



### Session Outcomes:

- a. Increase awareness of supportive strategies to engage children in expressing emotions, using executive function skills, and participating in positive social interactions with other children
- b. Increase knowledge of specific teaching strategies to engage learners in leadership, social-emotional learning, and emotional intelligence with guided support
- c. Identify two ways to include specific techniques such as Class Meetings within their own classroom settings and implications for all learners within the setting when returning to their work setting

### What is a class meeting?

#### Class Meetings:

- \* Planning and Decision Making
- \* Sharing information
- \* Engaging in Peer-led learning
- \* Discussion of a familiar or unfamiliar topic
- \* Impromptu and scheduled
- \* Teachers model and participate



"Class meetings are beneficial for all age groups...In school, in play, and at home, children draw upon the social skills and cognitive learning honed in class meetings."  
E. Vance & P.J. Weaver (2002)

### Planning and Decision Making Class Meetings:

Planning and decision making in the early childhood classroom is an opportunity to build on the established classroom community. It gives the teacher and children the opportunity to present materials and pose questions about use, shared space, and availability for the time period (day, week, month).

#### Process:

- 1) In a class meeting, the "conductor" (child or teacher) calls the entire class to the group rug or designated class meeting area. The conductor begins the meeting by saying "I called this class meeting..."
- 2) The conductor states his/her purpose, and then asks if anyone has any questions. Discussion occurs and others' viewpoints are considered or clarified.
- 3) The meeting is then concluded by the conductor by saying "Class meeting dismissed" Everyone goes back to their previous activity.





## Class Meetings for Sharing Information

Sharing information with the whole group throughout the day encourages peer to peer participation, efficient use of time, breaks information into cognitively manageable parts for young learners, and reduces repetition in giving verbal directions.

- Snack today
- Weather reporting
- Small group plans
- Special visitors
- Celebrations (birthdays, holidays, traditions)
- Change in Schedule ("mix up day")



## Engaging in Peer-led Learning

Goals met through peer-led learning include:

- \* persistence and engagement
- \* gathering information through listening
- \* remembering information presented in brief group discussions
- \* making and following plans for activities with other children
- \* displays socially competent behaviors (turn taking, helping, sharing) with peers
- \* participating in conversational turn taking by listening and responding to what was said.



Kansas Early Learning Standards  
<http://www.ksde.org/Portals/0/Early%20Childhood/Early%20Learning%20Standards/KsEarlyLearning5>



...responding to what was said.



ards

## Teaching and learning within the Zone of Proximal Development

### Zone of Proximal Development

Skills too difficult for a child to master on his/her own, but that can be done with guidance and encouragement from a knowledgeable person.



"the distance between the actual developmental level as determined by independent problem solving and the level of potential development as determined through problem solving under adult guidance, or in collaboration with more capable peers" (Vygotsky, 1978, p. 86).



## Our Classroom Community



- \* Developing a sense of self
- \* Describing engagement and action on objects
- \* Demonstrating a new skill or material
- \* Sharing common ideas and new ideas
- \* Building social relationships based on trust, respect, and turn taking
- \* Developing autonomy and confidence
- \* Problem solving as a whole group



## Teachers Role in Class Meetings

### Teacher as a facilitator:

- co-investigator
- identifying children's strengths and building on them
- embracing "teachable moments"

### Teacher as a model:

- routinely participate with children leading class meetings
- use questions to prompt further, more in-depth thinking
- assist in moving children through the class meeting process (conductor, questions, answers, dismissal)

### Teacher as a collaborator:

- sharing insights, ideas, observations "I noticed..."
- communicating challenges and solutions
- demonstrating use of materials

### Teacher as a decision maker:

- evaluating class meetings (length, purpose, type)
- extending topics to future meetings
- planning, gathering materials, and implementing with children's ideas, challenges, and strengths in mind



## QUESTIONS



## Encouraging Participation

Class meetings are inclusive of strengths and varied developmental levels in the classroom setting.

- 1) Varied in length, topic, and information
- 2) Include varied areas of development  
(social, emotional, cognitive, language, physical)
- 3) Support Autonomy  
(thinking for oneself, making decisions, leadership, independence)
- 4) MAKE IT FUN! Music, movement, routine

## Class Meetings in Action

Child-led



Teacher-led



## Time to CREATE!



Use the information presented to create your own class meeting outlines. Share with your small group:

- 1) What will your class meeting song/welcome/chant be?
- 2) How will children know the purpose of the meeting?
- 3) What area of the classroom will you use?
- 4) How will you encourage children to take the lead?

**DEMONSTRATE with your group!**

### Reflection questions:

- 1) What part of the class meeting process fits with my ideas of teaching and learning?
- 2) How can class meetings support what I am already implementing in the classroom setting?
- 3) What supports will the children need to establish and use class meetings successfully in the classroom?
- 4) What opportunities in the classroom could be presented through class meetings?
- 5) How do I communicate the importance of class meetings to staff?

"When we begin the year as **strangers**, strive to become **friends**, and end as **family** the year has been successful in developing the foundations for future success"

- Meitler





## References:

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Beka Meitler, M.S.  
Early Childhood Education  
Kansas State University

