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Experts in wondering : a study of Reggio documentation

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Experts in Wondering:
A Study of Reggio Documentation

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ABSTRACT

The focus of this independent study was to examine the role of documentation in the Reggio Emilia approach to early childhood education, and to explore benefits and challenges to the integration of Reggio documentation practices in a Reform Jewish nursery school setting. Documentation is a critical feature of the Reggio Emilia approach and is a tool for deepening children's learning, expanding teaching skills, involving families in the learning lives of children, and making learning visible to the community. To inform the research, a survey about documentation was distributed to staff members at the nursery school. A second survey was distributed at a different early childhood program at which teachers have extensive training and experience in documentation. A comparison of the two sets of survey responses reveals misconceptions, assumptions, and gaps in knowledge about documentation that contribute to difficulty implementing this approach. A workgroup comprised of the author and three nursery school teachers was convened. Over the course of six sessions, through open discussion and text analysis, the workgroup addressed questions of practice, value alignment, and obstacles to change, among other topics. Overall, this study confirmed the value of Reggio-inspired documentation to early childhood educators in a Reform Jewish setting, and developed recommendations for overcoming current obstacles to successful implementation of documentation practices.

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I. Introduction

I first became aware of the work of educators in Reggio Emilia about ten years ago, when I was working as a preschool teacher at Temple Shalom Nursery School.[1] Since that time, I have visited schools that purport to be "Reggio-inspired," heard speakers, and read books and articles, including the well-known 1991 Newsweek piece that touted Reggio schools as being the best schools in the world. Although I had many questions about the Reggio philosophy as my school began looking at ways to include its practices into its programming, it was not until I began the Early Childhood Leadership program at Bank Street that I began thinking more deeply about the larger questions of practice, collaboration, learning, community, values, leadership, and change that are inextricably intertwined in making a shift in philosophy or refining one's approach to early childhood education in an existing program.

When I considered the various elements typically associated with a Reggio program, the piece that seemed most challenging and, perhaps unsurprisingly, the most misunderstood in my own program, was the practice of documentation, or what the Project Zero research team from Harvard terms "making the learning visible." I decided to undertake an examination of the practice of documentation and its associated benefits and challenges as the subject of my Integrative Master's Project independent study, in the hope that as I deepen my own understanding, I can work collaboratively with my school and others to develop strategies for implementing reflective practices that enrich early childhood programs and enhance the learning of both children and adults.

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[1] For purposes of this Integrative Master's Project Independent Study, all names and locations have been changed.

II. Temple Shalom Nursery School

A. General Description of the Setting and its Leadership

Temple Shalom Nursery School ("Nursery School") is a licensed preschool in a metropolitan area of the United States established twenty-two years ago, and headed by its founder, Patty Gold. One hundred and twenty-five children two through five years old are enrolled in the program, and they attend school two, three, or five days each week dependent on their age. Regular school hours are from 9:10 a.m. to 12:15 p.m., with an early drop-off program beginning at 8:00 a.m. in the morning and an afterschool discovery program that runs until 2:00 p.m.

The school operates under the auspices of Temple Shalom ("Temple"), a Reform Jewish congregation with over 1100 member families. The Temple was founded in 1951 and has existed in its current location since 1957. The Temple, in addition to its ritual and community spaces, contains classroom space on two levels. For a period of time ending in 1991, the classroom spaces at the Temple were used by two early childhood programs as well as the Temple's Religious School. The early childhood programs were independent from the Temple, and although the income from this rent was a significant addition to the Temple's operating budget, it became clear to the Temple's leadership in the late 1980's that there was a growing trend nationally and among other area temples to establish their own nursery schools, which were perceived to add to the financial bottom line of the temple as well as the reputation of the temple overall. Additionally, establishing an early childhood program associated with a temple was seen as an effective tool to grow membership. A committee was formed at Temple Shalom to look

into the possibility of replacing the independent nursery school programs currently using space at the Temple with a program that would be a part of the Temple.

After engaging in fundraising activities within the Temple community to cover the initial costs of establishing the nursery school, the committee initiated a search for an early childhood professional to develop the program, and Patty Gold interviewed for the position. Patty was interested in returning to the world of early childhood education after spending several years at home with her own young children. She had a Bachelor's degree in special education, as well as a Master's in early childhood education, and before starting her own family Patty had worked with children with special needs in the local public school system and in a private school that was the first in the area to be accredited by NAEYC. After interviewing with members of the committee, as well as the then-Senior Rabbi and Executive Director of the Temple, Patty was offered the job. Her initial responsibilities were to meet the area licensing requirements for an early childhood program, hire staff, and purchase equipment for the classrooms and outdoor space. Additionally, Patty began to publicize the new Temple Shalom Nursery School program, and to meet with perspective families interested in enrolling their children in the first two classes at the school. After a year spent developing the program, Patty was hired by the Temple as the Director of Temple Shalom Nursery School.

The mission of the Nursery School, as articulated in its literature and on its website, is to provide a program maintaining the highest standards of early childhood education which nurtures the individuality of each child by encouraging freedom of expression, building strong social-emotional skills, promoting confidence through active hands-on learning, and emphasizing and fostering Jewish values of kindness (g'milut

chasadim), doing good deeds (mitzvot) and taking care of our world (tikkun olam). Also emphasized in information about the Nursery School is its sensitivity to the needs of parents of young children and the opportunity for parents to be involved in the daily life of the program and take leadership roles at the school.

The Nursery School focuses on nurturing the individuality of every child, with a philosophy based on the theories of Piaget, Vygotsky, Erikson, Gardner, the Bank Street Model and constructivist education, with more recent efforts to enfold inspirations from Reggio Emilia. The school's curriculum promotes play as the primary vehicle through which learning progresses in every age group. This play occurs in ten sun-filled classrooms, investigation, music, and movement spaces, and on an extended outdoor playground. Classrooms are set up as "centers," with developmentally appropriate materials grouped in areas such as dramatic play, blocks, art, writing, science and small manipulatives, and reading. Children are encouraged to use the materials in the room as they wish during long free play periods, with concurrent ongoing investigations.

The program maintains the highest standards of early childhood education; it has achieved accreditation by the National Association for the Education of Young Children (NAEYC) four times, most recently in July 2012. This is a rigorous, voluntary process by which early childhood programs demonstrate that they meet national standards of excellence. The Nursery School has also gone through a similar accreditation process through the Partnership for Jewish Life & Learning (PJLL) called the "Community Program in Jewish Education for Early Childhood Centers," and is a Board of Jewish Education Commended School.

Although the parameters of the Nursery School's first two entering classes were

set by the committee engaged in the initial development of the program, these were the last educational decisions made independent of consultation with the Nursery School's Director. To date, all policy decisions involving the Nursery School are made by the Nursery School Committee in consultation with Patty, the Director of the school, but this Committee defers to Patty on all issues having to do with the education of the children in the program, including but not limited to the hiring of teachers and consultants, class groupings, teacher pairings, teaching philosophy, classroom materials, educational programming and curriculum development. Over the years, Patty has had the freedom to explore and integrate emerging trends in early childhood educational philosophy into the Nursery School, including research into brain development, Creative Curriculum, and inspirations from Reggio Emilia.

The Nursery School has been phenomenally successful; it has grown to over one hundred and twenty students (and in some years enrolled close to one hundred and sixty children), and is highly regarded on both the local and national level. It engenders an enormous amount of loyalty among the families whose children have participated in the program, and many parents have become members of the Nursery School Committee or leaders in other aspects of the Temple. The overwhelmingly positive response to the Nursery School has been specifically referenced in such important Temple documents as its Long Range Plan and Report, where it was noted that almost 97% of its respondents rated the school as excellent and had "sung the praises of the school, its director, and its teachers" (Temple Shalom, 2009, p. 23).

Teaching is done in teams; some of the teaching teams have worked together for years, while other teams are new due to changes in assignments or recent staff hires.

There are currently twenty-two teachers, all of whom have attained at least a Child Development Associate certification, though many have either Bachelor's or Master's degrees in early childhood education or a related field. Ratios of teachers to children exceed or are in accordance with licensing and NAEYC requirements. In addition to regular teachers, there are a number of teaching aides and "floaters" who are available for extra coverage in classrooms as needed.

The Nursery School community exists largely without titles; there are no explicit distinctions between lead and assistant teachers. Teachers convene regularly for staff meetings, training, and professional development opportunities. Patty has also strived to set up less formal processes by which teachers for each age group or across age groups have the opportunity to meet with one another to share ideas and materials, and to support one another throughout the school year. Despite attempts to set up times for these teachers to meet, Patty's efforts have often been derailed by other scheduling demands, including communications by the teachers themselves that they would rather use the time for planning within their own teaching team. When groups of teaching teams have met together, they have exchanged sensory table and other classroom supplies and ideas for field trips, long-term investigations, and holiday celebrations. Unfortunately, there is no system in place for these helpful communications among teaching teams to happen with the regularity that Patty was seeking, and the benefits are therefore lacking in the hoped-for long-term impact. Yet generally it appears that all of the teachers on staff at the Nursery School recognize the importance of their work with young children and their families, and understand that they must support one another in the realization of the educational goals of the program.

Patty's persona exudes warmth, which she extends equally to Temple members, parents, and children. She shows enormous respect for both children and staff members, letting them find their strengths, supporting them where needed, and dealing with each as an individual. Patty actively identifies ways in which staff members can be most successful and then makes it possible to follow that path within the Nursery School, and is consistently enthusiastic about teachers taking advantage of outside opportunities to grow professionally. For example, when Patty began to explore ways in which to integrate the Reggio philosophy into the Nursery School program, she found that many teachers had questions about what this might look like in practice. She quickly created a link between the Nursery School and a school in Boulder, Colorado that had incorporated Reggio-inspired elements throughout its program, and sent a group of ten teachers to Colorado to meet with the staff and tour the school. Patty has supported her staff in taking advantage of other outside opportunities for learning and professional growth, as well, including attending and presenting at NAEYC and other conferences, providing information and encouragement for enrollment in college and graduate courses, and scheduling visits to other programs in the immediate area and beyond.

Patty also strives for ongoing professional growth for herself, thereby modeling for her staff what she has made clear is a priority. Three years ago she traveled to Italy to meet with early childhood experts from Reggio Emilia in order to extend her own ability to communicate with staff and families about the aspects of the philosophy she wished to incorporate into the work of Temple Shalom Nursery School. She is an active member of several early childhood directors' associations, and she also worked with a professional coach to assist her in developing a plan for clinical supervision at the Nursery School.

Not only does Patty seek to continue her professional growth as an individual, but despite her considerable expertise in early childhood development and special needs, she also recognizes where additional resources are required for the school community, and has made certain that these resources are available. She encourages Nursery School staff and families to seek in-house expert advice from the other members of the Temple's Senior Staff: the Executive Director is able to address financial and human resources concerns, and the rabbis, cantor, and Director of Congregational Learning are excellent resources for questions involving Jewish ritual and education as well as other matters involving children and their families. Patty also uses the Senior Staff as resources for her own questions and concerns.

Additionally, Patty has arranged for annual consulting contracts with several experts who regularly come to the Nursery School. A speech and language pathologist and an occupational therapist visit the school bi-weekly, and are able to conduct observations of groups and individual children, consult with teachers, and meet with parents. A behavioral therapist is also available to discuss issues involving an individual child or a dynamic within the group. A social worker holds open hours at the school bi-weekly so that parents can meet with her as needed; she also checks in with teachers and with Patty to provide guidance where required. Where these experts and staff members agree that it is appropriate, Patty has also worked with families to secure facilitators to support individual children in the classroom – this is yet another way in which Patty simultaneously advocates for and meets the needs of the children, families, and teachers in the Nursery School community.

I have found Patty's leadership style to be very collaborative. She is a consensus builder who seeks to share her vision with her staff and the families of the Nursery School, rather than imposing it upon them, and her commitment to the goals of the school in the creation of this vision are unwavering. She interacts with parents, staff, caregivers, and children with enormous respect, taking the time to really listen to what they have to say and responding thoughtfully, drawing upon her wealth of knowledge in the field.

In large staff meetings and smaller gatherings of teachers, Patty makes clear that she values the opinions of her staff. She often seeks out the views of various teachers on subjects as diverse as foods to be served at a school function, the timing for curriculum night, and the formatting of the progress reports provided by teachers to the families of their students. When there is a divergence of opinion, Patty will frequently continue the discussion until the path forward becomes generally agreed upon. While this can, on occasion, lead to challenges in getting decisions made in a timely manner, the frustration sometimes felt by staff members who would like quicker reaction times is consistently outweighed by the sense that the delay has been caused by Patty's careful consideration of the best course of action. Her resistance to "pull the trigger" under pressure might lead to decisions which may not be unanimously supported, but are respected.

The ways in which Patty allows members of the community to perform leadership functions is another key element of her authority. While some leaders might feel that allowing others to take on some leadership roles might detract from their own authority, in Patty's case the inverse is true; the ways in which Patty empowers others to make meaningful contributions to the system lifts up her own leadership to an even more

effective level. Investing in the members of the community by according them trust, respect, a level of autonomy in decision-making, and opportunities for personal and professional growth is Patty's investment in the success of the system itself, and the dividends are significant in all dimensions of the Nursery School and the larger Temple organization.

I met with Patty several times during my work on this independent study, and each time I was struck by her self-awareness of her leadership skills. When we discussed the initial development of the school program, Patty made it very clear that it had been imperative from the very inception of the school that she be willing and ready to embrace the independence that accompanied the school's commitment to balance its own budget, thereby excusing it from both providing the excess to the Temple, and receiving extra funding from the Temple. Patty strongly believes that it is this fundamental aspect in the formation of the school that has allowed her to make the school the best program possible, because she can make the choices she thinks are necessary without having to answer to anyone other than the staff and families of the Nursery School. If the Temple had the ability to approve or deny spending proposals by the school, Patty stated, the school would "lose its ability to impact the program in a rich way by having someone else dictate how you can spend your money and where you can spend your money" (P. Gold, personal communication, March 1, 2013). If that was the case, she continued, "it would not be the program that it is – it couldn't be" (P. Gold, personal communication, February 13, 2013). Patty's unwavering commitment to making the Nursery School the best program possible is clearly an essential element of her leadership style.

Patty's very nature positively impacts the program: her passion for early childhood education is contagious, the breadth of her expertise is expansive, her warmth is effusive, and she has the ability to model the behaviors she wishes to encourage in staff, families, and children.   All of these characteristics augment the program immeasurably. Additionally, her trust in and respect for the talents of her staff and her support of their ongoing professional growth have allowed her to shape a program that is enhanced by the most current educational philosophies and refined through the accreditation process. Working collaboratively to bring others into her vision for the program, Patty creates a safe space for all opinions to be heard and discussed. Her willingness to engage in extensive discussion rather than making decisions in haste leads to thoughtful formation of policy and procedures. Patty's individualized, relational approach makes each staff member, parent, and child feel valued, and engenders enormous loyalty that translates into a lasting commitment to the Nursery School and advocacy for the program within the Temple leadership.

B. My Personal Experience at Temple Shalom Nursery School

Over the past fourteen years, my experiences as a Nursery School parent, staff member, and consultant have given me a unique perspective on Patty's role in the program, and on the program itself.

I first met Patty over the telephone in 1999, when I called the Nursery School office to find out about enrollment for my daughter. Patty inquired about my daughter's age, and when I responded that she was still in utero, Patty burst into warm laughter. She assured me that there was plenty of time to look into nursery school programs for my

child, but that right now I should relax and enjoy the rest of my pregnancy and the process of welcoming the baby into my family. When my daughter was a year or so old, Patty continued, I should call the Nursery School back to set up a tour. After reading many news articles about the competitive state of the nursery school admissions process in some parts of the country, I felt an enormous sense of relief after speaking with Patty, and followed her instructions to call back and set up a visit when my daughter was older. Although it was a brief conversation, my first interaction with Patty as the Director at Temple Shalom Nursery School left me feeling reassured, comforted, and better-informed than before I had spoken with her.

My next contact with Patty was at my Nursery School visit a year or so later. The tour of the school was given by a teacher who articulately communicated the goals of the school and the ways in which those goals were met through play, exploration, and gentle support for all dimensions of child development in a safe environment infused with the values of Reform Judaism. The parents on the tour then gathered in a classroom, where we soon met Patty. She whirled into the room slightly out of breath, with the colorful scarf around her neck trailing behind her and her hair clip slightly askew. Although it appeared that she had interrupted some other task to meet with us, she was able to immediately focus on thoughtfully responding to our questions, inquiring about our families and children, and sharing her extensive background in the field and her passion for early childhood education. I enrolled my daughter in the Nursery School for the following year, and my son became a student there soon after.

I quickly became involved in the school as a volunteer, and by my second year as a school parent I found myself running the annual spring auction, the most significant

school fundraiser of the year. That year, in addition to chairing the auction, I began to take a more active role in volunteering at the school during the day. I gave tours to prospective parents and, in the group meetings with Patty that followed each tour, saw again how her warmth, expertise, and enthusiasm came through in everything she said to the families on the tours. I also started to help in some classrooms, offering an extra pair of hands to the busy teachers and occasionally standing in when a teacher had a meeting or appointment outside of the classroom.

In the spring, Patty and one of the teachers with whom I had spent time in the classroom suggested that I look into taking some early childhood classes, communicating their belief that I should pursue a position in the field. Since I had been practicing law before the birth of my daughter, this was not a path I had ever considered, but Patty's strong conviction in my abilities led me to sign up for the 90-hour early childhood development class offered locally. After I completed that course, I realized that Patty had been right: I loved the field and could not wait to learn more. I enrolled in additional coursework to complete my CDA credential, and Patty invited me to begin teaching at Temple Shalom Nursery School. There is no doubt that without Patty's intervention and encouragement the seeds of my enthusiasm for early childhood education would not have germinated into my commitment to move forward as a leader in the field through my work at Bank Street and beyond.

Under Patty's leadership the Nursery School has become one of the most well-regarded early childhood programs in the metropolitan area. One of the reasons it is viewed so positively is the way in which the school continues to evolve, including more recent efforts to enfold Reggio inspirations into the program. During the time I have

been associated with the school, I have seen shifts in the classroom, hallway, and outdoor environments, increased intentionality in the selection of materials, and a more thoughtful approach to explorations with the children. Patty and the staff have worked hard to create a space for learning that embodies the Reggio philosophy, showing the utmost respect for the diverse capabilities of children, engaging in long-term investigations, and seeking to make learning visible through photographs, artwork, language samples, and teacher-written summaries posted on walls and bulletin boards. This past fall, however, the school was engaged in a flurry of activity as Patty and the staff prepared for a tour of educators from around the country, who had expressed interest in the Nursery School's Reggio-inspired curriculum. Over a period of several weeks, displays on bulletin boards were replaced or redesigned, tables were set up in the building lobby with assorted provocations that I was fairly certain had never been seen by the children, and candles were lit around the school in preparation for the visitors. As the school was, in many ways, transformed, it made me wonder: is this what we think Reggio should look like? And if so, why are we only doing this now, when we have a tour coming? Why do bulletin boards displaying the work of the children need to be replaced with displays unrelated to the work of the children in that classroom? What must these teachers think? And what does this mean about what we truly understand about being "Reggio inspired"? It was clear to me that in order to answer these questions, I would need to deepen my own understanding of the Reggio approach.

III. The Reggio Emilia Approach – A Review of the Literature

A. Introduction

In the field of early childhood education there have been numerous times at which theory and practice have undergone a paradigm shift; in the past century in particular, educational reformers and thinkers such as John Dewey, Jean Piaget, Lucy Sprague Mitchell, Erik Erikson, Lev Vygotsky, and Howard Gardner have changed the way we think about children, their development, and the ways that they learn. It could be said that another such time was in the mid-1980s, when a group of schools in Reggio Emilia, a small region of Italy, became famous for their work with young children. In 1987 the Reggio Emilia approach generated considerable attention in the United States when an exhibit from the Reggio Emilia schools entitled "The Hundred Languages of Children" came to San Francisco. This exhibit, still on tour, contains an extensive display of children's theories illustrated through photographs, words, paintings, drawings and sculptures. For many American educators, "The Hundred Languages of Children" provided one of the first opportunities to learn about the research conducted by teachers and children in Reggio Emilia, introducing them to pedagogical documentation and the ways in which it changes the nature of teaching and learning in early childhood programs.

As the work of the schools in Reggio Emilia has been studied, publicized, and lauded, educational programs from around the world have expressed interest in "doing

Reggio." While some may be interested in the approach solely from a marketing

perspective, many schools have expended considerable effort and time to learn how to

integrate Reggio elements into their own programs. Though schools may be able to

emulate the "style" of Reggio as depicted in books, photographs and videos from the

schools in Italy, carefully selecting natural classroom materials, introducing long-term

investigations, using photography to capture moments with children, and creating

beautiful displays, can schools outside of Italy make the *philosophical shift* to embrace

pedagogical documentation as the main tool for teacher inquiry, learning, and

development? What are the major obstacles to such a shift, and how can they be

overcome? The literature on the Reggio Emilia approach and the practice of

documentation provided some key insights.

B. Brief history of the Reggio Emilia approach

Although the evolution of the Reggio Emilia approach has been well-documented

in early childhood practice such that it is not necessary to provide an extensive history in

this paper, the context in which the approach developed informs its very nature, and thus

a brief summary is warranted. Loris Malaguzzi, a young teacher, came to a small village

near Reggio Emilia, Italy after the Second World War when he heard that a group of

parents wanted to build a school using money from the sale of a tank and other detritus

from the war (Edwards, Gandini & Forman, 1998). The social and political context in

which the first school was founded was one of "urgency and radical, political action"

arising out of the larger Italian cultural landscape in which a rebellious spirit had

developed in the post-Fascist atmosphere (McClure, 2008, pp. 68-69). Malaguzzi,

inspired by the vision, commitment, and passion of this activist community, joined in the

creation of the first school, which became the first public secular school for young

children in Italy (Edwards et al., 1998). More regional programs serving children ages

three months to six years old followed, all eventually coming under the administration of

the municipality of Reggio Emilia (Edwards et al., 1998).

The schools of Reggio Emilia are characterized by extensive community

participation, which promotes ongoing interaction and extensive communication among

families, teachers, and the community (Edwards et al, 1998). Malaguzzi described how

important it is that

> our living system of schooling expands toward the world of the families,
> with their right to know and to participate. And then it expands to the city,
> with its own life, its own patterns of development, its own institutions, as
> we have asked the city to adopt the children as bearers and beneficiaries of
> their own specific rights (Edwards et al., 1998, p. 63).

The reach of the Reggio Emilia approach now extends well beyond the municipality; the

Reggio Children organization, under the leadership of Carlina Rinaldi, former director of

the Reggio Emilia schools, manages cultural exchange initiatives with teachers and

researchers across the globe, including "The Hundred Languages of Children" exhibit.

"The hundred languages of children" is a phrase from a poem written by

Malaguzzi; it expresses the multidimensional ways in which children learn and express

themselves (Edwards et al., 1998, p. 3). In addition to the traveling exhibit, it is also the

title of a book developed through collaboration between American and Italian educators

(Edwards et al., 1998, p. 10). This volume, a collection of essays about the development

and implementation of the Reggio Emilia approach, has become a pivotal text in the field

of early childhood education and the germinating point for extensive writing on the topic

from authors of many nationalities. In the words of Howard Gardner (1998),

> the Reggio approach is one in which each child's intellectual, emotional,
> social, and moral potentials are carefully cultivated and guided. The
> principal educational vehicle involves youngsters in long-term engrossing
> projects, which are carried out in a beautiful, healthy, love-filled setting…
> Nowhere else in the world is there such a seamless and symbiotic
> relationship between a school's progressive philosophy and its practices
> (p. xvi).

According to Reggio educators, education requires "reciprocity, exchange, and dialogue"

(Edwards et al., 1998, p. 10). One of the methods by which these three elements are

integrated into the Reggio approach is through documentation, which serves multiple

essential functions in the learning process: it provides children with a "memory" of their

experiences to support further inquiry, it provides educators with a unique tool for

ongoing research and reflection, and it provides families and the public with visible

evidence of learning in the schools (Edwards et al., 1998). Gandini (2004) distinguishes

the Reggio approach from an educational model, instead describing it as "an educational

experience that consists of reflection, practice, and further careful reflection" (p. 15, as

cited in Moran, Desrochers, & Cavicchi, 2007, p. 82). Documentation is the key to this

reflective practice.

C. Documentation as a critical feature of the Reggio approach

Prior to the emergence of the schools of Reggio Emilia, John Dewey, Maria

Montessori, and other late nineteenth- and early twentieth-century early childhood

education thinkers saw the value of observation as a starting point on which to base their

teaching. Although modern experts in the field including Falk and Darling-Hammond

(2010) generally agree that the practice of documentation can enhance teachers' ability to scaffold learning, Gandini and Golhaber (2001) suggest that it is only through the educators of Reggio Emilia that teachers outside of Italy are beginning to understand the full potential of documentation.

Dewey, Piaget, and other proponents of the constructivist approach to learning believed that the constructing of activities, beliefs, ideas and events on prior experiences allows children to integrate new understandings in ways that are active and collaborative, and therefore more deeply memorable (Kroeger & Cardy, 2006). Dewey in particular espoused the notion that the best teachers are learners, and that they must be "diligent students of their own teaching" (Krechevsky, Rivard, & Burton, 2010, p. 66). Patricia Carini (2000) has described how, inspired by Dewey's work, her program at Vermont's Prospect School examines the school's practice through observing, recording, and describing what happened on a continuing basis, thereby "generating knowledge of children, of curriculum, of learning and teaching" (p. 9). The constructivist philosophy requires such thinking and reflecting on the part of teachers in order to create the most valuable skill and concept challenges for children (Kroeger & Cardy, 2006). In the United States, the curriculum arising out of such practices has often been described as emergent or "project-based," which is characterized by teacher planning shaped by the evaluation of work as it progresses (Katz & Chard, 1996).

The Reggio approach builds on the constructivist educational philosophy, and so has been of great interest to U.S. early childhood programs already oriented toward these pedagogical practices (Goldhaber & Smith, 1997). In essence, it is a *co-constructivist* process in which children and adults review their experiences together using various

forms of representation including written notes, charts, and other narrative forms, in addition to audio and video recordings, photographs, slides, and children's drawings (Fraser & Gestwicki, 2002; Rinaldi, 1998; Dahlberg, Moss, & Pence, 2013). In Reggio, the word *progettazione* is used to describe the complex process of weaving together hypotheses, predictions, interpretations, planning and exploration, with teachers' study of their own practice at the forefront (Fraser & Gestwicki, 2002). Documentation is vital to *progettazione*; it is the marriage of theory and practice, and "an integral part of the procedures aimed at fostering learning" (Rinaldi, 2001; Goldhaber & Smith, 1997).

Documentation by Reggio educators is seen as "an active verb, rather than an inert noun" – a vibrant practice of deep engagement by adults in children's lives (Pelo, 2006, p. 179). Gianni Rodari (1996) observed, "everyday things hide secrets for those who know how to see and hear them;" the process of documentation is the pedagogical underpinning for this practice of seeing and hearing (as cited in Turner & Wilson, 2010, p. 6). Documentation is a deliberate choice to record what is happening within the natural flow of the school day in order to "reflect and communicate the surprising discoveries in children's everyday lives and the extraordinary events and happenings in places where children are cared for" (Goldhaber & Smith, 1997, p. 125). It is a close, keen study of children's beliefs about the topics to be investigated, the reasons behind their interests, and the sources of their current knowledge, gathered using a variety of tools (Gandini & Goldhaber, 2001). It is also a process of engaging children in reflecting on their own learning, helping them to develop theories that give meaning to events and objects in their world, and helping them frame questions to explore further. Instead of a strategy "to teach better what we as teachers already know… documentation needs to be

a way to get to know better what the children, in their own way, already know" (Turner & Wilson, 2010, p. 8).

Reggio documentation must be more than a technique; rather, it is "listening made visible," an attitude of "participant-observation" in teaching and learning that requires consistent and ongoing reflection upon the traces of paths of learning and thought processes captured through notes, photographs, videos, artwork, and other artifacts (Rinaldi, 2001, 2003; Gandini & Goldhaber, 2001, p. 125). Documentation is a "living record of the pedagogical practice" which can be returned to; it offers teachers and children the opportunity to listen and see the events captured in the documentation again, thereby revisiting the experience (Dahlberg et al., 2013, p. 162; Rinaldi, 1998). The social and analytical processes of children are also captured through documentation so that they can be reviewed, debriefed, and reinterpreted (Suarez, 2010; Katz & Chard, 1996). Through the use of documentation, teachers can capture the many ways in which children ask questions (in a hundred languages), and then reflect on the events to understand *why* they are asking these questions (Rinaldi, 2004).

As Tiziana Filippini, Coordinator of the Documentation and Research Centre of Reggio Emilia suggests, the visible traces of documentation lead to the creation of a social memory that makes experiences reknowable (Turner & Wilson, 2010, p. 10). Carlina Rinaldi, former Pedagogical Director of the Reggio Emilia Municipal Infant-Toddler Centers and Preschools and currently President of Reggio Children concurs, stating, "In representing our theories, we 're-know' or 're-cognize' them, making it possible for our images and intuitions to take shape and evolve" (2001, p. 81). This process supports both the creation of new understandings, which may then be further

clarified and deepened, and the comparison of teacher predictions about learning with the ideas that are emerging during the children's activity, enabling teachers to look for new pathways of inquiry (Katz & Chard, 1996; Gandini & Goldhaber, 2001; Turner & Wilson, 2010).

