THE CHILD PARENT CENTER AT SUGAR CREEK

A Deeper Look into the CPC Project

Fall, 2015

TABLE OF CONTENTS

The Child-Parent Center (CPC) Overview	
introduction and History	
Program Goals	
Core Program elements	
The Child-Parent Center at Sugar Creek Elementary Scho	ool4
Planning and Development	
District and Site Data	
Roles and Responsibilities	
Sugar Creek Child Parent Center Organization Flow Chart	7
Core CPC Program Elements at Sugar Creek	7
Effective Learning Experiences	
Aligned Curriculum and Practices	
3. Parent Involvement and Engagement	
4. Collaborative Leadership Team	9
5. Continuity and Stability from PreK-3rd Grade	9
6. Professional Development System	10
The Child Parent Center Local Innovation and Efficacy a	t Sugar Creek10
Local Innovation and Adaptation of CPC Model	=
Efficacy in Meeting Program Goals	
The Sugar Creek Child Parent Center Sustainability	11
Planning and Sustainability for the Future	11
Appendix A: Sugar Creek Steering Committee Planning	

THE CHILD-PARENT CENTER (CPC) OVERVIEW1

INTRODUCTION AND HISTORY

The Child Parent Center Pre-K to 3rd Grade program (CPC) is a center-based early childhood model that provides comprehensive educational and family support services, primarily in low-income neighborhoods, to children from PreK to 3rd grade. Established by the Chicago Public School District in 1967, the CPC has demonstrated for over four decades that it is one of the nation's most effective education reform strategies.

Each CPC is a dynamic support system for the entire spectrum from PreK to 3rd grade in partnership with its affiliated elementary school. The CPC's Head Teacher (HT) or Director works under the leadership of the elementary school Principal. The Parent Resource Teacher (PRT) directs the CPCP's parent resource room, and outreach activities are organized by the School-Community Representative (SCR). Health services are coordinated with the elementary school. Liaisons from the elementary school work with the HT and PRT to provide alignment of the curriculum and parent involvement activities from PreK-3rd grade.

After a language-rich and activity-based PreK program at ages 3 or 4, the K-3rd component of the CPC program provides reduced class sizes, teacher aides for teach class, continued parent involvement opportunities, and enriched classroom

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environments for strengthening language and literacy, math, science, and socio-emotional skills. Site mentors also work with CPC leadership staff to promote and sustain effective implementation. The key elements of the curriculum alignment and performance monitoring and integrated within a robust professional development system of school facilitators and online supports.

PROGRAM GOALS

The CPC has multiple goals to ensure its programs are of the highest quality and provide outstanding experiences and services to children and their families throughout the PreK-Grade 3 continuum. These goals are to: (1) Increase proficiency and excellence in early academic achievement in language arts, math, and science; (2) Enhance social adjustment and psychological development in the early grades, including socio-emotional learning, school commitment, and self-control; (3) Promote best instructional practices through supporting classroom quality and continued professional development for teaching staff; (4) Provide strategic support, including: (b) Aligning instructional practices, curricula, and communication within and across grade and (b) Building leadership capacity; (5) Increase parent involvement and engagement throughout a child's formative academic years; (6) Enhance educational success, career opportunities, and personal development for parents and family members; (7) Build a foundation for sustained student achievement from PreK-3rd grade to prepare them for 4th grade and beyond.

CORE PROGRAM ELEMENTS

The CPC model identifies six distinct elements, which operate independently and synergistically to produce long-term and

"It takes the synergy of all six elements, building on each other, to produce the comprehensive and long-term gains observed among Child-Parent Center children and their families." cumulative impacts on children's educational progress, socioemotional development, and well-being. These elements are: (1) Effective Learning Experiences; (2) Aligned Curriculum and Practices; (3) Parent Involvement and Engagement; (4) Collaborative Leadership Team; (5) Continuity and Stability from PreK-3rd Grade; and (6) Professional Development System.

¹ This material is taken from the CPC Manual. Human Capital Research Collaborative. (2015). CPC-PK3: Program Manual. Minneapolis, MN: University of Minnesota.

No single element can be isolated to achieve these results. It takes the synergy of all six elements, building on each other, to produce the comprehensive and long-term gains observed among Child-Parent Center children and their families. Thus, the CPC model can be implemented with high fidelity and be expected to produce significant results only when all six elements are in place.

