

# Developmentally Appropriate Practice: Kindergarten Policy Statement

Presentation to the  
Nevada State Board of Education

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# Presenters

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# Cross-Sector Alignment:

*Providing equitable access to quality early childhood services birth through grade 3.*

## NDE State Improvement Plan (STIP)

*Mission: to improve student achievement and educator effectiveness by ensuring opportunities, facilitating learning, and promoting excellence*

- **Goal 1:** All children, birth through third grade, have access to quality early care and education.
- **Goal 2:** All students have access to effective educators.
- **Goal 3:** All students experience continued academic growth.

## Early Childhood Advisory Council (ECAC)

### Vision & Strategic Plan:

*Nevada's children will be safe, healthy, and thriving during the first 8 years of life, and the system will support children and families in achieving their full potential.*

- **Goal 1:** Create a coordinated early childhood leadership infrastructure.
- **Goal 2:** Increase coordination and alignment between systems of care for young children and families.
- **Goal 3:** Increase capacity to equitably connect families with the early childhood system continuum of care and community at large.

# Alignment to STIP Values

- **Equity:** Increase enrollment in high-quality birth-3<sup>rd</sup> grade learning environments
- **Access to Quality:** Support quality early childhood education providers, teachers, and administrators
- **Success:** Accelerate Read by Grade 3
- **Inclusivity:** Increase inclusion across the continuum

# Presentation Outline

- What is Developmentally Appropriate Practice (DAP)
- DAP Kindergarten Policy Statement
- Connecting DAP K to Birth –3rd Grade (B-3) Approach
- History of B-3 Work in Nevada
- Current Strategies and Implementation Projects
  - Why Now?
- Moving Research & Policy to Practice: District Profile
- Next Steps, Timeline, & Questions

# WHAT IS DEVELOPMENTALLY APPROPRIATE PRACTICE?

# Our Why

**Each and every child** across Nevada, birth through 3<sup>rd</sup> grade (B-3), has the right to **equitable learning opportunities** with educators who **engage in developmentally appropriate practice (DAP)** that promotes each child's optimal development and learning through a **strengths-based, play-based approach** to joyful, engaged learning.

# Context

- Unify our voice for what DAP Kindergarten looks like
- State-level endorsement for what constitutes DAP Kindergarten
- Align practices and implementation in early learning settings
- Empower teachers and support classroom implementation
- Bridge the gap between 0-5 (pre-school) and K-3rd pedagogy and classroom instruction
- Increase student learning outcomes and engagement
- Jointly endorsed by NDE and State ECAC and others who are interested



# Nevada DAP Kindergarten Policy Statement

- Promote optimal development and learning
  - Strengths-based, play-based approach to joyful, engaged learning
- Recognize multiple assets all young children bring to early learning settings
- Build on each child’s strengths
- Design and implement learning environments in developmentally, culturally, linguistically, and ability appropriate ways
- Grounded in the evidence-based principles of child development and learning



## Nevada Developmentally Appropriate Practice Kindergarten Policy Statement

Each and every child across Nevada, birth through 3rd grade (K-3), has the right to equitable learning opportunities, beginning with the state’s youngest learners—in centers, family child care homes, or schools. These young children need opportunities that fully support their optimal development and learning across all domains and content areas. Educators who engage in developmentally appropriate practice (DAP) foster young children’s joyful learning and maximize the opportunities for each and every child to achieve their full potential.

### What is Developmentally Appropriate Practice?

Developmentally appropriate practices, as defined by The National Association for the Education of Young Children’s (NAEYC), promote each child’s optimal development and learning through a strengths-based, play-based approach to joyful, engaged learning.

Educators implement DAP by 1) recognizing the multiple assets all young children bring to the early learning setting as unique individuals and as members of families and communities; and 2) building on each child’s strengths. Educators design and implement learning environments to help all children achieve their full potential across all content areas and all domains of development, including physical, cognitive, health, social and emotional, and approaches to learning. To be developmentally appropriate, educator practices must also be culturally, linguistically, and ability appropriate for each child.