The teacher must shift from giving instruction to becoming a researcher of the learning process in their classroom (Schroeder-Yu, 2008; Falk & Darling-Hammond, 2010; Rinaldi, 2001). Although research in the classroom has historically implied a gathering of information about what is already known, the Reggio approach embraces the "normality of research" as an approach to everyday living, "a way of thinking for ourselves and thinking with others, a way of relating with others, with the world around us, and with life" (Rinaldi, 2003, p. 2). The Reggio approach requires teachers to rethink the meaning of assessment, and to "question our certainties about what is significant learning and what is not" (Gandini & Kaminsky, 2004). The process of seeking communicative clarity is only possible by acknowledging the boundaries of one's own knowledge, thereby narrating through documentation a research *process*, rather than a conclusory analysis (Rinaldi, 2003). The focus is thus shifted away from summative measures of achievement toward more formative and qualitative understandings of learning (Turner & Wilson, 2010), from a transmission model to an inquiry orientation (Krechevsky & Mardell, 2001).

This inquiry goes beyond children's knowing as an absolute into a more temporary state of mind and feeling (Wien, Guyevsky, & Berdoussis, 2011). It allows teachers to avoid placing children and what they say or do within already defined categories (Dahlberg et al., 2013). As Rinaldi (as cited in Turner & Wilson, 2010) has

observed, "children have many ways of acting in the world and… teachers can listen to these many languages and help make visible the ways in which children narrate these realities," thereby nurturing plurality and individuality (p. 9).

Documentation requires teachers to "observe with purpose" (Goldhaber & Smith, 1997, p. 8), but this process should not be confused with previous ideas of documenting observations of children, as Dahlberg et al. (2013) strongly caution:

> "Child observation"… is mainly about assessing whether a child is
> conforming to a set of standards. "Pedagogical documentation" by contrast
> is mainly about trying to see and understand what is going on in the
> pedagogical work and what the child is capable of without any
> predetermined framework of expectations and norms (p. 153).

Developing an "openness to meaning making" that goes beyond normalized standards or scales is a challenge to teachers who may find themselves entrenched in an environment in which instruction is goal-driven and assessment-based (Gandini & Kaminsky, 2004). It is unfortunate that in the U.S., as in many other countries, early childhood programs often use units of pre-developed curriculum, perhaps to offset inadequate teacher training and to provide standardization (Kroeger & Cardy, 2006). What is absent from such curricula is a more expansive view about learning, which allows assessment not only of what children understand, but also the process by which they come to understand (Gandini & Goldhaber, 2001).

Pedagogical documentation acknowledges the ability of children to serve as active meaning-makers of their world, rather than "consumers of predetermined knowledge" (Tarr, 2010, p. 14). When the focus is moved away from the product, it "becomes an approach of knowing, making it possible for the adult to be and know together with the child" (Turner & Wilson, 2010, p. 7). Thus the process and products of documentation

are not solely for teachers; they also give children the opportunity to reflect with their

teachers and each other on their experiences, "something that adults rarely do with

children, except when we talk to them, and too often we talk too much" (Goldhaber &

Smith, 1997, p. 8). This process of co-construction between children and teachers is key

to pedagogical documentation; it requires reciprocity, exchange of ideas, and shared

ownership in the learning experience to a degree that is unfamiliar to most educators

(Grieshaber & Hatch, 2003; Rinaldi, 1998; Dahlberg et al., 2013). Teachers learn

through the process of documentation that "observing and listening are reciprocal

experiences, because in observing how the children learn, we learn" (Gandini &

Goldhaber, 2001, p. 126). The resulting documentation "makes visible the interweaving

of adult and child thought and action" (Kroeger & Cardy, 2006, p. 391).

The modification of the learning-teaching relationship in this manner is

characterized by increased mutual regard and a sense of partnership between teachers and

children (Rinaldi, 2001; Moran, Desrochers, & Cavicchi, 2007). Documentation supports

such a dynamic, building a collective identity and shared support of learning between

students and teachers; Elmore (2003) notes, "who the learner is can shift at any moment"

(as cited in Krechevsky, Rivard, & Burton, 2010, p. 67). Thus the documentation process

is not removed from the educational relationship between teachers and students – to the

contrary, as students are invited into the learning process, documentation is situated

squarely in the middle of the transformed teacher-student dynamic (Tarr, 2010).

Goldhaber and Smith (1997) note:

> As staff reflect on the meaning of their observations, they are in fact
> building theories about children's theories. As a result, the classroom
> becomes a community of researchers, for as the children strive to make
> sense of their physical and social worlds, the teachers too are engaged in a

parallel process of inquiry. Together, teachers and children plan and participate in experiences in which everyone is both a learner and a teacher (pp. 8-9).

It is through collaborative reflection on documentation with their teachers that children may move away from "the idea that it is only the teacher who teaches" (Turner & Krechevsky, 2003, p. 43). Instead, the children and adults are equal partners in the learning and teaching process (Schroeder-Yu, 2008).

Pedagogical documentation also enhances opportunities for collaboration between children, encouraging children to value different perspectives as they negotiate the learning process. Rinaldi (2004) explains this process as follows:

> We enrich our knowledge and our subjectivity by listening to others and being open to them when we learn as a group. When children are working together, each is developing her own process by learning from the processes of the others... We are not separated by our differences but connected by our differences. It is because of my difference that I am useful to you because I offer another perspective (p. 4).

Documentation creates a context in which the uniqueness of the individual can appear, allowing teachers to support differing viewpoints as children work together and to integrate them into future planning (Turner & Wilson, 2010). As a result, group reflection on documentation can lead to discussions among children that exhibit deeper thinking, greater appreciation of the nature of learning, and increased sharing of values (Goldhaber & Smith, 1997). Sharing documentation with the learners also furthers children's appreciation of how they can learn from one another (Turner & Krechevsky, 2003).

The educator's stance in the practice of documentation must be one of curiosity and inquiry, rather than a desire to map "some universal and objective social reality"

(Kvale, 1992, as cited in Dahlberg et al., 2013, p. 153). Rinaldi (2004) suggests that teachers must consider how they can help children find the meaning in what they do, what they encounter, and what they experience. Accordingly, there are certain types of questions that Reggio educators pose as they begin the documentation and reflection process. These questions may be about what engages children the most, or what kinds of theories the children have (Dahlberg, et al., 2013). Teachers may wonder about how children are approaching a problem, what the interactions are between the children, and how they are constructing understanding between themselves (Tarr, 2010; Goldhaber & Smith, 1997). Teachers may also consider how they can challenge the children's theories, extend the work over a longer period of time, or deepen the children's learning processes (Dahlberg et al., 2013). Often, teachers in Reggio Emilia ask the children directly, "What can we do to remember what you did so that we can communicate it to others?" (Krechevsky & Burton, 2010, p. 68). In creating documentation, teachers may also consider whether the documentation reveals, without judgment, what the children were thinking, or if they can show children what they believe the children might be thinking in order to provide an opportunity for the children to alter their process (Wien et al., 2011). Tarr (2010) explains how a questioning perspective can inform documentation:

> Can the lens of curiosity help us see beneath the obvious, into the child's thinking and theory-making? Does this help us see the child in a new way? How might we offer this back to the child through a visible record of the child's experience? How might this provide a mirror to reflect what engaged us, as well as the child? Given what we have observed, do we continue to watch and reflect, or does it seem to be the time to contribute in some way to the interaction? Do we ask a question? What might we offer in terms of a new provocation such as a new material or a familiar material in a new way so as to create an opportunity for children to inquire more deeply or to see a new point of view? From the stance of curiosity

we are open to possibilities, rather than offering this question or material
as a way to bring closure (p. 12).

It is clear that what is critical is not the specific questions teachers ask, but rather the fact

that they are actually asking questions, rather than simply documenting what they think

they already know about children (Olsson, 2009, as cited in Tarr, 2010, pp. 11-12).

   Educators engaged in pedagogical documentation must also recognize that the

nature of such documentation necessarily requires that they are subjective in their

selection of events and interactions to document (Rinaldi, 1998). Documentation is made

up of recorded images, notations, and other artifacts that the documenter values as

meaningful (Turner & Wilson, 2010). Because the documenter is also a participant in the

learning, pedagogical documentation should not be collected as an external observer

outside of the activity (Shotter, 1992, as cited in Dahlberg, et al., 2013). In fact,

documentation cannot exist apart from one's own involvement in the process; what is

documented is a choice, just as what is not documented is a choice (Dalhberg et al., 2013;

Rinaldi, 2004). This is the relational nature of documentation, in which one needs to be

"aware of the lenses you are wearing and the role that your own subjectivity has had in

creating those lenses" (Tarr, 2010). Thus, Friere (1998) cautions, "Recording should not

be limited to the dutiful description of what takes place from one's own perspective. It

also implies taking the risk of making critical and evaluative observations without giving

such observation airs of certainty" (as cited in Falk & Darling-Hammond, 2010, p. 73).

Documentation is itself an interpretation, as well as lending itself to interpretation

(Rinaldi, 2001). Educators must therefore develop discernment, judgment, and decision-

making skills to best capture the learning experiences of children (Moran & Tegano, 2005).

Engaging in documentation requires teachers to slow themselves down, pay attention, and truly be in the moment with children (Gandini & Kaminsky, 2004). It is only then that learning becomes visible, and "new strands of work can emerge and be documented" in order to chart the course for ongoing exploration (Katz & Chard, 1996, n.p.; Schroeder-Yu, 2008). In this way, the fragments and artifacts collected through what is seen and heard represent both the past and the future (Rinaldi, 2001; Greenberg, 2000, as cited in Grieshaber & Hatch, 2003, p. 2). The children's voices inform planning, thereby becoming part of the educational practice.

The process of integrating what is gleaned from documentation into curriculum is not a one-way journey with a set end point, although interpreting documentation at the "end," rather than "as an integral part of the ongoing process of learning" is the traditional pattern (Gandini & Kaminsky, 2004, p. 5). In contrast, Reggio documentation is a cyclical process occurring during the course of experiences, through which "theory generates practice that, in turn, generates new theories and new perspectives on the world. The theories come from the practice, but also orient and guide it" (Rinaldi, 2003, p. 3; Falk & Darling-Hammond, 2010). Seidel (2001) captures this phenomenon beautifully:

> Documentation in the classroom takes on a particular hue. It becomes focused on the "stuff" of understanding -- ideas, theories, hypotheses, feelings, experiments, deductions, notions of cause and effect, imagination, intuitions, "performances," and the relationship of experience, skill, knowledge, and insight -- cognitive processes involved in coming to know something. Reggio's documentation is full of such stuff. In documentation, we see that recording and presenting children's actions and interactions can reveal the genesis of ideas and then, in being

shared with the group, can lead to new thoughts, questions, and
discoveries (p. 307).

While there is always an opportunity to gain insight into the thinking of children even if

documentation is reviewed only at the end of a period of time or project, the value of

using the documentation in a formative sense during the experience will have been lost

(Gandini & Kaminsky, 2004). Because children play a key role in helping to make

meaning of the documentation, waiting to reflect until the end of a unit of study due to a

mistaken focus on linearity and closure prevents the speculations, insights, questions, and

changes that deepen understanding for children and teachers from happening along the

way (Suarez, 2010, pp. 23, 28; Turner & Wilson, 2010; Schroeder-Yu, 2008). While the

"cycle of inquiry" described by Goldhaber (2001) may not be "linear or tidy," this

process is at the very core of pedagogical documentation (as cited in Tarr, 2010, p. 12).

1. What does documentation look like?

Pedagogical documentation as a practice of listening and observing has another

component – that of making the listening and observing *visible* to oneself, the children,

families, other teachers, and the larger community. Without making the artifacts of

documentation concrete in some way, the reflective nature of the process would be

greatly compromised. Accordingly, Reggio educators have developed a process by which

they create "three-dimensional writings" in the form of panels and other materials, which

serve to "leave interpretable traces" of their observations of children's meaning-making

efforts (Rinaldi, 1998, pp. 120-121; 2003, p. 87). These materials are the product of the

process of documentation, and are used to explain, not merely to display (Wurm, 2005; Forman & Fyfe, 1998).

Katz and Chard (1996) describe what may usually be found on such panels:

Documentation typically includes samples of a child's work at several different stages of completion; photographs showing work in progress; comments written by the teacher or other adults working with the children; transcriptions of children's discussions, comments, and explanations of intentions about the activity; and comments made by parents. Observations, transcriptions of tape-recordings, and photographs of children discussing their work can be included. Examples of children's work and written reflections on the processes in which the children engaged can be displayed in classrooms or hallways. The documents reveal how the children planned, carried out, and completed the displayed work (n.p.).

Project Zero, in partnership with Reggio Children, engaged in a lengthy study of Reggio documentation, and concluded that in addition to the above elements, the key features of documentation include guiding questions; multiple forms of documentation in different media; multiple perspectives drawn through collaboration; public sharing with children, parents, and community; curriculum shaping through retrospective analysis; and usage to inform "the design of future learning experiences" (Kroeger & Cardy, 2006, p. 392). Artifacts to be included in documentation should be collected during the course of the experiences with children, and not after they conclude (Rinaldi, 2004).

Although documentation is often described as a story, Filippini clarifies, "Documentation is not about the reorganization and arranging of material with the aim of assembling a descriptive linear story. Rather, documentation is a narrative pathway with arguments that seek to make sense of the events and processes" (Turner & Wilson, 2010, p. 8). Thus, if documentation were a story, perhaps it could best be described as

A story of trial, error, and triumph; an illustration of teaching techniques; an example of teacher/child collaboration; an instance of bottom-up curriculum development; a record of the growth of a teacher; a record of the growth of a child (Lewin-Benham, 2011, p. 146).

Rinaldi has also described documentation as a collection of stories that reveals "who children are, not just what they know" (Turner & Wilson, 2010, p. 7). Documentation can offer a unique form of narrative about a child, which is particularly valuable for children who may have difficulty telling their own story due to their age or social or language challenges (Suarez, 2010).

Researchers of Reggio documentation all appear to agree on one thing, however; a combination of tools should be used for observing, because "each modality leaves out something or adds something" (Gandini & Goldhaber, 2001, p. 127). The inclusion of images such as photographs, drawings, diagrams, slides, and video, in addition to written elements, heightens the impact of the documentation by showing children's relationships, problem solving, process, intent, passion, or thinking (Turner & Wilson, 2010; Moran & Tegano, 2005; Oken-Wright, 2001). Children's in-progress and finished works are valuable artifacts that can be captured by photographs, drawings, and video (Kroeger & Cardy, 2006). These images "speak," stimulating discourse, revealing new perspectives, and evoking further questioning; they move teachers to reexamine and refine their approach in their work with children (Oken-Wright, 2001; Moran & Tegano, 2005). Filippini notes that the impact of visual images in documentation is different from written elements:

Images offer powerful opportunities for multiple interpretations and discussions, even more so that written text. The use of various images makes visible the context and allows the audience to enter into that moment; it allows each of us to enter into that situation and examine our

assumptions. Images enable us to have different opinions about the situation, what it means, and what then we can know about the children in it, who the children are. We find this a very powerful way for people to focus on a topic and bring different perspectives to a conversation (Turner & Wilson, 2010, p. 7).

Pairing images with transcripts of recorded dialogue increases discourse even further, enabling teachers to "peel back the layers of an experience" to decode information and construct new understandings about children and their thinking (Wurm, 2005, p. 99; Moran & Tegano, 2005).

Documentation must contain the "presence of children," both following and shaping the process of meaning-making for children and teachers (Lewin-Benham, 2011, p. 38; Krechevsky & Mardell, 2001). Rather than using status measures to assess the development and learning of students, other aspects of the learning process are captured, such as changes in participation in different activities over time (Moran, et al., 2007). The artifacts of documentation contain "precious materials that allow a wider assessment to be made than one that simply focuses on the finished products" (Vecchi, 2001, p. 209). Thus, while documentation can be used for assessment, it is a democratic form of assessment that allows children to deepen their understanding of their own experiences as well as what their teachers "value as meaningful for their learning processes" (Rinaldi, 2004, p. 4).

Designing documentation, then, represents teacher's theories about how learning occurs and what that learning might be (Wien et al., 2011). While much has been written about the visual appeal of Reggio's documentation, documenting children's learning is not simply about creating beautiful panels or displays (Krechevsky & Mardell, 2001, p. 289). The care and attention that goes into creating documentation must be to both the

aesthetic aspects and the content of the display (Katz & Chard, 1996; Shroeder-Yu, 2008). This requires educators to develop a new language of visual literacy in order to present documentation that takes into account both "how the human eye reads images and how people interpret those images" (Wien et al., 2011).

Documentation shares the story of learning and makes experiences available for discussion, inviting children and adults to plan, revisit and interpret together (Lewin-Benham, 2011; Goldhaber & Smith, 1997; Gandini & Kaminsky, 2004). This environment of joint planning and ongoing evaluation increases openness to ideas flowing between teachers and students and leads to more interesting and satisfying work (Katz & Chard, 1996). Documentation reflects both collaborative efforts in the classroom and the shared interpretation of classroom events that enhances learning and deepens understanding for students and adults (Gandini & Goldhaber, 2001; Goldhaber & Smith, 1997). Accordingly, collaboration is fostered through both the *process* of documentation and the *products* of documentation (Schroeder-Yu, 2008).

Pedagogical documentation creates a "context of listening," in which theories are shared and varied perspectives are valued (Rinaldi, 2004, p. 4). This extends to sharing and reflection among children, among teachers, and between children and teachers (Dahlberg, et al., 2013). When children collaborate in this context, they appreciate what they can learn from each other, and "come to rely as much on their peers and themselves as on the teacher for feedback and problem solving" (Turner & Krechevsky, 2003; Krechevsky & Mardell, 2001, p. 290). They develop their own processes by learning from the processes of others, offering other perspectives and creating opportunities to see things that might otherwise have gone unnoticed (Rinaldi, 2004; Suarez, 2010). Through

group comparison and analysis of photographs, drawings, and previous conversations, children build theories on those of their peers and together determine the direction of their projects (Shroeder-Yu, 2008). Collaborative learning creates opportunities for children to "act as democratic citizens in their own classroom culture" (Turner & Wilson, 2010, p. 10).

"Going public" with documentation beyond the doors of the classroom increases teachers' accessibility to ideas, opens new possibilities, and enriches knowledge and subjectivity (Moran et al., 2007; Rinaldi, 2004; Tarr, 2010). Collective reflection by teachers on documentation maximizes its impact, as colleagues voice diverse perspectives and their interpretations of the documenter's intentions (Moran & Tegano, 2005; Dahlberg et al., 2013). Such collaboration encourages thoughtful review of what documentation reveals about children's understandings, misunderstandings, and theories, and can sharpen teachers' thinking about what they can do to expand and deepen learning (Pelo, 2006; Wien et al., 2011). In essence, working together, teachers are "building theories about children's theories" (Goldhaber & Smith, 1997, pp. 8-9).

Because teachers' own personal theories and views about childhood influences what they see and hear, comparing interpretations among colleagues is a particularly valuable exercise (Gandini & Goldhaber, 2001; Rinaldi, 1998). As teachers consider documentation with others, they frequently change their minds about what they originally saw in a photograph, returning to their classrooms with new mental lenses (Moran & Tegano, 2005). Deep consideration of one's own teaching choices, in light of others' thoughts about what they see in the documentation, therefore leads to heightened awareness in teaching, an increased ability to listen to children, and more willingness to

make changes in planning that are in tune with the children's questions, observations, and

problem-solving strategies (Rubizzi, 2001). As Fullan (2008) and Sergiovanni (2004)

have observed, this collaborative approach to reflection on students' work creates "the

kind of common meanings and values that are evident in effective schools" (as cited in

Falk & Darling-Hammond, 2010, p. 75).

2. Benefits of Documentation

a. Documentation deepens children's learning

The practice of documentation in schools has a direct impact on children's

learning. First and foremost, the creation and sharing of documentation with children

demonstrates to children that what they do has meaning and value, and that their efforts

and ideas are taken seriously (Rinaldi, 2004; Katz & Chard, 1996; Falk & Darling-

Hammond, 2010; Edwards, 1998). This encourages children to take ownership over their

experiences and their learning, and to give greater value to their own thinking (Goldhaber

& Smith, 1997; Turner & Wilson, 2010). As Katz and Chard (1996) note,

> Taking children's work seriously in this way encourages in them the
> disposition to approach their work responsibly, with energy and
> commitment, showing both delight and satisfaction in the processes and
> the results (n.p.).

In addition, children are able to contemplate the meaning of what they have learned

through the representations of their thinking and learning provided in documentation

which, according to Malaguzzi (1998), increases their curiosity, interest, and confidence

as learners (as cited in Falk & Darling-Hammond, 2010, p. 77). Thus, the layers of

activity that exist within the documentation process, including making theories explicit,

revising thinking, planning, and collaborative discussion, come together to encourage children to think deeply (Wien et al., 2011).

Documentation serves as a classroom memory; when children reflect on documentation of their ideas, thoughts, feelings, and activities, it stimulates memories of their experiences, thereby further enhancing their learning related to the topics investigated (Turner & Krechevsky, 2003; Katz & Chard, 1996). Reliving earlier moments through images and recordings can provide a critical boost to higher mental functions such as memory and focus, which reinforces and validates children (Edwards, 1998; Bodrova & Leong, 1996, as cited in Fraser & Gestwicki, 2002, p. 162). Rinaldi (2001) agrees that the images and notations contained in documentation can reinforce and enhance memory, which in turn benefits reflection, concentration, and interpretative skills (p. 84). This may make children more prepared to respond positively to future learning opportunities (Moran & Jarvis, 2001, as cited in Kroeger & Cardy, 2006, p. 391).

As children revisit their work, they become better observers and are more likely to seek clarification (Salmon, 2008). Self-observation can also aid in problem solving and collaboration:

> For example, when a child sees herself in a video clip wherein a tower that she and two others were building falls down, she has the opportunity to examine what led up to the instability of the building. If she and her friends can examine this video clip together, they can learn from each other's observations and interpretations (Gandini & Kaminsky, 2004, p. 9).

Documentation thus helps learners identify their own strengths and ideas, and serves as a basis to modify and deepen understandings individually and collaboratively that can lead to new efforts and representations (Falk & Darling-Hammond, 2010).

In accordance with Vygotskian theory (1951), documentation gives teachers opportunities to help children move from assisted to unassisted learning and achieve a higher level within the zone of proximal development (as cited in Fraser & Gestwicki, 2002, p. 162). Conceptual changes resulting from children's reflection on documentation include the diminishing of magical thinking and the sharpening of imprecise theorizing as children "gradually become mindful about how things work" (Lewin-Benham, 2011, p. 153). The resulting feelings of mastery can provide children with the initiative to engage in explorations of other topics with increased independence from teachers (Falk & Darling-Hammond, 2010).

Collaborative elements of pedagogical documentation increase opportunities for social learning as well; as it shows children how they can learn from one another, it encourages the formation of peer groupings (Kroeger & Cardy, 2006). Children who were not initially engaged in an investigation may become drawn in when they see related documentation on display, and to adopt a representational technique they might not have previously used (Oken-Wright, 2001; Katz & Chard, 1996). In this way, documentation makes children more aware of both their individual and group learning, and supports collective thinking and problem solving skills (Turner & Krechevsky, 2003; Falk & Darling-Hammond, 2010).

b. Documentation expands teaching skills

Through the practice of pedagogical documentation, teachers can realize their greatest potential (Rinaldi, 2001). Teachers who engage in documentation are researchers who study, describe, and define children's learning processes, thereby "making connections between developmental theory and real children" (Fraser & Gestwicki, 2002, p. 134; Falk & Darling-Hammond, 2010). Not only does documentation increase the knowledge of the teacher, but also new understandings of children's learning styles and behaviors result in deepening relationships with the children as individuals and as a group (Turner & Wilson, 2010; Krechevsky et al., 2010).

Teaching and learning are enhanced by the slowing-down required by documentation (Krechevsky et al., 2010). As noted by Dahlberg et al. (2013):

> If it is used as a tool for reflection, documentation often leads to thematic work taking longer, rather than the pedagogue rushing to the end and jumping into new ideas and content because she has planned in advance what should happen – when in fact the children could continue working far longer on a particular thematic project, deepening their learning processes (p. 157).

Through documentation, teachers become more aware of the potential that individual moments in the classroom may have for yielding something meaningful (Wien et al., 2011). As teachers perceive more opportunities for learning, "they become more willing to trust the co-constructed, investigative, and evolving moments as starting, middle, and ending places for understanding the children they teach and with whom they learn" (Kroeger & Cardy, 2006, p. 397).

The process of documentation and the focused attention it requires may also interrupt old teaching patterns, break habits, open new possibilities, allow teachers to see

children and their learning needs in new ways, and inspire teachers who may have become entrenched in routine (Pelo, 2006; Suarez, 2010). Additionally, documentation supports teachers' accountability to themselves, each other, and the community; it provides a new lens through which they may consider how their classroom practice is consistent with their own and their school's pedagogical values, and it presents to the community evidence of learning that may not be assessed through standardized testing or other methods of assessment (Krechevsky et al., 2010, p. 65).

c. Documentation involves families in the learning lives of children

Although in most cases families are eager to know about their children's experiences at school, often in typical early childhood education programs varied barriers to communication exist that make sharing the complexity of children's lives at school challenging. Distances between parents and teachers and parents and children can be exacerbated by work, time constraints, and soci-economic, linguistic, and cultural barriers (Kroeger & Cardy, 2006). These obstacles can make it difficult for families to be fully involved in the learning lives of their children, and as a result, the life of the child in school and the life of the child at home "run a parallel, silent course" (Gandini & Goldhaber, 2001, p. 131; Lewin-Benham, 2011). Documentation can overcome many such barriers, becoming a tool for communication that is fundamental to families' engagement in investigations, explorations, and projects at a deeper level than doorway chitchat and brief exchanges of anecdotes with teachers (Pelo, 2006; Turner & Wilson, 2010; Fraser & Gestwicki, 2002; Goldhaber & Smith, 1997).

When learning is made visible through documentation, parents can become authentically engaged in the intellectual world of their children's lives, entering into a

dialogue of the potential meaning and significance of the images and artifacts presented

(Goldhaber & Smith, 1997). As Gandini (1998) explains, documentation

> introduces parents to a quality of knowing that tangibly changes their
> expectations. They reexamine their assumptions about their parenting
> roles and their views about the experiences their children are living and
> take a new and more inquisitive approach toward the whole school
> experience (as cited in Malaguzzi, 1998, p. 70).

Documentation demonstrates both the learning and the ways that meaning-making

occurs, encouraging parents to value the process of a project rather than just the product,

and providing a basis for parent-child discussions (Schroeder-Yu, 2008; Falk & Darling-

Hammond, 2010).

Parents are moved by the ways in which documentation presents "the richness and

diversity of their children's cognitive, physical, and social experiences, and to celebrate

their often unnoticed achievements" (Goldhaber & Smith, 1997, p. 9). It is significant,

however, that documentation also

> helps parents to see and discuss their children in the context of the group,
> not in isolation or in competition with the other children. Through
> documenting, we assure that no child is invisible and all adults in the
> community of learners come to know the children well. Sharing our
> documentation establishes a relationship of reciprocity with families, and
> an atmosphere in which all adults strive to know the child and support her
> learning as a team, teachers and parents together (Oken-Wright, 2001, p.
> 6).

In this way, documentation creates a community of learners that extends beyond the

classroom, creating partnerships among all of the families and all of the children (Fraser

& Gestwicki, 2002; Oken-Wright, 2001).

d. Documentation makes children's learning visible to the community

Documentation also serves an important function beyond the teachers, children, and families. It is a tool for communication that enables the voices of children and their educational experience, which might otherwise not be revealed, to be shared with the wider community (Pelo, 2006; Falk & Darling-Hammond, 2010; Schroeder-Yu, 2008). Documentation celebrates children, presenting them as competent thinkers who are more than just cute (Turner & Wilson, 2010; Goldhaber & Smith, 1997). It provides uniquely compelling evidence of the intellectual abilities of children to the public, countering cultural trends that too often sideline children's experiences despite claiming to "leave no child behind" (Katz & Chard, 1996; Pelo, 2006).

The practice of documentation also "affirms teachers' central role in the educational enterprise," valuing them as professionals rather than "passive recipients of educational dictates" (Falk & Darling-Hammond, 2010, p. 76). Because children's learning is made explicit, teachers can effectively communicate to administrators about needed support and resources (Oken-Wright, 2001). Documentation can also be the basis for professional writing and contributions to research in early childhood education that, in turn, gives teachers a vehicle to advocate for their own profession (Schroeder-Yu, 2008).

The active exchange of ideas between schools and their surrounding communities permits schools to be seen and heard as a public and political place (Turner & Wilson, 2010). Increased visibility of the learning process through pedagogical documentation establishes the legitimacy of early childhood institutions in society (Dahlberg et al., 2013). As learning becomes visible to those outside of schools, it

> holds promise for creating a citizenry that is informed about education, that can make sound decisions about schools and schooling, and that can sustain those decisions through advocacy and political engagement (Falk & Darling-Hammond, 2010, p. 78).

Increased public understanding about what is taking place among learners creates opportunities to develop strategies for effective and necessary systemic changes in education (Schroeder-Yu, 2008). Thus, as pedagogical practice becomes a part of public discourse, the culture of childhood becomes "a participant in a true act of exchange and democracy" (Dahlberg & Asen, 1994, as cited in Dalhberg et al., 2013; Rinaldi, 1998).

