

## AIAN Education Manager Webinar Series: January 2013

Vanessa Maanao-French: Good afternoon, and welcome to webinar number three. We're glad to have you.

Sher'ee Maxwell: Yes. Sher'ee is here, too. With a cold.

Vanessa: Sher'ee is such a trouper. She's been sick for...going on a week and a half, two weeks?

Sher'ee: Yeah, a week and a half.

Vanessa: And the first day back, all she wanted to do was do this webinar.

Sher'ee: I couldn't wait to be here.

Vanessa: So, we're going to be talking about data today. And as we are going to make this our new tradition with you all, we wanted to have our welcome page with greetings from around the country. And so this is -- we've added to our list, since last time which is very exciting. Well, thank you again, and welcome. We're glad you're going to spend some time with us.

For those that are new, we'll introduce ourselves. For those that are old...[Chuckles] you know our faces and you know our voices. But my name is Vanessa Maanao-French, and I work, here, at the National Center on Quality Teaching and Learning in Seattle, Washington, as the AIAN Program Manager. And that beautiful little girl is my daughter. She's now two, and as feisty as ever.

Sher'ee: And my name is Sher'ee Maxwell, and I'm the Tribal Liaison at the National Center. And I -- the photo of me is of -- with my mother-in-law, my 98-year-old mother-in-law. And she's pretty spry and wonderful, and I adore her. And I just wanted to share her beautiful face with all of you and let you know that her thoughts and wishes, she wanted me to make sure to send out to all of you, because, she's keeping track of what's happening in Indian country, and wishes all of us the very best.

Vanessa: So our behind-the-scenes extraordinary webinar team also includes Dawn and Susan. I'll let them introduce themselves.

Dawn Williams: Hi, everyone. This is Dawn Williams. Those are my two little girls there. They're four and two years old. And I'm here to help you with any support or technical difficulties you might have. So, just let us know if you have any challenges.

Susan Stewart: Hi, and this is Susan. I don't have my kids in the picture with me, but I've got a couple of middle schoolers. And I'm happy to be here. And again, I will also be behind the scenes and able to provide some support to you. Just send a question my way, put it in that question box, and I will respond to you behind the scenes.

Vanessa: Fantastic. Thank you. And these two women, seriously, are the best women of this webinar series. Without them, there would not be an us.

Sher'ee: Amen. Absolutely.

Vanessa: And they're also very wise in the area of early learning; so, if you have a question, even if it's not about what we're talking about, today, feel free to pop it in that question box. And if they can answer it today, they'll answer on the spot. If not, they'll make sure that we get those questions and that we get back to you. So, without further ado, we'll keep going. So, our time together.

Sher'ee: Yes, our time together. I'm so excited to be here with everyone today. And I'm actually really excited about the topic. I love data. I love data, because, I don't know; I just feel like I'm so in control, when I have data and I understand it. And so we're excited to share with you today and to reflect on the importance of using data to inform program decision-making and to offer you resources to support the work that you are already doing, the awesome work. And, also, to learn from each other and to draw on your own knowledge and experiences that you have to share with us, today. So, thank you for being here, again.

Vanessa: So, when I think about data, which I also love -- so, glad you love it as well. Be a love fest about data all day today. I think about how do we share that with our teams? How do we make it meaningful? And I think one way to do that is to develop and foster a culture of inquiry within your programs. And that's going to be an underlying theme, throughout our talk today. And to do that, you've got to first embrace change. Because, when you get data, you're going to have information that'll kind of inform you to make some changes. And, if we know anything about Head Start, I think it's Head "Change" Start. There's always change in Head Start; so that's something we've got to learn to embrace. And what I've learned in my life, personally, and also, professionally, is that it's not so much the change, itself, that creates the tension; it's that transition, from going from something that's comfy and cozy to something that's new. Even if that new thing is great.

Like, for example, an assessment tool. I know this assessment tool is going to be faster, better, give me better information, but I am so good at the old one. I might change, but it'll take me time.

Sher'ee: It's hard to let go.

Vanessa: It's hard to let go. Embracing change: The first step.