THE CHILD-PARENT CENTER AT SUGAR CREEK ELEMENTARY SCHOOL



PLANNING AND DEVELOPMENT

As part of the Midwest Expansion of the Child Parent Center model, Normal, Illinois was identified as a promising potential site for a Child Parent Center placement in downstate Illinois. Under the direction of Michelle Lamboley, Director of Special Education at Unit 5 School District, who formerly oversaw the its PreK program, Unit 5 had invested in building a high-quality early childhood education; yet additional work was needed to ensure the early learning experiences in Unit 5 were integrated and well-aligned across the PreK to 3rd grade continuum. Lamboley explained:

As the educator overseeing the PreK program in Unit 5, I knew we believed as a district we had a good PreK before the CPC and that we were solidly providing services. What we were lacking as a district was a vertical connection. We also knew that the CPC was a nationally recognized program. As a district we saw this as a great opportunity. (Michelle Lamboley, Director of Special Education, Unit 5)

To seize that opportunity, and with technical support provided by Illinois State University's Center for the Study for Education Policy, Unit 5 School District Superintendent, Gary Neihaus and Lamboley convened a steering committee of community stakeholders in the early childhood field to undertake the planning and development process. "We were ready to do the work," explained Lamboley. "We all knew we needed to partner in this work to provide valuable information, support, and facilitation." Leading the steering committee for the CPC in Normal was Perry Soldwedel. Mr. Soldwedel was with the Consortium for Educational Change and was hired as a consultant to oversee the steering committee. A former superintendent in Pekin, Illinois, Soldwedel had substantial experience with the implementation and sustainability of a PreK-

Grade 3 center in his district. Having successfully undergone the work of implementing a PreK-3 program afforded Soldwedel much credibility with the steering committee for Unit 5.

The steering committee had a wide representation of experts and practitioners in the early childhood field, including PreK and elementary teachers, building administrators, and community-based organizations, like Head Start of Livingston and McLean County, United Way of McLean County, the Regional Office of Education's STAR Adult Literacy, and Illinois State University. Over the course of six months, the steering committee worked to assess the needs of the community to determine where would be the most suitable location for a Child Parent Center. Ultimately the decision was made to locate the CPC at Sugar Creek Elementary. Sugar Creek is centrally located in the district's large geographic span and already housed one of the district's two early learning sites, which offered the added advantage of implementing the CPC program in a self-contained PreK-Grade 5 building.

Beyond selecting the location, those planning and development steering committee meetings were key in laying the groundwork for the Child Parent Center at Sugar Creek Elementary School. These meetings provided extensive opportunities for dialogue and collaboration among those in the school district and the community. The committee assessed and discussed the educational and social needs of the community and the various ways in which the CPC model was poised meet those needs, as well as leverage the extensive resources already available in McLean County. The process of community engagement was key in sketching the architecture of the Sugar Creek CPC program and establishing the relationships and networks of services that would enhance and



sustain the program in years to come. Since January 2012 the CPC has gone from the earliest planning stages to full implementation in September 2013.

The ongoing success of the CPC at Sugar Creek can be attributed in large part to the thoughtful and engaged process of planning and development that cultivated shared vision and investment among the diverse organizations and stakeholders engaged therein.

Jan-Aug, 2012 Sep-June, 2013 Sep-June, 2014 Sep-June, 2015 Sep-June, 2016 Sep-June, 2017

Planning Pre-K Year Kindergarten Year Ist Grade 2nd Grade 3rd Grade

DISTRICT AND SITE DATA

Located in McLean County, Illinois, Unit 5 School District is a mid-size school district serving an expansive geographic area and diverse population of students. The urban core of McLean County has pockets of deep poverty, but the community is also characterized by affluence due to the presence of large corporations in the county, like State Farm Insurance in Bloomington. Outside of Bloomington-Normal, the county is dominated by agriculture. The school district consists of more



than 214 square miles, serving more than 13,600 students within its 17 elementary, 4 junior high buildings, 2 high school buildings, and 1 vocational training site. Thirty-one percent of the district's students are classified as low-income. Sixty-seven percent of students are White, 11% are Black, 9% Asian, 8% Hispanic, and 6% two or more races.