3. Challenges to integrating documentation practices

If pedagogical documentation practices can yield such great returns for children, teachers, families, and communities, then why are they not implemented in every school program? According to researchers in the field, the answer to this question is complex, to say the least. One major obstacle is teachers' understanding of the nature of pedagogical documentation; schools outside of Reggio Emilia tend not to share philosophical orientations to learning and teaching, which makes adopting these practices a "hard to reach place" (Kroeger & Cardy, 2006). Documentation is a new language and literacy for most teachers in the United States, where the focus has historically been on linearity and closure (Wien et al., 2011; Turner & Wilson, 2010). Allowing children to explore their own hypotheses and theories can be especially difficult, "as we are so inscribed in a perspective that assumes the pedagogue already knows the answer" (Dahlberg et al., 2013, p. 158). Embedding documentation into the culture of a classroom may therefore be overwhelming and frustrating, even when teachers know intellectually what they want to do (Turner & Wilson, 2010; Goldhaber & Smith, 1997; Wien et al., 2011).

a. *Philosophical hurdles*

i. Moving past the assessment model of teaching and learning

In the early childhood programs of Reggio Emilia, documentation is both a

product and a process for assessment that represents in words and images the learning

process of individuals and groups; in the United States, assessment is typically an

evaluative process of judgment, in which work outcomes are measured or placed in

relation to other work (Seidel, 2001; Turner & Krechevsky, 2003). As a result,

> many U.S. educators, who collect documentation, wait to interpret and use
> it (as if it were evaluation data) to judge or describe the final learning
> outcome at the end of a series of experiences, rather than as part of the
> everyday teaching/learning process. Evaluation focuses on the summative
> rather than the formative character of assessment. Assessment, when
> viewed as evaluation, is seen as a tool for grading and comparing students,
> for rating them on a scale to determine a level of competence or
> development, for classifying them for special services, or for deciding
> whether to retain them or pass them on from one grade to the next
> (Gandini & Kaminsky, 2004, p. 5).

This approach to assessment can be seen as measuring children against a standard with a

desired endpoint, in comparison to which they are most often in a deficit position (Tarr,

2010).

Researchers in the field have voiced many concerns over the increased use of

standardized tests to measure student knowledge, believing that it is to the detriment of

more creative and content-rich learning and will have negative consequences for early

childhood education (Krechevsky et al., 2010; Grieshaber & Hatch, 2003). As educators

struggle to respond to the mandates of policymakers, the curriculum is narrowed and rote

learning is emphasized (Senge, 2000, as cited in Gandini & Kaminsky, 2004, p. 8).

Constructing curriculum using a set of externally imposed standards reduces teacher

"openness to going into uncharted territory with children," and fails to reflect the unique

ways in which children make meaning from their experiences. (Gandini & Kaminsky,

2004, p. 10).

Even when the benefits of developing curriculum based on collaborative and

ongoing reflection with children are understood, teachers feel compelled to spend time on

skills and concept mastery (Kroeger & Cardy, 2006). Pressures from parents and

administrators for reports of ways in which children measure up to a specific standard or

learning outcome redirect teacher observations away from qualitative, formative

understandings of student learning and toward summative and standardized measures of

knowledge (Tarr, 2010; Turner & Wilson, 2010; Gandini & Kaminsky, 2004). As

research increasingly establishes that the Reggio Emilia approach offers a viable

alternative to standardized assessment, it may increase in its appeal to parents and

administrators as well as to teachers, thereby overcoming some obstacles to its

implementation (Grieshaber & Hatch, 2003).

ii. Expanding the focus beyond the individual

Documentation provides information about what learners understand and can do

that is often not revealed by standardized assessment methods, "enabling the range of

their knowledge and skills, as well as their special strengths and ways of working to be

seen," and offering "understandings of how learners approach and complete complex

tasks" (Falk & Darling-Hammond, 2010, p. 78). Conventional assessment tools rarely

allow children to think and work together, focused instead on the individual child and

their ability to respond to decontextualized problems (Seidel, 2001). This established

focus on the child as an individual makes it difficult for American teachers to recognize

and represent the development of a body of knowledge in a group of children working collaboratively, even though it may be understood that together they are able to develop capabilities beyond those of any one child in the group (Seidel, 2001).

The Reggio approach is focused on *children*, rather than on a child (Forman & Fyfe, 1998). As Forman and Fyfe (1998) explain,

> Even when a child is featured in the documentation, the intent is to have the viewer treat the child as a representative child… Documentation tries to raise questions about children's thinking and teaching strategies rather than to mark the progress of all individual children (p. 246).

This view of teaching and learning is in marked contrast to the portfolio approach of assessment adopted by many American educators, in which the journey of the individual student is recorded (Seidel, 2001; Carini, 2000). In order to engage in pedagogical documentation, the lens must be shifted from the achievements of individuals to the ways in which learning happens within a group, "without losing sight of the individual" (Tarr, 2010, p. 13). All constituents of children's educational experiences must therefore subscribe to the idea that the documentation of the group's collective thinking also celebrates the diversity and richness of individual children's cognitive, social, and physical experiences (Ritchart, 2002, as cited in Salmon, 2008, p. 458; Goldhaber & Smith, 1997).

b. *Systemic obstacles – time, staffing, scheduling, and resources*

Pedagogical documentation is a practice requiring time – time with children, time in reflection, time collaborating, and time making the learning visible using panels or other formats. It is a struggle for teachers to move toward a more pedagogical way of thinking when they are working in school environments that were not originally designed

with this educational practice in mind (Kroeger & Cardy, 2006). Time originally dedicated to planning lessons may not be enough time for the deep reflection required in creating a truly responsive curriculum (Tarr, 2010). Because existing staffing patterns and daily scheduling may not be conducive to documentation, carving out the time to engage in this practice requires a high level of discipline and a commitment to the process from both teachers and administration (Kroeger & Cardy, 2006; Gandini & Goldhaber, 2001).

Teachers also find it challenging to integrate pedagogical practices because they fear that it takes time away from the children. They view documentation as an either-or dichotomy that forces them to divert attention away from interacting with children and accomplishing other teacher responsibilities (Kroeger & Cardy, 2006). Brenda Fyfe disagrees:

> We must think of this as "time for children." The time adults spend
> observing and documenting, and then interpreting and reinterpreting
> documentation will make our time with children all the more meaningful
> and responsive (Gandini & Kaminsky, 2004).

Even when teachers begin to document, the ways in which they use their time interferes with their ability to maximize their own learning, as well as that of the children. For example, teachers unfamiliar with the process of reflecting upon learning fail to take the needed time to consider documentation, instead jumping ahead too quickly to the implications for their teaching (Gandini & Kaminsky, 2004). Conversely, some teachers spend so much time struggling with the process of documenting the learning that there is too long a time lag between the activity and the completion of the documentation, thereby reducing children's interest in and enthusiasm for the displayed artifacts of their

experiences (Goldhaber & Smith, 1997). While collaborative work between teachers may help reduce the overwhelming nature of the work, time for such collaboration is often not built into programming and staffing in early childhood educational settings (Fraser & Gestwicki, 2002; Given, Kuh, LeeKeenan, Mardell, Redditt, & Twombly, 2010).

Lack of access to the resources and tools required for documentation is another challenge to the integration of documentation practices. In order for the "walls to speak and document," equipment such as cameras, tape recorders, slide projectors, typewriters, computers, printers, video cameras, and photocopiers is required (Malaguzzi, 1993, and Vecchi, 1992, as cited in Grieshaber & Hatch, 2003, p. 90). Access to these resources is only the first step; teachers must also achieve mastery in order to use them effectively (Goldhaber & Smith, 1997). Wall space for displaying documentation and meeting space for collaborative discussions among teachers, assembling documentation, and storing documentation are also required (Fraser & Gestwicki, 2002). While these are certainly challenges, Dahlberg et al. (2013) make clear their view that "this is not just a question of resources, but of prioritizing, making space for pedagogical documentation because it is understood to be of overriding importance" (p. 156).

c. Teachers' understanding of the documentation process

Perhaps more significant than the above-mentioned obstacles to the adoption of pedagogical documentation is the difficulty teachers outside of Reggio Emilia have with the underlying concepts of the practice. Teachers must shift their approach from informing to educating, observing to reflecting, and displaying to documenting (Forman & Fyfe, 1998). The distinction between display and documentation has proven to be

particularly elusive for teachers seeking to integrate Reggio practices into their

classrooms and schools.

The most common mistake teachers make in documenting learning is to create a

linear collection of photographs and quotes to tell a story or reconstruct an event. (Turner

& Wilson, 2011). For example, this display at Temple Shalom, showing children on a

trip to the National Building Museum, would not be considered documentation in the

eyes of Reggio scholars, despite its beautiful layout, photographs of engaged children,

and well-written captions (*Fig. 1*). Recountings of class experiences using descriptive

language, called "making *doing* visible" by one teacher, merely skims the surface of

documentation and its potential (Wien et al., 2011; Lewin-Benham, 2011). As Forman

and Fyfe (1998) clarify:

> A set of photographs pasted to posterboard showing a trip to the farm is a
> display. A set of photographs captioned with the children's words would
> still be a display. The panels need commentary to qualify as
> documentation (p. 245).

Using documentation as a method solely for recalling or sharing what happened

fails to use the process from a research perspective (Gandini & Kaminsky, 2004). To

document in the manner of the Reggio schools, it must be a tool for rethinking and

analyzing experiences, "a door to enter a world of possible events, not as a window that

pictures a single time and place" (Forman, 1995, as cited in Forman & Fyfe, 1998, p.

247). Thus, isolated experiences that are unlikely to continue are not typically candidates

for documentation, nor are other decorative artifacts that do not have meaning for

children, are not used to engage children, or fail to stimulate reflection about something

children did or might do in the future (Lewin-Benham, 2011). The display in Figure 2 is

another example of a beautiful artifact coupled with descriptive text placed in the hallway at Temple Shalom. The weaving project shown and described in the written piece was an isolated activity that has not been placed by the teacher in a larger context through which to explore children's theories, understandings, and reflections (*Fig. 2*). As a result, Reggio educators would not consider it documentation.

Reggio documentation is different from a display, even one that contains beautiful photographs with captions or descriptions; instead, it is an organized record containing detailed descriptions of learning and teachers' analysis of the ways in which this learning informs and shapes curriculum (Lewin-Benham, 2011; Moran et al., 2007). It is particularly challenging for teachers to understand that although documentation should be aesthetically pleasing, it is not meant simply to serve decorative purposes (Katz & Chard, 1996). Often teachers shifting to a documentation approach must diverge sharply from their school's contextual visual culture, which may include education supply house borders and die-cut shapes and figures (Wien et al., 2011). While such decorations might be pleasing to the eye, they have no connection to children's experiences and as such do not enhance discourse or the process of meaning-making (Forman & Fyfe, 1998; Lewin-Benham, 2011).

Teachers new to documentation also frequently mistake vague and superficial captioning for the type of analytical commentary required "to frame the data as examples of something more general, some principle that can be applied in new contexts" (Forman & Fyfe, 1998, p. 245; Rinaldi, 2001). For example, the display in Figure 3 contains thoughtful commentary, but it does not extend the initial experience of the children's investigation of charcoal beyond that one exploratory session to consider additional

questions or ways in which the children might explore that or other media further (*Fig. 3)*.

Without the careful crafting of text to expand the meaning of the images contained in the documentation, the process simply creates overwhelming amounts of unfocused data that is disorienting and creates a loss of meaning (Wien et al., 2011; Rinaldi, 2001). Teachers must therefore craft documentation that reveals more about children than their physical likenesses, using the melding of images and text to explain what both the children's and teachers' minds "pondered, wondered, imagined, questioned, found puzzling or exciting, or considered in any other way" (Lewin-Benham, 2011, p. 38). It is only with time, reflection, and experience that teachers can discern how and where to best focus their energy in their creation and analysis of documentation (Given et al., 2010).

4. Moving beyond real and perceived obstacles to documentation

a. *Practical solutions*

Although introducing pedagogical documentation to American early childhood settings is challenging, the literature suggests that with careful consideration teachers can develop strategies to overcome many real or perceived obstacles. Collaboration, planning, persistence, experimentation, and combining different documentation methods provide some solutions for reaching documentation goals (Kroeger & Cardy, 2006).

First, teachers must develop habits of documenting, perhaps the most important of which is advance planning for taking advantage of documentation opportunities (Wien et

al., 2011). Such planning may include making tools for documentation, such as cameras,

video recorders, audiotaping devices, and notepads, consistently accessible; developing

documentation logs to manage field notes and diagrams; creating computer databases to

help manage the organization of notes and transcripts; and making arrangements with

other community members to assist with notetaking (i.e. posting a parent at the fish tank

to write all children's comments down) (Wien et al., 2011; Moran et al., 2007; Fraser &

Gestwicki, 2002). Identifying times at which teachers can support one another in the act

of documenting children's learning, and experimenting with the ways in which this could

be structured are key to a successful transition to a pedagogical framework (Kroeger &

Cardy, 2006).

Because finding the time to engage in the process of documentation is often

identified as the biggest barrier to engaging in such practice, teachers need to work with

administration to find and organize time for this work (Gandini & Kaminsky, 2004).

Often schedules can be rearranged to arrange for more teacher meeting time during the

day and for teachers from different classes to meet regularly to engage in collaborative

reflection on documentation (Moran et al., 2007; Tarr, 2010). Weekly staff meetings

could also have some time designated for discussing documentation (Fraser & Gestwicki,

2002). Some schools have arranged for student interns to record children's dialogue,

while others have adjusted staffing patterns to enable an additional staff member to serve

as a scribe (Fraser & Gestwicki, 2002). At other programs, a mentor-teacher or

pedagogista position was created to facilitate documentation efforts (Pelo, 2006). While

all of these options may not be possible for all settings based upon budgetary, staffing,

scheduling, and other limitations, there are many creative ways in which teachers,

working hand in hand with their communities, can overcome logistical obstacles to documentation.

b. *Strategies to advance teacher understanding*

In *Working the Reggio Way*, Julianne Wurm (2005) writes of her visit to the archives of a school in Reggio Emilia. While there she saw examples of documentation that resembled the documentation that she had seen in American schools just beginning to adopt pedagogical practices. This anecdote should be enormously encouraging for teachers in the U.S.; it shows that documentation in Reggio Emilia evolved over time, and that questions, issues, and misunderstandings similar to those with which American schools are currently struggling with now occurred in Italian schools as well. The task of U.S. education leaders, then, is to determine how best to support teachers here in their own evolution of the practice of documentation.

Gandini and Kaminsky (2004) suggest that determining what such a support system should look like is a significant challenge; however, the academic literature makes reference to a number of strategies that have already been implemented in a number of American programs to aid in deepening understanding of the documentation process. Fyfe, in her interview with Gandini and Kaminsky (2004), discusses how, in some programs, all of the teachers read the same book and have a group discussion about its implications, while other programs collect publications and resources about documentation to be shared (p. 12). While collective reflection and discussion among teachers are essential elements of documentation, Tarr (2010) presents concerns about the collaborative process:

> If a group of teachers does meet together around documentation artifacts, what will help them as a group see beyond the 'curriculum lens'? In other words, if we look through the same lens, what will disrupt that vision to create other possibilities? Is it enough to say we need to look at these from multiple perspectives around such questions as what is going on here? ... How do we avoid power relationships so that open discussion can occur and multiple perspectives respected? How is trust established so that conversations based on real curiosity can take place? What is needed to maintain a climate of openness so that these conversations can be about the documentation and what the children are doing and thinking and not focused on one teacher's practice that may be threatening? (p. 13).

While these are important considerations, they are not insurmountable. Given et al. (2010) report that one school created a reflective study group of five self-selected teachers working with a volunteer facilitator from a local university, and another school hired a research coordinator to facilitate a school-wide inquiry process, work with teaching teams, and facilitate monthly staff meetings (p. 39). A Critical Friends Protocol was established in another school, which gave the teachers a "common focus" in their work toward integration of pedagogical documentation in their program (Given et al., 2010, p. 40). Thus, both the setting up of more formal working groups in which conversation is deepened with the assistance of a skilled facilitator, and the use of protocols to structure discussion are ways in which schools may mitigate the concerns raised by Tarr (2010).

IV. Integrating Reggio-Inspired Documentation Practices at Temple Shalom

A. Introduction

While researchers in the field seem to have reached general agreement that there is much to be gained from the Reggio approach, they are equally in agreement that this

way of teaching and learning with children evolved and continues to exist because of historical and sociocultural factors unique to Italy and to the Reggio Emilia region in particular. It would therefore be a mistake to assume that it could be transported over the ocean to the United States and implemented without considering the existing culture of education here, as well as the educational practices that have arisen in response. At the present time, government and social forces have dictated an assessment-directed school curriculum that has trickled down to our youngest learners. Integration of the pedagogical documentation process could potentially be an effective response to those who doubt that a child-centered approach to early childhood education results in actual learning; making such learning visible to parents, administrators, and communities through documentation may prompt positive shifts in education policy. The question, then, is *how* to move educators forward in their understanding of and ability to engage in such documentation. For purposes of this work, I have been concerned specifically with the practices of the teachers at Temple Shalom Nursery School.

As discussed above, Temple Shalom has been exploring ways in which to enfold practices inspired by Reggio Emilia into its own program for almost ten years. Through her own active professional development, Patty had become aware of the work done by the schools in Reggio Emilia, went to The Hundred Languages of Children exhibit, attended several conferences on the Reggio approach, and later went on a study tour to Reggio Emilia, Italy. Although she may have introduced elements of the philosophy to teachers before I became a member of the staff, the first formal introduction of the staff to the Reggio philosophy as something from which we would draw inspiration in a more purposeful and intentional manner occurred approximately nine years ago.

Upon arriving to staff orientation at the beginning of that school year, teachers were guided to a large meeting room in which instrumental music played softly, candlelight flickered, and tables were decorated with linen cloths on which smooth stones, small baskets, dried and fresh flowers, and small pieces of driftwood rested. We were thus introduced to the concept of the "environment as third teacher," a key element of the Reggio approach. Reggio schools give particular thought to creating spaces for children in which they may engage with open-ended materials that provoke dialogue, imagination, and collaboration; in this way, educators intentionally construct environments that actively participate in the learning experiences of children and convey a respect for their interests, rights, needs and capacities (New, 1998, p. 267). In my later discussions with Patty, she explained that she began the staff's introduction to Reggio with this aspect of the philosophy because it was the most concrete; reconsidering the layout, lighting, and materials in our rooms in a new way seemed the most accessible entry point to the Reggio approach (P. Gold, personal communication, February 13, 2013). At the time, I found myself intrigued by the slideshow images Patty shared of the airy, uncluttered, art-filled classrooms in Reggio schools, but as a practical matter I became focused on obtaining lamps, baskets, fabric samples, and dried twig arrangements to place in my room before the school year began without truly understanding how the presence of these materials might impact the learning that would occur.

Over the next several years, Patty engaged experts to come speak to the staff about the Reggio approach, sent teachers to visit other programs that were also drawing inspirations from Reggio, and brought the staff to conferences on related topics. Changes began to occur in the school that directly reflected Patty and the staff's growing

familiarity with aspects of the Reggio philosophy: an art studio was created, staffed by an *atelierista* who facilitates explorations of art materials with small groups of children; gardens were designed and planted by the children in the outdoor spaces; and teachers sought to integrate children's interests, questions, and theories into long-term investigations.

Teachers also began to use photography more extensively to capture moments of discovery and wonder shared with the children, and to share this photography with families through bulletin board displays, incorporation in their weekly notes, and online albums. Patty provided each classroom with a digital camera, and teachers were welcome to use their own cameras as well. More recently, Patty has made additional technology available to teachers, setting up several computer stations and printers in the staff area and purchasing additional camera memory cards, a video camera, and an iPad for staff to use as needed. Teachers also have the use of a photocopier, light projectors, and tape recorders. Most staff members carry their personal smartphones with them throughout the day, which gives them further access to digital photography and audio recording capabilities.

Documentation as a practice was not discussed in depth with the staff until some time after the initial introduction to Reggio; it was ultimately presented to Temple Shalom teachers in a training session by a fellow staff member, Sarah, who had become deeply interested in Reggio and had been enthusiastically pursuing opportunities to become more well-versed in the approach. In her workshop, Sarah spoke to the staff about how investigations allow children to construct their own knowledge, and that teachers support children in developing higher-level thinking skills by creating

opportunities to hypothesize, experiment, and collaborate. She discussed how in-depth exploration could best be accomplished when involving topics children can see or act upon in their environment, and suggested some ideas for long-term investigations.

Sarah also explained how bulletin board displays should be used for the documentation of these investigations. Such displays, she said, could be a combination of photographs, examples of children's work, quotes from the children, and a description of the process. She made clear that this documentation should reflect the children's planning and decision-making, as well as the school's beliefs in the competency of children, their ability to construct knowledge, and the democracy of the learning process. After the presentation, Sarah provided teachers with a multi-page handout she had prepared (S. Epstein, personal communication, n.d.).

This document, which was circulated among teachers for the next several years, contained a long section about hallway and classroom bulletin boards that explained in detail how documentation should look. It gave specific instructions as to the approved typeface and fonts to be used to written text, the method of printing to be used, how to trim the bottom of pages if there is too much blank space, and the type of boards to which the materials should be mounted. It expressed a preference for mounting spray or rubber cement over staples, made suggestions for accompanying booklets on binder rings and ways to present easel paintings and other artwork. In several pages of densely printed instructions and recommendations, Sarah attempted to give the Temple Shalom staff a blueprint for the documentation process. This work shaped many teachers' understanding of what documentation is and how it can be used, and some teachers refer to it to this day.

Although many elements of the environment and day-to-day life at the Nursery School now suggest their Reggio inspirations, currently documentation as a pedagogical process is unevenly practiced. In order for Temple Shalom Nursery School to realize the full potential of the Reggio approach, teachers must first gain a more complete understanding of the underlying reasons for documentation. Once teachers recognize what pedagogical documentation can accomplish with regard to extending their own as well as children's learning, they can then explore how various techniques may enable them to make this learning visible, beyond just taking photographs, writing commentary, and creating posters. I hoped that my Independent Study might provide the impetus for such in-depth study of documentation by the Nursery School staff.

B. Initiating Practitioner Research

In order to play a role in effecting change in teacher understanding of the pedagogical documentation practices of the Reggio approach at Temple Shalom Nursery School, I needed to engage in a deliberate and reflective study of the program. Collecting qualitative and quantitative evidence and collaborative work with other members of the community are ways in which insight is gained about current practices as well as teacher understandings and misconceptions (Anderson, Herr, & Nihlen, 1994). Accordingly, I determined that two research tools would be most effective to accomplish my research goals: a survey to be circulated to the Nursery School staff, and the creation of a workgroup in which teachers could voluntarily participate in the study of documentation theory and techniques.

Due to my unique position in the Nursery School community, I gave a great deal of thought to my approach to these initiatives. As a former Nursery School parent, I had

developed relationships with many staff members stemming from my contacts with them as my own children's teachers. This relationship shifted in some ways when I became their co-worker; I am aware that the fact that many of the teachers knew me first as a parent may possibly color their view of my role in the program, especially since I was not in the field of early childhood education at that time.

In my current role in the school I have assisted Patty, the Director, on various matters of policy, teacher and parent communication, accreditation, licensing, and other issues involved in the ongoing work of the school. At Patty's request, I have worked closely with a number of teachers as a mentor and resource; I suspect, however, that a number of teachers are unfamiliar with or confused about my position, particularly since I have not been teaching in the classroom for several years. Since many of the staff members have significantly more years of experience in the classroom than I do, and may not have been aware of my own journey toward leadership in early childhood education, I needed to carefully consider how I structured the introduction of the survey and workgroup to emphasize my interest in working *with* the staff to collectively develop our documentation skills, rather than giving the impression that I would be imparting wisdom upon the teachers in a didactic, top-down fashion (Anderson et al., 1994, p. 4).

The Reggio approach to early childhood education is inspiring, challenging, and remarkable in its consistent emphasis on placing research, reflection, collaboration, and the rights of children at the forefront of classroom practice. As Wien et al. (2011) suggest,

> The first task of the teacher educator… is to encourage teachers to try documentation, to recognize their first attempts as beginnings, placeholders of sorts, and to have an acute sense of timing about when to support teachers in seeing that there is much more with which they can

engage – to enjoy, study, interpret, plan, and carry forward – that will make teaching unbelievably exciting (n.p.).

With this in mind, I intended for my work with the staff at Temple Shalom Nursery School to create well-timed opportunities for shared insights, thoughtful reflection, stimulating discussion, and collaborative theorizing, in order to together move closer to the practice of pedagogical documentation.

1. **The Surveys**

   a. *Development and Distribution of the Temple Shalom Nursery School Survey*

Surveys offer researchers the ease of administration coupled with the directness of anonymous responses to factual and attitudinal questions (Anderson et al., 1994). When I began developing the survey for Nursery School teachers, I knew that it needed to be relatively concise, while providing an opportunity for teachers to both complete open-ended questions and closed-ended rating scales. My preparation of the survey required thoughtful consideration of the key aspects of documentation to which I wanted to draw respondents' attention, and required multiple drafts and extensive editing before reaching its final form. It became apparent that shaping the survey so that the questions followed a logical sequence without reflecting my own assumptions and beliefs also required deep thinking and reflection, and careful structuring of the questions (Anderson et al., 1994; Trochim, 2006).

The final Nursery School survey (Appendix A) began with several structured-response questions about teaching experience. It then turned to the topic of Reggio philosophies and practices, and asked whether respondents had worked in any other

program that has included Reggio philosophies and practices, and whether they believe that there are benefits to incorporating Reggio philosophies and practices in their teaching. These were the only two dichotomous questions contained in the survey; respondents could check a "yes" or "no" response to each.

The next two questions were open-ended questions intended to solicit respondents' thinking about any benefits they think arise from the incorporation of Reggio philosophies and practices in their teaching, and what the attendant challenges, if any, may be. Following these questions, the survey turned to the topic of documentation specifically. Respondents were asked what they believe the purpose of documentation to be, and then asked to identify three words that come to mind when they think of documentation. It was my intention to increasingly focus respondents' thinking on the practice of documentation with the progression of these questions.

The next question was presented in a structured-response format, asking respondents to fill in the blanks by ranking in order how they believe various stakeholders may benefit from documentation. Choices included individual teachers engaging in documentation, the teaching staff as a whole, the children in the class, parents of the children in the class, the school as a whole, and school visitors. Respondents could also note that they believed that "none of the above" benefited from documentation, or fill in the blank next to "other" with a party not listed above.

An open-ended question followed, inviting respondents to share what the documentation process had been like for them, and a series of single-option variable questions were next. The first Likert scale was designed to elicit responses of agreement or disagreement to statements about the respondent's views on their own documentation

practice on a one-to-five rating scale with a neutral middle value, as well as statements of frequency on a one-to-five rating scale with "sometimes" as the middle value. The second Likert scale was designed to elicit responses as to perceived usefulness of various resources to documentation practice on a one-to-five rating scale with "somewhat useful" as the middle value. The concluding question on the survey was an open-ended fill-in-the-blank question asking respondents what they believe they need to further develop their practice of documentation.

After securing Patty's approval, I introduced the survey to the Nursery School teachers at a staff meeting. At the meeting, I made certain to clarify that the survey was part of my ongoing work at Bank Street, not part of my work assisting Patty at the Nursery School. I explained that my own experience with Reggio had led me to the conclusion that documentation was one of the most difficult concepts to understand and implement, and that the staff's responses to the survey would clarify what *they* are thinking about documentation, which would inform my ongoing research and IMP work. I also discussed how this work would likely include a workgroup to do some in-depth exploration of the practice of documentation. Accordingly, while teachers would be able to complete the survey anonymously, there would be an additional, unattached page to the survey on which they could indicate their willingness to participate in the workgroup and/or to be interviewed in person or by telephone, if they had additional follow-up questions for me, and the best method for contacting them (Appendix B).

Following my presentation there were a few questions, and the teachers appeared to be open to the idea of completing the survey. The surveys were distributed in teacher mailboxes the following day, each in its own envelope, with an attached cover letter

expressing my appreciation for their participation (Appendix C). A separate envelope was placed in my own mailbox for the collection of the supplementary pages for respondents who wanted to maintain anonymity by separating their contact information from the survey itself.

b. Development and Distribution of the City Preschool Survey

After distributing the surveys to the Nursery School staff, I had the opportunity to go on a study tour of the City Preschool. City Preschool is a small, independent early childhood program serving approximately fifty children. It has been operating for seventeen years, and was developed from its inception as a Reggio-inspired educational program. While on my tour, I learned that every staff member had studied in Reggio Emilia, and that the Director of the program, Jessica, had been to Italy several times to study the approach.

The school environment reflected in countless ways the impact of Reggio philosophy on the space, but most notable were the examples of documentation that lined the hallways and covered the classroom walls. Unfortunately photography of this documentation was not allowed, but visitors were encouraged to take notes as they wished. In my notes, I strove to capture the impact of the panels and displays, and the ways in which they reflected the values of the school, the authentic dialogues between teachers and students, the emergent nature of the research questions, and the methods by which teachers worked with the children to respond to these questions.

I found the panels intriguingly headed with titles such as, "What is clay?" "We could make the tree a blanket." "A desire to know one another." "Letter-ness: Exploring the way letters look, feel, move and communicate" and "Can you imagine the

fastest shoe in the world?" They were accompanied by photographs, written explanations of the origin of the question and the approach taken in response, varied supplementary materials including bagged samples of clay, annotated transcriptions of recordings of the children during an experience and while reflecting on photographs after the experience, drawings made by the children, and diagrams of how children approached a problem and articulated their thinking while doing so. The amount of time, effort, synthesizing, and love that had gone into the process of creating these panels was evident.

