AIAN Education Manager Webinar Series
Putting the Child Back into Teacher-Child Interactions

Vanessa Maanao-French: Our topic today is putting the child back into teacher-child interactions, and we'll be looking at CLASS as well as part of our discussion. So it'll be about the kids but also about data. It'll be a nice balance. So by introduction, in case you haven't been on a webinar and this is your first one, if so, welcome. And I do recognize some names, so welcome back. My name is Vanessa Maanao-French. I work here in Seattle with the National Center on Quality Teaching and Learning. And it's been my privilege to work with the AIAN project here at our center and to be developing products and resources and actually working directly with some grantees in region 11. And today I am joined by Susan Stewart, and, Susan, would you like to introduce yourself?

Susan Stewart: Sure. Hello. Good to see everybody. And I'm going to be working behind the scenes. If you have any needs during the webinar, just let me know in general chat.

Vanessa: Perfect. Thanks, Susan. Dawn is typically with us, but, you know, when you're so talented as these two are, you're in high demand. So Dawn was actually double booked today and is working another webinar. So we'll miss her, but just to also give credit to her, because without both of these women, our webinars would not be nearly as successful as they are. So today this is what we plan to do. We're going to learn from one another. We'll have some times to chat and share your experiences. And that's when I think we really get some deep learning. We'll offer you some resources to support the work that you're already doing. And then, finally, throughout this webinar, we'll be reflecting on the ways that we can really support quality interactions in the classroom, because it really is about preparing children for success in school and life. So what I want to do is start with focusing on the children. And I think these kiddos are beautiful. These little ones are actually from Oneida Head Start in Wisconsin, and they are having a blast in the snow.

And I was just in South Dakota recently, and I heard it snowed on Sunday. So I know that some of you out there may still have snow, and I'm sure my friends in Alaska probably still have snow on the ground, too. But the quote itself is really what I want to focus on. And I rarely read slides, but this one is so important that I think I will. So the quote is, "Early childhood is a period of momentous significance. By the time this period is over, children will have formed conceptions of themselves as social beings, as thinkers, and as language users, and they will have reached certain important decisions about their own abilities and their own worth." And this quote to me I use often, so you may have actually seen it before in one of my webinars, but it's so powerful, especially the last line about by the time this period is over, and we're talking about the time kids are 5, 6, 7 years old, they will have decided whether or not they are learners or they're not, they can be leaders or they're not. And we're hoping that all of their thinking about themselves is strong and confident. Keep the question in mind: What do our children need to be prepared for success in school? And we'll also balance that again, like I mentioned in the beginning, with some CLASS data.

How can we use data that we have locally as well as regionally and nationally to help us think through how to be really intentional with our planning for professional development so that we do reach those outcomes for kids? It always comes full circle and back to the children. So this little image reminds me of your work. It's a lot of puzzle pieces that need to be fit together, and you all do so much and you are all so busy. But when thinking about professional development, there's supervision, thinking about— probably already thinking about pre-service for the next program year, what are those trainings and

workshops and conferences you may try to attend for yourself and for your staff. So all these pieces of the puzzle that then come together with the same goal, right? We want to support teachers to build their awareness, their knowledge and skills so that they're really effective in their practice within the classroom. And as I think about professional development, I kind of use this visual; it helps me.

So taking our puzzle pieces that we just saw, those are those professional development elements that fit together to really reinforce that effective teaching practices in the classroom which we really feel are embodied in the house framework that you see there below the blue box, that really helps us get kids learning, which then is very much related to the Head Start outcomes framework. And then at the bottom of this graphic, how we decide what that professional development should be is based on what the children need, and I'm talking at the program level as well as individual child needs to reach their goals for school readiness. Plus, what do we know teachers need to be able to provide the highest quality learning environments for kids? And then that drives their professional development. And of course staff turnover can change things. Kids are different every year, so that changes things.

So this process is very fluid, very fluid. So maybe this might be something helpful for you as you're thinking about planning over the summer. For our full-day folks, it never ends. Thinking still about pre-service and what it might look like and where the focus might be for professional development in the coming year. So a question that I have for us, and I have some data behind it, is how are our teachers doing as far as those quality skills and interactions we want to see in the classroom? And we have some data to look at, and this is CLASS data. And this is all of the Head Start programs in all 12 regions, their monitoring scores in 2013. So some of the trends that we saw were that 31% of grantees scored below 2.5 in a domain. And I'm sure it comes as no surprise to anyone out there that all of those were in instructional support. At the dimension level of CLASS, 58% scored below 2.5 in at least one dimension of instructional support.

