

The Ecology of School Readiness Research Lab

News VOLUME 1

Our mission is to examine the factors that impact young children's school success and to communicate our findings to practitioners and policy makers

PROJECT UPDATES

Conversation Compass

The Conversation Compass approach is a conversation-based instructional approach designed to build teachers' planning around instructional conversations, to strengthen children's communication skills, and to foster peer-to-peer conversations in the classroom.

Sabrina Huang will be at the BU Wheelock Community Symposium presenting about Mental State Talk within the classroom before and after teachers took part in Conversation Compass workshops

ACSES

The Assessing Classroom Sociocultural Equity Scale (ACSES) is a measure designed to evaluate teacher-child interactions and assess interpersonal processes within the classroom environment.

Members of the research team for ACSES, Shana Rochester, Tonia Durden and Ana Scholnik met at BU last week for the ACSES training and worked together coding interactions for equity

Reading, Relationships & Racial Equity

The Reading, Racial Equity, & Relationships study is designed to ultimately improve children's 3rd grade reading scores, as well as help children and youth thrive throughout development.

Dr. Curenton and Shana Rochester are in Pittsburg this week finishing up focus groups with parents

Where will you see us next?

BU Wheelock Community Symposium

An Introduction to the ACSES Paper presented by Ana Scholnik
Mental State Talk Before and After Conversation Compass presented by Sabrina Huang

We are opening a new center

In partnership with Boston University and Vital Village Network and linked with the Early Childhood Institute of Boston, the Ecology of School Readiness Lab will become part of the larger center which will operate the Riser Network.

Our new center's mission: Planting seeds of racial justice and equity for children in Boston and beyond



This issue's interview:

Conversation Compass with Dr. Curenton

Published in 2016 by Dr. Stephanie Curenton, Conversation Compass is a guide for early education teachers to provide high-quality language learning for their students, allowing teachers to adapt their classrooms conversations to meet the diverse needs of all of their learners. In this issue we have the opportunity to interview Dr. Curenton about Conversation Compass.

What inspired your work towards Conversation Compass?

“The work that I was doing with my colleagues at Ohio State University and the University of Virginia inspired my work. What I was learning from working with this team is that classroom conversations were important for children’s language and early literacy skills.”

What broader goal/purpose within the system of education in our country, does Conversation Compass help address?

“It helps to address the need to build the skills, knowledge and capacity of the early childhood educator workforce. It was designed to help teachers build their skills.”

Who could benefit from reading and working with Conversation Compass?

“Teachers and program directors would benefit.”

What do you feel is the biggest barrier our system faces in educating minority students?

“The biggest barrier in K-12 I think is school segregation. Our schools are more segregated today than they were decades ago, and now they are segregated both by race and income. This segregation makes it hard for minority students to have access to high quality education. The biggest barrier to early childhood system is access and availability of programs that provide high quality services within children’s neighborhoods and that fit with the hours that parents need to work.”

Do you have mentors in the field? Who are they? What work of theirs inspires you?

“I have been fortunate to have several wonderful mentors – Melvin Wilson, Bob Pianta, Marty Zaslow. The mentor who really inspired this Conversation Compass work is Laura Justice at Ohio State University. I am also blessed to have several peer colleagues who also inspire and support me—Tonia Durden and Iheoma Iruka.”

How do you continue your curiosity/passion in the field? Where do you gain inspiration?

Do you have any suggestions for our readers?

“I gain inspiration from my own children. They are fun to be around and they provide such insight into the minds and worlds of children.”

