A close-up, slightly blurred photograph of a young child with dark hair, wearing a white shirt, looking down intently at a book or paper held in their hands. The background is out of focus, showing a desk with various items like a pink object and some papers.

**Best Practices in ECE:
Prekindergarten Guide
Learning Environments
Webinar 2 of 2
9/23**

Best Practices Guide Team

EC Programs



Lauren Gomez
Curriculum &
Instruction



Sylina Valdez
EC Programs
Director

- **Supports and timelines**
- **Background Information**
- **Connections to the PK Guidelines and the Best Practices Guides-Learning Environments**
- **Next Steps**
- **Questions, Survey and Certificates**

Prekindergarten Best Practices



Introduction

At TEA, our vision is to prepare every child in Texas for success in college, career, or the military. This vision is set forth by building a foundation for knowledge and skills in reading, math and other developmentally appropriate subjects that serve the needs of the whole child in early childhood education. In partnership with families, schools, and communities, the Early Childhood Education Division at TEA provides support, resources, and guidance that are aligned to effective early learning practices and support the foundational framework for creating a high-quality early childhood educational program.

Learning Objectives

- **Review current supports and timelines that align to implementation of the 2022 Texas Prekindergarten Guidelines in the 2023-24 school year.**
- **Review key content in Best Practices in ECE: PK Guides specific to learning environments.**
- **Explore next steps for technical support with the Prekindergarten Guidelines through the Best Practices in ECE guides with upcoming webinars and office hours.**

Supports and Timelines

PK Guideline Support Timeline

Current

- PKG documents published
- Webinar recordings and office hours scheduled monthly through 2023-24
- Birth-2nd grade Vertical Alignment Documents published

In Progress

- **“Best Practices in ECE: PK/K/Admin” webpages to support instruction in EC programs**
- **Webinars- Sept/Oct. 2023**

**Today's
focus**

Future

- PK Outcome Guide on the TX Gateway platform 2023-24
- Office Hours will be combined to support PKGs and Best Practices Guides beginning September 2023

Best Practices in ECE Guide-Training Rollout

Webinar 1: Foundations

- DEVELOPMENTALLY APPROPRIATE PRACTICES
- RESEARCH BASED BEST PRACTICES
- SUPPORTING CHILDREN WITH DISABILITIES
- SUPPORTING EMERGENT BILINGUAL CHILDREN

Webinar 2: Learning Environments

- CLASSROOM ORGANIZATION AND ROUTINES
- PHYSICAL ARRANGEMENT
- LEARNING CENTERS
- OUTDOOR LEARNING ENVIRONMENTS
- ACTIVITY/LESSON PLANNING AND CURRICULUM
- DAILY SCHEDULE

*Recorded webinars are available on our Texas Prekindergarten Guideline webpage

Background Information



“Best Practices in ECE: Guide” Background Information

- 1. Parts of the introduction section of the 2015 TXPKG were taken out to provide a condensed version of the 2022 TXPKGs, with a focus on skills and outcomes. The decision was made to compile that content as a separate resource.**
- 2. PKG focus groups determined the need for more support with best practices in Kindergarten and guidance for ECE Administrators.**
- 3. The content in these guides required:**
 - **A review of current research in the ECE field**
 - **A condensed and easily accessible format (webpages)**
 - **Exemplars**

Prekindergarten Guide

- **Purpose:**
 - Support **educators** in providing effective, high-quality instructional practices in early childhood classrooms
- **Audience:**
 - Teachers/Teacher Assistants
 - District/Site Coaches/Instructional staff that support Prekindergarten classrooms