Again, this may not be a surprise to any of us, as we're still working to build those skills in our teachers. And then, finally, instructional support scores were actually lower in 2013 than they were in 2012. Now the caveat to that, of course, is that we're talking about two very different groups of grantees that were monitored in each year. So it's not really comparison data. You can't really say that it's a trend. But it's good information to kind of keep in mind, right? It's interesting. I'd like to tease it out a little bit more, but these are some trends I wanted to share with you. So here's a question for you to consider. Do you feel like your teachers in your program are ready to benefit from targeted training in instructional support? Yes or no? And then if they're not ready, what do they need to become ready? If you have ideas about what teachers may need to become ready, please feel free to type that in our little chat box. I see that five of us have already voted about whether teachers are ready to benefit from targeted trainings, so thank you, appreciate it. Thanks, Pat.

So Pat's comment about what teachers need—oh, and Katherine, too. Thank you so much. Training, examples of what it looks like, instructional support, and then incentive. I agree. That's such a simple thing, but it really does matter a lot. With teachers having to do so much, what is their incentive to practice and try new things? And actually, sometimes when you practice, or a lot of times when I practice, there's a little bit of fail and then succeed, right? So taking the risk to fail in order to learn and to grow. So thank you for your comments. We'll go ahead and move along, because I have some more ideas for you to consider. So some more data. All of this data is also available on ECLKC, or "e-click," depending on what you call it. And I'll share with you at the end of this webinar how to access this data.

So this again is our 2013 monitoring data at the domain level. And you will see we have emotional support, classroom organization, and instructional support listed. And you can see how it kind of falls. We're actually doing pretty well as a nation. Of the 359 grantees that were observed this past year, we're really getting close to that 6, or the high score, in the first two domains. And, you know, we're just sneaking in to the middle ground of instructional support. So let's look at how those scores were distributed, because this is also interesting to look at. So by way of orienting you to the next three slides, you have the number of grantees on the left and then their emotional support score on the bottom. So the number of grantees, for example, that scored a 6 is about 45 or so. So I'll go ahead and show you that without all that mess on top of it. So this is emotional support domain scores and kind of how they were distributed. I'll give you a quick second to peek at that.

Now here's classroom organization. You'll notice a subtle shift a little bit to the right—or to the left. And then finally, instructional support. And you can see definitely there was a change there. So a question I have for you to chat about is what did you notice—what do you notice about these three graphs? It's a pretty broad question, so your answers are going to be right. So what do you notice in this data?

[music plays]

Thank you for taking some time to kind of look at data. Not everybody's a data geek like me. I love, love this stuff, and I appreciate the comments from both Mary and Alison. You know, Mary, this probably is pretty similar to what folks have seen in other programs, and I think—oh, yeah, Katherine's comment, too, that kind of flows nicely with the graphs as well, that we do a good job in those first two domains, right? It's that last domain we don't necessarily have all the tools for maybe yet, or our teachers come in with a different skill set and they're naturally good at the first two and we're building up our staff capacity in that last one. One other thing that stands out to me, too, before I move on to our next slides is that the distribution of scores, especially in instructional support, is striking to me, that we have a couple of grantees that scored below a 1.5 in instructional support at the domain level, but we had maybe one, maybe two—it's hard to tell, because this graph is, you know, so small, you can't tell how many grantees that little blip is. But we did have a grantee that scored over a 4.5 at the domain level for instructional support. So the spread is really interesting to me as well.

But your comments are really strong about, you know, we're good at those first two. So we've got a foundation there to build from. But what I'd like to do is kind of go in there a little bit deeper and look at those first two domains especially and their relationship to instructional support. So what I'd like to do, like I said, is get a little bit deeper. And we see these are just the CLASS dimensions, the 10 across. And it's very easy to go straight to the instructional support scores, because they really stand out because they're so much lower than the other two. But I think it's worth our time to spend some time really unpacking these first two domains to see if there's some clues about how we can better support this side with this side. So bear with me; it'll make sense. So we'll look at the dimension level scores again, but just one domain at a time. So here is just emotional support and the dimensions within, which I know you're all familiar with. So positive climate, negative climate, teacher sensitivity, and regard for student perspectives.

And what we've seen in the data, regardless of whether we're looking nationwide or region by region, and sometimes, and most often, grantee by grantee, regard for student perspectives is the lowest score of these four dimensions. Now, we all know, of course, that negative climate we want to be low, but the others that are scored in positive ways, regard for student perspectives is the lowest. So that got me thinking about some things. And so now let's move to classroom organization. And we saw a similar

trend. At the national, regional, or grantee level, the trend is that instructional learning formats is the lowest score within these three dimensions. So, thinking about that, we have these next three graphs to kind of think through again and to look more critically at what those scores mean.

So looking at the scores from 2013 again, and where you see those little circles is where regard for student perspectives from emotional support and instructional learning formats and classroom organization sit along all of these dimensions—these are all 10 dimensions again. So this first view is looking at those grantees that actually scored above a 3 in instructional support. So you can see where their scores all lie, and they're pretty much high overall, right? So now I'll add. The red line now are those grantees that scored between a 2.5 and a 3. Now I'm reminding you again the circle is regard for student perspectives and instructional learning formats. And we're starting to see a little bit of a pattern. And I'm going to overlay one more set of grantees. Now, these are the grantees that scored below a 2.5.