Following the tour, I contacted Jessica, City Preschool's Director, and discussed the work that I was pursuing for my IMP. I asked her if it would be possible for me to circulate the survey among her eight teaching staff members, and explained that their responses would, I believed, be especially useful in light of the sophisticated documentation practices in which they were engaging. She warmly responded that if her staff agreed to participate, she would be pleased to distribute the survey for me. A week later Jessica informed me that the City Preschool teachers would be happy to complete my survey. After modifying the survey slightly to reflect the different program name (Appendix D), I emailed the survey to Jessica accompanied by a cover letter (Appendix E) and a supplemental page to be completed by respondents who would be willing to be interviewed in person or by telephone (Appendix F).

c. Survey Results

Ultimately, I collected twenty completed surveys from the Nursery School staff, and five surveys from the City Preschool staff (a yield of 83.3 percent and 62.5 percent, respectively). A comparison of the responses from each program yielded results that may prove key to understanding where some of the challenges to the implementation of

documentation practices lie at Temple Shalom Nursery School. The survey responses to a number of questions in particular appear especially probative.

First, despite variation in longevity of teaching experience, age of children taught, and prior experience in Reggio or non-Reggio programs, all respondents from both programs indicated their belief that there are benefits to incorporating Reggio philosophies and practices in their teaching. Moreover, respondents from both programs gave answers demonstrating a breadth of knowledge about varied Reggio philosophies and practices, explaining that the Reggio approach has an "emphasis on mutual respect and a collaborative focus," "children learn through experience," allows teachers to know each child as an individual," creates "an open and fluid connection between teacher and child," is "child-focused," helps teachers "track the evolution of [children's] thoughts and skills," and "promotes critical thinking and problem-solving" (Appendix A, Question 6; Appendix D, Question 6).

It should be noted, however, that a few Nursery School respondents focused solely on aspects of the classroom environment in their responses; in addition, one Nursery School respondent left this question blank, perhaps intending to indicate their belief that there were no benefits to incorporating Reggio practices into the program, or their inability or unwillingness to articulate what those benefits might be. One Nursery School respondent answered "too hard to explain," while another indicated doubt about "the practicality of projects and documentation," also inquiring as to whether there are "any long term benefits to children vs. other philosophies."

Responses to Question 7, in which respondents were asked to identify challenges to incorporating Reggio practices in their teaching, yielded some similar responses

between the two schools, but there was much more variation in respondents' views. 20 percent of teachers from City Preschool and 45 percent of teachers from the Nursery School identified *time* as a major challenge – time for individual reflection, time for collaboration among teachers, time to develop and create documentation panels, time creating documentation artifacts (i.e. taking photographs), time setting up materials, time to plan, and time to share work with others. Teachers from both schools also noted that choosing which ideas to document and staying aware of adult biases and judgments were challenges of documentation. The challenges raised by Nursery School teachers are displayed in Table 1.

Although teachers from City Preschool noted that "time" was a challenge to the incorporation of Reggio practices, they also noted that "luckily… we have time built into our day for this work." This was a topic that arose during my study tour of the program; all teachers at City Preschool are paid for three to three and a half hours each day for afternoon planning time. City Preschool teachers with whom I spoke on the tour explained that they used this time to reflect on artifacts of documentation, transcribe notes and recordings, collaborate with one another, correspond with parents, print and catalog photographs, write daily journal entries, create and refine documentation panels, prepare materials for ongoing investigations, and other related tasks. Temple Shalom Nursery School teachers are not afforded this type of paid work time after the children leave for the day; although there are ninety minutes of paid planning time per week for teachers, this time is frequently taken in total or in part by staff meetings and training sessions, leaving few large blocks of paid time available for teachers to engage in the types of activities that are integral to the Reggio approach.

Responses to Question 8 of the survey were similarly varied, with some overlap between the two programs (Table 2). 80 percent of teachers at the Nursery School and 60 percent of teachers at City Preschool agree that a significant purpose of documentation is to communicate with people outside the classroom (parents, other teachers, administration, and visitors). Teachers at both schools also agreed that documentation is a tool for reflection on learning with children (60 percent of City Preschool respondents, 30 percent of Nursery School respondents). Other aspects of documentation were mentioned by teachers from both programs. In addition, twenty percent of the responding teachers from the Nursery School noted that documentation sends a message to children that their work is valued. One Nursery School respondent remarked that they believed that documentation helps the school administration guide teachers' practice, while another Nursery School teacher indicated that she wasn't sure what the purpose of documentation was, but there are "definitely some benefits for children."

Question 9 asked respondents to list three words that come to mind when thinking of documentation. There were forty-three different words and phrases shared (Table 3). Some of the words, while not identical, fell into similar themes, while others were distinct.   The most commonly used words or themes were "photographs," "time," "process," "challenging," "learning," "language sample," and words that related to communication, including "informative," "convey," "describing," "showing," and "explaining." While the words provided by the City Preschool teachers were overwhelmingly focused on the more abstract aspects of the process of documentation (91 percent), nearly 33 percent of the words provided by the Nursery School teachers

focused on the concrete elements of preparing documentation panels (words such as "bulletin boards," "poster board," "captions," "language sample," and "layout").

The tenth survey question asked respondents to rank in order who they believe stands to benefit from the documentation process. The question provided a list of stakeholders in the education process, along with the option to write in additional, unlisted parties or to indicate "None of the above." A significant percentage of teachers at both programs had difficulty with this question, either completing the ranking partially (i.e. only ranking the first two groups they identified as benefiting) or leaving the ranking blank and noting below that all of the groups are important and therefore unrankable. Three out of five respondents (60 percent) from City Preschool left this question uncompleted, and eight out of twenty respondents (40 percent) from the Nursery School left it uncompleted. Of the City Preschool respondents who completed the rankings, "the children in my class" was ranked most highly (first by one, second by the other respondent). "Individual teachers who engage in documentation" was also ranked highly as benefiting from documentation (ranked first by one respondent). Among Nursery School respondents, five groups were most frequently identified as benefiting most highly (ranking first through fourth) from documentation: "the children in my class," "parents of the children in my class," "parents of all the children in the school," "individual teachers who engage in documentation," and "the teaching staff at the Nursery School." Figure 4 illustrates how these rankings were distributed.

Question 11 on the survey asked respondents to describe what the documentation process has been like for them. Teachers from both schools used the word "challenging" most frequently. City Preschool teachers used other words to describe the process in

somewhat neutral language: "learning," "complex," "developing," and "natural."

Responses from Nursery School teachers were more polarized; while some responses

contained words with positive associations, such as "rewarding," "gratifying,"

"thoughtful," "pleasurable," and "satisfying," a high percentage of Nursery School

responses were more negative. Many Nursery School respondents described the process

as "difficult" and "time consuming," and other words such as "obstacle," "tiresome,"

"frustrating," "labor-intensive," "unclear," "forced," "expensive," and "daunting" also

appeared.

Two Likert scale questions followed. Question 12 asked respondents to rate

statements on a one-to-five rating scale with regard to their work at their school, and

Question 13 asked respondents to rate statements on a one-to-five rating scale with regard

to resources that might aid in the development of documentation skills. A summary of

the responses from City Preschool teachers to Question 12 appears in Appendix G, and a

summary of Nursery School teacher responses appears in Appendix H. Of particular note

in these results are the differences in responses between the two schools to several

questions.

In response to Question 12c, 30 percent of Nursery School respondents indicated

their neutral position with regard to the essential nature of documentation to their

practice, another 30 percent indicated that they agreed that documentation was essential,

and only 10 percent indicated that they most strongly agreed (Appendix H). The City

Preschool teachers, on the other hand, unanimously responded that they most strongly

agreed that documentation was essential to their teaching practice (Appendix G).

Similarly, in response to Question 12d, 35 percent of Nursery School respondents indicated that documentation is sometimes integrated into their day-to-day work, 40 percent indicated that it is often integrated into their work, and 10 percent responded that it is always integrated (Appendix H). On the City Preschool surveys, 40 percent indicated that documentation is often integrated into their day-to-day work, and 60 percent responded that it is always integrated into their work (Appendix G).

Nursery School respondents indicated in response to Question 12g that 35 percent rarely consult with other teachers about their documentation, 35 percent sometimes consult with other teachers about documentation, and 20 percent often consult with other teachers (Appendix H). On the other hand, 80 percent of City Preschool respondents indicated that they often consult with other teachers about their documentation, and 20 percent noted that they always do so (Appendix G). In response to the next question, 45 percent of Nursery School respondents were neutral about whether they would like to consult with other teachers about their documentation, 45 percent agreed that they would like to consult with other teachers, and 10 percent most strongly agreed, compared with 25 percent of City Preschool respondents who agreed that they would like to consult with other teachers about their documentation, and 75 percent who most strongly agreed (Appendix G; Appendix H).

Responses to two subsections of Question 13 are notable as well (Appendix I; Appendix J). In response to Question 13d, 20 percent of Nursery School respondents noted that time to collaborate with other staff members on documentation would be potentially useful, 40 percent indicated that it would be somewhat useful, 15 percent responded that it would be very useful, and 15 percent stated that it was essential

(Appendix J). City Preschool respondents unanimously agreed that time to collaborate with other staff members on documentation was essential (Appendix I). Similarly, in response to Question 13g, 35 percent of Nursery School respondents noted that more access to articles and research about documentation practices for independent reading could be potentially useful, 20 percent felt that it would be somewhat useful, 35 percent noted that it would be very useful, and 5 percent indicated that it is essential (Appendix J). In response to the same statement, 60 percent of City Preschool survey respondents indicated that more access to independent reading materials on documentation would be very useful, and 40 percent responded that it is essential (Appendix I).

The final question on the survey asked respondents to complete the sentence, "If I had _____, I believe I would be able to further develop my practice of documentation." The most frequently occurring response to this question on the surveys of both school programs was "time," with 72 percent of Nursery School respondents noting that time would be helpful, and 40 percent of City Preschool respondents indicating the same. Nursery School respondents also indicated that training (33 percent) and staff coverage (22 percent) would also allow them to develop their documentation practice. In addition, some concerns about availability of resources appeared on Nursery School surveys, including the need for video cameras, photo paper, photo printers, foam core, and writing support. In addition to time, City Preschool respondents noted that more feedback, practice, and better personal design, layout, and video skills would aid in their documentation.

d. Wonderings and observations about the survey results

My review of the survey results both confirmed some of my observations about the practice of documentation at the Nursery School and led to some new questions. I found it encouraging that all respondents indicated their belief that there are benefits to incorporating Reggio practices in their teachings, which may mean that the staff is receptive to further learning about how to further enfold such practices into their work. There was some variation in Nursery School teachers' understanding of the Reggio approach, however; while many responses focused on how the connection between teachers and children is fostered by this teaching philosophy, other respondents focused on aspects of the classroom environment while a few found it difficult to articulate what those benefits might be. These results suggested to me that the staff may need some more familiarity with foundational Reggio elements before the role of documentation becomes viewed as an essential aspect of their teaching practice.

Responses about challenges to the incorporation of Reggio practices revealed that Nursery School staff members recognize that this approach requires a great deal of time, although it is not clear that the staff understood how they might use this time to best effect if they had it. Although some respondents indicated that they would use this time for collaboration, later survey questions asking about the value of increased time for collaboration to the practice of documentation did not receive strongly positive responses. Other challenges identified by Nursery School respondents about Reggio practices addressed concerns about underlying program support for the approach in terms of logistics, alignment with other teaching philosophies that are part of the program, and understanding aspects of the approach.

When asked about the purpose of documentation, most Nursery School teachers had ideas about ways in which documentation could add value to their work, though a high percentage of responses focused on outward communication rather than the reflective practice. This is consistent with responses to the subsequent question in which respondents listed three words that describe documentation; more than a third of the words listed by Nursery School teachers related to concrete aspects of displays of documentation. While many teachers did, in their responses to both questions, highlight aspects of documentation related to reflection on learning and teaching, generating ideas for future exploration, and showing children that their work is valued, I was struck by the Nursery School staff's focus on the outward displays of documentation. Without a solid understanding of the ways in which documentation is integrated into day-to-day classroom practice, how could teachers create documentation panels that communicate the types of co-constructive learning envisioned by Reggio Emilia educators? I began to wonder if there were substantial underlying misconceptions about documentation stemming back to the way in which it had been introduced several years ago, and if these were contributing to difficulties in the successful integration of documentation practices at Temple Shalom Nursery School.

Inconsistencies in responses to Survey Question 10 support this conclusion; despite focus on the outward displays of documentation in previous responses, teachers ranked children in their class and individual teachers who engage in documentation most frequently as the greatest beneficiaries of documentation. This would seem to indicate that many teachers recognized that it is the reflective aspects of the *process* of documentation that are most significant rather than displays of the learning. The survey

responses thus suggest some real confusion about the focus of documentation and its purpose; is the primary goal for teachers to focus inward, on their work with the children inside the classroom, or outward, on creating products to display what has occurred?

On the other hand, what is clear from Nursery School staff survey responses is that there is great variation in teachers' experiences with documentation, with some expressing very positive views, and others suggesting that the process is "tiresome," "frustrating," and "forced." Perhaps the most accurate responses, then, were those that characterized the practice of documentation as "daunting," "difficult," and "unclear." It seemed that this lack of clarity was impeding many teachers' ability to appreciate how documentation could enrich their classroom practice.

A comparison of Nursery School and City Preschool teacher responses to Survey Questions 12 and 13 further support the notion that Nursery School teachers, unlike their counterparts at City Preschool, do not understand the ways in which collaboration, additional training, and text study could benefit their practice of documentation. While City Preschool teachers, whose approach to documentation has become quite sophisticated, nearly unanimously agreed that collaboration, training, and text study are essential aspects of their documentation practice, Nursery School teachers averaged a neutral response to questions about these topics. If Nursery School teachers do not engage in collaboration, do not see the need for text study, and do not feel that group and/or individual documentation training and support are needed, is it any wonder that Nursery School teachers indicated that not only do they not have a particularly strong understanding of documentation, but they are not overwhelmingly interested in

understanding more about the approach and have mixed interest in integrating it further into their day-to-day practice?

My analysis of the survey responses confirmed that convening a workgroup to work collaboratively on text study about documentation, experimentation with new documentation techniques, and reflecting on classroom experiences would be a logical next step. If the workgroup process could lead to greater understandings about documentation and its role in day-to-day practice, which in turn generated increased enthusiasm about new ways to enfold documentation practices into Temple Shalom Nursery School classrooms, then this process could prove similarly valuable for the Nursery School as a whole. Encouraged by the enormous potential for positive impact on teaching practices both within the workgroup and, eventually, for the larger Nursery School staff, I began to consider my options for the workgroup.

I turned to the supplemental pages of the surveys, on which respondents could indicate whether they would be willing to be interviewed in person about their responses or, in the case of the Nursery School, interested in participating in my action research project. While a significant number of respondents from both programs expressed their willingness to be interviewed, and several Nursery School respondents indicated that they might be interested in participating in my workgroup dependent on the time required, three Nursery School staff members expressed unconditional enthusiasm for participation in the action research project.

These three staff members, Rebecca, Amy, and Leah, joined me in forming the Documentation Workgroup. Each of them brought a unique perspective to the group: Rebecca has been teaching for five years, has a background in journalism and the arts,

and has been pursuing her interest in the Reggio philosophy by participating in an area early childhood educators' Reggio practice group; Leah has been teaching for ten years, and has a Masters degree in special education; and Amy has been teaching for eight years, and has attended many conferences and school programs across the country to gain greater familiarity with Reggio practices. All three teachers have visited City Preschool and other Reggio-inspired early childhood programs.

2. The Documentation Workgroup

After "officially" inviting Rebecca, Amy, and Leah to join the workgroup, we communicated via email to set up our first meeting, and agreed to come together on a weeknight evening at my house. I found myself full of anticipation before we gathered for the first time; I was also surprised at how nervous I felt. Although the surveys had required respondents to spend time and thought to complete them, this was face-to-face work with colleagues I know and respect. They are women with busy professional and personal lives, and I wanted to make sure that, even though this workgroup was being convened as part of my IMP, it would be time well spent for all members of the group. I was also immensely grateful for the trust they were placing in me to facilitate this journey for all of us. I hoped that I was up to the task.

I loosely planned an agenda for the first meeting, along with ideas for what the group might accomplish over the six planned workgroup sessions. I believed that the group would be able to serve as a collaborative and creative source of support as group members delved more deeply into the subject of documentation and began to try new techniques in their classrooms. Ultimately I envisioned that each teacher would document an episode or investigation from their classroom, and together we would create

documentation panels that could be brought back to the remaining Nursery School staff to show not only what documentation can look like, but to discuss how the collaborative process supported the creation of this work. This was not, in fact, the end product of our work together, but what happened was, I believe, much more valuable.

Over the course of the six meetings, several themes, concerns, and questions emerged. For the purposes of this discussion, I will focus on the following themes and questions, which I believe are most directly related to the scope of this IMP: current understandings about documentation and how we, as a school, may have arrived at them; our values as a school and how documentation is consistent with these values; how we can weave more opportunities for collaboration into our practice; how different types of technology can play roles in the reflective practice of documentation work; and how to bring our thinking back to the staff and parent community in order to create positive change.

In order to capture the energy, enthusiasm, and sense of exchange that occurred during our workgroup meetings, the six sessions will be discussed for the most part as if they were fifteen hours of non-stop discussion, fueled by mutual respect, excitement about the topic at hand, and many bowls of M&Ms. While we talked, I recorded the sessions digitally on my computer so that I could listen to them again and reflect not only on the minute-by-minute details of the conversation, but the ways in which the synthesis of material, deepening understanding, and generation of new questions occurred. As various ideas, questions, concerns, and observations emerged, I mapped them, looking at patterns, where previous concerns were resolved, and where new ideas sparked. In this

way, I strove to document the workgroup's experience as, together, we learned about the

Reggio approach to documentation.

a. Current workgroup understandings about documentation

At the first workgroup meeting, I began by describing how I was going to be

recording each session so that I could listen back to our dialogue and reflect on it, using

each discussion as a tool to expand our conversation in a way that would hopefully propel

the process forward. The group then agreed to allow me to share their responses to their

surveys, so I began by asking Rebecca, Amy, and Leah why the words they had written

on their surveys in response to Question 9 were the words they felt best described

documentation. Amy had used the word "professional," and she explained that

documentation is "the best work you can be doing as a teacher [but also] the hardest to

do… [and] when I'm getting it done, that's when I feel like a professional….It's so hard

it must be part of good work" (Documentation workgroup, March 19, 2014). Rebecca

had used the word "convey," and she explained that documentation "shares, makes

visible, what is alive in the classroom…. It is something that captures and distills what is

happening and communicates it" (Documentation workgroup, March 19, 2014). Leah

used the word "organic," and she explained that her word choice reflected her

understanding of documentation as "truly about the process" (Documentation workgroup,

March 19, 2014). While these responses showed that there was appreciation for the

difficulty, effectiveness, and process-orientation of documentation among the workgroup

members, the workgroup had many questions about the distinction between observation

and documentation, what documentation looks like in practice, and why there has been so

much emphasis at the Nursery School on the appearance of the final products of

documentation rather than the process of documentation.

Amy explained her understanding of documentation by using an example from

her own classroom's investigation about the creation of a new garden space at the

Nursery School:

> I wanted to convey what, developmentally, is happening with the children.
> Why is it even important? Is it important because we want to have pretty
> flowers and that precious idea of a school garden? ... What I wanted to
> show was that developmentally we're talking about critical thinking and
> problem-solving and cooperation and small groups. This is what we're
> working on. We're not working on a garden. We're working on these
> skills. And so this is a way to authentically assess what's going on, and
> the *catalyst* is this investigation of the garden (Documentation workgroup,
> March 19, 2014).

Photographs of Amy's documentation from this ongoing investigation show how the

focus was on how "small groups help children take on big challenges" (Figures 5a-5b).

While the children's discussions in their small groups were about the garden, what Amy

and her co-teacher were observing was the interaction between the children and the ways

in which they approached problems and generated solutions. The transcriptions of these

discussions, photographs of the children, and teacher analysis reveal the thinking behind

the ongoing exploration and the ways in which the investigation was shaped by the

children's own thinking. Amy's description of the process behind the display was very

helpful in clarifying how observing the children was a key element of the process of

documentation, but it was how she used those observations as a tool for reflection and

shaping the ongoing exploration that created the opportunity for meaningful

documentation.

I then shared with the group my recent experience during the study tour at City Preschool. I learned from the teachers at that program that, during the preceding summer, they had decided as a group to pursue two explorations – clay, and identity. During the summer session, children attending the Preschool camp program expressed interest in creating portraits of one another and then turned these portraits into a school directory. As the school year began, the children began discussing other ways in which people come to know one another, and one group of children determined that sitting at a table together was one important way in which this happens. After spending several weeks drawing tables and examining issues of perspective and line, these children decided that they next wanted to create tables out of clay.

On the day that I visited, I witnessed the following small group experience:

A small group of four-year old children were brought into a room adjacent to their classroom to continue their exploration of clay tables. First, their teacher set up a laptop on the table around which the children were seated, and played for them a brief excerpt of a video of themselves from the day before, talking about the clay tables they were crafting. The teacher asked if the children remembered this discussion, and this video revisiting of the experience appeared to quickly reengage the children in the investigation. The teacher then set up a digital camera on the corner of the table to record the day's events, and provided the children with the miniature clay tables they had crafted, which had been fired in the school kiln. The children quickly made observations about how many of their tables could not stand up, or did not balance evenly. Their teacher asked them why they thought this might be the case, and several children responded with conclusions about the placement, number, and length of the table legs that might be required to successfully make a table.

The teacher next lifted the plastic wrap off of a large unfired clay table resting upside-down on the work surface, and asked the children what they thought they should do next on this project, based on what they had observed about their miniature tables. The children were able to apply the observations they had made about the small tables to the larger project, noting that they needed to make sure that the legs of the large table were spaced out and all the same length. The teacher asked them how they could tell if the legs were the same length, and when one child suggested a ruler, she was encouraged to get one, which she brought back to the group.

Together the children decided on the best leg length, and the teacher then helped the children identify the markings on the ruler that corresponded to that length. The group next assisted one another with measuring with the ruler and cutting each table leg to the agreed-upon length. The teacher asked if the children knew another way to see if the legs were all the same length, and suggested that they experiment with a level she had provided, asking them to observe the center bubble and to think about where they might want it to be to show that the table would be able to balance when turned right-side up. The children were entranced with the level and were able to determine that the bubble needed to be centered in order to establish that the table legs were even. They then each used the level on their own miniature tables, chorusing, "No, that's not level!" each time the indicator was on one side or the other.

In a fifteen-minute period, I observed this City Preschool teacher as she carefully presented the opportunity for a tremendous amount of learning to take place, including critical thinking, reasoning, language skills, math concepts, collaboration, and the use of familiar and new tools. While the focus of the activity was on the clay tables, as in Amy's class investigation of the garden, the tables were merely the vehicle for the construction of knowledge for the children. The goal was not for them to become table makers, but rather, to use the making of the tables to support the development of larger concepts.

After I related this experience in the workgroup session, we all agreed that this was the type of practice in which we want to engage, but Rebecca, Leah, and Amy raised concerns that the emphasis at Temple Shalom Nursery School seemed to be more on the appearance of the products of documentation than this ongoing process. The survey results bear this out, as seen in Nursery School staff responses to Question 9, where a significant percentage of the responses focused on the concrete elements of preparing documentation panels. The workgroup felt that perhaps the way in which the concept of

documentation had been originally introduced had something to do with this lasting impression among Nursery School staff members.

Although Sarah's presentation to the staff about documentation did address how the process involves teachers and children working together as co-constructors of knowledge, the workgroup concluded that her emphasis on the "look" of bulletin boards and documentation panels eclipsed her explanation of the purpose behind the creation of these products of documentation. Over the years since her presentation, teachers seeking to refine their documentation practice found themselves repeatedly directed to make changes to the ways in which their bulletin boards and panels were formatted, rather than engaging in questioning or discussion about the underlying explorations and how the documentation display could effectively make the children's learning visible. In fact, there were times when work in progress was posted on bulletin boards, but in anticipation of a tour or other event these artifacts of documentation were removed and "more visually appealing" displays of children engaged in singular experiences were put up in their place. At one point Leah mused that it was these types of experiences had led her to believe that documentation was about the display, even though the Nursery School had always emphasized that, in working with children, "it's about the process, not the product" (Documentation workgroup, May 13, 2014). Leah continued that it was not until she had joined the workgroup that she realized that the same was true of documentation.

Members of the workgroup agreed that the annual children's art show at the Nursery School also seemed to place greater weight on product over process, thereby confusing the issue further. This annual event is an opportunity for family and other

special visitors to come to the school to see a display of the children's artwork. In

preparation for the show, teachers have historically been encouraged to introduce

children to the work of a specific artist or to an artistic technique. Many teachers have

found that in making choices about how to proceed, they tend to give greater

consideration to what might be most visually appealing instead of what is most

authentically related to the work of the children in the classroom. Leah and Amy

discussed this tension:

> Amy: I'm always nervous to display the children's work in the most
> authentic way, because I don't know that it's always understood
> by our population… I think to some extent it's valued, but I'm
> always nervous to show work that to us is meaningful as
> educators, and to the class is meaningful with the children…
>
> Leah: … but doesn't look like paintings.
>
> Amy: Yeah. But I think that it's valuable and important and so every
> year I just do it even though I'm nervous about it… So then I felt
> like I was sort of pushed in this direction [that] they should all
> have the same art project and I felt very constricted into, like, how
> am I going to have each of them show themselves and express
> themselves within the confines of a cohesive exhibit.
>
> Leah: Every year we follow the same pattern.
>
> Amy: The more important work that we're doing is not what we're
> showing off (Documentation workgroup, May 1, 2014).

The workgroup also raised concerns that the somewhat insular nature of teaching

at the Nursery School does not provide the opportunities for collaboration so essential for

the practice of documentation. The group suggested that the absence of collaboration

causes a lack of consistency as to the approach taken to documentation, as well as a

missed opportunity to work together to deepen understanding of documentation as a

teaching community. As Amy noted, "The more you understand the process of

documentation, the easier it is to develop the product" (Documentation workgroup, March 19, 2014).

This may also explain some of the emphasis on the appearance of documentation at the Nursery School rather than the content; without a stronger sense of the underlying goals of documentation, the focus can only be on documentation at the most visible level. The variations in ways that different teachers try to present what has occurred in their classrooms thus end up proving easier to question or "correct" than the underlying pedagogical approach to the work that was done with the children. When people are new to documentation, it is easier to "focus on the staples," the most concrete aspects of the outward display of what has occurred in the class. Unfortunately, this eventually alienates teachers from the value of the process as the appearance eclipses the content and teachers begin to believe that documentation is solely about rigid formatting. While the aesthetic aspects of the display are certainly important, requiring teachers to adopt a new language of visual literacy, the workgroup agreed that the heart of the Reggio approach to documentation is the intersection between the products of documentation and the processes that ultimately lead to those products; this is the greatest area of confusion for the Nursery School staff.

In workgroup discussions I noted that, as workgroup members began to appreciate that Reggio documentation means more than the display elements, more questions emerged about the practice of documentation as a reflective process. Leah stated, "I don't know that I've wrapped my head around the idea of Reggio-inspired documentation," and Rebecca mused, "What does it look like when it's what it's supposed to be?" (Documentation workgroup, March 19, 2014). In anticipation of these

types of questions and concerns, I had selected several journal articles and book chapters

for the group that I felt would support the group's growing understanding of the reflective

nature of the practice of documentation (Appendix K).

Feedback to the journal articles at subsequent sessions was generally extremely

positive and the articles were used as ongoing reference points throughout the workgroup

experience. The group agreed that Kroeger and Cardy (2006) and Oken-Wright (2001) in

particular had effectively captured many of the challenges of learning to document, and

the articles provided useful examples that resonated with their growing conceptualization

of their own documentation practice. Leah remarked that she felt her understanding of

documentation becoming increasingly clear, noting

> When I just started this last week I might have said I was confused, but
> now I'm starting to try to embrace the idea of 'the no right answer' from
> the parts of the *Hard to Reach Place* article with the pros and cons; they
> are not saying one way is perfect. They're saying you can choose these
> different aspects… I'm trying to embrace the idea that it's all right, to
> some extent, in different ways (Documentation workgroup, April 9, 2014).

Amy responded, "Yeah, I wish it was presented to other teachers this way"

(Documentation workgroup, April 9, 2014). However, later in the conversation, she

mused, "I'm trying to grasp this idea that if I read enough articles I will just get it and put

a period at the end of the sentence. I'll just know what to do. And that's not what's

happening and it's frustrating" (Documentation workgroup, April 9, 2014).

In response, Leah and Rebecca pointed out that many of the articles do not

include specific anecdotes about the struggle to engage in documentation, so that readers

are not able to fully appreciate how challenging the process is. Many examples in the

literature are of successful documentation that captures significant and intriguing

moments of learning, but there are few moments recorded in which teachers are faced with disappointing outcomes, failed initiatives, or uncertainty. Amy then recounted a recent experience with her class, in which she found that her approach had been initially unsuccessful, but ultimately led to a moment of insight for her own practice. She had attempted, after some time had passed, to return to the ongoing garden documentation, and had led her class into the hallway to look at the bulletin board on which artifacts of the project had been posted. The children appeared disengaged, despite her questions and prompts. She next brought the group back into the classroom, and together they looked out the window at the status of the garden; the children were still quiet in response to her continued questioning.