Sher'ee: Embracing curiosity is also important. And, curiosity in your role would be a desire to continually seek information about how your children and families are doing. And I think it means also looking for fresh approaches to help children learn and engage their families and communities in the process. And it means encouraging your staff to ask about the why and the how of program policies. Yes, be like the three- and four-year olds in the classrooms who are filled with the most amazing how and why questions. Dialogue flourishes in curiosity, and from dialogue comes understanding. Right, Vanessa?

Vanessa: Right. That is so profound. And also very, very true. And, you know, thinking about curiosity also leads to reflection. And it's difficult to find time to reflect, but when you find that time, it yields such great results, for you, as a leader to be able to ponder, think about, receive feedback and think about how you want to bring that back to your staff, to encourage them to be reflective leaders as well. Because we want to know, what can you learn from your parents and your tribal leaders about what the program can do next? And then what are you doing, today, feeds into the program that you're building for tomorrow? We're always striving for excellence.

Sher'ee: Systems thinking is important. And Head Start -- as we know, Head Start programs are complex organizations and often make change in a series of small steps. So, remind yourself that this takes practice, that the practices are only as good as the systems that support them. And classroom quality depends on quality systems.

Vanessa: And feedback. I said a little bit about this, when we talked about being reflective, but it's also, you know, seeking out feedback from different places -- talking to your childcare partners, talking to the schools. Because, we want to have more information, so, as to answer that question more fully: Is my program making a difference for the kids and families that are here today, and how can we build it to serve those kids and families in the future?

Sher'ee: Tolerance of failure and vulnerability.

Vanessa: You got a hard one.

Sher'ee: I know. It's a mouthful, too. Jeez. Recognize -- so, it's recognizing when approaches aren't working, is what it's saying simply. And change the course, if necessary. It's okay to start off on one path and realize it's not working, and it's, actually, a brave and smart leadership decision to make, to change the course, if necessary, which can be difficult, especially, after an investment of time and resources, but so worth it in the end. Never regret that.

Vanessa: It makes me think about kids who are learning to walk, and how vulnerable you have to be to take those first couple of steps and you fall, and you get back up and you fall. And then, finally, you know, you're running. But, if you didn't have that tolerance of those failures, between crawling to running, you would never get there.

Sher'ee: That's right. That's right. Well, so, Vanessa we know we need data in Head Start.

Vanessa: Yes.

Sher'ee: And it's critical to school readiness success and informs our steps towards closing the achievement gap. Correct?

Vanessa: That is so true. And, then, also, when we're thinking about closing the achievement gap, it's not only about how are our kids doing today. I keep saying that over and over again, because it really is about the program itself, too, when we think about data. I don't want us to be shortsighted and think only about these kids, and the achievement gap for these kids. It's also about: Is our program growing the capacity it needs, so that our kids, forever, will be part of closing the achievement gap?

Sher'ee: So, we spoke about this, during our last section, actually -- our last session. Our children cannot wait. And the children in your classrooms, right now, cannot wait. It's January, 2013. How many children in your program will be starting kindergarten in the fall, and how many of them will be ready? And, Vanessa, maybe -- can you say more about the levels of quality that will get our kids ready?

Vanessa: Sure. Absolutely. We can, certainly, borrow from another model that comes, actually, out of the Parent, Family and Community Engagement Framework. When we think about levels of quality, it's nice to have a starting point. Where is my benchmark? Where am I going to be launching from? And the starting point really is the performance standards. If we've got those in place, then we are primed and ready to get to the next levels of quality. There are nearly 2,000 performance standards; so, just being at the starting point is no small feat, in and of, itself. And, so, if you are there, pat yourself on the back, and know that you're doing it every single day. But, then there's also ways to push beyond that starting point, that baseline, and go farther, to progressing, which is the next level. And you don't have to do this for every single component of Head Start -- that would be amazing, but unbelievable. With progressing, there may be certain aspects of your program that you really are pushing the bar, that you are, perhaps, utilizing CLASS.

So, you have people onsite who are reliable, and you're using it ongoing to decide which training you want to use, based on what you know about the teachers' interactions in the classroom. That's going beyond what the performance standards are asking you for, and it really supports high services for kids and those interactions in the classrooms to be really what they need to prepare for school.