Learning Environments

Prekindergarten Guide-Physical Arrangement

Promote Language and Literacy

Materials

Storage

Display

Traffic Patterns

Furniture

Safety

Prekindergarten Guide-Physical Arrangement

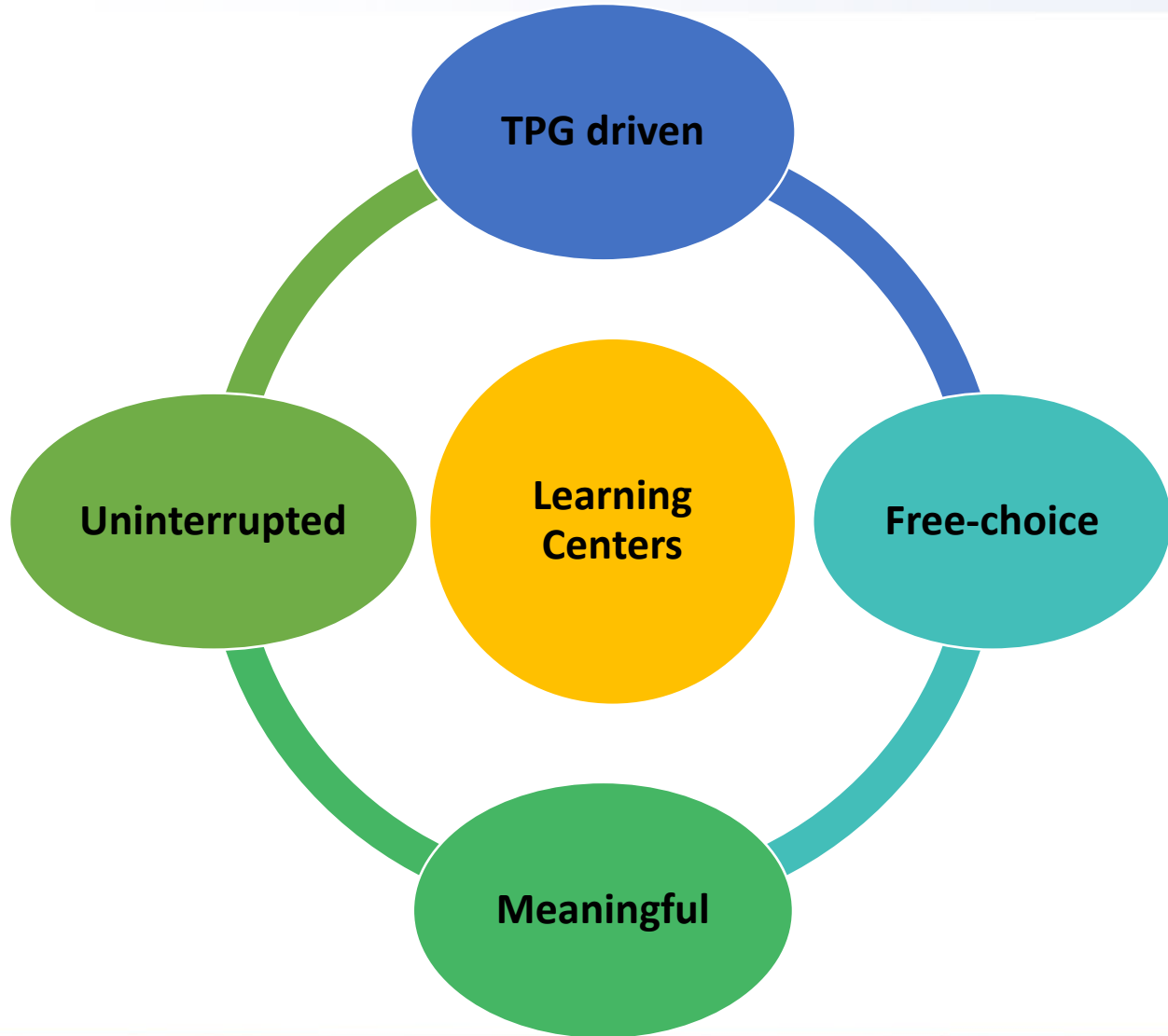


Classroom organization that supports routines


- norms (e.g., looking eyes, listening ears)
- procedures (e.g., fire drill, arrival/dismissal)
- Labeled objects with print/picture for identification (e.g., cubbies, focus wall)
- Charts or Visual scaffolds
 - Visual daily schedule
 - Attendance
 - Helper charts
 - Planning charts (e.g., learning centers)
 - Concept chart (e.g., vocabulary list)
 - Letter/word wall




Prekindergarten Guide-Learning Centers




Early Childhood Education Learning Centers




Dramatic Play Center
Children use life-like furniture and materials to learn and pretend using their own imaginative schemas.







Library/ABC Center
Children use a diverse set of reading materials, puppets, and story-telling props to build their motivation to read and write.

Construction Center
Children engage with a variety of construction materials to build structures using instructional themes and imaginative schemas.







Math Center
Children use a variety of math materials to engage in number sense, geometry, measurement, and classification activities.




Science/Discovery Center
Children use a variety of science and/or nature materials to engage in discovery and inquiry with the world around them.

Writing Center
Children use writing tools and fine-motor experiences to practice drawing and writing.





Art/Creativity Center
Children use a variety of art materials and tools to express themselves through creative, open-ended means.