When the group came together in their meeting space, Amy again tried to ask thoughtful questions, but there were still no responses so, frustrated, she decided to "completely shut up and let it be silent" (Documentation workgroup, April 9, 2014). To her surprise, after a short period, the children began discussing the garden and their thoughts about how to proceed. Amy continued to be quiet, responding only with acknowledgement and encouraging body language, and the conversation among the children gained momentum, generating increased enthusiasm, curiosity, and excitement for the project. Amy recalled her thoughts from that day:

> I was like, oh, right! I need to be quiet if I want them to talk! … It was a really eye-opening experience for me that if we're just quiet, they can actually have these conversations that get them to a more interested place (Documentation workgroup, April 9, 2014).

In response to these group concerns about finding examples of documentation where teachers' struggles with the process are captured, in a later session I provided the

workgroup with two book chapters (Lewin-Benham, 2008, pp. 112-129; Kinney &

Wharton, 2008, pp. 14-55). In each of these excerpts, there were examples of

explorations in which the educators' assumptions and biases impacted the experience for

the children. In one, children became interested in electricity, and while teachers tried to

make an overhead projector and other materials available for the children so that they

could learn more about this topic, discussions about the use of the electrical equipment

with the children became focused on safety issues and the inherent dangers of electricity.

After a brief period, the children's enthusiasm waned, and they moved on to another

project (Kinney & Wharton, 2008). The authors noted,

> Why this keen interest in electricity with its many possibilities for learning
> did not develop further will never be known. Could it have been that the
> children found buildings more interesting than electricity? Or could it
> have been that the staff team were wary of developing such an interest
> further, and this conveyed itself to the children? (Kinney & Wharton,
> 2008, pp. 21-23).

Lewin-Benham (2008) recounts an example of documentation in which a group of

children befriended a turtle, and the relationship became the subject of a year-long

investigation, including art, music, drama, storytelling, and studies of the environment

and animal behavior (pp. 112-129). When the class decided to paint a mural about the

pond in which the turtle was eventually released, their teacher, Jennifer, asked the

children what the turtle found in the pond, and they told her that it was filled with rocks,

mud, and fish. Jennifer had other ideas, however, so she suggested that they imagine

wearing goggles and diving under the water; in response, the children generated images

of deep-sea diving. A fellow teacher then noted that, in fact, rocks and mud are found on

the bottom of ponds, which led Jennifer to realize that her own elaborate, preconceived

image had caused her to envision a scheme unrelated to reality. This was a "*huge* lesson in how easily teachers can impose their ideas on children" (Lewin-Benham, 2008, p. 127).

Discussion of these two examples of documentation appeared reassuring to the workgroup members; while we had all made observations of the lyrically poetic ways in which the Italian educators articulate their thinking about documentation and the myriad ways in which knowledge is co-constructed during the documentation process, it was comforting to read and discuss examples of times in which things did not go as planned. Amy wished that more teachers understood

> that [documentation] doesn't always work. Because all the presentations and tours make it seem effortless, and that it works every time, that there's really no struggle. If there's no right answer, there has to be a struggle, right? And it doesn't help me to believe that everyone else has an easy time with this (Documentation workgroup, April 9, 2014).

The group agreed that presentations and readings that included examples of documentation that did not go as planned, accompanied by reflections by teachers about what may have happened, would be extremely helpful for educators learning about documentation.

The group continued to struggle in every session with finding entry points into documentation, recognizing moments of growth and learning, balancing group learning with supporting individual children, and other details of the practice of documentation. Our discussions about documentation frequently moved beyond aspects of classroom practice, however, focusing most often on how documentation could be enfolded into the daily lives of Nursery School teachers in a manner that is consistent with school values,

and how its practice must be supported if it is deemed a philosophy in which it is worth investing.

b. *Connections between values and practice*

As the workgroup continued to meet, the group began to discuss how clarification of the key values of the Nursery School and the connections between those values and educational practice is essential. The program has been in existence for over twenty years with Patty, its founding director, at the helm, and the philosophical underpinnings of the program have remained consistent although the teaching practice has evolved over time. As previously discussed, the values of the Nursery School are based in Reform Judaism, with educational philosophies informed by the theories of Piaget, Vygotsky, Erikson, Gardner, the Bank Street Model and constructivist education. In addition to the more recent influence of inspirations from Reggio Emilia, Patty has integrated elements based on early childhood brain research and Creative Curriculum, and training sessions over the years have focused on a variety of topics, including developmental assessment tools, writing weekly notes to families, "How Does Your Engine Run?," Handwriting Without Tears, Jolly Phonics, emergent curriculum, the project approach, integrating Jewish holidays, ideas for sensory materials, and ways to meet the needs of individual children. Underlying all aspects of the program is the school's adherence to the criteria required to maintain its NAEYC accreditation. Overall, however, Patty has made clear that her vision of the school is to provide opportunities for learning through play to scaffold development across all domains, with a particular emphasis on social-emotional development.

While each member of the workgroup has been teaching at the Nursery School for between five and ten years, and therefore is deeply familiar with the program, all voiced concerns about the ways in which these various initiatives meld together into a cohesive whole, and how Reggio-inspired practices fit into this mix. As Amy stated,

> We are known for being an inclusive school; we welcome children with unique needs. And we are also a Reform Jewish school. Are we just adding too much to the pile of things that we are? Are we too many things? … Sometimes I don't know which thing to play to (Documentation workgroup, March 19, 2014).

Leah shared this concern, suggesting that as "the focus has changed, and different details and aspects of different areas have come and gone, we are left with this one piece from each area [and] in the back of my mind at least are all of these other pieces that were there" (Documentation workgroup, April 9, 2014). Leah also had specific concerns, based on her expertise in special education, about how documentation's focus on the learning of the group can allow teachers to best meet the needs of individual children with various challenges. Although Rebecca noted that she didn't see inconsistencies in the practice of documentation with other aspects of the Nursery School program, perhaps because she had not been teaching as long as Leah and Amy and so was not familiar with the evolution of various practices, she agreed that documentation "has to be at the core of everything you do and how you operate; it's not just something you make a poster about… [and] you can't layer it on top, sometimes" (Documentation workgroup, May 13, 2014).

Workgroup members indicated that confusion about the program's goals and how teachers should reflect those goals in their work with children is an obstacle to

consistency of practice and prioritization of time. The following exchange is an example

of the type of discussion that arose on this topic:

> Rebecca: [The Nursery School is] a place where there is incredible respect for childhood and the individual child… it's a place about growth, and if you approach it from that perspective, it's a place that grows and evolves and responds to suggestions. It's not rigid at all. It's very open to growth.

> Amy: That fluidity feels like confusion to me. Whereas it's very nice that we can grow, I just feel like we grow in every direction. And I don't know what's most important, and I can't do all of it.

> Alison: Maybe we need to ask how this fluidity gets distilled into teacher's practice with children day to day? What is expected of teachers?

> Rebecca: I don't see the inconsistencies. But maybe that's because I came after [Sarah] did her presentation [about documentation], so I didn't see what came before.

> Leah: Maybe the confusion is because the focus has changed, and different details and aspects of different areas have come and gone, and then we are left with this one piece from each area… In the back of my mind at least are all of these other pieces that were there (Documentation workgroup, April 9, 2014).

During another session, Rebecca and Amy again struggled with the need for

clarification of the mission of the Nursery School and how one might do so in order to

determine the role of documentation.   This discussion was sparked by a question I raised

about whether self-study could help us identify our practices in order to refine our future

approach and, ultimately, the ongoing vision for the program:

> Amy: Yeah. In terms of creating a cohesiveness and a mission, we could sort of tie it all together by what's actually being done, and we don't know that unless we find out what's actually being done.

> Rebecca: I hear you. But I think collecting the information about what's already being done needs a lot of very careful thought and the questions need to be very carefully stated, and reflect a mission

statement, which makes me think that it might be a backwards approach. It might make more sense to start with a mission statement and take that, and ask for examples of ways that it's being expressed in the various classrooms…. We need to have something to start from, that says, "This is who we are." I would start from the statement, and see where it is expressed, rather than starting from researching who we are and then come to a statement. It's kind of like a dance, a little bit of sort of dancing back and forth and back and forth. You've got to start from something, though.

Amy: I disagree.

Rebecca: You disagree?

Amy: Yeah. In my experience, consultants will come in, and figure out who you are first, before they'll help you write a mission statement; I think the reason people do that is, what if your staff says, "I actually don't agree with that. I don't think that's who we are." And then we're asking all of these questions under the lens of this particular mission statement, and people say, "Well, I don't actually think that's who we are," and I think then their responses are not honest…. I think it sets a tone with teachers, as well, that they didn't need to be told what our mission was to be good teachers in the classroom. That they were doing things already that were valuable and we're just shining a light on showing it (Documentation workgroup, May 28, 2014).

Discussion of the mission of the school led to additional questions about the alignment of documentation with existing school philosophies and practices. Specific concerns were raised about whether long term investigations of one topic are oriented toward more cognitive types of learning to the exclusion of social-emotional growth; whether the practice of documentation is consistent with Jewish values; and how Nursery School families can be educated about and included in the documentation process. The workgroup felt that some exploration of these questions was necessary in order to determine how to prioritize their efforts in the classroom.

i. Long-term investigations and social-emotional growth

The phrase "long-term investigation" has been a subject of confusion at the Nursery School since the Reggio philosophy was first introduced. Perhaps one reason for this lack of clarity is that teachers recognize that these extended periods of exploration in Reggio programs arise out of the interests of the children, the questions they ask, and the observations they make. At the Nursery School, however, the workgroup reported that teachers generally feel that they need to focus on a specific topic of investigation, which they are encouraged to identify and name early in the school year, before they have really gotten to know the children in their class. Leah raised additional concerns about the ways in which documentation can support and record social-emotional growth in children. She had originally perceived documentation to be focused on more cognitive aspects of learning, and felt that we would not be operating in a manner consistent with core values of the Nursery School program if we did not maintain focus on social-emotional development. Moreover, she recalled how she has taught groups of children for whom the focus needed to be on the class community, but she did not believe that this was an "appropriate topic" for an investigation.

As we read various articles and discussed the philosophy of documentation, however, it became increasingly clear to the workgroup that documentation does, indeed, increase opportunities for social learning, particularly through its collaborative elements, and therefore documenting such learning is both valuable and important (Kroeger & Cardy, 2006). Leah later reflected about the way in which she had grouped paper cut-outs of pairs of feet on the floor by the classroom doorway to help her class visually organize themselves for transitions out of the classroom and then, throughout the year,

gradually removed the cut-outs as the children were increasingly able to manage the transition without the visual cues. "Thinking about that now," she remarked, "you've got visuals, and comments… that could have been a great documentation topic!" (Documentation workgroup, June 6, 2014). Although Leah had felt pressure to select a topic that seemed "more Reggio," she and the workgroup together concluded that investigations that are extended and revealed through documentation can be shaped to capture any type of learning. Amy felt especially strongly about recasting the concept of the long-term investigation at the Nursery School:

> Why are we apologizing for not having time to focus on long-term investigations because we are focused on the children in the classroom? The children *are* the project – so let's talk about that! (Documentation workgroup, May 28, 2014).

Ultimately, we concluded that using documentation to show the social-emotional development of children is not just important; it can be an essential tool to show what is otherwise difficult to quantify. While tools of documentation such as photographs and video can certainly be used to show how a child has learned that when he piles blocks to a certain height they are going to become increasingly unstable, or that a marble placed on an incline is going to roll toward the ground, using documentation to show social-emotional growth over time takes a great level of care, intuitiveness and awareness on the part of the teacher to recognize key moments of learning, understand their significance, and find ways to shape and extend experiences to deepen learning further. As Wien et al. (2011) and Rinaldi (2004) note, the context of listening created by documentation allows teachers to capture any type of learning deemed meaningful. The group saw enormous potential in thinking about documentation in this way, particularly in light of the Nursery

School's emphasis on supporting children's social-emotional development in addition to other developmental domains.

   ii. Alignment with Jewish values

  While the group came to agreement that the Nursery School's respect for children and their social-emotional growth is aligned with the Reggio philosophy, there were questions about how Reggio-inspired practices can reflect the Reform Jewish values of the program. While being a Reform Jewish family is not a prerequisite for enrollment in the Nursery School, the fact that the Nursery School functions within the Temple Shalom environment informs its nature at the most fundamental levels. As Patty developed the program, she focused the underlying basis of the curriculum not on principles of academic readiness, but rather on Jewish values related to how people treat one another and extend themselves to each other and the larger community with warmth, kindness, tolerance, and understanding. Rituals of Reform Judaism are present in each school day as children chant blessings before sharing snack, in each week as children and their families come together to celebrate Shabbat with a group sing, and in the celebration of Jewish holidays throughout the year. While many of these rituals would be possible to carry out in a different building, the fact that the school is housed in the Temple allows the teachers and children to find deeper meaning in carrying them out. Additionally, the rabbis and cantor frequently take part in both the celebration of holidays and daily rituals such as snack time in a way that creates indelible connections between the children and the Temple, that are often extended as children leave the Nursery School and enter the Religious School.

Although literature addressing the implications of the Reggio approach in Jewish settings is not extensive, there has been some writing on this topic, including an article by Lewin-Benham, a widely-published author of articles and books about Reggio educational philosophy. Considering the intersection between Reggio and Jewish content, Lewin-Benham (2009) observes that the absence of a mandate to cover specific material in the Reggio approach allows Jewish content to permeate the classroom in books, conversations, projects, and activities (p. 11).

The Jewish Early Childhood Education Initiative (JECEI), an organization founded in 2004 to support high-quality Jewish early childhood education programs, has specifically recognized the alignment of the two approaches; the JECEI website outlines common themes between Judaism and Reggio early childhood education, including the joining together of families in a continual journey, showing one another mutual support, honoring uniqueness, appreciating community, building on children's joy and sense of wonder, engaging in joint inquiry and dialogue, and sharing in responsibility to the surrounding world (Quality Jewish ECE: Reggio Emilia Inspiration/Jewish Values, n.d.). Reggio philosophy and Jewish teaching also share reflectiveness, careful examination of one's work, collaboration, concern for emotional well-being, and respect for each individual's rights (Lewin-Benham, 2009, p. 11; Goodman & Ryan, 2009).

The involvement of the family is a key similarity between the two approaches; according to JECEI, Jewish education can be strengthened and revitalized by the Reggio philosophy, since "drawing families into the school philosophically, practically, and spiritually is a paramount goal of both" (Lewin-Benham, 2009, p. 10). Lewin-Benham (2009) continues,

> In both school systems, evidence of family is pervasive; symbolically, in
> objects contributed by families – Jewish artifacts or, in Reggio, objects
> typical of the region; figuratively, in photos, drawings, and other images
> of family that appear throughout a classroom; and literally, in the frequent
> presence of family members in the classroom, both formally and
> informally (pp. 10-11).

Interestingly, the Reggio approach to documentation is not only closely aligned with Jewish values, but also to the work of one of the most prominent Jewish philosophers of the 20th century, Martin Buber. Buber, an intellectual giant often described as a modern sage and prophet, viewed education as a serious topic for study, and his philosophy of unity as described through the dialogical concept of "I-Thou" echoes much of the language of the Reggio educators. Weinstein (1975) summarizes the "I-Thou" attitude as the representation of the "supreme level of relationship which is exemplified through authentic communion," mutuality, and inclusiveness (pp. 20-21). Just as Reggio educators speak of the "hundred languages of children," Buber describes authentic human relationship as the kernel of education, processed through a dialogue that need not be verbal, and believed that "each person is endowed with the inalienable freedom to think, to know, to express himself freely on the basis of his own particular being" (pp. 35, 71). He modeled his own teaching on the work of Rabbi Dov Baer, the great Maggid (wandering preacher), in a non-directive, open-ended approach through which the teacher perceives himself "not as a dispenser of knowledge and truth, but as a catalyst whose task it is to inspire his students to search and keep searching" (pp. 76-77). Buber's educational views are consistent with the reflective practice of documentation; he believed that "the experience of inclusion is the core of [the] teacher-pupil relationship." He continued:

In this experience the teacher must not only be cognizant of the effect of his action upon his pupil, but he must also view himself and his influence through his pupil's eyes…. Inclusion does not mean merely recognizing the child's individuality, or experiencing him as a spiritual person, or acknowledging him as a person. Inclusion means that the teacher "catches himself 'from over there,' and feels how it affects one, how it affects this other human being" (Buber, 1971, p. 100, as cited in Weinstein, 1975, p. 38).

Buber's philosophical views of education and the role of the teacher are closely aligned with the practice of documentation. So, too, are the Reform Jewish values of the Nursery School program. Engaging in Reggio documentation practices in a Jewish setting does not mandate that explorations focus on Jewish holidays, observances, stories, artifacts, or themes; rather, it is the very practice of documentation that embodies deeply held Jewish values which are, in turn, made more meaningful to children through the reflective process.

iii. Involvement of families

Another theme that emerged during workgroup conversations was the involvement of families in the life of the Nursery School, and how we, as a school, need to ensure that families understand the richness of what is occurring in the classrooms. City Preschool and other Reggio-inspired programs accomplish this, in part, by inviting families to evening programs several times a year. During these programs, teachers present their documentation about an ongoing project. While these parents receive weekly and sometimes daily updates about school activities, these evening programs are specifically focused on "telling the story" of a long-term investigation with the children.

At the Nursery School there is a Parents' Evening in the beginning of the year at which parents visit the classrooms and teachers introduce themselves. Teachers regularly communicate with parents through weekly notes; photographs displayed online, sent in emails, and displayed at school; at twice-yearly conferences; at school-wide events and celebrations; and in telephone calls and casual doorway conversations. The school has recently found additional ways in which to involve parents over and above historical volunteer roles with fundraising, providing healthy snacks, and being a classroom guest on Shabbat, such as a recent vote at the Family Seder on what should be planted in the school garden. Although these points of connection with Nursery School families are important, they have not appeared to advance parent understanding with regard to documentation practices in the program.

The group agreed that, with regard to documentation, parents need greater understanding about what they are seeing. Educating parents would help them appreciate what teachers are trying to show "beyond the cuteness of the children;" with greater parent understanding would also come more appreciation for both the teaching and the learning occurring in the program (Documentation workgroup, March 19, 2014). Documentation's emphasis on the learning of the group requires some reframing for a parent community that tends to focus on individual children, as well, potentially easing the tension teachers sometimes face when planning family events such as Special Visitors' Day. On such occasions, parents have often indicated that they would like the children to prepare a project that can be taken home by each family, rather than joining in on a group project even if the group project is something in which the children are deeply invested (Documentation workgroup, May 1, 2014). As Amy said, "I know from a top-

down approach how much our school values the work that we do, but somehow that message isn't actually getting through to all of our families" (Documentation workgroup, March 19, 2014). If parents had a greater appreciation for the rich learning that occurs when children and adults collaborate as a group, parents would more deeply value such experiences when they share them with the class in person or see what took place on displayed panels of documentation.

Rebecca did see great enthusiasm from parents when she shared with them her idea for a long-term investigation about "hands." She found that they were very excited about the project, providing ideas, sending in books, and planning classroom visits and activities with the teachers (Documentation workgroup, April 9, 2014). As Rebecca described it, "This was definitely a different level of connecting" (Documentation workgroup, May 13, 2014). The workgroup agreed that finding more opportunities for parents to participate in the activities that are important to the children's life at school would have powerful implications. Amy was hopeful that this

> would create an entire cultural shift in terms of how we view parents in
> our community, which would have a dual impact because there would also
> have to be an expectation shift; but they would also be like partners, which
> can only help us as educators (Documentation workgroup, May 13, 2014).

The group concluded that the school should review the events that are planned for families and refine the focus so that they better reflect the values of the program. Retaining events based on tradition that are not connected to the ways in which the school has evolved leads to parent expectations that are similarly misaligned to the emerging philosophy of the program. Perhaps, the group agreed, the Nursery School should host exhibits of explorations instead of an annual art show, and invite special

visitors to take part in ongoing projects instead of creating a one-time craft project in honor of their visit. Moving beyond disconnected events to a more cohesive vision of family involvement in the ongoing work of the children will not only help parents find more meaning in the work of the school, but will also provide valuable opportunities for collaboration between school and home that will enrich the learning experience for all.

c. *The collaborative experience*

The workgroup strongly believed that collaboration between school and home was essential to the process of documentation and, inversely, that the process of documentation would help to build a collaborative process between school and home. Before such collaboration could take place *outside* of the Nursery School, however, increased collaboration must occur *within* the program. The workgroup process provided an invaluable model of the benefits that can be found in collaboration. Our work together led to increased questioning and reflection, fresh perspectives on classroom experiences, and a renewed willingness to take risks in teaching practices. In addition, the process of learning and working together generated further commitment to the practice of documentation and the collaborative process.

On a number of occasions, workgroup members asked the group questions about classroom experiences, and this led to rich discussion. For example, Rebecca mentioned at one meeting that she was struggling with some aspects of her ongoing investigation of "hands":

> I am having trouble figuring out how to really engage the children in the
> dialogue, the learning, the questions. We keep bringing the conversation
> back to hands, but I'm trying to figure out how to make that real

connection… I feel like I'm dancing around those a-ha moments but
haven't really gotten to it (Documentation workgroup, April 9, 2014).

The group responded quickly with suggestions and ideas for Rebecca, including making

books out of photographs of the children's hands, projecting photographs of the hands on

a wall or window shade, and sending the photo books home with the children to look at

with their families, followed by opportunities to record the children's comments and

thoughts about each of these experiences (Documentation workgroup, April 9, 2014).

At another workgroup session, Amy brought up an example from that day at

school, in which the class began to discuss whether they could eat flowers

(Documentation workgroup, May 1, 2014). This led to a lively discussion about whether

this topic could be explored further through photographs or sampling of edible flowers, or

whether this was a digression that could or should be disregarded due to lack of

relatedness to the ongoing class investigation or safety concerns. Following this

conversation, Amy shared her thoughts with the group:

> This moment here, where one teacher says, "I would share it," or maybe,
> "I wouldn't…" All three of you had different ideas, and we all ended up in
> a place where nobody was like, "No, I would never agree to that." We all
> ended up in a place where it's like, "Well, that's an interesting take on it."
> I want that conversation all the time. That dialogue with children. That
> dialogue with teachers. It's essential – and I don't get enough of it now.
> But I think it's essential (Documentation workgroup, May 1, 2014).

In addition to engaging in collaborative thinking about classroom experiences, the

workgroup also worked together to expand each other's understanding of the journal

articles and book chapters we had read. At our second session, Leah questioned an

example of documentation depicted in *Reflections on Documentation: A Discussion with*

Thought Leaders from Reggio Emilia (Turner & Wilson, 2010, pp. 5-13). In this article,

Tiziana Filippini explains a series of photographs that are part of a larger documentation

entitled Choreography for a Dance; she describes how the photographs were taken when

the children were "exploring, interacting, and entering into relationship" with a large

exhibit space (Turner & Wilson, 2010, p. 7). Filippini then discusses the questions raised

by Reggio educators in response to these photos: "What is the shape of running?" "What

is its directionality?" "What is at the heart of the children's experience of running?"

(Turner & Wilson, 2010, p. 7). Leah's response to this article was less abstract; she

wanted to know, "What happened to just playing? Do we *need* to make a study about

running?" (Documentation workgroup, April 9, 2014). While this could have been

simply an isolated funny, slightly snarky observation, it instead led to important dialogue

within the workgroup.

> Rebecca: I *loved* the photos of running. They captured a moment you would not necessarily think to capture. The movement, and the physicality, and the freedom that you see in these pictures – I was very taken by what I saw in those pictures… It's about documenting exuberant joy and noticing that and what elicits that reaction in children. To me that was an example of studying the joy and figuring out where one might go from that.

> Leah: When I think of it that way, I like it (Documentation workgroup, April 9, 2014).

Through this conversation, Leah became more aware of the potential that individual

moments may have for yielding something meaningful, as Wien et al (2011) suggest; in

addition, we all saw how the collaborative process has immense potential to provide new

mental lenses, so that educators may see things that might otherwise have gone unnoticed

(Moran & Tegano, 2005; Rinaldi, 2004; Suarez, 2010).

Not only did the group feel that the workgroup model was important to bring back

to the staff as the impetus for collaboration among teachers from different classrooms,

but workgroup members were excited to rejoin their teaching partners to reflect in a more

collaborative style on classroom experiences. As Amy stated,

> This is so valuable, and it needs to be built into what we do… because it's
> incredibly valuable and every time we sit here and talk I'm fantasizing
> about that meeting where [my co-teacher] and I sit down, play back the
> tape, think about questions we're going to ask the children. I have no idea
> when that would happen. But that's the fantasy… to be able to talk about
> what kinds of questions we want to use provoke learning. I want [us] to
> have different ideas, and to go back and forth, and think about which one
> are we going to try, but there just hasn't been time for that, and I wish
> there was (Documentation workgroup, May 1, 2014).

It was clear that the group was beginning to appreciate the value of diverse perspectives

in the documentation process, particularly with regard to the work with their co-teacher in

the classroom. Rebecca summed up her thoughts as follows:

> It is interesting to think about the partnership piece. One teacher may
> capture different moments than another, and have a different concept of
> what is valuable… Two people in the same room could have two totally
> different stories to tell (Documentation workgroup, May 13, 2014).

While diverse perspectives add tremendous value to the process of documentation, it

requires time to share those perspectives with one another, as the workgroup members

were keenly aware. The group noted that recognizing that there is no "right answer" to

questions about documentation is an important first step, but that the "multiplicity of right

answers" can only be explored through discussions with colleagues, and this process

takes time. Moreover, such collaborative practice among teaching teams could not occur

at the Nursery School without first creating opportunities for the entire staff to gain new

understandings about what documentation is, how it can be incorporated into their

classroom practice, and how it can enhance the learning experiences of both teachers and students.

d. Introduction of new technology to the documentation process

At the beginning of the very first workgroup session, I asked the group for their permission to record our sessions, and we spoke about the tools I was using for my documentation of the workgroup process. In addition to my laptop computer, on which I audio-recorded our discussions, I used an omnidirectional speaker to ensure that I was able to hear each member of the group speak clearly. I also showed the group a transcription pedal I was planning to use when listening to the recordings, so that I could control the digital recording playback with my foot while freeing my hands to write or type. The group was intrigued by my use of these tools and expressed interest in trying out the microphone during small group discussions with their classes. As Amy pointed out, having a clipboard in your hand can feel distancing, and teachers want to be more fully engaged with the children through the process of documentation, not less so. The use of a recorder could help with this; "it makes you feel more active when you can put down the implement and be fully in the moment" (Documentation workgroup, March 19, 2014). In addition, as Rebecca pointed out, using technology could also better allow teachers to balance between full engagement with the children and the specificity of detail that parents seek (Documentation workgroup, March 19, 2014).

Uses for technology in documentation were not discussed again until our second meeting, when Rebecca shared with the group a new purchase she had made – a tiny digital recorder. She excitedly reported on her experience with the recorder, which she had carried in her pocket to record during free play in the classroom:

"It's golden! I'm telling you. It's just there in your pocket and it's recording everything. You're not doing anything. You're not writing, you're not trying to watch a child and get a note and grab a camera, you're not holding a video camera. It's just there and going around with you. And I went home and listened to it, and I was like, "Oh, my G-d!" I did it a couple of days, for like a half-hour or something. I was very inspired by the articles. I just needed to see it spelled out…. The dialogue and what I'm hearing on this is like, I don't believe it! And I'm learning things! Like there's this one little guy in my class, and he is on there constantly, and I don't think I really realized how much he comes to me, how much he follows me or comes back to talk to me. His constant voice on here has taught me something about him I didn't know before (Documentation workgroup, April 9, 2014).

Leah, who described herself a number of times as having a tendency to be "technology-resistant," was intrigued by Rebecca's experience. She explained that she usually takes written notes throughout the day and types them up after school, but recently had been experimenting with photography to capture what is occurring in the classroom. She had also tried to use a mini-cassette recorder once to document a small group's discussion about chicks, and and recounted her surprise at how useful it had been.

I was nervous that it was a tool that in theory would be great but not really… but after I did that I was more comfortable with it. I felt like it was more realistic and I'm sure having the present-day version would make that even easier than having to stop and rewind (Documentation workgroup, April 9, 2014).

Amy noted that she tends to use her smartphone to take photographs and record in her classroom because the automatic streaming to her laptop saves time. She felt strongly that each teacher needs to figure out what works for them, and that this discovery process needs to be supported by "somebody to check back in and say, 'How is that working?' or 'Let me watch you use that for a while and let you know how I see you using it'" (Documentation workgroup, April 9, 2014).

After this discussion, I purchased two more digital recorders and gave them to Amy and Leah to use in their classrooms. I was very interested to hear if their experience would be similar to Rebecca's, and how the three of them would find the use of this new device helpful in the process of documenting their work with the children in their classes. At the next meeting, we had so much to discuss that we only spoke briefly about the recorders in the very last moments of the session. At that time, Amy said that she was enjoying experimenting with it, and that the sound quality was an improvement from her phone. Leah admitted that she was having trouble using the recorder and requested some help from the workgroup to learn how to operate it. Rebecca, who had shown such excitement about the recorder the previous session, surprised us all with her less enthusiastic feedback. She reported that she was now "less in love" with the recorder, as the novelty wore off and she began to struggle with larger questions about how to incorporate it into her practice (Documentation workgroup, May 1, 2014).