The next level is innovating. Now, you're getting outside of the box, you're thinking –

Sher'ee: I love this. This is my favorite.

Vanessa: This is a good one, right?

Sher'ee: Yeah, I like this one.

Vanessa: Be creative.

Sher'ee: Where I start having fun.

Vanessa: You know, you're cutting edge. You are a program that other programs should come watch in action. A program that I just left, recently, had an Early Head Start program that served incarcerated women. That's an innovative program. They are going to where the mothers and children are, even if they're in prison. Because, they're still moms, and they're still babies. So, what are we doing to be able to ensure that that relationship is one that helps those children grow? And, for those that have been with us, since the first webinar, think about that brain development that's happening in Early Head Start and the difference it makes to have the mom be with their babies so early. And that really is our intent, today, is to focus on data. Because, sometimes, there is just so much, you don't know what to do with it. There are so many reports.

Sher'ee: And where to start, where to start?

Vanessa: And where to start. That is so true. Because, it can be overwhelming. And for those that are feeling pretty confident, I could almost guess you've probably been doing this a while. And, then, for those that are feeling overwhelmed, it could be you're new, and it could be that things are changing, right? It's that change piece, again.

So, during this webinar, we'll discuss some ways about leading cultures of inquiry, so, that the data isn't yours alone to hold, that it really is your whole team coming together to work with data, to wrestle with it, tease it out, and to learn from it and improve their program.

Sher'ee: Well, and I like this slide, because, it puts everything in nice little buckets -- buckets. Buckets or boxes, whichever you would like. And four steps. So, data is involved in all four steps of a school readiness action plan. In step 1, data helps us decide on school readiness goals. In step 2, data informs our decision-making with regard to curriculum and assessment tools and how we support staff with

training and resources. And step 3 is focused on how we gather and analyze our child assessment data. In step 4, it's about what we do with our data. And this is our focus for today. Yay!

Vanessa: And on the other -- this is a box, or a house. Data is also involved in all aspects of our framework for effective practice. Now, that leads us to supporting kids to be school-ready. And when I think about data, I think about engaging interactions that -- we have ways to measure the effectiveness of the teaching that's happening in the classrooms, those interactions. And I'm sure people are familiar with CLASS and the ITERS and the ECERS. For some, it might be the QRIS in your state. Or your own observations that you're doing as supervisors. You're gathering data about the foundation of the house. And now, of course, there's the curriculum. And you want to be gathering data on the fidelity of the curriculum. Are teachers using the curriculum the way the curriculum was designed?

To be sure that, like for example, the Creative Curriculum Checklist. They've got theirs, other curriculums have theirs. But it's just a way to be sure, gathering data, that the practice is consistent across classrooms and delivered with high quality. This is the one that probably is the easy one to put together with data, and that's ongoing child assessment. And then, finally, the roof of the house: Highly individualized teaching and learning. We're continually gathering data and information about: Are our interventions working with these children? Are we making a difference? Are we moving them on their IEPs, for example? For those kids who are gifted and are needing more challenge, is what we're providing giving them what they need as well?

Sher'ee: So, we go through our webinar today, it will be helpful to hold in mind, and even maybe write down, your own school readiness goals. And ask yourself, how would you apply what we share today to determine if you are meeting this school readiness goal. I love this picture. It's so cute. Photograph, I should say. It's darling.

Vanessa: That is sweet. So, we're going to put some context around goals and around looking at data. And it's a little bit of review of the school readiness steps. So, bear with us. It'll be quick. So, we know from the start that we're using data, we're using information that we gathered from the community, from parents to develop our school readiness goals, that they're based on the Early Head Start framework and from early learning guidelines in your states, and then you develop your goals. And we also know that you have a curriculum and an assessment tool that aligns to your school readiness goals.

So, here are some data pieces. We can use that assessment to help us know: Are we doing enough to make a difference with our school readiness goals? Our assessment tools will let us know that. If our kids are progressing, we'll be able to monitor that at least three times a year, right? And then, finally, our

assessment tool also helps us know if our curriculum and our teaching practices are strong enough to do what we want it to do. We always talk about making our house stronger. The assessment is one big piece of information that lets us know if we're on the right track.