Sugar Creek Elementary is a Pre-K through 5th grade school that is centrally located within the Bloomington-Normal community. Its total enrollment is 505, with an average class size of 23. Sugar Creek houses one of the district's early childhood programs, as well as a special education program. Thirty-two percent

of the students attending Sugar Creek have IEPs. Since the Child Parent Center was installed at Sugar Creek, district Superintendent Gary Neihaus committed to enroll and transport any CPC child and his/her sibling(s) to Sugar Creek through 5th grade, which has notably changed the student demographics. Fifty-seven percent of Sugar Creek students are classified as low-income, an increase of 20% since the implementation of the CPC. The demographic composition of Sugar Creek students is 57% white, 21% Black, 6% Hispanic, 5% Asian, and 10 % two or more races; and there is an eight percent student mobility rate. Seventy-two percent of Sugar Creek students met or exceeded standards on the Illinois Standardized Achievement Test (ISAT).

ROLES AND RESPONSIBILITIES

Sugar Creek Elementary has implemented the Child Parent Center in collaboration and coordination with Unit 5 School District administrative staff. Thus, the CPC program benefits from the shared ownership and investment among a variety of district staff. From the earliest planning stages, Director of Special Education, Michelle Lamboley, has been actively involved in all aspects of CPC implementation at Sugar Creek. As the former Early Learning Coordinator for Unit 5, Lamboley has helped to shape the vision and mission for the Sugar Creek CPC and has acted as administrative liaison to the district on behalf of the program. Kris Pennington, the current Early Learning Coordinator, is also deeply involved with the CPC program. Pennington communicates regularly with CPC staff to facilitate district-wide early learning outreach and offer guidance specific to Sugar Creek's early learning program. The Sugar Creek Principal, Nicole Combs, in new to the school, as of the 2015-2016 school year. She is committed to the CPC model and has been working actively with CPC staff, as well,

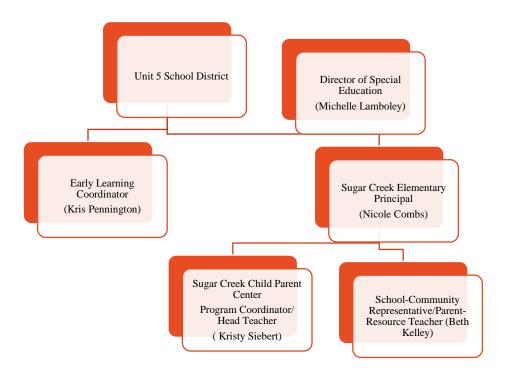
"The integrated PreK-3rd Grade infrastructure of **Sugar Creek Elementary** allows for a more consolidated and seamless structure to the roles and responsibilities within the Child Parent Center, as well as the entire school... The Sugar Creek CPC has the distinct advantage of merging the resources, roles, and responsibilities typically segregated between these two programs."

to better integrate and leverage the program in school wide programming. Kristy Siebert is the Program Coordinator of the Child Parent Center, and oversees all aspects of the CPC at Sugar Creek. As Program Coordinator, Siebert fulfills the Head Teacher responsibilities of the CPC model. Her background in early childhood education brings a level of curricular and pedagogical expertise specific to the PreK-Grade 3 continuum and provides valuable support and hands-on guidance to the teaching staff at Sugar Creek. Siebert works closely with Beth Kelley, the Family Coordinator at Sugar Creek. In her capacity as Family Coordinator, Kelley fulfills the dual-CPC roles of School-Community Representative and Family-Resource Teacher.

The integrated PreK-3rd Grade infrastructure of Sugar Creek Elementary allows for a more consolidated and seamless structure to the roles and responsibilities within the Child Parent Center, as well as the entire school. Unlike other CPC models, wherein the Head Teacher works in the early learning building and a School Facilitator works in the elementary building, the Sugar Creek CPC has the distinct advantage of merging the resources, roles, and responsibilities typically segregated between these two programs. As Program Coordinator/Head Teacher, Siebert has the advantage of working in the same building as both the PreK program and the K-3 program, effectively maximizing her services and guidance. Kelley, too, is able to leverage this structure to build on sustained family relationships and connections and help bring greater continuity between school- and home-based support for children and their families. Sugar Creek's PreK-Grade 5 structure not only means the program can operate more effectively and efficiently while housed under one roof, but it also means the innovations and expertise that are working in early learning can be "pushed up" to the K-3 grades and beyond. This supports a better integrated early learning and K-3 relationship, with better aligned

curriculum and professional development opportunities, more meaningful and sustained parent engagement, better collaboration, and overall more effective, stable, and continuous learning experiences. Below is a organizational chart for the Sugar Creek CPC.