At the meeting that followed, however, Rebecca seemed to have renewed her affection for the digital recorder, finding that it could be a useful tool for both reflecting on moments in the classroom with children and on her own teaching:

> The first week I loved it; I loved listening to it, I loved putting it where I was not and capturing something. The second week I didn't love it so much because I would forget to turn it on, or then I'd have hours of stuff and then it wasn't so novel and there was too much stuff to listen to… so I figured it's going to take me a little while to figure this stuff out. But I found in preparation for conferences it's been a wonderful thing to have because it just brings you right back into the moment… I also got some feedback on *me*, and how I handled certain situations (Documentation workgroup, May 13, 2014).

Amy reported that her experience using the recorder was "kind of intense," because she felt like she needed to record everything (Documentation workgroup, May 19, 2014).

Ultimately she placed the recorder in a plant in the housekeeping area to capture language

from a child who is very quiet when her teachers are nearby, but "when she is engrossed

in play it all comes out" (Documentation workgroup, May 19, 2014). Through the use of

the recorder, Amy learned a great deal about this child and the ways in which she

interacts with other children in the class.

Leah reported that although she was still having trouble operating the recorder,

she was still interested in trying it. This led to an important discussion about how

practice evolves. As a group, we all recalled when cameras were introduced as a new

tool for us to use in our classrooms, and how difficult it was to determine where to focus

the lens, when to take the camera out and when to put it away, and how to print,

distribute, and display the pictures (Documentation workgroup, May 13, 2014).

Although we recognized that there is much for us to learn in terms of using cameras and

other recording devices in our documentation practice, we had each overcome the initial

hurdles with regard to the use of the camera in the classroom, and felt that this boded well

for our ability as a teaching community to integrate other tools into our work.

e. What have we learned, and how do we bring this back to the staff?

Over the course of our meetings, the workgroup touched on many topics, some

briefly, and others in great detail. One issue to which the group returned again and again

was how we could bring what we had discussed back to Temple Shalom Nursery School

in order to make a positive shift in the staff's approach to documentation. As discussed

earlier in this study, as the Director of the Nursery School, Patty has authority to make all

decisions related to the education of children in the program, including the underlying

teaching philosophy. One of the Nursery School's defining characteristics is that it is a Reform Jewish program; this is not subject to change (nor did the workgroup believe that it should change), but Patty has the discretion to determine how the practice of the teachers in the program is informed by the school's Reform Jewish values. Patty also has the ability, constrained only by budget and the availability of her staff, to set working hours, arrange staffing patterns, and implement professional development initiatives.

The workgroup would not be approaching Patty with an idea for a radical shift in teaching approach; to the contrary, it was Patty herself who originally brought the idea of incorporating inspirations from Reggio Emilia to the program. Further, Patty has provided a great deal of support for my work at Bank Street, including this independent study; she has consistently sought opportunities for the staff to advance their professional development and bring what they have learned back to the community, and expresses her genuine desire for Nursery School teachers to be innovative in their approach to providing the best learning environment for children. Accordingly, the workgroup concluded that Patty would likely be receptive to finding ways to bring our ideas to the staff for discussion and consideration.

The group had come to believe through the workgroup process that engaging in documentation would best be done as a community, rather than on an ad hoc basis where individual teachers who wish to pursue this approach do so, while others who are uninterested in documentation do not. Such consistency of approach requires that the teaching staff recognizes the importance of documentation to their practice, and that it is a value of the school as a whole. As Amy stated,

> It is interesting to know… that I'm on board! I love it! Let's do more of this! I can't sponge it up enough! I love it! But if 98% of our teaching staff is like, "Boo, it sucks," then how is it ever going to be successful? We were all chosen by the same person to work at this school together. So there should be some sort of commonality of value. And if 98% of the teachers think it's not valuable then either we're not conveying the value to the teachers that [Patty] has for the school, or we're not respecting what is valued (Documentation workgroup, March 19, 2014).

Thus, the question that must be asked of Patty and the staff is whether we are committed to this vision and to moving from our current practice toward a common goal of increased understanding and more consistent application of documentation practices. These questions cannot even be asked, however, until the staff has a better understanding of the goal to which we are considering directing ourselves.

Educational change theorists including Dewey, Schön, Kegan, Senge, and Schaefer have studied the dynamics that lead to successful implementation of change initiatives in school settings. Dewey (1991) posits that teachers continually change their practice by engaging in experimental testing in the classroom, while Schön (1983) argues that transformation is through a process of reflection on the personal experiences in the classroom that challenged teachers' assumptions (as cited in Vetter, 2012, pp 28-29). Kegan (1994) proposes a constructive developmental theory which states that change requires that individuals have "the desire to change, a shift in personal values, and transformation in the way [they] know" (as cited in Vetter, 2012, p. 29). Senge (1990) suggests that change requires individuals to become systems thinkers who see interrelationships, while Schaefer (1967) posits that teachers must become "scholar-researchers and scholar-practitioners who would become students of their own teaching practice" (as cited in Sergiovanni, 1996, pp. 148, 151).

When considering the change that would accompany a refocusing of the Nursery School staff on the practice of documentation, all of these theories must be considered. Without a linking of theory to practice, as Dewey suggests, teachers will be unable to apply the abstract aspects of documentation to their day-to-day life in the classroom. Reflecting on classroom experiences is the method by which transformation occurs, according to Schön, and is also the key to documentation practice. The desire to change and a shift in values which, according to Kegan, are prerequisites for change, can only occur with greater understanding, which links to Senge's and Schaefer's theories that change requires understanding of the larger picture and the ways in which one's own practice fits within it.

Fullan's (1993) approach to change, described as the "ready, fire, aim" sequence, is also instructive with regard to how we may wish to think about this shift in practice for the Nursery School (pp. 31-32). Fullan suggests that individuals must first decide to work together toward a common direction without bogging down the process with strategic planning ("ready"); next, the team can engage in inquiry and action that fosters learning and skills ("fire"), followed by a crystallization of new beliefs, formulation of mission and focused planning for the future ("aim"). In essence, once we determine that we, as a community, want to incorporate documentation into our day-to-day practice, we must engage in study and experimentation with documentation to better understand how it works in reality before we can determine how this affects future plans for the school.

According to Fullan (1993), it is only through a collaborative process of talking, trying things out, inquiry, and re-trying that skills develop, ideas become clearer, and the shared commitment is forged (p. 31). It would be a mistake, however, to assume that all

staff members would be equally open to change. As Kegan notes, people have an innate immunity to change that undermines our own intentions; in order to overcome this immunity, we must take a reflective stance toward our work through exploring our assumptions. It is only then that we will be able to make other choices in our work (Sparks, 2002, p. 69).

In one of our workgroup meetings, Amy mentioned a story she had heard on the radio about a vaccination study in which there was an unexpected result when mothers were given information about the importance of vaccinations. A blog about the study and its consequences revealed that, to the researchers' dismay, a significant percentage of the mothers who had originally been most anti-vaccination became even more vehemently anti-vaccine after being presented with information about how important vaccinations were for their children (Kahan, 2014, n.p.). This phenomenon, which Kahan (2014) identifies as the "dynamic of motivated reasoning," predicts that "individuals will 'push back' when presented information that challenges an identity-defining belief" (n.p.). The workgroup felt strongly that this dynamic should be considered in our approach to teachers about documentation; while some teachers, according to the survey results, are interested in learning more about the process and believe that it has value for early childhood education, others may be less receptive. For those teachers, challenging their belief system with a mandate to integrate a new type of practice into their classrooms may have a similar result – those teachers may become increasingly vehement in their beliefs that documentation should not and will not be part of their teaching approach.

Successful teacher change does not come when the decision to transform "comes from someone other than themselves"; people cannot be forced to think differently or

compelled to develop new skills (Vetter, 2012, p. 29; Fullan, 1993, p. 23). Teachers "need to have a sense of what they are about and what it is they are trying to accomplish" to have "a sense of the intelligibility behind their choices" (Starratt, 1995, p. 66). Thus, the essence of a learning organization, as described by Senge, Kleiner, Ross & Smith (1994), must be cultivated among the Nursery School staff, so that teachers develop new capacities, but also "fundamental shifts of mind, both individually and collectively" (p. 18, as cited in Wallace, Engel & Mooney, 1997, p. 169).

Patty's enthusiasm for staying at the forefront of educational theory might, on the surface, appear to characterize the Nursery School as a learning organization, "continually expanding its capacity to create its future" (Senge, 1990, p. 14, as cited in Sergiovanni, 1996, p. 169). Unfortunately, despite Patty's best intentions, some of the changes which she has sought to make in the school have been perceived by the staff as "add-onitis" or "projectitis," "where the latest interesting innovation is taken on without either a careful assessment of its strengths and weaknesses or of how or whether it can be integrated with what is already going on (Fullan, 1993, p. 51). This perception, Fullan (1993) continues, tends to divide teachers into three groups – the believers, the resisters, and those who are unsure (p. 52). Even if teachers are willing to comply with such innovations, they may utilize what Louis & Miles (1990) call "shallow coping" skills to reduce potential problems and conflicts by avoiding taking risks in practice (as cited in Fullan, 1993, p. 26).

Although many Nursery School teachers have attended Reggio-themed workshops and training seminars, and visited open houses at schools that have integrated Reggio practices into their programs, linking the information that has been garnered

through these experiences with the practice of teachers at Temple Shalom has been a challenge. Simply reporting back to the group after such workshops or visits that "it was great," or "you should have seen it," is not compelling enough to create the momentum for change. In addition, this may have unintentionally created a sense of exclusivity, conveying to Nursery School teachers that documentation practices are being done so much better elsewhere that perhaps achieving such levels of proficiency is unattainable – and therefore not worth striving for. Moving forward, we must instead approach documentation in light of the work currently being done at the Nursery School, identifying the values that documentation reflects and enhances, and therefore why we should find ways to adapt such practices to our own program.

Presenting the need to *adapt*, rather than *adopt,* documentation practices is key to the work that should be undertaken with the Nursery School staff. The approach of Reggio Emilia arose out of a historical and culturally-specific vision of life as a citizen in an Italian democracy; it cannot be simply replicated (Ben-Avie, Vogelstein, Goodman, Schaap & Bidol-Padva, n.d., pp. 13-14). As Rinaldi (2006) herself has stated, attempting to align oneself too closely or take a theory too wholly is a kind of imprisonment; programs must interpret Reggio practices for their specific needs, in their own context (as cited in McClure, 2008, p. 77). While the appeal of the Reggio approach is undeniable to many from a philosophical and aesthetic standpoint, early childhood professionals outside of Italy might be surprised to learn that Reggio educators have never intended for their philosophy to be reproduced elsewhere:

> Perhaps we should make more clear that Reggio itself is an interpretation
> of Reggio! The only thing that we can share with others is our values and
> the reason why and the way in which we try to challenge ourselves…. We
> have nothing to teach. The risk we have to avoid is the imperialistic

approach, for us and for them to believe that everything we touch becomes gold and is perfect (Rinaldi, 2006, pp. 197-198, as cited in McClure, 2008, p. 67).

The Nursery School staff has definitely felt the tension between aspiring to be "more Reggio" and the status quo. The workgroup agreed that the Reggio approach had been held up as iconic educational practice, but that we, as a staff, had not been able to effectively "make Reggio" happen at the Nursery School. More to the point, the workgroup wondered whether it *could* happen at the Nursery School, and whether it *should* happen at the Nursery School.

Rinaldi's views on the culturally-specific pedagogy of Reggio are instructive on this point; perhaps our goal as a program should not be to imitate Reggio, but to integrate aspects of Reggio practice into our own work in an authentic way. Ardzejewska and Coutts (2004) suggest that a philosophically-driven curriculum such as Reggio "is likely to encounter hurdles when the elements are transported to a different context," especially "when the philosophy is not well-understood" (p. 17). Fullan (2001) concurs, asserting that this lack of knowledge leads teachers to "'only assimilate the superficial trappings,' thus leading to limited success in the implementation of innovative ideas" (p. 37, as cited in Ardzejewska and Coutts, 2004, p. 17). Thus, instead of attempting to "do Reggio," we should look into our own practice to see what we are doing and how we can better convey it to each other and to our community.

As McClure (2008) suggests, if we view Reggio as an attitude, rather than an idealized concept, the Nursery School could then forge its own identity within its specific context (pp. 72-72).   In this way, the notion of the Italian model of "Reggio" is removed as an obstacle to the reflective approach, replaced instead with connectedness between

shared values and the Nursery School's practice. This will, in turn, create a congruence

that deepens understanding (Wallace et al., 1997, p. 17), a confluence of the here and

now that may eventually lead to what Csikszentmihalyi (1990) calls "flow" and Rodgers

and Raider-Roth (2006) term "presence" – the experience of bringing one's whole self to

full attention so as to perceive what is happening in the moment (as cited in Day, 2012, p.

18).

By considering the methods in which Nursery School teachers already engage or

are attempting to engage in documentation, we may thus effectively reintroduce the idea

of documentation to the staff. Amy suggested that it is important to recognize that the

staff may currently feel frustrated by the idea of documentation and therefore resistant:

> The reintroduction to documentation should not be, "You're still not
> getting it and you need to do it right," but rather, "Maybe there's a way we
> could do this that speaks to who we are as educators already and really
> reflects what we are doing in the classroom." This is not a new theory,
> and it would get buy-in from the onset because people won't feel bad
> about what they haven't understood or the difficulty they've had in trying
> to apply it in the past (Documentation workgroup, May 28, 2014).

Highlighting the ways in which our work with children values open-ended exploration,

invites discussion and dialogue, involves the community, is in an aesthetically pleasing

setting, engages parents, and encourages reflection, may shift existing perceptions among

the Nursery School staff, allowing teachers to perceive themselves not as failures at

adequately replicating Reggio practices, but rather as educators who are themselves

engaging in ongoing learning. Instead of seeking answers that are delineated by practices

elsewhere, engaging in authentic questioning will allow Nursery School teachers to

redefine their approach to documentation in our own practice (Applebee, 1996, p. 110).

We must realize that we do not have to try to recreate in literal fashion what is being done

in Reggio Emilia to benefit from the educational approach they have developed. Instead of "doing Reggio," in essence, we must undertake a long-term investigation into "doing us," and to the extent that lessons from Reggio can enrich our own practice and the learning experience of children, we should find ways to enfold such lessons into our own program.

This exploration will require that teachers "challenge and reconstruct deeply embedded practices and beliefs" (Borko & Putnam, 1996; Pennington, 2005; as cited in Vetter, 2012, p. 27), which takes time, ongoing commitment, and "the courage to embrace the long journey" (Starratt, 1995, p. 59). It will be critical for teachers to work collaboratively through this process; it is through sharing that a learning culture is created (Dixon, 2000, as cited in Fullan, 2001, p. 84). Moreover, the creation of a shared vision allows teachers to "tap into enormous sources of energy and enthusiasm," which gives "a focus and intensity to their work and provides the confidence that when they work together, they can solve the problems and overcome the obstacles" (Starratt, 1995, p. 45).

Many members of the Nursery School staff have already had a taste of this type of collaborative work, when Amy convened a series of "dialogues" during the summer of 2013 in which teachers could come together voluntarily to discuss issues of concern about the school. Amy reported to the workgroup that the dialogues "indicated a shift or growth" as people joined; the discussions were professional and thoughtful, and many teachers indicated after the dialogues had concluded that the opportunity to come together to have the conversations was perhaps more important than any one idea raised during each meeting (Documentation workgroup, May 1, 2014). Rebecca, Leah and Amy expressed their willingness to share with the staff their own positive experience within

the documentation workgroup, using the summer dialogues as an example of how our

staff had engaged in this type of collaborative work together in the past. As Leah

remarked,

> This model has been so great, because it has been a wonderful way to
> converse, and share ideas, and shape our ideas based on other people's
> ideas. And maybe there's an opportunity to create microversions of this
> when reintroducing this process to the staff (Documentation workgroup,
> May 13, 2014).

Rebecca also noted that past experiences at Reggio conferences and at school open

houses had left her feeling like she could not even articulate the questions that would help

her more fully understand what was being done in those programs, but participation in

the workgroup had made her feel that she is able to "speak the language more clearly";

she clarified that this is not necessarily because she now has the answers, but rather

because she can ask better questions (Documentation workgroup, May 13, 2014).

Perhaps, then, engaging in collaborative work on documentation with the Nursery School

staff as a whole will make better questioners of us all, creating an intentional process of

inquiry that enables us to be more accountable to the values that underlie our practices

and structures. In such a way, we may, together, "lift [our] heads out of the ongoing

stream, get [our] bearings, and chart a course, thus working against the feeling of being

directionless that often results from immersion in the full dailyness of school" (Trough,

2000, pp. 182-183).

After six sessions totaling over fifteen hours of discussion, reflection, and

questioning, the school year ended, and I spoke with the workgroup about bringing the

process to a close. To my surprise and great pleasure, Rebecca, Amy, and Leah insisted

that the workgroup was not ending, but rather taking a hiatus over the summer, to

reconvene in the fall. The process of meeting, they said, was so exciting, energizing, thought-provoking, and helpful that they did not want it to conclude (Documentation workgroup, June 11, 2014). The workgroup members felt instead that the workgroup should begin meeting again at the start of the school year, and that it should be opened to other staff members who want to join in the discussion. As had been discussed in previous meetings, the workgroup agreed that having voluntary meetings away from school would provide a forum to advance dialogue about documentation and time to review and discuss articles and classroom experiences in a manner that is currently not available during the school day (Documentation workgroup, May 1, 2014; June 11, 2014). Although this would be unpaid time, the group felt that staff members might be inclined to join as the benefits were felt among involved teachers, and that positive peer pressure might also be an effective way to increase participation (Documentation workgroup, May 13, 2014; June 11, 2014). An online forum could supplement these meetings to allow for participation for teachers who are unable to attend.

It is likely that this ongoing workgroup initiative would be enthusiastically supported by Patty, who informed me as my work on this independent study approached its conclusion that she had decided to make the idea of "documentation as a reflective process" a guide to discussion for the coming school year and beyond, and that she would be using some of the materials provided and questions raised in the workgroup as a starting point for work with the Nursery School staff. This was an exciting development, to say the least; it provides a foundation for the process of inquiry needed to make real changes in teaching practice, as well as to address opportunities to more closely align the work of the school with its values, such as reshaping the annual Art Show and Special

Visitors' Day, reconsidering the ways in which we determine what is placed on bulletin boards and in hallway displays, and developing family education programs about the role of documentation in the school. I found it incredibly meaningful in my own journey toward leadership in early childhood education that my work on this independent study has not only served as a catalyst for change within the workgroup, but that it had also created the impetus for Patty to "carry on a conversation with the problem" among the Nursery School staff (Schön, 1983, as cited in Starratt, 1995, p. 66). By officially reopening the dialogue about documentation and addressing the challenges of its practice head-on with Nursery School teachers, we may finally, together, redefine our approach to documentation in a way that reflects the values of our program in its own unique context, and deepen our collective sense of how documentation will prove integral to our ongoing learning as a community.

V. Conclusion

Through the practice of documentation, the educators of Reggio Emilia shine a light on the complexity of the learning experience in the early childhood classroom. The "hundred languages of children" are celebrated in a unique partnership between teachers and students, in which documentation supports the dynamic exchange of ideas between adults and children learning together. Turning on its head the transmission model of education, documentation allows for assessment of student growth on an expanded landscape where children's theories, hypotheses, imaginations, questions, and insights become the guide for new discoveries and deepening understanding. Documentation is the pedagogical foundation for the practice of seeing and hearing children both

individually and as a group, and the process by which teachers may record, reflect, and communicate what children come to know in their daily lives at school. The display of the meaning-making efforts of children through documentation panels provides a unique narrative of the learning experience; it allows children, teachers, families, and the larger community to enter into the conversation, thereby adding additional perspectives and further enriching the process.

The practice of documentation, as a method of co-constructing knowledge, is a rich and intentional approach to deep engagement in learning that has value beyond its context within the Reggio Emilia municipal school system. Carlina Rinaldi's statement that "Reggio itself is an interpretation of Reggio" (2006, pp. 197-198, as cited in McClure, 2008, p. 67) gives tacit permission for teachers outside of Reggio Emilia to reinterpret the practice of documentation in the educational language of their own setting. In the case of Temple Shalom Nursery School, this perspective on documentation must be integral to the teachers' renewed focus on the reflective process, so that we may be freed of the sense that we must, in some way, "do Reggio" in our program and, instead, work collaboratively to shape the approach into one unique to the Nursery School, aligned with our values, and becoming part of the fabric of our work.

Most importantly, the pursuit of effective documentation practices does not require teachers to become experts in documentation itself, but rather that they become expert in *wondering* about documentation. Through documentation, educators are encouraged to wonder with children; not to have the answers, but to join the children on their journey. As Tarr (2010) and Turner and Wilson (2010) suggest, this journey must begin with curiosity and the desire to generate inquiry, rather than seeking the expected.

Similarly, learning about documentation does not result in a final moment of knowledge, but rather the generation of more questions. As educators explore these questions, they can join their young learners in becoming experts in wondering, leading to a lasting sense of excitement about discovery that will enrich the lives of teachers, children, families, and the larger community.

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Tables

Table 1.

Nursery School Responses to Survey Question 7: "What do you see as the greatest challenges in incorporating Reggio philosophies and practices in your teaching?"

Challenge identified	% of respondents who noted
Time – more time needed for individual reflection, collaboration, development and creation of documentation panels and artifacts, setting up materials, planning, and sharing work with others	45%
Logistics – lack of availability of materials and resources, interfering with classroom management, conflicting scheduling requirements	45%
Incorporation into the program – support for Reggio approach among other teaching philosophies, "consensus on how much of this we are willing to do as a school"	35%
"Imitation vs. inspiration" – understanding that Reggio goes beyond the way something looks	15%
Choosing which ideas to pursue and document	15%
Lack of collaboration – need to share ideas among staff	10%
Staying aware of adult biases and judgments	10%
The materials are not interesting to children	5%

Table 2.

Responses to Survey Question 8: "What do you believe is the purpose of documentation?"

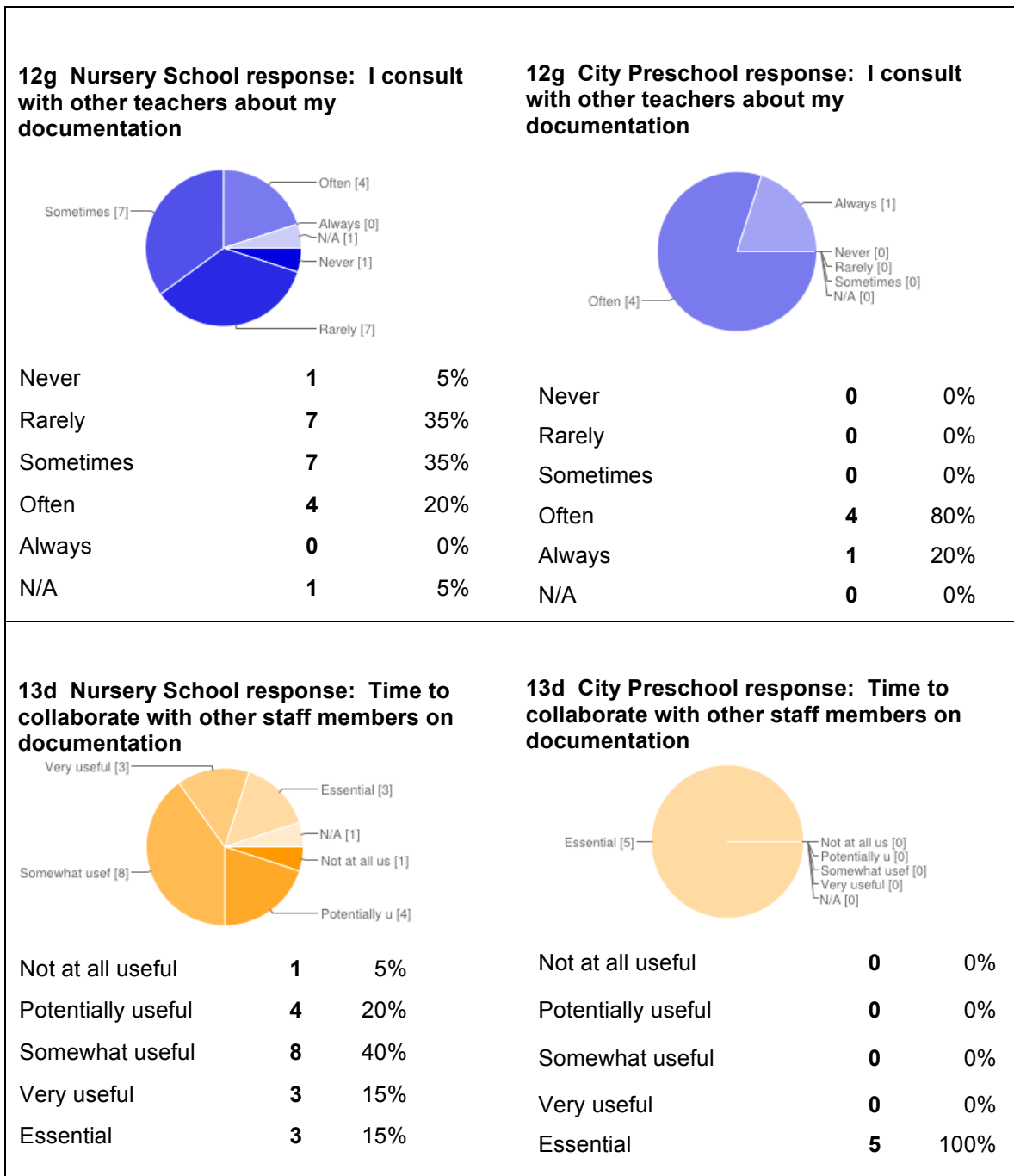| Purposes of documentation	% of respondents who noted	
	Nursery School	City Preschool
Communication with people outside the classroom – parents, other teachers, administration and/or visitors	80%	60%
Tool for reflection on learning with children	30%	60%
Extending understanding of a project or experience	10%	60%
Generating ideas for future exploration	25%	60%
Creating an institutional memory/archive	5%	40%
Tracking children's growth/assessment	20%	40%
Reflecting on own teaching	35%	20%
Sends message to children that work is valued	20%	-
Helps administration guide teachers' practice	5%	-
"Not sure – but definitely some benefits for children"	5%	-

Table 3.

Responses to Survey Question 9: "When you think of documentation, what are three words that come to mind?"

Temple Shalom Nursery School	City Preschool
Challenging (2)	Challenging
Learning	Learning (2)

Communication-themed words: (6 total)
    Informative (2)
    Convey
    Describing
    Showing
    Explaining
	Communication (and related words): (3 total)
	    Sharing work with others
	    Readability

Visibility	Visibility-themed phrases:
	    Making the quickly passing moments
	    visible

Photographs (6)	
Time (6)	
Process (5)	
Language sample (2)	
Bulletin boards	
Poster board	
Illumination	
Beautiful display	
Resource for teacher evaluation	
Powerful	
Educational	
Appearance	
Pictures	
Words	
Clear	
Organic	
Professional	
Important	
Captions	
Layout	
Videos	
Observing vs. participating	
Atelierista	
Interesting	
Too much	
Thoughtful	
Insight	
	Reflection/reflective (2)
	Abilities/strengths of children
	Ongoing
	Listening

Table 4.