Sher'ee: Okay, so to think of school readiness and data, let's, maybe, start with the classroom.

Vanessa: Perfect.

Sher'ee: Yeah. So, this slide shows the inner circle, and it helps us to think about what needs to happen in the classroom and the systems that need to be in place to support the classroom level. This might include such things as staff development, parent engagement and facilities management.

Vanessa: And wouldn't life be so easy, if we could just stay focused on the classroom? But we can't, because this is Head Start. And in Head Start, our classrooms are embedded within a Head Start program. So, this next circle represents that, and that we need to be also mindful in thinking about data with regard to program governance and ERSEA and our self-assessment data.

Sher'ee: The last circle reminds us that Head Start and Early Head Start programs operate in the context of their community. And it's important, as the agency and the program, to build key external partnerships to support school readiness from those within the tribes, with the local school districts, LEAs, other community partners, and all the way to state government. It's even informed by the national environment, such as the Race to the Top, Early Learning Challenge grants and other initiatives. So, this graph helps us remember that our target is the children and the families we serve in our programs. And I think it also helps us keep our eyes on the prize, while considering what we must put in place in our agency and in our community to realize our goals.

Vanessa: Yeah. And, if you're feeling a little bit overwhelmed by all the things we've just shared, which is kind of a lot -- let's review the school readiness steps, and let's show you the systems approach -- this one will blow your mind. So, when you're thinking about school readiness steps and your role, they're the center of what we talk about, but we realize that this is your reality.

Sher'ee: Yikes.

Vanessa: That it's much, much bigger than just school readiness. It's beyond the classroom walls, as Sher'ee and I have been sharing with you, that there are so many other things that you're also balancing and basically juggling. You've got your fiscal management, your facilities. For small programs, I've definitely been there. The toilet overflows, you are the person to deal with that. And so, in recognizing that as a challenge, it's also part of the support. That these are the other pieces that feed into school readiness goals, that it's not just you alone. That all of these systems are there with the same purpose.

Sher'ee: Mm-hmm. I love this. I think it's a great visual because, it just, it really, I think, it recognizes how complex it is, but it shows the whole picture.

Vanessa: Right. But it's a big job.

Sher'ee: Okay. So, let's talk about your role. In thinking about data and school readiness, this list of responsibilities may sound familiar. And the first one, the first bullet, is help staff plan/conduct ongoing child assessment. Assist staff to understand and use assessment data. And provide training, assistance, and resources. Also, aggregate data across the program. And use data trends to inform staff support.

Vanessa: Easy. [Chuckles] And within your role and all those things that you do, you're really answering some really key questions. And the first one -- and we'll probably say this 100 times more in this, in the webinars.

Sher'ee: Mm-hmm, definitely.

Vanessa: But the main question is: How are the children doing? How are the kids doing? The next big question is: Well, how do we know this is true -- confidently?

Sher'ee: With confidence.

Vanessa: Yes, how do we know with confidence that the kids are doing, how they're doing.

And then, finally, now that we have the answer to this, what are we going to do next? And that's the whole point of creating these cultures of inquiry within a program and looking at your data critically. But it starts, first, with having a data collection plan. And this may sound very familiar to you, so, we're going to run through this fairly quickly. But you start with a purpose, that this is one example, and we'll show you three. But in this example, the purpose of collecting the data is, how are the children doing meeting their school readiness goals? This is something you all are doing out there.

And the lead might be you. Most likely you. The data collection methods would be the assessment data gathered by the teachers. The resources that you would need to be able to look at that data, critically, would be your -- for this example, Teaching Strategies GOLD reports. And then you would have a timeline set, not only for when the teachers are going to be gathering the data, but for when you as the Education Manager or Director are really analyzing that data, you know, pulling it apart, putting it back together, putting it in different groups, different buckets, like we always talk about, of data, to really look at it, critically.

Sher'ee: Okay. The next slide talks about the lead person. That would be the Program Director or the Education Manager.

Vanessa: And this is for a different purpose, right, Sher'ee? This is the one where -- different question. It's how many of our kids are going to meet or exceed kindergarten entrance standards?