SUGAR CREEK CHILD PARENT CENTER ORGANIZATION FLOW CHART



CORE CPC PROGRAM ELEMENTS AT SUGAR CREEK

As a program designed to meet the needs of children and educators within a diversity of settings and communities, the Child Parent Center model maintains the flexibility and adaptability to ensure the program is well-integrated into the community-and school-based settings. The implementation of the core elements is distinct in each site, and these elements reflect and enhance the educational experiences of students, schools, and communities. The section below details Sugar Creek's creative and effective implementation of the core elements of the CPC program.

1. EFFECTIVE LEARNING EXPERIENCES

Sugar Creek's strategies to enhance effective learning experiences is undergirded by statewide education initiatives, like the Illinois Learning Standards, which ensure high-quality and common expectations for children as they progress throughout the early childhood years and beyond. The key task at Sugar Creek, as Kristy Siebert, the CPC



Head Teacher, puts it, is "how are we going to go above and beyond?" For Siebert, developing effective learning experiences at Sugar Creek is a matter of promoting rigorous and developmentally appropriate learning opportunities for children. Siebert uses classroom visits and teacher discussions to better understand the teachers and their classrooms. With this understanding, Siebert has modeled math problem solving in first grade classrooms, and is collaborating with the first grade teachers to create and implement integrated units of study

that reflect best practices in the classroom. To support social and emotional development, Siebert has gone into the kindergarten and first grade classrooms to present lessons that encourage the students to reflect on their own behavior and interactions.

Effective learning experiences aren't confined to the classrooms at Sugar Creek, though. Through parent workshops and home visiting activities, parents and families become engaged partners in their child(ren)'s learning experiences. One activity occurred prior to winter break in the 2014-2015 school year, when the Sugar Creek CPC hosted a "Cabin Fever" workshop to give parents ideas of educational and play-based activities they could do at home during the break with materials that they already have. Additionally, during home visits, Kelley works intergenerationally with parents and children to help build confidence and success in their learning experiences. For example, when a mother expressed concern to Kelley that she wasn't confident she understood letter sounds well enough to help her child work it, Kelley worked with the mother to master her own letter sounds and empower her to teach her child.

Alignment of curriculum and practices is a key aspect of the Sugar Creek Child Parent Center. Capitalizing on

2. ALIGNED CURRICULUM AND PRACTICES

education initiatives like Common Core State Standards, and new assessments, like the Kindergarten Individual Development Survey (KIDS), Siebert and the Sugar Creek teaching staff have been working to create better linkages between the Pre-K program and Kindergarten program. Siebert identifies Kindergarten as a "linchpin" in creating seamless transitions for CPC children, and sees curriculum alignment as an important component in successful transitions. As Kindergarten

seamless transitions for CPC children, and sees curriculum alignment as an important component in successful transitions. As Kindergarten teachers prepare to undertake the KIDS assessment, an authentic assessment of child development across academic and social and emotional domains, Siebert is using her understanding of this



assessment to guide her as she supports the teaching staff in the areas of curriculum, assessment, and best practices. As KIDS promotes observational data, as opposed to paper and pencil assessments, Siebert has supported the first grade teachers in analyzing running records and creating rubrics to assess to reading responses. This support was provided to encourage staff to become more familiar with the principles of authentic assessment and begin to structure their learning experiences around those principles.

3. PARENT INVOLVEMENT AND ENGAGEMENT

Parent involvement and engagement are central to the Sugar Creek CPC. With the outstanding support of Beth Kelley, the School Resource Coordinator, parents and families are given a variety of opportunities to become involved in their child(ren)'s education and the school community. Parent/family workshops are scheduled on a monthly basis that cover important and useful topics, like financial planning. Family nights also occur on a monthly basis, and these are aimed at promoting parental and family engagement in their children's learning. Siebert was instrumental in designing and disseminating "Kindergarten Readiness Kits" at kindergarten registration, which included play-based math, literacy, and social-emotional activities and manipulatives to help children and their



families prepare for the upcoming year. The Parent Resource Room is stocked with hand-on materials to encourage parents and children to partake in play-based educational activities.