Okay, I'll tell you that we've asked this question of different groups, and we get a very similar spread about "no" versus "yes". So it's not surprising that the votes kind of blended out this way. And a lot of it is just understanding what those dimensions are and to see the relationship between the two. So let's try and see if we can't unpack that by watching a quick video, and then we'll talk a little bit more about regard for student perspectives. But this is just a nice example of that first dimension we'll talk about.

Boy (counting in Tagalog until ten): One.

Teacher and children (repeating after the boy): One.

Boy: Two.

Teacher and children: Two.

Boy: Three.

Teacher and children: Three.

Boy: Four.

Teacher and children: Four.

Boy: Five.

Teacher and children: Five.

Boy: Six.

Teacher and children: Six.

Boy: Seven.

Teacher and children: Seven.

Boy: Eight.

Teacher and children: Eight.

Boy: Nine.

Teacher and children: Nine.

Boy: Ten.

Teacher and children: Ten.

Boy: Ten!

[applause]

Girl (in English): Again! Again! Again!

Vanessa: I love that video. My favorite part is the little girl at the end saying, "Again! Again!" So the reason why I chose this video as an example for regard for student perspectives is that it really does a nice job of showcasing a teacher allowing a child to, one, take a role, have a leadership role, to lead lessons, and to demonstrate their own skills and strengths and abilities, which is all encompassed within regard for student perspectives. So what I'd like to do now is actually—since I know you guys are familiar with this, I'm not going to read slides to you, but I wanted to kind of walk through the dimension of regard for student perspectives, the indicators and the behavioral markers, and we'll do that to music. So you have a chance to kind of just quickly review what this is all about.

 [music plays]

That was a quick review of regard for student perspectives, probably the quickest CLASS dimension training you've ever had. So let's move on and we'll go to the next one, because, again, this is a review for those, because I know you know quite a bit about this tool. But here's another video that kind of previews and is a nice example of instructional learning formats as this teacher prepares the children to learn about science.

Children: Science!

Teacher: Science. You ready?

All: Look... listen... touch. Ask questions... use tools and such. Be ready...

Children: To think and discover. I'm a real science lover.

Teacher: Good!

Vanessa: Again, a really quick video, but this is about setting the stage for learning, getting children engaged and excited about the activity that's going to happen, have engaging materials, and utilize a variety of modalities of learning. And so you can kind of see that teacher's set up and ready for a science experiment with the children, and the children are prepared and ready to go with her. So, again to music, we'll review the dimension of instructional learning formats.

[music plays]

One more video that kind of ties it all together and shows a nice example of both regard for student perspectives and instructional learning formats.

Child: It's a roly-poly.

Teacher: Uh-huh. Because when you touch it, what does it do?

Girl: Rolls up into a ball.

Teacher: I know! Should we try it? Can I try it?

Girl: Use the tweezers.

Teacher: Yeah? Okay. Ready, Dalen?

Girl: What you found, guys?

Teacher: Kyra found a roly-poly, and I'm going to see if I can make it go into a ball. Because she said if you touch it, it goes into a ball. And that's why they're called roly-polies, because they're going to roll. He doesn't want to come out. Ooh, I got it! Okay, let's see.

Child: Roll into a ball.

Girl: Put it back in there.

Teacher: I will. Hold on. We'll look and see if he turns into a ball. Come on. Ball, please! Maybe he'll listen to you.

Child: I see some—

Teacher: He tickles! His little legs are really soft. He tickles my hand. He even makes me jump.

Girl: Maybe he will climb—oh, no, don't fall off!

Teacher: It's going into a ball! Hold on. Look at his legs.

Girl: Like he's saying, "Hey, let me out!"

Child: He's rolled into a ball!

Teacher: Yeah, he is. That's why Kyra told me they're rolls. Like, what's the liquid stuff? What is the liquid?

Child: I found a spider.

Vanessa: Isn't that a great video? I really just so appreciate how well the teacher is able to not only be outdoors and engage the children directly with nature, but she's just so much a co-participant in the learning and she's taking cues from the children. They're offering their ideas, and she's repeating them and extending them. They have really interesting materials to work with along with the roly-polies. And she did ask one question at the end that I'm always like, "Oh, I don't know if I want to know the answer."

Isn't there something about some liquid that just came out of the bug? I don't think I want to know what that was. But anyway, it's a nice way to think about bringing those two together, those dimensions together.