Sher'ee: Right. Thank you. Thank you, Vanessa.

Vanessa: Sure.

Sher'ee: And the data collection method would be kindergarten assessment results. Needed resources would be the Memorandum of Understanding with local schools. And the timeline would be completed by October 31st of each year.

Vanessa: I'm not sure how many of you all already have these things in place, but this might be an idea.

Sher'ee: I like it.

Vanessa: So, this is our last example of a data collection plan. And this one is: What is the level of instructional quality in your classroom? Again, the lead might be you. And a familiar tool to all of us would be the CLASS. The resources that you would need would be -- you know, for example, in the program I'm thinking of in my head, you need two observers who are trained to reliability. For some other programs, it may be just you who is trained to reliability. And then, finally, figuring out when you want to gather that data. And in this example, it's mid-November and, then, again at the end of March, just to give a beginning and an endpoint. And then, of course, the next thing is what are you going to do with it? And I love this quote. This quote has been floating around the National Center, for quite a long time, and it's really profound.

Sher'ee: I love it.

Vanessa: And it came from a Head Start teacher. "If I knew what you were going to use the information for, I would have done a better job of collecting it." And she meant it with all sincerity. And I think it's really important that staff understands the purpose of data and how it feeds into the program goals, as well as, the goals for the kids in their classroom. And so we're going to switch gears just a little bit. And we're going to, kind of, go through like a Data 101 in 10 minutes. And by Data 101, we mean these terms are tossed around quite a bit. Let's just go over them. Let's just be sure we're all on the same page with them. Lots of terms and definitions that we'll be using throughout this webinar and upcoming webinars; so, we'll just start from the beginning.

Sher'ee: Jump right in. Okay. Well, I'll jump right in and take this slide. It's Aggregate Data. And that means to organize, compile the available data, and combine data from several measures into a whole.

Vanessa: Pulling it together.

Sher'ee: Pulling it together. And our next term is to Disaggregate. And here are our beautiful buckets again. And this disaggregate is to separate into parts or groups. So, when you disaggregate data, you are separating into the parts, parts or groups. For example, with child outcomes data, on completion of physical exams, you could look at the results for three-year olds and four-year olds, separately. You could look at attendance in relation to transportation: Do children who ride the bus attend more regularly, than self-transported children? So dis-- can you say that word for me?

Vanessa: Sure. Disaggregation.

Sher'ee: Thank you. Sorry. My throat is crazy. Disaggregation helps us to think about children and families with like characteristics to determine if we are better -- if there are better ways to provide services to them. Keeping data, as a whole, could hide groups of children and families who need more support.

Vanessa: I'm sure that makes sense to all of you out there. And we're going to give you some quick tips, as part of Data 101, to organize and summarize your data. So, of course, you want to organize and summarize it. And if anything, the teachers are doing this all the time in their classrooms. and I love this example with the ice cream cone.

Sher'ee: Love this. It's so cute.

Vanessa: But this data is organized and summarized. It's also presented graphically. And so it's easy to read and to understand. And it helps us to examine it in a systematic way. And we're going to introduce a process for doing that in just a little bit.

Sher'ee: You may already be using the concept of an average in your programs, as you look at how children perform at the classroom or program center level. To be sure we're all on the same page, though, let's review this definition, as well as, some of the others. And this is averages. So, the average is simply equal to the sum of scores divided by the number of scores you have. And I actually asked my daughter, my 16-year-old daughter, last night, do you remember how to average? So, she was -- it was kind of funny, because we had a little conversation about this. She said, "I learned it in third grade, Mom." Sometimes, you will hear the average referred to as "mean." So, should we walk through an example, Vanessa?

Vanessa: I think that'd be helpful, don't you?

Sher'ee: Okay. So, let's say you have a class with 10 children and you assess their knowledge of number words from one through 10. The class average is simply the sum of all the children's scores, divided by

the number of children. The table here shows you how many number words each child knows. Jose, Julia, and Kim all know all 10 words. Kyle and Sui seem to be having the most trouble with number words. They score only five or six points each. But how does the class do on average? As you can see below, the scores. Our sum of scores is 82. This is by dividing 82 by 10, the number of children in the class. We find our average of 8.2 points.