*Comparison of responses by Nursery School and City Preschool teachers to Survey Questions 12g and 13d.*

12g Nursery School response: I consult with other teachers about my documentation

Never	**1**	5%
Rarely	**7**	35%
Sometimes	**7**	35%
Often	**4**	20%
Always	**0**	0%
N/A	**1**	5%

12g City Preschool response: I consult with other teachers about my documentation

Never	**0**	0%
Rarely	**0**	0%
Sometimes	**0**	0%
Often	**4**	80%
Always	**1**	20%
N/A	**0**	0%

13d Nursery School response: Time to collaborate with other staff members on documentation

Not at all useful	**1**	5%
Potentially useful	**4**	20%
Somewhat useful	**8**	40%
Very useful	**3**	15%
Essential	**3**	15%

13d City Preschool response: Time to collaborate with other staff members on documentation

Not at all useful	**0**	0%
Potentially useful	**0**	0%
Somewhat useful	**0**	0%
Very useful	**0**	0%
Essential	**5**	100%

Figures

Figure 1.
Display with photographs, language samples, and teacher description of a class field trip.
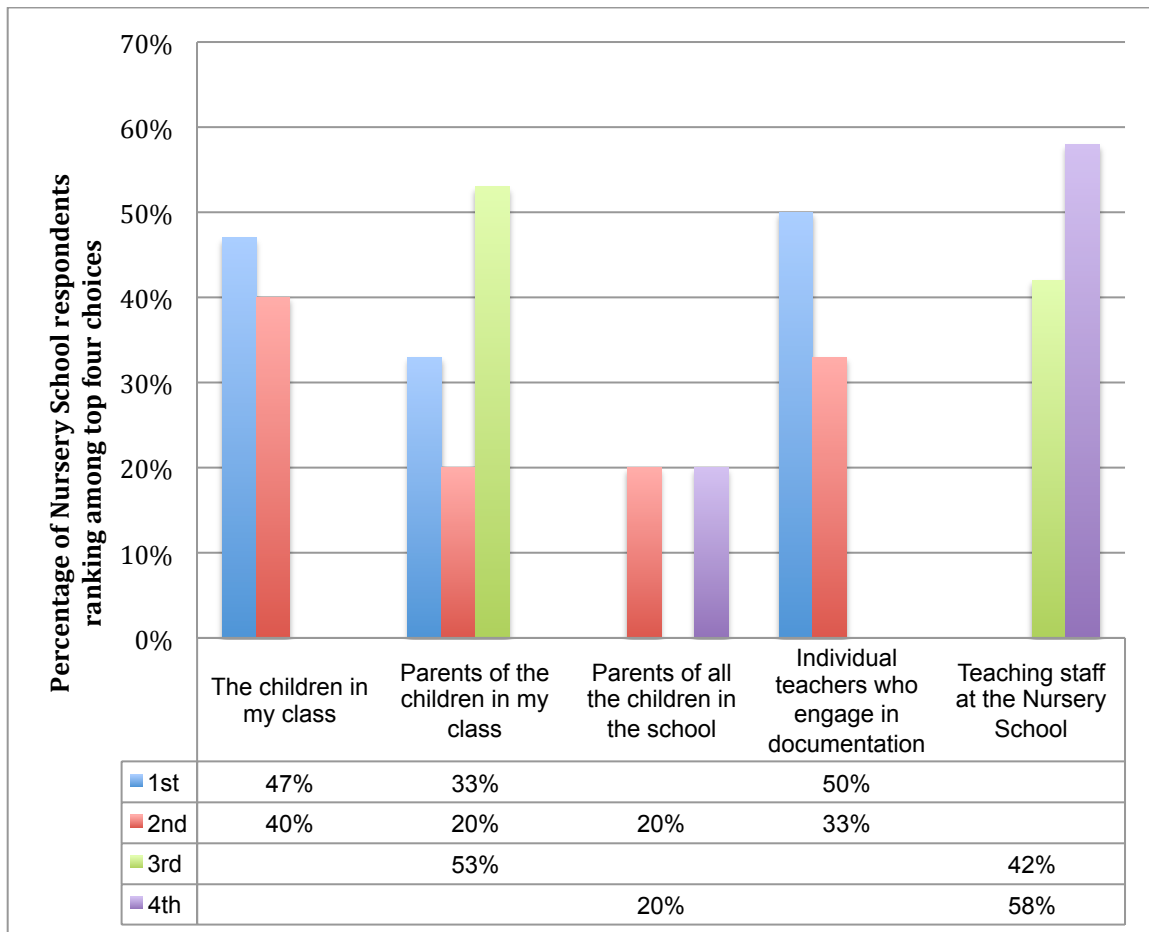
Figure 2.
Display of a loom project with photographs and teacher description.
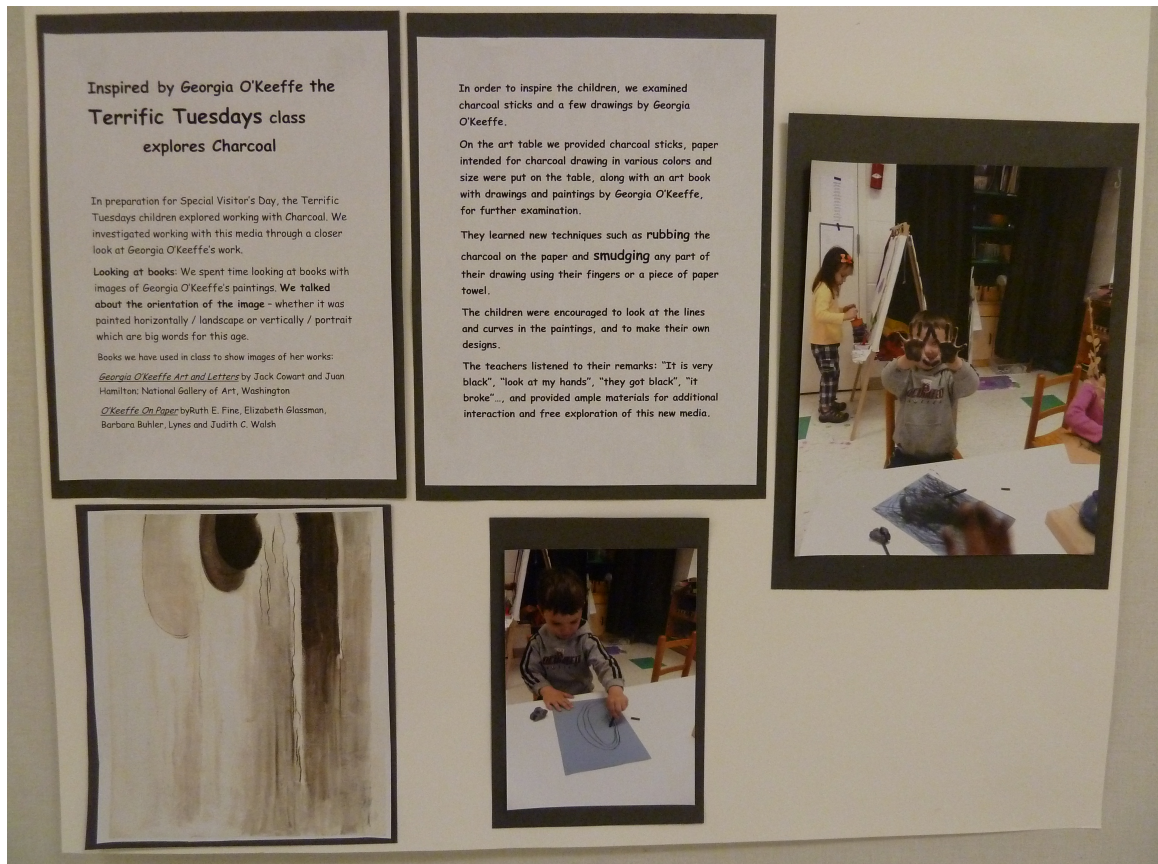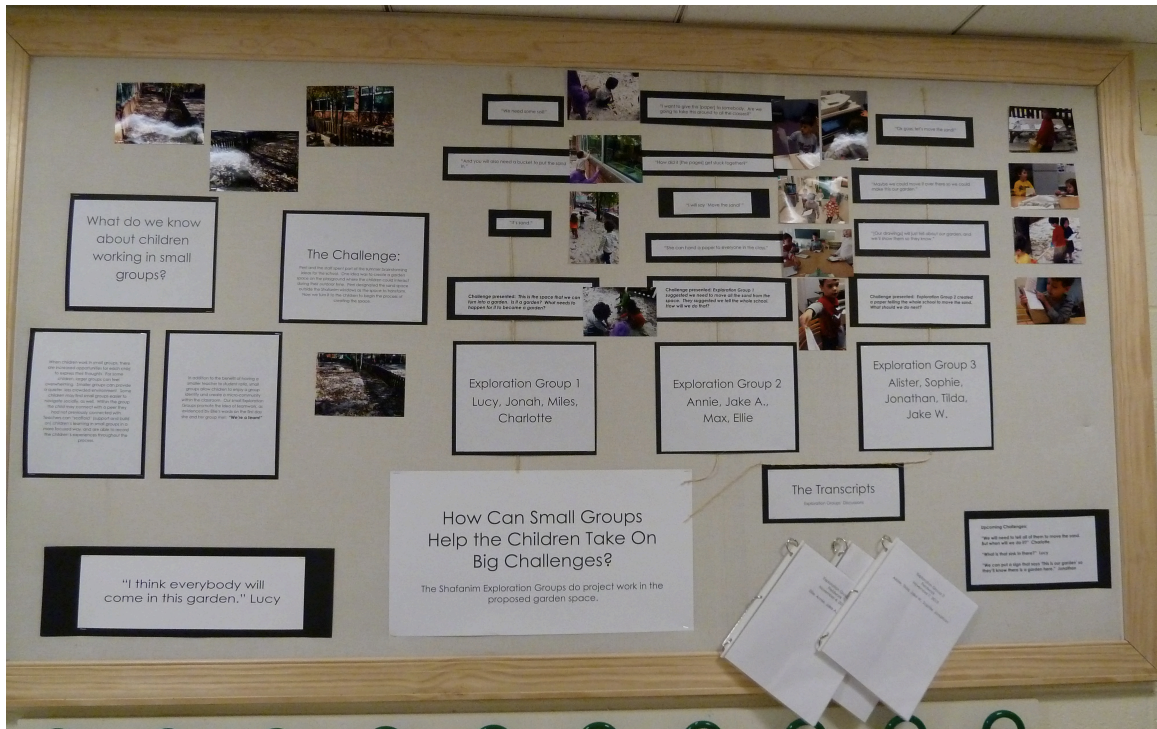
Figure 3.
Display of class exploration of charcoal with photographs and teacher description.
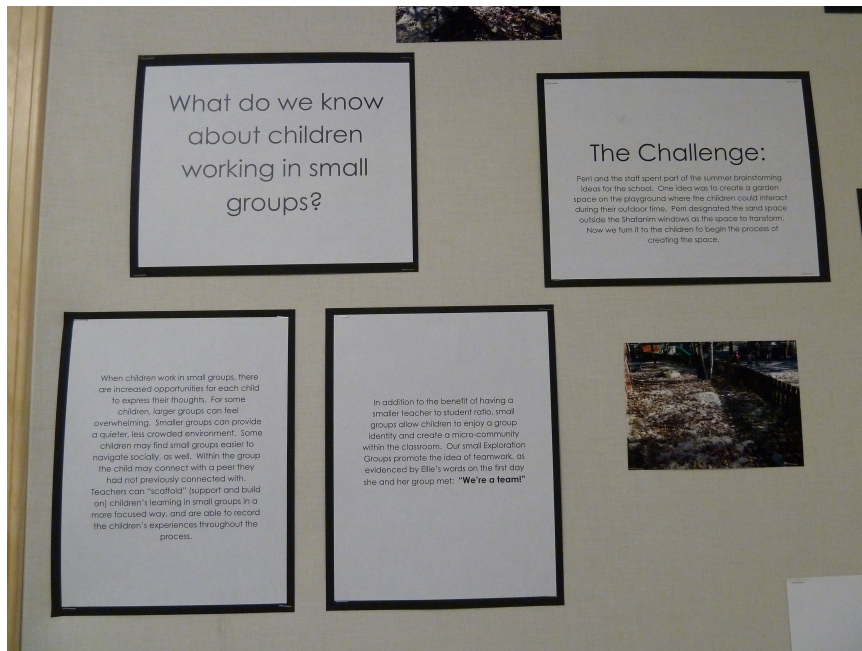
Figure 4.
Nursery School responses to Survey question 10: "Who benefits most from the documentation process?" This multiple bar graph and data table illustrates the five groups most frequently ranked first, second, third and fourth.

	The children in my class	Parents of the children in my class	Parents of all the children in the school	Individual teachers who engage in documentation	Teaching staff at the Nursery School
1st	47%	33%		50%	
2nd	40%	20%	20%	33%	
3rd		53%			42%
4th			20%		58%

Figure 5a.
Documentation of Amy's class investigation.

Figure 5b.
Detail of Amy's documentation.

Appendices

Appendix A.

<u>[Nursery School] Staff Survey</u>

Thank you so much for completing this survey! Your honest responses will be very helpful to me as I explore issues related to Reggio documentation practices for my Master's project.

*Please place your completed survey in its envelope into
Ali Hurewitz's teacher mailbox by <u>Wednesday, February 19</u>.*

1. **How long have you been an early childhood educator?**

    _____ years

2. **How long have you taught at [the Nursery School]?**

    _____ years

3. **What age(s) are the children you currently teach?**

    _____ years old

4. **Have you taught in any other program that has included Reggio philosophies and practices?**

    (   ) Yes   (   ) No

5. **Do you believe that there are benefits to incorporating Reggio philosophies and practices in your teaching?**

    (   ) Yes   (   ) No

6. **If YES to the above, what do you think are the benefits of incorporating Reggio philosophies and practices in your teaching?**

7.   **What do you see as the greatest challenges in incorporating Reggio philosophies and practices in your teaching?**

8.   **What do you believe is the purpose of documentation?**

9.   **When you think of documentation, what are three words that come to mind?**

10. **It is said that all of the following groups may benefit from documentation. What is your opinion? Who do you believe stands to benefit most from the documentation process?**

     Please rank, in order, how you believe these groups may benefit from the documentation process:

     ____   Individual teachers who engage in documentation
     ____   The teaching staff at [the Nursery School]
     ____   The children in my class
     ____   The children in the entire school
     ____   Parents of the children in my class
     ____   Parents of all children in the school
     ____   The school's reputation
     ____   Temple [Shalom] members
     ____   The larger Washington, D.C. community
     ____   Visitors to [the Nursery School]
     ____   The practice of early childhood education
     ____   Other _____
OR ____   None of the above

11.   **If you have done documentation, what has the process been like for you?**

12.   **How would you rate the following statements with regard to you and your work at [the Nursery School]:**

a.   **I understand what the Reggio Emilia practice of documentation is**

1	2 N/A	3	4	5
Most strongly disagree	Disagree	Neutral	Agree	Most strongly agree

b.   **I want to understand more about documentation**

1	2 N/A	3	4	5
Most strongly disagree	Disagree	Neutral	Agree	Most strongly agree

c.   **Documentation is essential to my teaching practice**

1	2 N/A	3	4	5
Most strongly disagree	Disagree	Neutral	Agree	Most strongly agree

d.   **Documentation is integrated into my day-to-day work in the classroom**

1	2	3	4	5
	N/A			
Never	Rarely	Sometimes	Often	Always

e.   **I would like to further integrate the practice of documentation into my day-to-day work in the classroom**

1	2	3	4	5
	N/A			
Most strongly disagree	Disagree	Neutral	Agree	Most strongly agree

f.   **I include the children in my class in the documentation process**

1	2	3	4	5
	N/A			
Never	Rarely	Sometimes	Often	Always

g.   **I consult with other teachers about my documentation**

1	2	3	4	5
	N/A			
Never	Rarely	Sometimes	Often	Always

h.   **I would like to consult with other teachers about my documentation**

1	2	3	4	5
	N/A			
Most strongly disagree	Disagree	Neutral	Agree	Most strongly agree

i.   **I share documentation with parents while it is in progress**

1	2	3	4	5
	N/A			
Never	Rarely	Sometimes	Often	Always

j.   **I share completed documentation with parents**

1	2	3	4	5
	N/A			
Never	Rarely	Sometimes	Often	Always

13.   **How would you rate the following statements with regard to resources that might aid in your development of documentation skills?**

a.   **Time outside the classroom *during* the school day for teams to work on documentation**

1	2	3	4	5	N/A
Not at all useful	Potentially useful	Somewhat useful	Very useful	Essential	

b.   **Time outside the classroom *after* the school day for teams to work on documentation**

1	2	3	4	5	N/A
Not at all useful	Potentially useful	Somewhat useful	Very useful	Essential	

c.   **Additional staffing support in the classroom**

1	2	3	4	5	N/A
Not at all useful	Potentially useful	Somewhat useful	Very useful	Essential	

d. **Time to collaborate with other staff members on documentation**

1	2	3	4	5	N/A
Not at all useful	Potentially useful	Somewhat useful	Very useful	Essential	

e. **Group training in documentation philosophy and Reggio practices**

1	2	3	4	5	N/A
Not at all useful	Potentially useful	Somewhat useful	Very useful	Essential	

f. **Individualized training in documentation philosophy and Reggio practices**

1	2	3	4	5	N/A
Not at all useful	Potentially useful	Somewhat useful	Very useful	Essential	

g. **More access to articles and research about documentation practices for independent reading**

1	2	3	4	5	N/A
Not at all useful	Potentially useful	Somewhat useful	Very useful	Essential	

h. **More access to technology for documentation (computers, cameras, video recorders, audio recorders, iPads, etc.)**

1	2	3	4	5	N/A
Not at all useful	Potentially useful	Somewhat useful	Very useful	Essential	

i. **Group training in the uses of documentation technology**

1	2	3	4	5	N/A
Not at all useful	Potentially useful	Somewhat useful	Very useful	Essential	

j.   **Individualized training in the uses of documentation technology**

1	2	3	4	5	N/A
Not at all useful	Potentially useful	Somewhat useful	Very useful	Essential	

k.   **More availability of documentation panel materials (paper, photo paper, etc.)**

1	2	3	4	5	N/A
Not at all useful	Potentially useful	Somewhat useful	Very useful	Essential	

l.   **Group training in developing documentation design techniques**

1	2	3	4	5	N/A
Not at all useful	Potentially useful	Somewhat useful	Very useful	Essential	

m.   **Individualized support in developing documentation design techniques**

1	2	3	4	5	N/A
Not at all useful	Potentially useful	Somewhat useful	Very useful	Essential	

n.   **Writing support for written elements of documentation**

1	2	3	4	5	N/A
Not at all useful	Potentially useful	Somewhat useful	Very useful	Essential	

14. **Please fill in the blank**:

If I had...

_____

_____ ,

I believe I would be able to further develop my practice of documentation.

PLEASE SEE NEXT PAGE FOR FOLLOW-UP QUESTIONS

Appendix B.

Attachment to Nursery School Survey.

If you would be willing to be interviewed in person about your responses to this survey, please write your name and preferred method of contact below:

_____

_____

If you would be interested in participating in Ali's action research project focused on documentation, please write your name and preferred method of contact below:

_____

_____

If you would like to speak with Ali in further detail before indicating your interest in participating, please write your name and preferred method of contact below:

_____

_____

IF YOU WISH YOUR SURVEY RESPONSES TO REMAIN ANONYMOUS, please detach this sheet from your survey and place it in the envelope in Ali's mailbox marked "Further Interest"

Thank you again for participating in this survey!

Appendix C.

Cover Letter to Nursery School Survey.

February 12, 2014

Dear Teachers,

Thank you again for your willingness to complete the attached survey for my Master's project. As I mentioned at the staff meeting on Monday, my work at Bank Street in the Early Childhood Leadership program has given me the opportunity to research and design an in-depth exploration into an area of my choosing. My work here at [the Nursery School] has inspired me in countless ways, but I have been particularly intrigued by our ongoing efforts to integrate the philosophies and practices of Reggio Emilia into our program.

I have personally found that one of the most difficult Reggio concepts to understand and implement is that of documentation. In the past months I have thought a great deal about what documentation means, what we have to gain from its practice, and how we might go about doing it in a way that "fits" within the [Nursery School] world. Your completion of this survey will give me an idea about what *you* think about documentation. I hope that you find the questions interesting and thoughtful, and that your curiosity is piqued with regard to my ongoing work. As I mentioned, I would like to create a workshop with some volunteers to do a more in-depth study of the documentation process, and I can't wait for the opportunity to work with those of you who are interested!

Please complete the survey by NEXT WEDNESDAY and place it, in the envelope, in my school mailbox. Thank you again for your time, your thoughtful and honest responses to the survey and, hopefully, your willingness to join me on this journey!

With great appreciation,

Ali Hurewitz

Appendix D.

[City Preschool] Staff Survey

Thank you so much for completing this survey! Your honest responses will be very helpful to me as I explore issues related to Reggio documentation practices for my Master's project.

Please complete the survey and return to [Jessica] or email to [my email address] by Friday, April 20.

1. **How long have you been an early childhood educator?**

   _____ years

2. **How long have you taught at [City Preschool]?**

   _____ years

3. **What age(s) are the children you currently teach?**

   _____ years old

4. **Have you taught in any other program that has included Reggio philosophies and practices?**

   (   ) Yes   (   ) No

5. **Do you believe that there are benefits to incorporating Reggio philosophies and practices in your teaching?**

   (   ) Yes   (   ) No

6. **If YES to the above, what do you think are the benefits of incorporating Reggio philosophies and practices in your teaching?**

7. **What do you see as the greatest challenges in incorporating Reggio philosophies and practices in your teaching?**

8. **What do you believe is the purpose of documentation?**

9. **When you think of documentation, what are three words that come to mind?**

10. **It is said that all of the following groups may benefit from documentation. What is your opinion? Who do you believe stands to benefit most from the documentation process?**

    Please rank, in order, how you believe these groups may benefit from the documentation process:

    ___ Individual teachers who engage in documentation
    ___ The teaching staff at [City Preschool]
    ___ The children in my class
    ___ The children in the entire school
    ___ Parents of the children in my class
    ___ Parents of all children in the school
    ___ The school's reputation
    ___ The larger Washington, D.C. community
    ___ Visitors to [City Preschool]
    ___ The practice of early childhood education
    ___ Other _____
    OR ___ None of the above

11.   **What has the documentation process been like for you?**

12.   **How would you rate the following statements with regard to you and your work at [City Preschool]:**

a.   **I understand what the Reggio Emilia practice of documentation is**

1	2	3	4	5
	N/A			
Most strongly disagree	Disagree	Neutral	Agree	Most strongly agree

b.   **I want to understand more about documentation**

1	2	3	4	5
	N/A			
Most strongly disagree	Disagree	Neutral	Agree	Most strongly agree

c.   **Documentation is essential to my teaching practice**

1	2	3	4	5
	N/A			
Most strongly disagree	Disagree	Neutral	Agree	Most strongly agree

d. **Documentation is integrated into my day-to-day work in the classroom**

1	2 N/A	3	4	5
Never	Rarely	Sometimes	Often	Always

e. **I would like to further integrate the practice of documentation into my day-to-day work in the classroom**

1	2 N/A	3	4	5
Most strongly disagree	Disagree	Neutral	Agree	Most strongly agree

f. **I include the children in my class in the documentation process**

1	2 N/A	3	4	5
Never	Rarely	Sometimes	Often	Always

g. **I consult with other teachers about my documentation**

1	2 N/A	3	4	5
Never	Rarely	Sometimes	Often	Always

h. **I would like to consult with other teachers about my documentation**

1	2 N/A	3	4	5
Most strongly disagree	Disagree	Neutral	Agree	Most strongly agree

i.   **I share documentation with parents while it is in progress**

1	2	3	4	5
	N/A			
Never	Rarely	Sometimes	Often	Always

j.   **I share completed documentation with parents**

1	2	3	4	5
	N/A			
Never	Rarely	Sometimes	Often	Always

13. **How would you rate the following statements with regard to resources that may support your documentation practice?**

a.   **Time outside the classroom *during* the school day for teachers to work on documentation**

1	2	3	4	5	N/A
Not at all useful	Potentially useful	Somewhat useful	Very useful	Essential	

b.   **Time outside the classroom *after* the school day for teachers to work on documentation**

1	2	3	4	5	N/A
Not at all useful	Potentially useful	Somewhat useful	Very useful	Essential	

c.   **Additional staffing support in the classroom**

1	2	3	4	5	N/A
Not at all useful	Potentially useful	Somewhat useful	Very useful	Essential	

d.   **Time to collaborate with other staff members on documentation**

1	2	3	4	5	N/A
Not at all useful	Potentially useful	Somewhat useful	Very useful	Essential	

e.   **Group training in documentation philosophy and Reggio practices**

1	2	3	4	5	N/A
Not at all useful	Potentially useful	Somewhat useful	Very useful	Essential	

f.   **Individualized training in documentation philosophy and Reggio practices**

1	2	3	4	5	N/A
Not at all useful	Potentially useful	Somewhat useful	Very useful	Essential	

g.   **Access to articles and research about documentation practices for independent reading**

1	2	3	4	5	N/A
Not at all useful	Potentially useful	Somewhat useful	Very useful	Essential	

h.   **Access to technology for documentation (computers, cameras, video recorders, audio recorders, iPads, etc.)**

1	2	3	4	5	N/A
Not at all useful	Potentially useful	Somewhat useful	Very useful	Essential	

i.   **Group training in the uses of documentation technology**

1	2	3	4	5	N/A
Not at all useful	Potentially useful	Somewhat useful	Very useful	Essential	

j. **Individualized training in the uses of documentation technology**

1	2	3	4	5	N/A
Not at all useful	Potentially useful	Somewhat useful	Very useful	Essential	

k. **Availability of documentation panel materials (paper, photo paper, etc.)**

1	2	3	4	5	N/A
Not at all useful	Potentially useful	Somewhat useful	Very useful	Essential	

l. **Group training in developing documentation design techniques**

1	2	3	4	5	N/A
Not at all useful	Potentially useful	Somewhat useful	Very useful	Essential	

m. **Individualized support in developing documentation design techniques**

1	2	3	4	5	N/A
Not at all useful	Potentially useful	Somewhat useful	Very useful	Essential	

n. **Writing support for written elements of documentation**

1	2	3	4	5	N/A
Not at all useful	Potentially useful	Somewhat useful	Very useful	Essential	

14. **Please fill in the blank**:

If I had…

_____

_____ ,

I believe I would be able to further develop my practice of documentation.

PLEASE SEE NEXT PAGE FOR FOLLOW-UP QUESTIONS

Appendix E.

April 8, 2014

Dear Teachers,

Thank you again for your willingness to complete the attached survey for my Master's project. My work at Bank Street in the Early Childhood Leadership program has given me the opportunity to research and design an in-depth exploration into an area of my choosing. I have been particularly intrigued by the efforts of many US preschool programs to integrate the philosophies and practices of Reggio Emilia.

I have personally found in my experience as a teacher and consultant at [the Nursery School] that one of the most difficult Reggio concepts to understand and implement is that of documentation. In the past months I have thought a great deal about what documentation means and what we have to gain from its practice. Your completion of this survey will give me an idea about what **you** think about documentation.

Please complete the survey by _Friday, April 30_. You may either return it in hard copy to [Jessica] or email it as an attachment to [my email address].

Thank you again for your time and your thoughtful and honest responses to the survey.

With great appreciation,

Ali Hurewitz

Appendix F.

Attachment to City Preschool Survey.

If you would be willing to be interviewed in person or by telephone about your responses to this survey, please write your name and preferred method of contact below:

_____

_____

IF YOU WISH YOUR SURVEY RESPONSES TO REMAIN ANONYMOUS, please detach this sheet from your survey and submit separately.

Thank you again for participating in this survey!

Appendix G.

City Preschool Responses to Survey Question 12: How would you rate the following statements with regard to you and your work at City Preschool?