And when you see this, you can see how it can be a really great springboard for having some really strong instructional support interactions with the children. So what I'd like to do is kind of end us with an activity. And what we're going to do is look at the data from two classrooms, and these are just, you know, some sample data, so not anybody's real data, and then talk about the possible training and support that you might do for the teachers within those classrooms. So here is classroom A's data. And in the orange box you see the emotional support score, and then of course along that you have the dimension scores for emotional support. The blue bar will be your classroom organization domain score and dimension scores, and finally, the green bar is instructional support. So I'm going to add this second classroom to that. And so now you can see similar data for the program, for both classrooms, excuse me. So what I want to kind of have us do next is thinking about that data—I'll put it back up in just a second.

I want you to consider this, that these two classrooms have very similar instructional support scores at the domain and dimension level. But would you train or support these teachers differently? And if your approach would be different, share how and why. And part of what we're talking about today is the differences in scores for regard for student perspectives and instructional learning formats. And you'll notice that in each classroom, despite their instructional supports being similar, the scores in those particular dimensions are very different. So I'll give you a little bit of time to think about what might you do differently for each of these classroom teams.

[music plays]

Well, thank you all for taking some time to peek at this data. It's kind of—again, it's a lot of data to take in at one time during a webinar, but maybe this will give you some ideas about how to look really closely at your own data that you have at the local level. I appreciate your response, Alison, and, hi, nice to see your name. It is about taking different approaches and kind of being repetitive about it so that teachers sometimes need to hear it several different times in several different ways and to practice it several different times in several different ways before it becomes integrated into practice. And because those two dimension scores are so different, regard for student perspectives and instructional learning formats, it may be a strategy to really focus on those two dimensions for classroom B. And maybe classroom A, because they're strong really across the board in all of the dimensions up to instructional support, this classroom team really could be ready for that targeted instructional support training.

So maybe they get a little stronger dose of it or you have them go to the NCQTL web page and look at those 15-minute in-service suites on instructional support. Whereas for classroom B, maybe we take a step backwards—not really backwards, step sideways—to think about, do we need to boost their skills and knowledge in the area of regard for student perspectives and instructional learning formats as a foundation for them to be ready to really benefit from stronger training in instructional support? So just something to consider and maybe a new way to look at your own local data.

So as we leave and wrap up today, I wanted to be sure that you have resources at your fingertips that will help you continue this internal dialogue around how do we support kids to do their best along with teachers to do their best? So I did tell you at the very beginning when I introduced the CLASS data that it is available for you online on ECLKC. And we'll put those links for you in the general chat area. The first is

the actual data that I used today, so those CLASS scores from 2013. The other thing that OHS has done is—I'm sure you probably have seen this, too—is how to use CLASS in Head Start. So it's a document that kind of walks through why Head Start uses CLASS and ways that you can use it to inform your professional development. So those two links are there for you if you want a quick way to download it.

The other thing I wanted to be sure to review with you is how to find some of those in-service suites online. You may have them in those big binders that your ECE's brought out to you as well, but if you have staff working at remote sites from you who don't have ready access to that big binder, it's always nice to refer them to the website so that they can do those quick 15-minute in-service suites, watch those highlight videos, and get more ideas about how to incorporate these instructional learning skills into the classroom. So again on our website, look for engaging interactions and environments, the foundation of the house on our website, and then you'll find the in-service suites. And they're put into different buckets, just the same way CLASS is organized: emotional support, well organized classrooms, and instructional interactions. And for you as well there are some decision-making tools, or I think tools for supervisors, included on that same page.

And so I'll walk through a little bit of what these specific tools. If you don't already have it, or if you lost your copy, you can get the crosswalk of the NCQTL in-service suites with CLASS. So that's a quick download for you, too, and we'll put that little link up for you. And just because you've been talking about these two dimensions today, these are the suites that you'll find on that crosswalk that align with regard for student perspectives and instructional learning formats. And as you can see, there are six here for you to choose from should this be an area you'd like to focus on in the future with your staff. In addition, we have Improving Teacher-Child Interactions: Using CLASS in Head Start Preschool Programs. It's a really long title, but it's full of great information about how to use your CLASS scores that you've collected at the local level to design professional development for your program. So this is a worthwhile document to look into. It's available online for you as well. And you may have received a copy of it from your ECE specialist, but it's always here for you here.

And then finally, as we wrap up our time together, I wanted to bring us back to the quote that we started with. And this time I'll let you pause and read it for yourself and look at this beautiful little girl. And she's actually a little girl—I think she's also from Oneida Head Start. This beautiful face. Because it does take us back to why we do what we do every day, even on the busiest days of our year, that it all comes down to this little face and the thousands of others that we serve in region 11, to make sure that they are ready for school, but also, maybe even more importantly, that they believe in themselves and they're confident learners. So it matters because she matters. So, again, thank you so much for joining me. I know how busy your schedules are every single day, and the fact that you carved out this hour for us means so much. Enjoy your day. Thanks again.