Vanessa: Perfect. Good example.

Sher'ee: Thank you. And, Vanessa, you mentioned as a tip to make the information visual, when possible, not only to hold your team's attention but to make it meaningful. And I know I'm visual. I remember the information and I'm more interested in reading it when it's visual. So, this is a great example. I love this.

Vanessa: Isn't that cute?

Sher'ee: Yeah, very cute. Did you do this?

Vanessa: No, Susan did this. I can't take any credit.

Sher'ee: Thanks, Susan. Good job.

Vanessa: Speaking of visuals, also, if you put engaging and entertaining, I was looking at one of those little figures and said, "Oh, that could be my daughter." So, averages are useful when comparing whole classrooms or classrooms across programs or across sites, depending on how large a grantee you are. And also thinking about the different kinds of support they might need. So, let's just look at this graph here. And the classroom that Sher'ee was sharing with you is classroom A. There's their score of 8.2 of number of words known. Then, you have classroom B and classroom C. So, you can, maybe, look there and say, okay, now I have an understanding of where each of my classrooms are. And then I can also use averages again to learn what my program average is, right? So, now, we've got this just under seven is the program average. And I'm seeing that classroom C is below the program average.

This makes me want to spend even more attention and ask more questions, and gather more data about classroom C, but also about classroom B. What are they doing?

Sher'ee: Yeah, what are they doing?

Vanessa: Something good. When we think about averages,

She'ree mentioned this, as well, is that we can hide information within the average. And that we need to think about the distribution of scores, as well. So, if we think about classroom A, for example, in this one here, we just took five kids from each classroom. They're all doing about the same. But if we look at classroom B, we've got some outliers, right? We've got Angela with a nine and Maria with a one. But still, the averages in the classroom are the same. So, thinking about distribution and being mindful not to lose data, when you're aggregating, but to be really conscious of it. And here's another beautiful way -- thank you, Susan -- for showing that visually. You can see in classroom A, they're all kind of clumped together in the middle. In classroom B, you've got the outliers on the sides, and those are the kids and the classroom we want to pay attention to.

Sher'ee: Well, and I think that's pretty -- hopefully, pretty typical too. In a classroom, you always have those kids that are pushing the envelope in one direction or the other.

Vanessa: We don't want to lose them.

Sher'ee: So, when we look at our data from different time points, say, from fall to spring or, even, fall to winter, it's not enough to say we've made gains. If we do this data, simply number -- it's simply numbers on a page. We need to push ourselves further to disaggregate and analyze our data. Right?

Vanessa: Absolutely.

Sher'ee: And how much gain? Is it enough? How did subgroups of children do? And do we need to change or expand our curricula? These are some of the questions that I think we can be asking ourselves.

Vanessa: Absolutely.

Sher'ee: Yes, so these are our data analyst goals for you. That these are the kind of statements you will make or will continue to make

Vanessa: You love getting your data reports.

Sher'ee: I love getting data reports.

Vanessa: I bet your teachers want them.

Sher'ee: Absolutely.

Vanessa: So, this is -- I love Calvin and Hobbes. So, this little slide made me think of data, and I'll tell you why. This is a great little strip, with Calvin saying: "Wanna see something weird? When you put bread in this slot and push down this lever, then in a few minutes, toast pops up!" And I love, so: "Wow. Where does the bread go?" "I don't know. It's weird!" And to me, it makes me think about teachers and data, especially, data that they don't see beyond using in their classrooms. That if they're putting something into a big report, it disappears and becomes something else and it becomes meaningless. It gets lost in this big bucket of information. So, really we want teachers to be able to make that connection that every little morsel of data that they provide to the program really does inform and make change happen within the program. So, you know, connecting the dots, making bread become toast. It's still bread; it's just toasty.

Sher'ee: It's being a detective, you know, a little bit of detective work there.

Vanessa: Exactly. So, now, finally, to those cycles we've been talking about forever, it seems. So, this is one way to bring data into your meetings with your staff. That we want to build that spirit of learning, that idea, that culture of inquiry into your team to get people to be active thinkers and using the data. Because, that's when you really start to believe in its power.