Sensory Center
Children interact with tactile materials (e.g., sand, water, pasta, beans, paper, light box, etc.) to learn through sensory experiences.

Prekindergarten Guide-Learning Centers

- **Dramatic Play/Pretend and Learn**
- **Construction Center**
- **Library/Literacy/ABC Center**
- **Writing Center**
- **Art/Creativity Center**
- **Science/Discovery Center**
- **Math Center**
- **Sensory Center**

Other possible centers/stations in the ECE classroom:

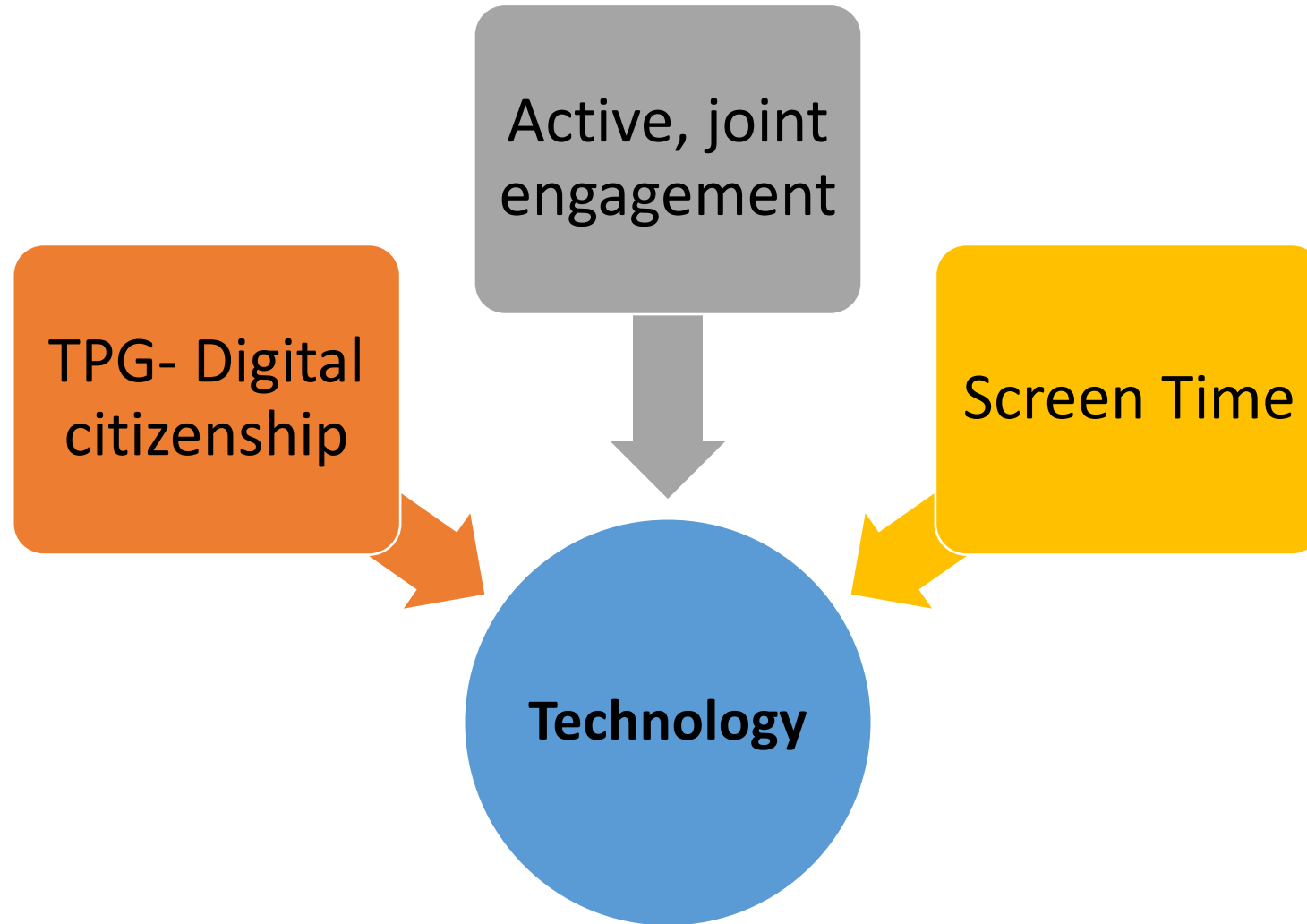
- **STEAM related center**
- **Discovery zone-** organic elements and gardening
- **Coding and robotics**
- **Engineering-**tinker table/ deconstruction area, light and sensory zone, lego wall/table
- **Creative arts** (music, dance, theater)