### What is DAP Kindergarten (DAP K)?

Kindergarten is a pivotal year that bridges the gap between changing pedagogies of 0-5 years and K-3<sup>rd</sup> classroom environments, both of which must be grounded in child development. Although kindergarten classrooms are emergent, flexible, and ever changing, the following essential elements guide DAP K:

- A balance of both team- and child-initiated learning activities
- Play, daily routines, and classroom experiences focusing on four frames of thinking and learning: belonging and contributing, self-regulation and well-being; demonstrating literacy and mathematics behaviors, and problem solving
- A large block of uninterrupted play, when children manipulate objects, act out roles, and experiment with different materials; and
- A large block of time for child-initiated learning activities, often at learning centers where meaningful interactions have been planned (NAEYC, 2017)

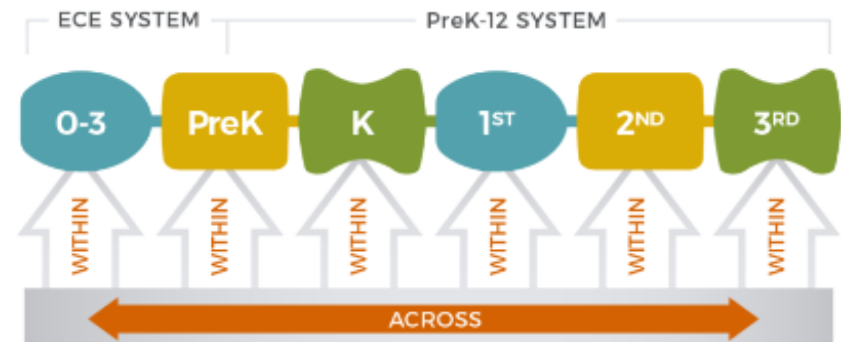
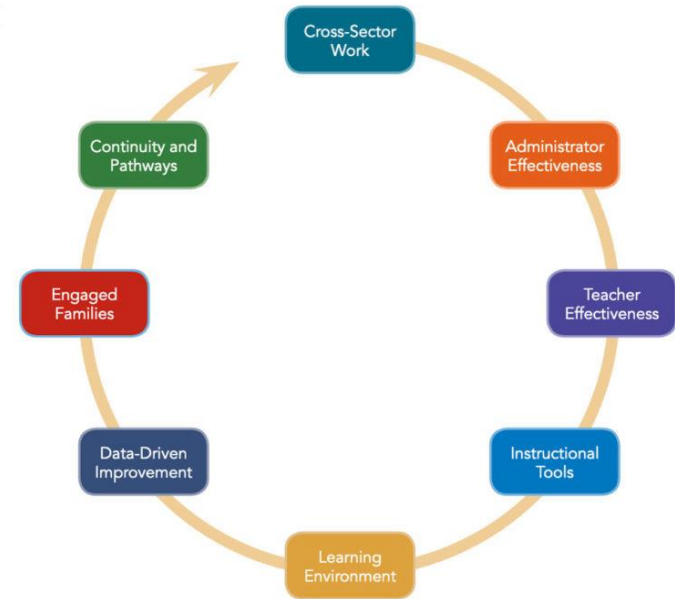
These elements show up on a continuum as identified in the graphic below (Miller & Almon, 2009) with best practices finding the sweet spot in the middle.



# CONNECTING DAP K TO NEVADA'S B-3 APPROACH

# B-3 Approach: Key Assumptions and Impact

- Systems alignment and coordination
  - Bridging 0-5 systems and PreK-12 Systems
- Key elements (buckets)
  - Current focus on Administrator Effectiveness, Teacher Effectiveness, and Learning Environment
  - Includes but not limited to alignment of curriculum, assessment and instructional practices
- B-3 improves and aligns within and across each age/grade level
- DAP is foundational to B-3 work
  - Nevada’s B-3 work is grounded in the research based on the National P-3 Framework that is designed to address key questions facing those who are developing and implementing comprehensive P-3 approaches in their school, district, or community. (P-3 being synonymous with B-3 in this context)



National P-3 Center Framework:

<https://national-3center.org/p-3-framework/>

# HISTORY OF B-3 WORK IN NEVADA

# History of B-3 Work

2010-2015

- 3 State Teams participated in Harvard P-3 Institute under the leadership of Dr. Kristie Kauerz and The National P-3 Center.

