Early Childhood Needs to Be Ready for Prime Time

- Importance of investing in early childhood has reached a tipping point.
- How do we efficiently help give parents, caregivers, and teachers the skills they need to do their jobs well?
- Current efforts are often ineffective and scarce resources are not invested wisely.
- We know too little about what works, even less about how to scale it, and there is very limited knowledge sharing in the field.
The limits of program replication
Scaling practices not programs
Designing for scale
  – What are the essential elements of solutions?
  – Tailoring/individualization within our constraints
  – What is good enough (efficacy/cost curve)?
  – Pathways and platforms
The Early Learning Lab

The Early Learning Lab is a new venture designed to catalyze the innovation and learning needed to support great teaching and caregiving for all young children.

The Lab uses new tools and approaches in partnership with others to design, test, and promote the large-scale adoption of effective and scalable solutions that help adults build the skills and practices that support children’s success.
2016 Lab Goals

- Support coordinated experimentation in select California communities
- Catalyze innovation and experimentation so we can learn together, faster
- Drive the field towards new approaches to scaling impact
- Synthesize knowledge, providing tools and building networks for engagement and learning
Early Learning Lab Theory of Change

Improving early childhood outcomes at scale

Drivers of Change

- Coordinated Testing & Learning
  Design, implement, and test new early childhood solutions together

- Design for Scale
  Focus on policy, systems, and design dimensions for large scale adoption of solutions

- Knowledge Sharing
  Breakdown silos and share new learning to accelerate change

- Collaborations & Networks
  Diverse players come together to think and act in new ways

Engaged and Activated Early Childhood Doers, Thinkers, Funders

5-Year Outcomes

- Increased supply of scalable solutions that build key skills and practices of parents, caregivers, and teachers

10-Year Outcomes

- Policies and Funding
  Sufficient resources, supportive policy, and political will

- Systems & Pathways
  Connected systems that act as platforms and pathways for solutions

- Solutions
  Effective solutions that build key skills and practices of parents, caregivers, and teachers

- Parents, Caregivers, & Teachers
  Adults engage in practices that build children’s skills and competencies

IMPACT

Outcomes for Children
Increased School Readiness and Student Achievement
The Starting Smart and Strong Initiative
Developing Scalable Solutions

- **Starting Smart and Strong**
  - 10-year Packard initiative
  - Oakland, Santa Clara, and Fresno

- **The Lab’s role**
  - Co-design of experiments
  - Support for implementation
  - Facilitation of ongoing learning
THE BIG 5 TARGET PRACTICES

The most important practices we want to build in teachers, parents, and caregivers.
Using the Big 5 Target Practices to Improve Child Outcomes

- **Teacher PD & coaching** focused on identified target strategy enhancements
- **Research-based curriculum**
- **Ongoing child assessment to inform instruction and CQI**
- **Teachers use effective practices and deliver high quality instruction**
- **Parents and caregivers demonstrate increased mastery of target practices**
- **Positive and stimulating adult-child interactions that support child competencies and skills across targeted outcome domains**
- **Increased kindergarten readiness and student achievement**

Child and adult data used to identify focus of Big 5 target practice enhancement strategy

Parent & caregiver skill building focused on enhancing Big 5 practices

Teacher PD & coaching focused on identified target strategy enhancements

Research-based curriculum

Ongoing child assessment to inform instruction and CQI

Teachers use effective practices and deliver high quality instruction

Parents and caregivers demonstrate increased mastery of target practices

Positive and stimulating adult-child interactions that support child competencies and skills across targeted outcome domains

Increased kindergarten readiness and student achievement
Applying the Solution Making Cycle to District-Led Experimentation

March

Explore and Ideate
- Form Experiment Implementation Team (EIT)
- Understand district population and need
- Identify potential solutions and assess evidence
- Assess fit and feasibility

May

Design and Plan
- Finalize solution(s) to test
- Develop experiment design and TOC
- Define essential functions
- Develop supports
- Prep service delivery system for change

Fall ‘15

Implement, Test, and Learn
- Launch experiments and initiate implementation
- Use data to monitor implementation
- Engage in rapid cycle problem solving and iterate
- Participate in cross-community learning

Evolve, Embed, and Scale
- Create conditions for spread inside and outside district
- Institutionalize solution as “practice as usual” and monitor
- Adapt and enhance solution
- Extend reach and scale of solution

Adapted from the National Implementation Research Network
The Fresno Language Project

- Build on Interests and Provide Learning Opportunities
- Use Positive Guidance
- Read or Tell Stories
- Respond Promptly to and Extend Verbal and Nonverbal Communication

Design and Plan
District-Led Example
Design and Plan
Fresno Theory of Change

**Intervention Topics**
- Enhancing Language Development
- Home Language Growth and Development
- Dialogic Reading and POLL Strategies (use during home and school routines)

**Family Engagement**
**Coaching/PD**
**Classrooms Teachers**
**Family Child Care Homes**
**Children**

**Outcome**
Language as an indicator of School Readiness (DRDP)

**Third grade reading scores increase**

Aligns to ELL Big Five Strategies:
(1) Scaffolding and (2) Reading or Telling Stories
Implement, Test, and Learn
Fresno Design

Identify Specific Evidence-Based Practice Enhancements To Address District Need

Scaffold Development for Growth and Learning

Dialogic Reading
Personalized Oral Language Learning (POLL) Strategies

Read or Tell Stories
Questions?

For more information contact:

- Catherine Atkin ([catkin@earlylearninglab.org](mailto:catkin@earlylearninglab.org))
  Executive Director
- Kimberly Boller ([kboller@mathmatica-mpr.com](mailto:kboller@mathmatica-mpr.com))
  Director, Testing and Learning