The role of the classroom staff during learning centers:

Communication	Safety and Supervision
<ul style="list-style-type: none">▪ Actively play with the children in centers▪ Facilitate social interactions among peers▪ Comment on child's play schema▪ Opportunities for formative assessment	<ul style="list-style-type: none">▪ be vigilant▪ anticipate children's behavior▪ be aware of problem-solving challenges that may occur between peer-to-peer interactions▪ be actively engaged with children who require additional support

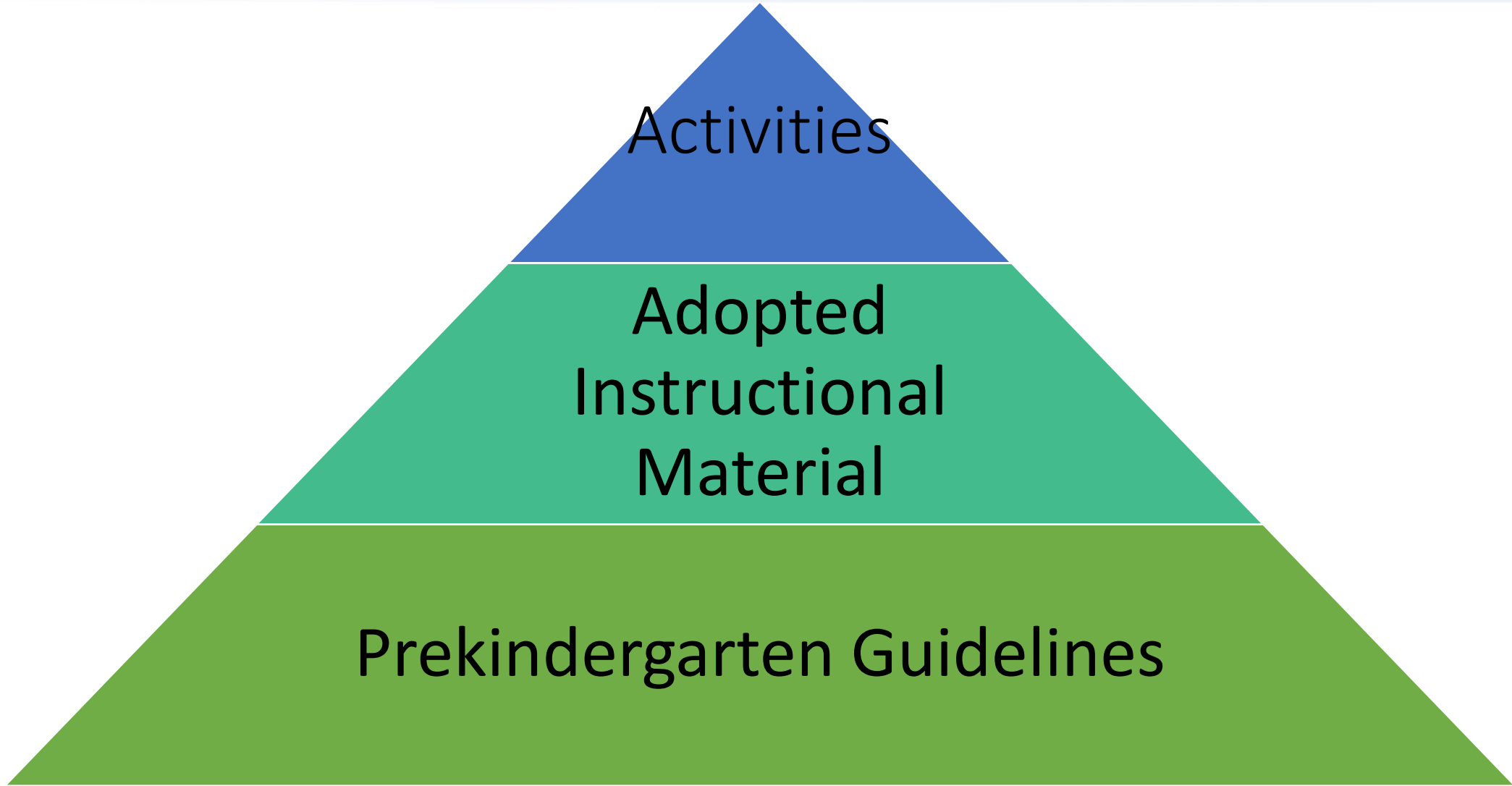
Prekindergarten Guide-Learning Centers



Prekindergarten Guide- Outdoor Learning Environments



Prekindergarten Guide-Activity/Lesson Planning



Effective
PK3 and
PK4 daily
classroom
schedules
should
include:

Integrated learning

A balance between **teacher-directed and child-driven (choice) learning experiences**

Developmentally appropriate, hands-on, play-based activities

Intentionally designed opportunities

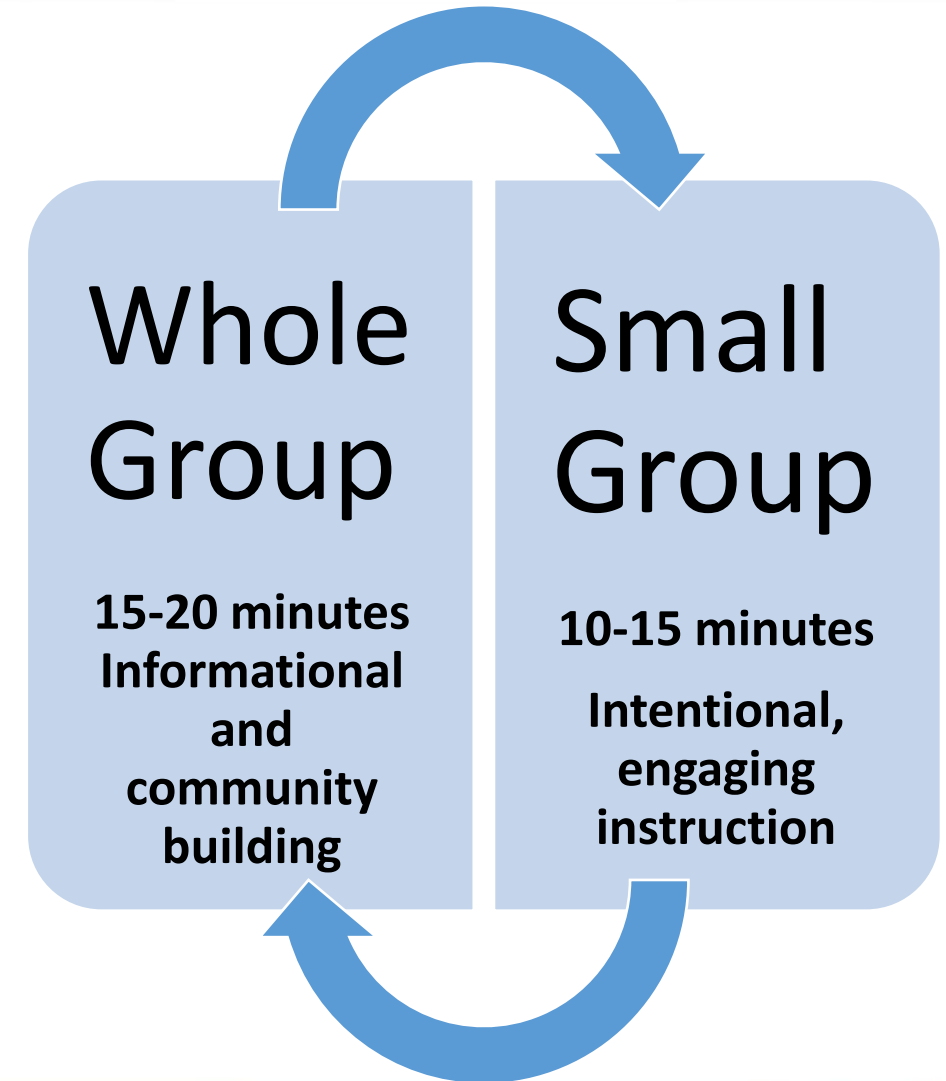
Opportunities for **relationship-building and communicative experiences with peers**

Schedule and Activity Guidance:

- Referenced throughout the school day, and consistently followed
- Time for transitions and self-help procedures
- Daily group activities should include cross-content learning experiences throughout the school day

Calendar Time:

- Activities that support child development and the concept of time
 - Time within a day (PK3/PK4.V.D.4) vs. length of time across days/weeks/months



Next Steps

*Any
Questions?*



Contact us:

**TEA - Early Childhood
Education Division**
ECE Support Portal



Prekindergarten Guide Survey



Let us know how we can support you better!