Monthly newsletters are sent out to the CPC parents, as well, which include information about job and educational opportunities for parents, as well as program and school information. In addition, Siebert develops and sends home a monthly ELA lesson for the each K-2 family based on a book that the child gets to keep. Another

communication tool that Siebert and Kelley are able to utilize a school-wide notification system to keep parents informed and updated. Kelley attends one home visit with all interested CPC families at the beginning of the year, and then continues visits throughout the school year with interested families. These visits range in nature and enrich the lives of the entire family. Kelley also fields emails and phone calls from CPC parents on a regular basis, and she often helps families troubleshoot or connect with community resources. In the upcoming year, Siebert and Kelley are planning to provide integrate individualized educational support for children and families into home visits. Working with the PreK-3rd grade teachers, Kelley and Siebert will inquire into specific areas in which children would benefit from additional supports. Then, accessing the many educational resources available in the CPC Resource Room, Siebert and Kelley plan to work collaboratively to identify the most useful play-based supports, like board games or children's books, to take along on home visits. Through creative and individualized supports and engagement, the Sugar Creek CPC is able to support families in ways specific to their needs and interests.

4. COLLABORATIVE LEADERSHIP TEAM

Continuous formal and informal collaboration form the backbone of the Sugar Creek Child Parent Center and extend its successes to other schools in the Unit 5 School District. Regular meetings are scheduled for Siebert and district administrators Lamboley and Pennington, to discuss the CPC, which ensures the Unit 5 administration is kept abreast of the work at Sugar Creek and thus better able to support that work. Within Sugar Creek Elementary, Siebert attributes the efficacy of the Sugar Creek CPC to the strong working relationship among the Head Teacher (Siebert), School-Community Resource (Kelley) and school principal, Nicole Combs. collaborative leadership team at Sugar Creek plans, reviews, and strategizes about effective CPC strategies, and they each possess a unique approach and expertise that complements the others'. Yet the CPC's influence extends beyond the school walls. Within the Unit 5 School District, other schools are looking to the Sugar Creek CPC as a model for building outstanding PreK-3rd Grade education programming and enhancing meaningful parent engagement. Two community schools in the district are attempting to replicate components of the CPC, and thus, Siebert and Kelley also collaborate across sites to provide assistance and guidance on technical aspects of the Child Parent Center Model. The Sugar Creek CPC has assisted other schools in learning how to leverage resources to replicate their program, and Kelley has had other schools' staff shadow her on home visits. The unity of the teacher, social worker, and administrators who guide the bigger picture has been central to the success and sustainability of the Sugar Creek CPC.

5. CONTINUITY AND STABILITY FROM PREK-3RD GRADE

Siebert is savvy in leveraging resources and initiatives already in place to promote the continuity and stability of educational experiences and practices from PreK-3rd Grade. Relying on the continuity of state learning standards and new assessments, as well as professional development provided to the Sugar Creek CPC through the Erikson Institute, Sugar Creek staff are maximizing these opportunities to (re)visit each other's classroom practices and expectations and develop better alignment between and among the grade levels. Siebert's hands-on style in helping teachers navigate the educational terrain with the PreK-3 classrooms and her expertise in developmentally appropriate practice ensure the children and teachers have consistent and high-quality examples to build from across the learning continuum through the integrated units of study that she is developing with the teachers who choose this support.

"Other schools are looking to the Sugar Creek CPC as a model for building outstanding PreK-3rd Grade education programming and enhancing meaningful parent engagement."

6. PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT SYSTEM

Sugar Creek Elementary utilizes Professional Learning Communities (PLCs) to enhance professional development (as well as alignment and effective learning experiences) throughout the school year. The school has 15 days set aside each year for a "late start," which gives teachers the time and opportunities before the school day begins to be actively engaged in their PLCs. Siebert requested permission from the Erikson Institute to use their professional development modules for implementation for PLCs, if teachers choose this option. Siebert plans to work collaboratively with teachers in this coming school year to identify and select aspects of the Erikson professional development content and break it into digestible components that can be done within the context of the PLCs, with amble time to reflect and review the strategies and concepts presented in subsequent PLC meetings.

THE CHILD PARENT CENTER LOCAL INNOVATION AND EFFICACY AT SUGAR CREEK

LOCAL INNOVATION AND ADAPTATION OF CPC MODEL

A key to the continued success of the Sugar Creek CPC is its innovative and adaptable style to meet the continually changing

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needs of the school and district. Now in its fourth year of implementation, the Sugar Creek CPC has developed and evolved organically into a program that is truly unique to the Sugar Creek Elementary School and Unit 5 School District. Through the implementation process, the CPC continues to be tailored in ways that meet the distinct needs of its students and their families. The program elements are mobilized to meet the program goals, with attention to the specificities in the Sugar Creek community.

