others?

Do you have sites stronger than others? And for all these questions, the next question could be what contributes to this difference? And finally, one other example of data analysis may be to look at the risk factors of the children and the families. Do you have children and families who are experiencing homelessness, substance abuse, domestic violence? Do these differences translate into differences in scores for the children? What additional support could be built into the program? That's another question you can ask yourself. And also what additional resources might be needed for your staff. Having the information and really analyzing the data allows the opportunity for us to see if there are ways to leverage resources, to see where resources can be reprioritized, and to measure the impact of making such changes. We know -- Vanessa and I were talking earlier about how our programs change from year to year, just as our children and our families do. And in our programs, we do all we can to be responsive to the children and families we are currently serving. Having clear, usable data helps us do just that.

Vanessa: I'm glad you said "usable." You know, too often we have numbers that sit on our desk, that sit in a folder. You can have all the Excel spreadsheets you want, but unless we're doing something with it, numbers are just numbers.

Sher'ee: That's right. So, what groups of data do you examine in your program? And it could be the same as what we suggested in this presentation, or there might be other buckets that you have that we have not mentioned. We'd love to hear. So, we'll just give you a minute or so to use that question box.

Susan: I'm sorry, and this is Susan. I'm going to be watching the question box. I know that you won't see the questions coming in from other people, but we'll see them. And as soon as we get some answers about what kinds of data that you look at in your kinds of clumps, or I like the word "buckets," of data, that we'll share those back with everyone. Not necessarily we won't say your name, but we'll share what you have written to us about what kind of bucket. And we've got one that says that all of this person's assessment systems are online, and these applications offer many ways to aggregate the data according to almost any factor of interest. And another program says that their buckets are very similar to those that are used in the presentation. Thank you for both of those comments.

Sher'ee: Yes, and I see a comment just coming in as well, Susan, that says children who also attended their Early Head Start program. And I, yeah, that's a good –

Vanessa: Yeah, that is a good one. Thinking about having more years of service, yeah, absolutely.

Sher'ee: Oh, and one more just popped on: Returning children.

Vanessa: Oh, very nice.

Susan: Okay.

Sher'ee: Okay. Thank you, everyone, for sharing.

Vanessa: So, we're getting down to the bottom line here, right? The fundamental question for school readiness for all the steps is are the children making progress towards achieving those goals? And so we're asking ourselves like you mentioned, that we are always asking questions, how are the kids doing? And if the kids are making progress, then we should be continuing to do what we're doing. But then the next step is what do we need to do to maintain that? Is there something that we need to continue to provide to teachers, continue to provide within the program to make sure that progress stays steady, we're still moving forward? But then the other side is what if the children are not making progress? Then we need to change what we're doing, how we're teaching, and we need to do it sooner rather than later.

Sher'ee: Yeah, absolutely.

Vanessa: We've talked before about the hours, the days. We don't have time, and these kids don't have time to wait for us to take too long to make these changes. So, what do we need to do? What can we do now to change things to better support teachers, change things within our programs to make a difference, so that our kids are making progress? And I love this one. This is where we want to be. We want to be achieving those goals. And if we've accomplished those, let's move on to something more challenging.

Sher'ee: Keep those kids challenged, absolutely.

Vanessa: Keep the kids challenged, keep the teachers challenged, keep the program stretching and growing and improving. So, then again, what would we need to do for teachers, what would we need to do in our programs to get on and do something more challenging? So, last but not least, step four resources.

Sher'ee: Yes, step four resources. Vanessa, would you like to share this?

Vanessa: Sure. So, the step four resources that we have are focused on two things. CLASS is one of them, and I'm sure everybody knows about CLASS. And what's available right now online is the "Understanding and Using CLASS for Program Improvement." And this is a nice, five-page brief that would give nice overview information about what the tool is, how it's used, what it measures. And this would be something you might want to share with your policy council, with your tribal council to give them a nice overview introduction to CLASS. So, that's there for you.