2014

- NV Governor's P-3 Institute
- Developed state B-3 Policy Briefs with the National Governor's Association (NGA).

2016-2019

- Preschool Development Grant
- Developed NV Professional Leadership Program and Policy Analysis and Recommendations
- NV B-3 Summit

2020-2021

- DAP Kindergarten Cohorts and P-3 Leadership Academy Cohorts

2022

- NV State Team attended P-3 Institute with NDE Superintendent & Deputy Superintendent

# National P-3 Institute Team

October 2022

- State Superintendent of Public Instruction, NDE
- Deputy Superintendent for Student Achievement, NDE
- Office of Early Learning and Development; State PreK, NDE
- Chief Academic Officer, Clark County School District
- Director, Northwest Regional Professional Development Program
- Professor & Department Chair; P-3 Leadership Academy State Facilitator, University of Nevada, Reno
- P-3 Leadership Academy Co-facilitator, Washoe County School District
- Early Learning Principal, Nye County School District
- School Board Trustee, Washoe County School District



## Pillars of the P-3 Promise

### Name the Priority

- State to District Superintendent intentional communication about & professional learning on the importance of P-3; Press conference on NDE's support for the foundations of learning

### Professional Learning Modules

- Develop and disseminate high-quality online learning modules for initial training on the science of learning and child development for K-3rd teachers and elementary administrators (message with Read by Grade 3)

### Lighthouse Schools

- Cultivate model schools in each district that have embodied principles of the science of learning and child development in their teaching practices and have aligned practices across P-3 grade levels

### Kindergarten Promise Transition to Kindergarten Summer Program

- Facilitate kindergarten transition by piloting a 4-week transition to K across the state, embedding PL for teachers, family engagement, MLL practices, & centering DAP strategies and learning environments

# CURRENT STRATEGIES AND IMPLEMENTATION PROJECTS

# NDE Supported B-3 Strategies and Implementation Projects in Place

1. P-3 Leadership Certificate Program and Statewide Cohort
2. Developmentally Appropriate Practice (DAP) Kindergarten Cohorts- Statewide
3. Transition to Kindergarten Work: Washoe, Lyon, Elko
4. Local ECACs- Washoe, Elko, Carson/Douglas, Lyon/Story/Mineral, Southern Nevada, Tribal
5. West Ed Transforming Kindergarten Collaborative: Cross Office State Team
6. PDG 0-5 Renewal Grant: FY24-26 (Pending)



Scan for details,  
or visit:

[bit.ly/NVB-3Strategies](https://bit.ly/NVB-3Strategies)



# Why Now?

- Alignment to the STIP and Read by Third Grade goals
- History of B-3 Work
- ★ • State and District Leadership and Administrator Support is critical to implementation
- Moving Research and Policy to Practice

# MOVING RESEARCH AND POLICY TO PRACTICE

# District Profile:

## Washoe County School District

- **Enrollment:** PK- 1,064 and K- 4,503
- **Number of sites:** Approximately 15% of Kindergarten Classrooms are moving towards DAP approach
- **Key Partnerships:** Regional Professional Development Programs (RPDP), ECAC, NDE-OELD, Others
- **Systemic Planning and Implementation:** WCSD DAP K Handbook, local ECAC, Superintendent support, etc.

# A Look Inside DAP Kindergarten Classrooms

- [Video: Kindergarten: Where Play and Learning Can Meet \(RELs\)](#)



# NEXT STEPS AND TIMELINE

# Working Timeline



# Next Steps



# Contact Information / Questions

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