Sher'ee: Using these guiding assumptions with staff can also help break down barriers that come with roles and positions, when it comes to discussing data, I think.

Vanessa: Mm-hmm.

Sher'ee: Data have no -- data has no meaning alone. Your data is a file folder of Excel spreadsheets, like it is in this photograph. Tucked into a file drawer, it has no meaning. Data only has meaning if it's put into action and if you really look at it and think about it, as it relates to your children in your classroom.

Vanessa: Exactly. And you need to understand your data before you can plan. Just like this little girl in the slide, here, who's learning physics, right now. And as she's learning those concepts of physics, she's able to build her tower higher and higher.

Sher'ee: And this slide is talking about continuous growth and learning. They're accelerated by cycles of inquiry, experimentation, and reflection. And you can think of cycles of inquiry like fertilizer for critical thinking.

Vanessa: But not the smelly kind!

Sher'ee: Not the smelly kind.

Vanessa: And that really, as you're building these cycles of inquiry, that everybody is a leader and they impact the quality of the program itself. So, everybody's helping this little kiddo grow. And these cycles of inquiry, looking at data does make a difference. So, this cycle begins without even looking at the data, believe it or not. That you gather as a group and you have your key question that you want to ask, using your data. And you start digging in. What are those assumptions that we're entering in with? What are some predictions we might be making about the data we're going to see? What are some questions we've been holding in our own thinking? And then, what are possibilities for learning that looking at the data will present? And a key question is always: How are our kids doing?

So, we can start from there and thinking about what are the predictions about -- what do we think, before we can see the data? And the data we're going to be using today, and we're going to use this slide quite a bit, is this graph. And we're going to pretend like we're going through this

inquiry process together, in a bit, but this graph is about the percentage of kids meeting expectations on all objectives. Spring of 2011, just the four-year olds. You know, just the kids who turned four, as of September. And then, also looking at these domain levels at the bottom, social-emotional, physical, language, cognitive literacy, and math. And it's key in this graph that they're also comparing attendance. So, the dark blue is the kids that attended fewer than 160 days in the year, and then, kids who attended at least -- so 160 days or more this year. Next?

Sher'ee: The group, then, takes time to reflect on the data, with these questions in mind. This is a time to notice trends and to learn from the data. During this stage, I think it's important to talk about, to really focus on the facts. What does the data tell us? And do not get into the reasons why, at this point.

Vanessa: So, then at the last phase -- so, the first phase, think about it, wonder about what it might be, make predictions. Second phase, really look at the data, critically: Do those "just the facts, "list about what you really see? The next piece is when you get to, kind of, play with the data. You can, kind of, start to make inferences or develop your explanations about what you're seeing. Think about what other data you want to incorporate. So, we're looking at attendance.

We're looking at how kids are doing in these domains. So, now I'm curious about, even within attendance, which kids were on the bus and which kids were not, you know, other things we may want to bring in. So, let's go back to our graph then, right? And just remembering that 160 days, or fewer, is the dark blue, and the less than is the light blue. What are some things that jumped out at you? And I'll put the graph back. Don't worry. So, what are some things that jump out at you? Just quick reflection, and pop it into the question box for us.

Dawn: There was another comment. I got the first one. The chart tells that children who attended more are doing better than those that attend less. Also, that language didn't make a difference on the attendance, but literacy definitely did. And someone else was asking what factors attributed to daily attendance.

Vanessa: This is data dialoguing!

Sher'ee: I know. This is awesome.

Vanessa: I love it. And it really is. It comes down to first looking just at the facts, right? Because, we're not -- okay, there's a trend here, but, now, I'm noticing there's a difference right here right in the middle on language. So, the questions that are, now, popping up are why is that, right? So, you want to know what's the difference in attendance? What are the causes around that? So, now, you want to go back and gather more data. This is when you get your staff charged up and you're like, okay, we can answer these questions, we just need more information. Right?

Dawn: Yeah, there's another one that's asking: How would you use data to compare progress in time -- or over time?