But what might be more interesting to you is the CLASS implementation guide that's coming soon, hopefully, in the new year. And this would be a resource especially helpful for programs that are using CLASS where you have an on-site person who's doing those observations and getting scores for you. So, again, like we talked about data, you can take those CLASS numbers and move it into action and really be able to do something intentional with it. And of course we have our in-service suites, and we'll go through a long list of the in-service suites in just a moment. And then we talked about these two resources from the other national centers, as well. And of course...

Sher'ee: Don't forget to call your ECE Specialist to help you with these resources.

Vanessa: We promise we were not paid for any kind of endorsement for the ECE Specialists.

Sher'ee: No, we were not.

Vanessa: The ones we met, we adore.

Sher'ee: Absolutely. Yes. They're awesome.

Vanessa: But we weren't paid for this endorsement. So, I promised that I would run through the in-service suites that are being developed or are developed already by the National Center on Quality Teaching and Learning, and they start with "Building a Solid Foundation." And this one, like the name says, is about the foundation of that effective practice house, which is associated with those CLASS domains. So, we've got one that provides a nice introduction to all of that. Then we have these suites

about social and emotional supports. They're there for you. We have a lot on well-organized classrooms. And I know we've heard from out there that people are interested in dealing with challenging behaviors as a topic, and these suites within here are the proactive way to address that. So, how do you set those behavioral expectations, those classroom rules? How do you redirect behavior? These in-service suites are a great way to kind of build in those skills within your teachers or to get those nice reminders of how to kind of set these things up. And all of these your ECE Specialists have for you. So, we'll keep saying that. If you want these, you can get these. Even the ones that are not online yet.

Sher'ee: Get the speed dial going on that ECE Specialist.

Vanessa: Yes, exactly. Speed dial them. And here are the ones for instructional interactions, or otherwise known in CLASS terms as instructional support. And you'll see, Sher'ee and I have our favorite, "Thick and Thin," in there, and this is part of that "Conversations" one. When you're thinking about "Concept Development, Quality of Feedback, and Language Modeling," this is where you would find those trainings that are specific to those skills.

And then finally we talked about these in step three of school readiness, those ongoing assessment suites as well. So, there's lots out there. Be sure to connect with your ECE Specialist about getting your hands on those. So, quick question -- a yes/no -- is: Who out there right now are using these in-service suites? We're seeing 25 percent of you are saying "yes," but 75 percent are saying "no." So, now you know they exist. Now, you know what they are. Get them. Trust me, you will love to have them. For Education Managers with lots and lots of time, you will want these. Pull them off the shelf and you're ready to go.

Sher'ee: They're fun. They're very interactive.

Vanessa: Very interactive, very informative. But what I love, too, about them is they pair some research - you know, they give you the why, but then they tell you how you do it in the classroom. So, it's really practical, apply-it-today stuff.

Sher'ee: Lots of visuals.

Vanessa: Exactly. Find that number for your ECE Specialist and get those ones online right now.

Sher'ee: Yes.

Vanessa: So, this is going to, I think, become one of our traditions for our webinar series. I'd like to leave us all with a quote that inspires, motivates, gets us reflective. And this is another one of my favorites, and I'll read it to you all. "Children are remarkable for their intelligence and passion, for their curiosity, for their intolerance of shams, the clarity and ruthlessness of their vision." And I share this quote with you because I -- well, one, this sounds like a four-year-old. That they are curious and they're passionate, and they're very ruthless in what they want to do. But I also share it with you, because I want this to be reflective of you all as well. That as Education Managers and as leaders in your program, that you, too, are curious and you're passionate and you're using all of your intelligence. That you're ruthless in what you want, which is the highest quality program with your teachers having the most support, so that they can be in there in their classrooms doing their best work, so that we can give our kids all that we have.

Sher'ee: Yes. Absolutely.

Vanessa: Just going back again, thinking about that time, 512 hours or however you want to think about it, to really get inspired to do it. We've got to spur that curiosity and that passion.

Sher'ee: Thank you, Vanessa. Thank you. I can hardly wait for next month's quote. So, finally we are out of time. And we need to say goodbye. So, we want to say thank you once again for your participation. We have our emails and names here, if you want to contact us directly.

Vanessa: This is Vanessa. Thank you again. Si Yu'us Maase and adios. Until next time.