EFFICACY IN MEETING PROGRAM GOALS

Through the creative and extensive work at the Sugar Creek CPC to implement the core elements, the CPC program truly is going "above and beyond" in meeting program goals. Through professional development for teachers, classroom observation, and supports that spans the grade levels, and through targeted home visiting to supplement classroom work, the CPC is increasing proficiency and excellence in early academic

achievement in the areas of language arts, math, and science, among others (CPC Goal 1). Through extensive professional development opportunities provided by Erikson Institute and Siebert's guiding hand in emphasizing developmentally appropriate practice in the PreK-3rd grade classrooms, the Sugar Creek CPC is promoting best instructional practices that develop greater levels of social-emotional learning, school commitment, and self-control (CPC Goal 2, 3). Sugar Creek CPC is strategic in providing support across the PreK-3 continuum by using state- and district- level policies and initiatives to promote alignment of instructional practices, curricula, and communication (CPC Goal 4A). With ongoing and targeted leadership from Combs, Siebert, and Kelley, as well as collaborative engagement of the PLCs, the Sugar Creek CPC is guided by deeply committed and knowledgeable individuals (CPC Goal 4B). The innovative and individualized parent engagement strategies that have been implemented at Sugar Creek through workshops, events, home visits, and one-on-one consultations have not simply increased parental involvement, but actually transformed and empowered parents in their relationship with the school and their child(ren) (CPC Goal 5). As a result of that engagement, parents are supported in a variety of ways, including (1) connections to educational resources, like the STAR Literacy program; (2) information about career opportunities and skill building made available through newsletters and parent workshops; and (3) contributions to their personal development and confidence (CPC Goal 6). In its commitment to educating children in a holistic way that emphasizes developmentally appropriate practice, as well as academic success, and in its continual adaptation and refinement to meet the unique needs of its children and families, the Sugar Creek Child Parent Center has built a strong foundation for sustained student achievement from PreK-3rd grade to prepare them for 4th grade and beyond.

THE SUGAR CREEK CHILD PARENT CENTER SUSTAINABILITY

PLANNING AND SUSTAINABILITY FOR THE FUTURE

From its earliest stages of planning and development, the Sugar Creek CPC has emphasized engagement of community partners as key assets in the sustained success of its program. That thoughtful planning process that preceded implementation established a solid systems framework and forged meaningful community and district connections for the program. And it has paid off. Now in its fourth year, the Sugar Creek CPC has flourished and become an exemplar of outstanding PreK-3rd grade education programming throughout the district and beyond. Its reputation and buy-in at the district and community levels are important components of its long-term sustainability. By maintaining its responsiveness to the changing needs of the school and district, the CPC has become an integral part of the Unit 5 School District's early learning and outreach strategies. This is especially important in the context of changing statewide education policies and initiatives. With dynamic leaders overseeing the program, like Siebert, Kelley, and Combs, and with its deep investment in the educational wellbeing of children and families, the Sugar Creek Child Parent Center will likely be sustained for years to come.

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APPENDIX A: SUGAR CREEK STEERING COMMITTEE PLANNING

Mission Statement: The mission of the committee is to replicate a comprehensive system of education and family supports that will serve children Preschool through Grade 3. The vision of the committee was to promote school readiness, parent involvement and early school success that will lead to future success

Guiding Principles

- We believe serving the needs of children at-risk of school failure must begin as early as possible.
- We believe comprehensive and intensive multi-dimension services are necessary to address failure.
- We believe all children are capable of learning, achieving and making developmental progress.
- We understand children develop at different rates and each child is unique in his/her own development, growth and acquisition of skills.
- We believe children learn through engaged, active exploration with their environment.
- We believe children learn in the context of interactions and relationships with family members, caregivers, teachers and other children in their immediate environment and in their community.
- We believe the family is a significant contributor to children's lifelong learning and development and therefore we will build upon the strengths of the families we serve.
- We believe that accomplishments of the mission and vision can only be achieved through a shared ownership and accountability with community partners.
- We are committed to change as driven by data, research and assessment.

Long Range Goals (Principles)

- We will build district and community commitments and capacities in replicating the CPC model to ensure sustainability.
- We will implement the CPC model with staff to improve the academic life and outcomes of children.
- We will implement the CPC model with families to improve the academic and life outcomes of children.