Vanessa: Over time. That's a good question, too. That's a good question, too. You know, and this is us just looking at one chart for 30 seconds, right? So, can you imagine bringing your teams together, even having different data sets up a wall and just spending time staring at it and just pulling it all in, then, moving to another side of the room and looking at another set of data, pulling that all in. And then, sitting down, as a group and saying: "Okay, what did we learn from that?" And I think that's the power of putting data back into the hands of your team.

Dawn: Yeah, and just looking at it with that curiosity that we talked about earlier. And have some fun with it, don't you think?

Vanessa: You do. And I think that, you know, the part about asking questions; they can be off-the-wall questions, right -- off-the-wall predictions about what you're going to see. But, really when it comes to the data and you start really wrestling with it, then, you're going to get to the meat of figuring out the real answers. So, these questions that are popping up are exactly what you'd want to have your staff be coming up with, as well.

Sher'ee: So, as always, we want to leave you with resources. The National Center for Quality Training and Learning resources. We want to remind you of the assessment in-service suites, here, on our slide.

Vanessa: And they're all online. Remember, we found those. And so, if you can't even get your ECE Specialist, but you can get to your computer, you can get to these in-service suites.

Sher'ee: Absolutely. Or, we can help you, too.

Vanessa: Yeah, just let us know.

Sher'ee: And simply use the search box here and type in "Learning from Assessment Toolkit," and you can pull up this screen here.

Vanessa: Yeah, and a lot of what we talked about today is based on this Learning from Assessment Toolkit. And we took a really abbreviated version of it, but, there's more there. There's presentation guided practice, more resources. So, you know, check it out. The ECLKC is a great resource for you. And then this is my favorite. You could, actually, encourage cell phone use at your next staff meeting. And I'm not sure if others of you out there have used this tool, but it's free to use. I think you can get up to 40 or so votes with it.

Sher'ee: Fun. I like that.

Vanessa: And you really, really do text in your answer. And I'll give you the web address, if you pop back over. It is...

Susan: It's here: polleverywhere.com. Okay? So, try it out. It's fun.

Vanessa: And it's super easy.

Sher'ee: Wait until my 16-year-old hears about this. She's going to be using it.

Vanessa: And we have a quick second just to remind folks, if you're not aware, that our national center does monthly broadcast calls. And these are just a fantastic way to learn more from people, who are on the cutting edge of the field, about what's new, what's fresh in our field. And this next one is -- this one's going to be on science, right? Is it science, Dawn? It's going to be on -- the topic is around science in the classroom with Dr. Daryl Greenfield from the University of Miami.

And this is a free and amazingly easy way to hear from experts from around the country right in the comfort of your own office chair. So, if you can, go onto our website and you can register to join in on this webinar and space is limited, so, if you're interested, go ahead and jump on there; if you want to put them in your calendar for next time, they're the fourth Monday of each month, from 10:00 to 10:45 our time, Pacific time, or from 1:00 to 1:45 Eastern time. So, all that information is on the website, as well as, some archived calls as well. So, another resource. Trying to dig out those resources for you.

Sher'ee: Okay, and as our time is winding up really, really quickly, we want to end as usual with a quote. And, today, I get to read the quote, yay! So, this is one of my favorite people, one of my heroes, Sitting Bull, Chief Sitting Bull from the Hunkpapa tribe. And he is quoted as saying, "Let us put our minds together and see what life we can make for our children."

Vanessa: You know, I love that you read this quote, and I think it makes perfect sense. And it, kind of, moves me more, because you read this quote, Sher'ee.

Sher'ee: Thank you.

Vanessa: But, it also reminds me that this is not new work to us. It's not new work in Indian country, but this is something that's been in the hearts and minds of people for a very long time, and that our kids have always mattered. So, now we just have new ways to do it, to look at it.

Sher'ee: Absolutely. I'm going to cry!

Vanessa: I love it when I make her cry.

Sher'ee: Oh, my God! Too emotional, too emotional.

Vanessa: This is data. No emotion in data. Thank you, so much for being with us.

Sher'ee: Thank you. Pidamaya.

Vanessa: Si Yu'us Maase. In my language, too. I love that we do that. We know your time is very tight, and that we get a gift of your time, you know, once a month to spend is truly a gift back to us -- so, thank you.