

# LEADING THE WAY: P-3 EDUCATION IN COLORADO

## WHO:

LAMB CARO, *Early Childhood Administrator*

## WHERE: Thompson School District.

This is the 17th largest school district in Colorado, encompassing 362 square miles, and is the largest employer in Loveland and Berthoud. It is a pre-K through 12th grade district with 13 early childhood centers, one K-8 school, 20 elementary schools, five middle schools, five high schools and two charter schools.



## GOALS:

### *Implement Developmentally Appropriate Practices Across Grade Levels*

Lamb and his team started with a pilot at Lincoln Elementary School that focused on what developmentally appropriate practices look like in the early years, particularly in kindergarten, and how these practices connect from grade to grade. Utilizing the expertise of a consultant on DAP in Kindergarten has built upon the benefits of implementing Teaching Strategies™ Gold.

Lamb worked with Michelle Malvey, the principal at Lincoln Elementary, to align the early childhood program with the rest of the elementary school. Michelle provides additional supports to the early childhood program, building capacity within the team.

### *Strengthen Family Engagement*

Closely connected to the implementation of developmentally appropriate practices is the importance of family engagement. Efforts are being made to more thoughtfully include families in events and engage them in planning opportunities when possible.

## LESSONS LEARNED:

Participation in the P-3 Leadership Cadre encourages thinking and planning with a systems approach. As a former principal, Lamb Caro brings a perspective from the ground to inform systems planning and changes. It is important to dedicate time to the P-3 work at level meetings and leadership meetings. This will build capacity all the way to the 3rd grade.

“A lot more vertical articulation with our Pre-K and Kindergarten teachers is happening... Lots of critical thinking. This kind of work has me pretty pumped.”

“Play is purposeful and intentional. There is a plan, and it all ties in to our early learning outcomes.”

## NEXT STEPS:

To guide this work, we will use a clear plan to expand this work to other schools in the district and include community partners in this work. We will use data to track progress and identify what works when P-3 work is implemented with intention.