**12a I understand what the Reggio Emilia practice of documentation is**

Most strongly disgree	**0**	0 %
Disagree	**0**	0%
Neutral	**0**	0%
Agree	**3**	60%
Most strongly agree	**2**	40%

12b I want to understand more about documentation

Most strongly disagree	**0**	0%
Disagree	**0**	0%
Neutral	**0**	0%
Agree	**2**	40%
Most strongly agree	**3**	60%

12c Documentation is essential to my teaching practice

Most strongly [5]

Most strongly [0]
Disagree [0]
Neutral [0]
Agree [0]
N/A [0]
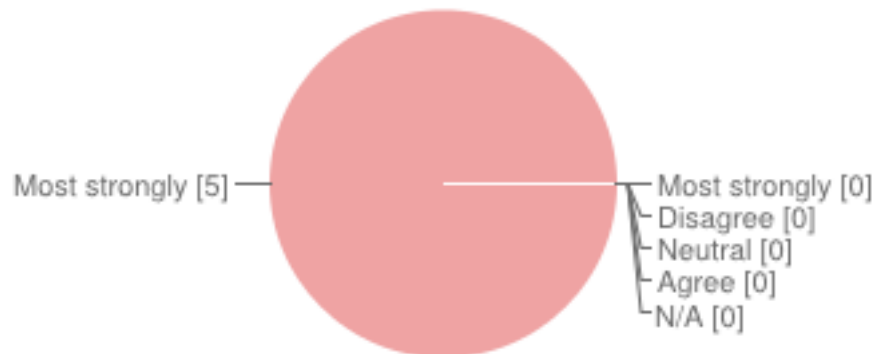
Most strongly disagree	**0**	0%
Disagree	**0**	0%
Neutral	**0**	0%
Agree	**0**	0%
Most strongly agree	**5**	100%

12d Documentation is integrated into my day-to-day work in the classroom

Always [3]

Never [0]
Rarely [0]
Sometimes [0]
N/A [0]
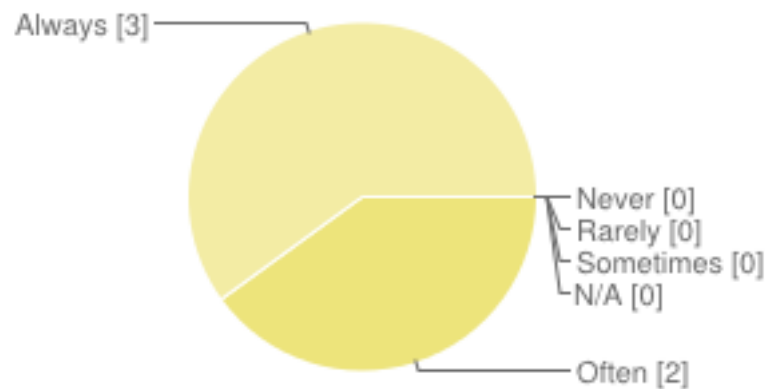
Often [2]

Never	**0**	0%
Rarely	**0**	0%
Sometimes	**0**	0%
Often	**2**	40%
Always	**3**	60%

**12e I would like to further integrate the practice of documentation into my day-to-day work in the classroom**

Most strongly disagree	**0**	0%
Disagree	**0**	0%
Neutral	**0**	0%
Agree	**2**	40%
Most strongly agree	**3**	60%

12f I include the children in my class in the documentation process
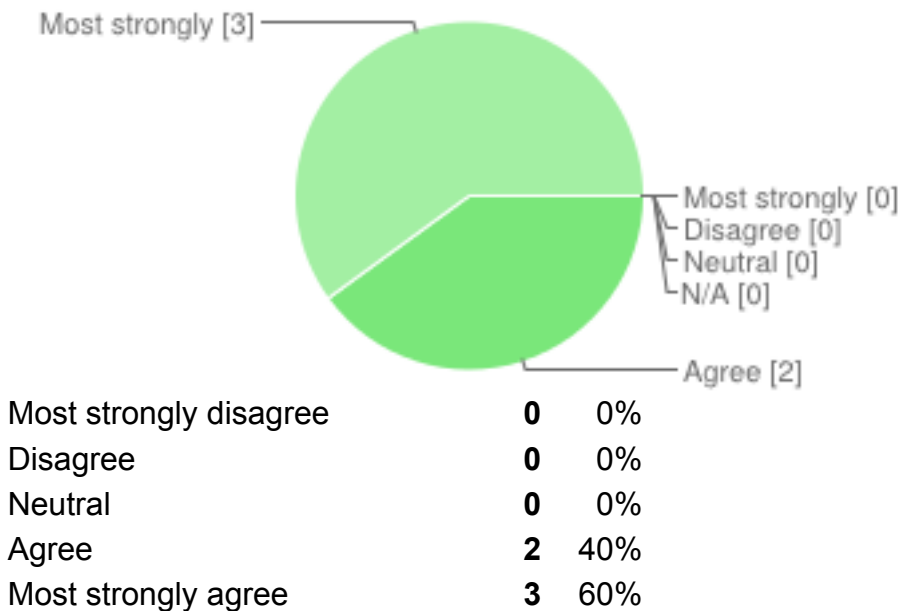
Never	**0**	0%
Rarely	**0**	0%
Sometimes	**3**	60%
Often	**2**	40%
Always	**0**	0%
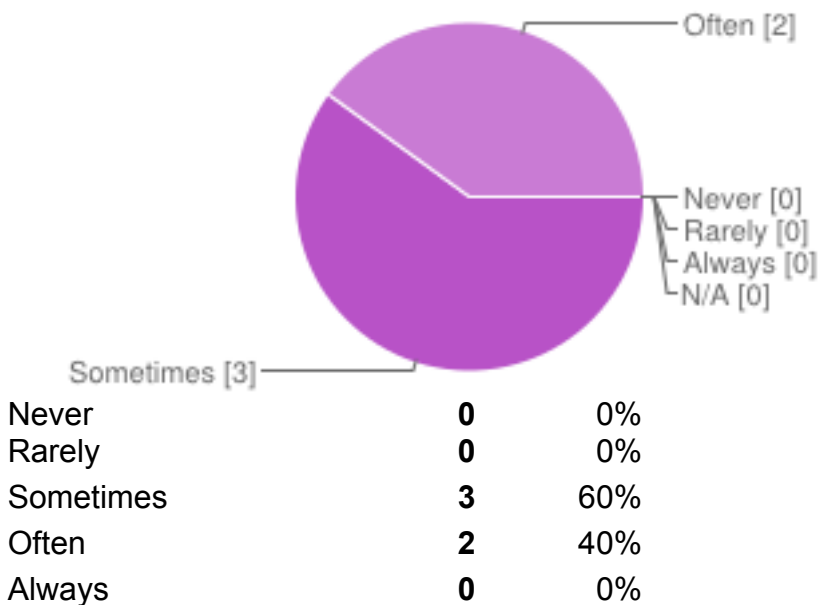
12g I consult with other teachers about my documentation
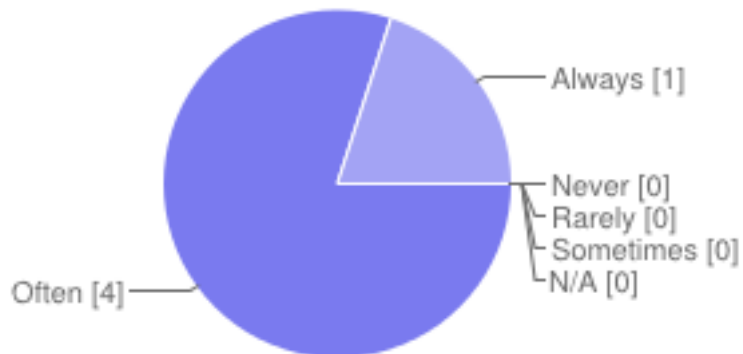
Never	**0**	0%
Rarely	**0**	0%
Sometimes	**0**	0%
Often	**4**	80%
Always	**1**	20%
N/A	**0**	0%

12h I would like to consult with other teachers about my documentation
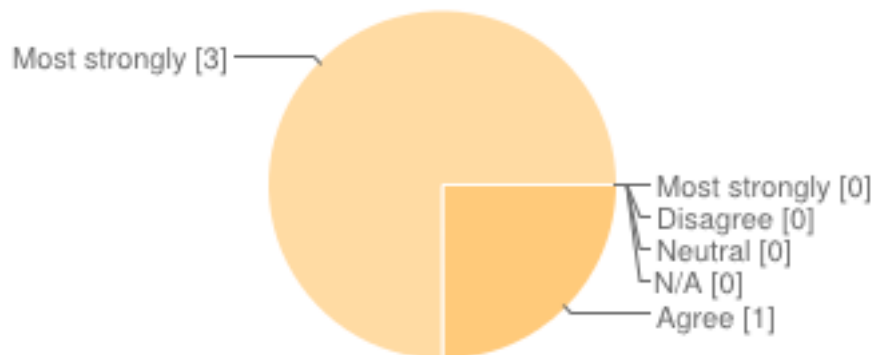
Most strongly disagree	**0**	0%
Disagree	**0**	0%
Neutral	**0**	0%
Agree	**1**	25%
Most strongly agree	**3**	75%

12i I share documentation with parents while it is in progress
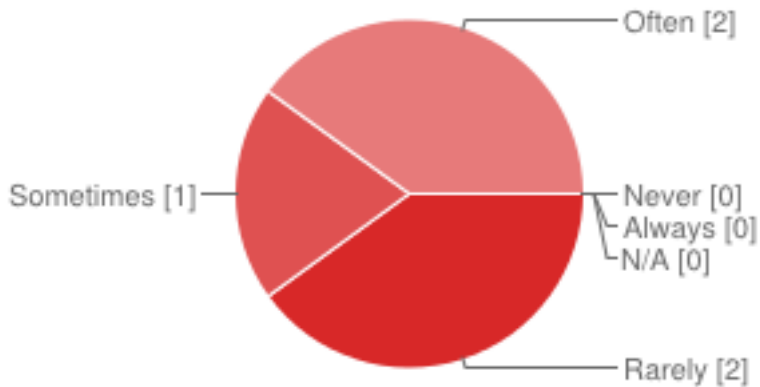
Never	0	0%
Rarely	2	40%
Sometimes	1	20%
Often	2	40%
Always	0	0%

12j I share completed documentation with parents
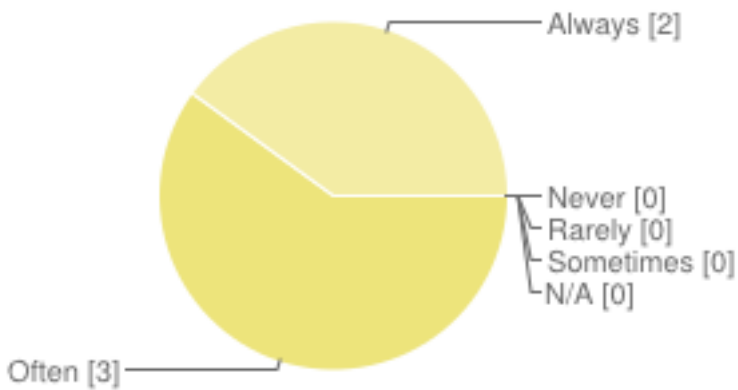
Never	0	0%
Rarely	0	0%
Sometimes	0	0%
Often	3	60%
Always	2	40%

Appendix H.

Nursery School Responses to Survey Question 12: How would you rate the following statements with regard to you and your work at the Nursery School?

12a. I understand what the Reggio Emilia practice of documentation is

Most strongly disagree	**1**	5%
Disagree	**1**	5%
Neutral	**7**	35%
Agree	**8**	40%
Most strongly agree	**3**	15%
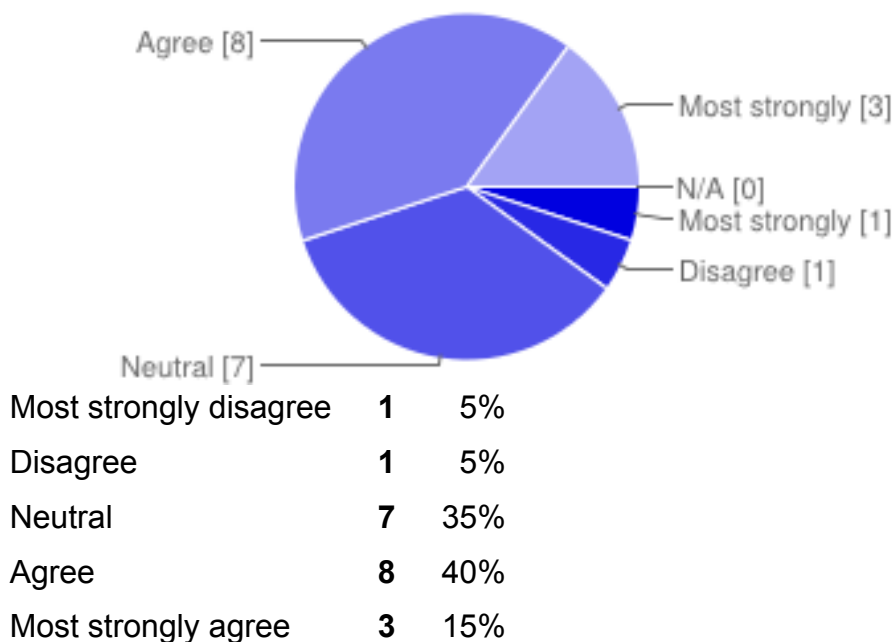
12b I want to understand more about documentation
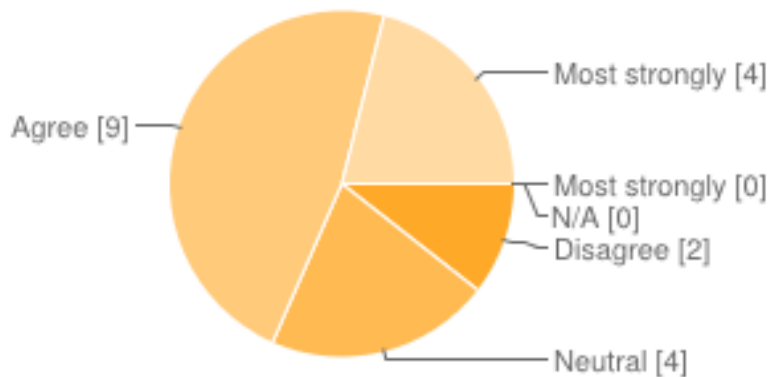
Most strongly disagree	**0**	0%
Disagree	**2**	11%
Neutral	**4**	21%
Agree	**9**	47%
Most strongly agree	**4**	21%

12c Documentation is essential to my teaching practice
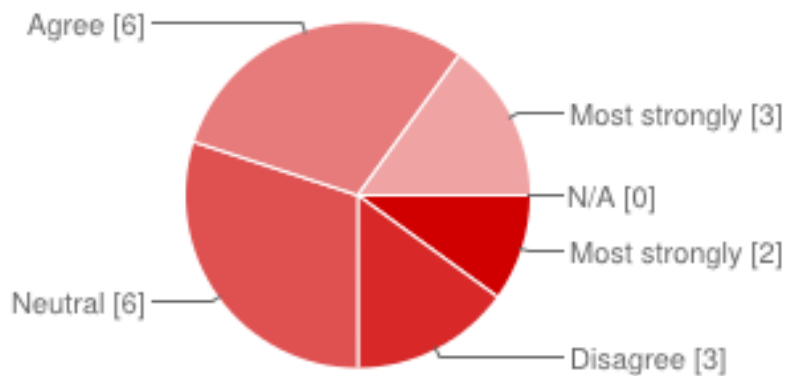
Most strongly disagree	**2**	10%
Disagree	**3**	15%
Neutral	**6**	30%
Agree	**6**	30%
Most strongly agree	**3**	15%

12d Documentation is integrated into my day-to-day work in the classroom
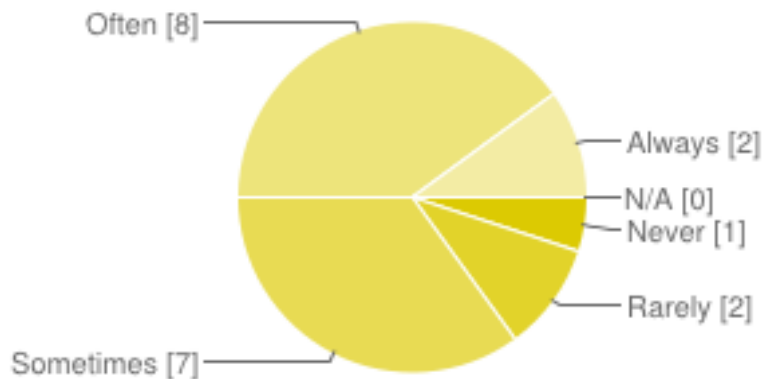
Never	**1**	5%
Rarely	**2**	10%
Sometimes	**7**	35%
Often	**8**	40%
Always	**2**	10%

12e I would like to further integrate the practice of documentation into my day-to-day work in the classroom
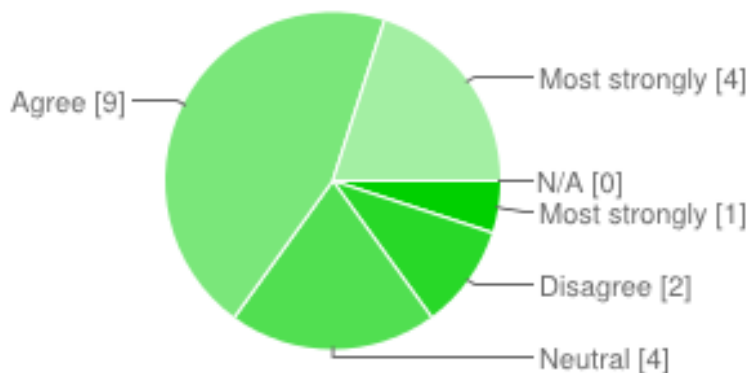
Most strongly disagree	**1**	5%
Disagree	**2**	10%
Neutral	**4**	20%
Agree	**9**	45%
Most strongly agree	**4**	20%

12f I include the children in my class in the documentation process
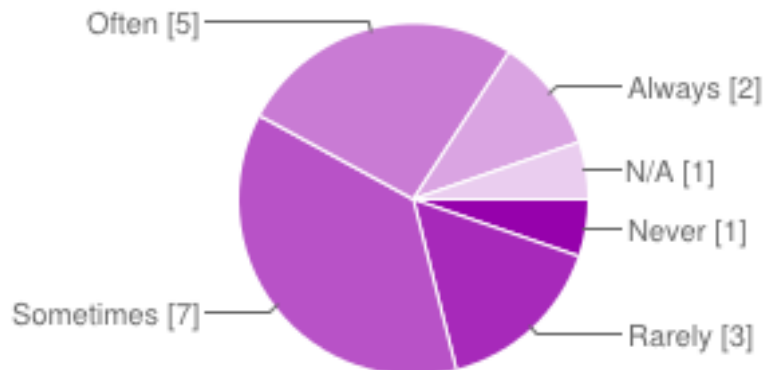
Never	1	5%
Rarely	3	16%
Sometimes	7	37%
Often	5	26%
Always	2	11%
N/A	1	5%

12g I consult with other teachers about my documentation
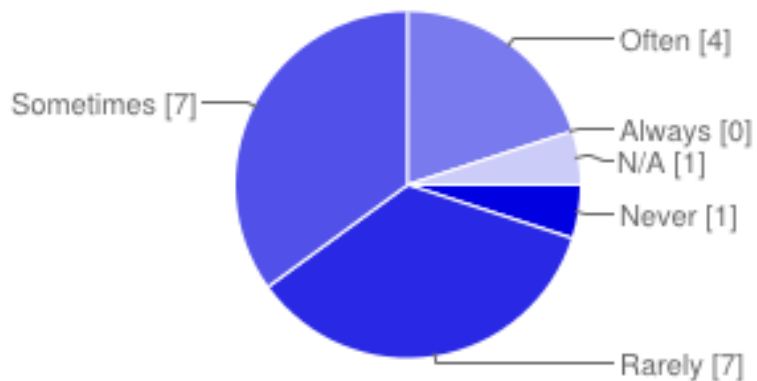
Never	1	5%
Rarely	7	35%
Sometimes	7	35%
Often	4	20%
Always	0	0%
N/A	1	5%

12h I would like to consult with other teachers about my documentation
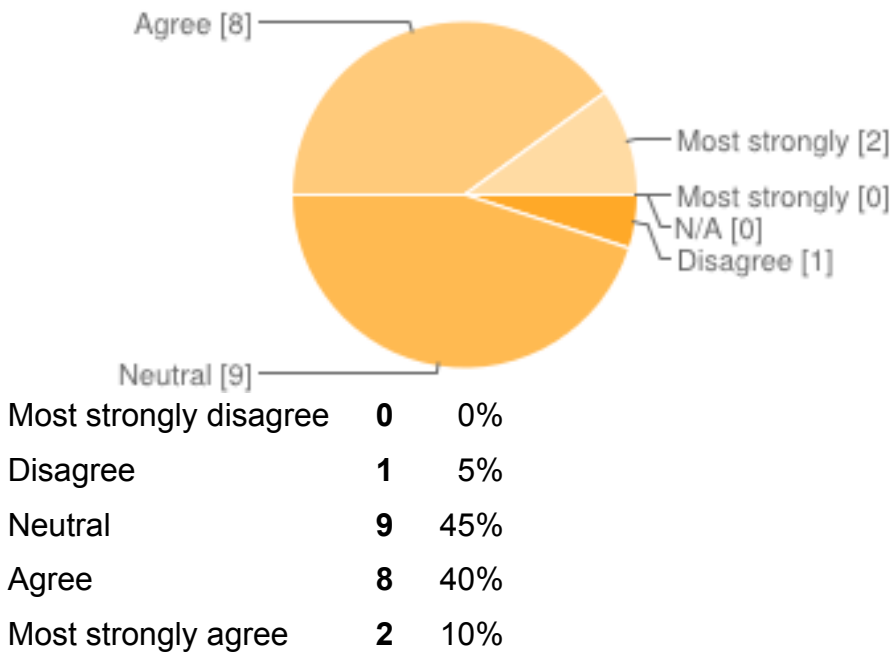
Agree [8]

Most strongly [2]

Most strongly [0]
N/A [0]
Disagree [1]

Neutral [9]

Most strongly disagree	**0**	0%
Disagree	**1**	5%
Neutral	**9**	45%
Agree	**8**	40%
Most strongly agree	**2**	10%

12i I share documentation with parents while it is in progress

Sometimes [8]

Often [2]

Always [0]
N/A [1]

Never [3]

Rarely [4]

Never	**3**	17%
Rarely	**4**	22%
Sometimes	**8**	44%
Often	**2**	11%
Always	**0**	0%
N/A	**1**	6%
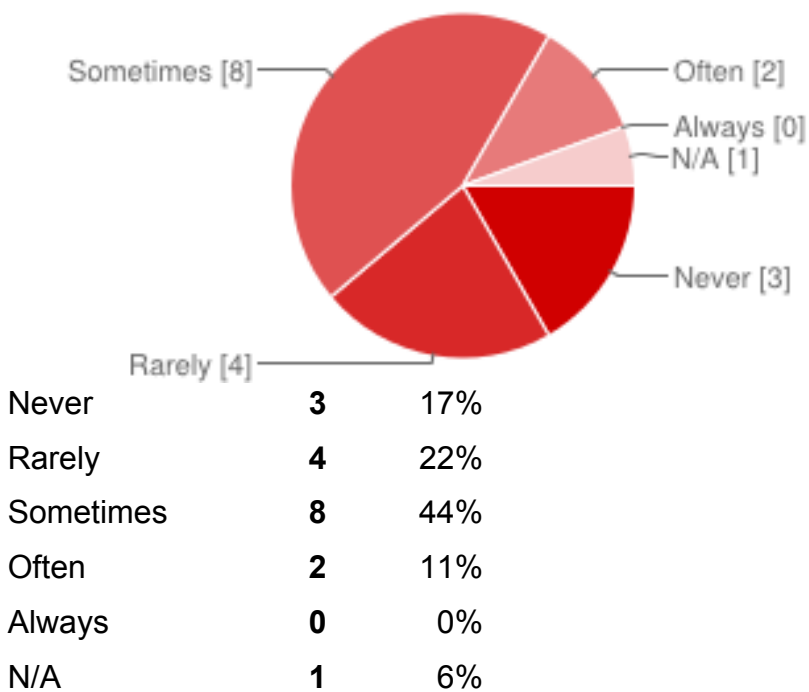
12j I share completed documentation with parents
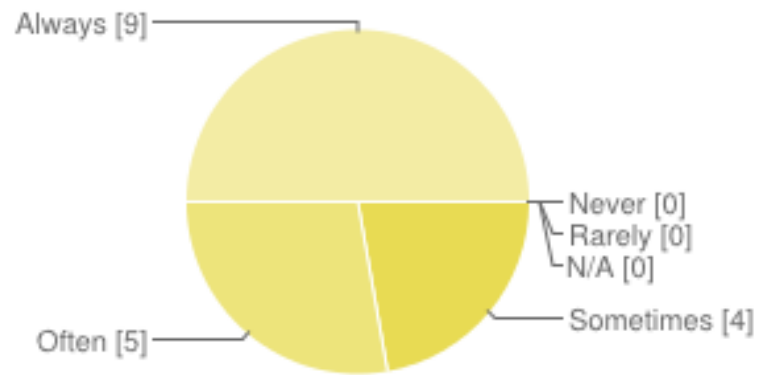
Never	**0**	0%
Rarely	**0**	0%
Sometimes	**4**	22%
Often	**5**	28%
Always	**9**	50%

Appendix I.
City Preschool Responses to Survey Question 13

13a Time outside the classroom *during* the school day for teachers to work on documentation
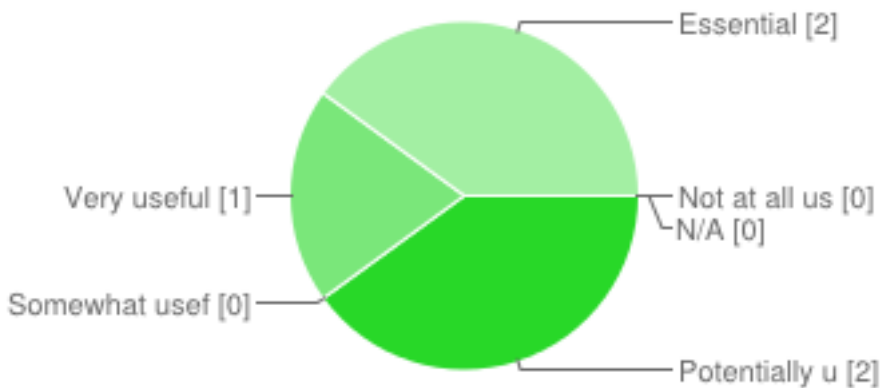
Not at all useful	**0**	0%
Potentially useful	**2**	40%
Somewhat useful	**0**	0%
Very useful	**1**	20%
Essential	**2**	40%

13b Time outside the classroom *after* the school day for teachers to work on documentation
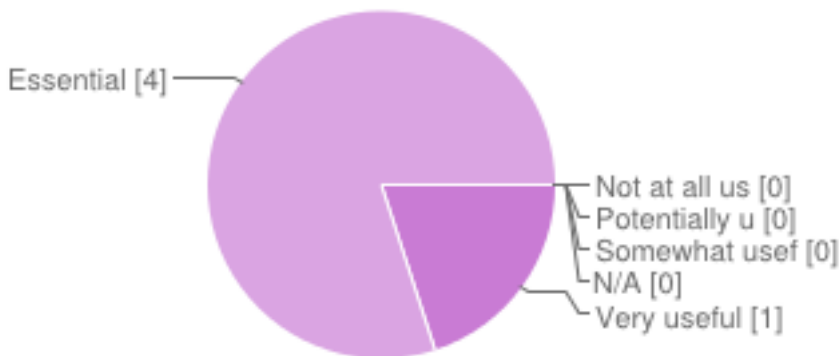
Not at all useful	**0**	0%
Potentially useful	**0**	0%
Somewhat useful	**0**	0%
Very useful	**1**	20%
Essential	**4**	80%

13c Additional staffing support in the classroom
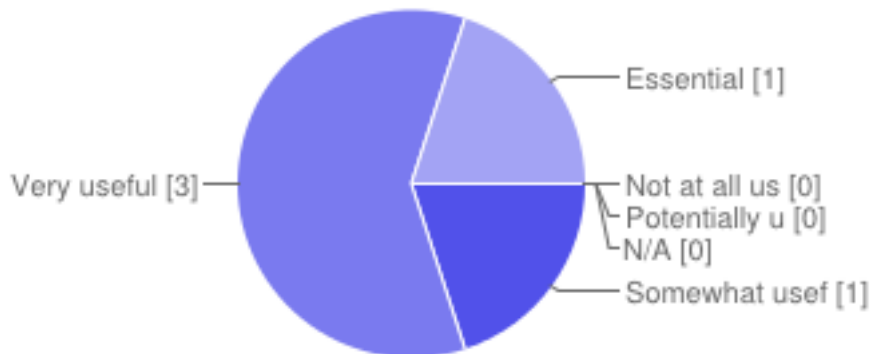
Not at all useful	**0**	0%
Potentially useful	**0**	0%
Somewhat useful	**1**	20%
Very useful	**3**	60%
Essential	**1**	20%

13d Time to collaborate with other staff members on documentation
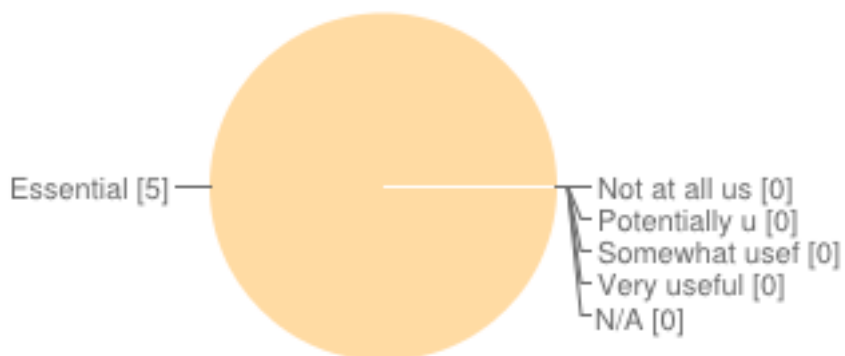
Not at all useful	**0**	0%
Potentially useful	**0**	0%
Somewhat useful	**0**	0%
Very useful	**0**	0%
Essential	**5**	100%

13e Group training in documentation philosophy and Reggio practices
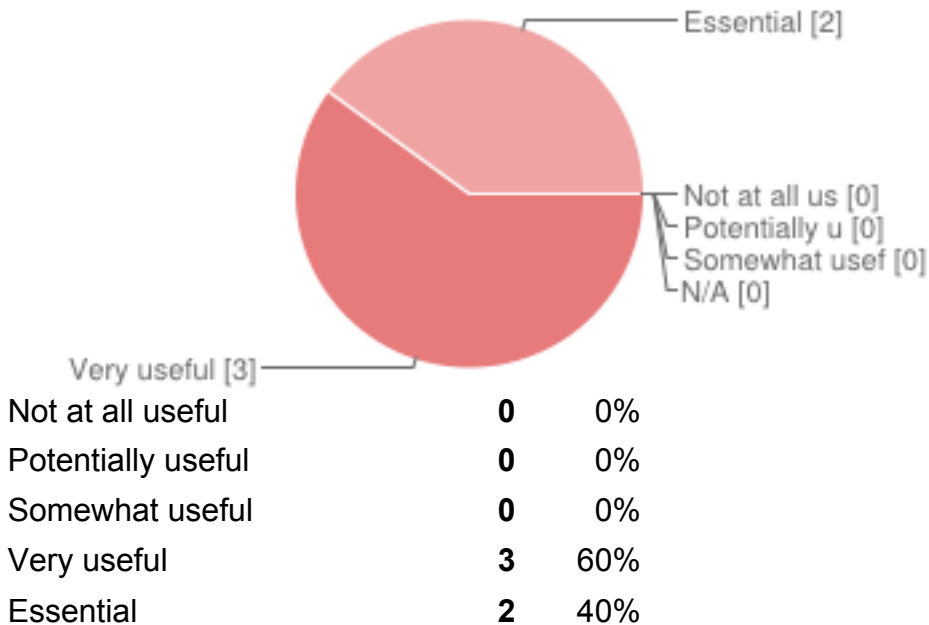
Not at all useful	**0**	0%
Potentially useful	**0**	0%
Somewhat useful	**0**	0%
Very useful	**3**	60%
Essential	**2**	40%

13f Individualized training in documentation philosophy and Reggio practices

Not at all useful	**0**	0%
Potentially useful	**0**	0%
Somewhat useful	**1**	20%
Very useful	**3**	60%
Essential	**1**	20%

13g Access to articles and research about documentation practices for independent reading

Not at all useful	**0**	0%
Potentially useful	**0**	0%
Somewhat useful	**0**	0%
Very useful	**3**	60%
Essential	**2**	40%

13h Access to technology for documentation (computers, cameras, video recorders, audio recorders, iPads, etc.)

Not at all useful	**0**	0%
Potentially useful	**0**	0%
Somewhat useful	**0**	0%
Very useful	**1**	20%
Essential	**4**	80%
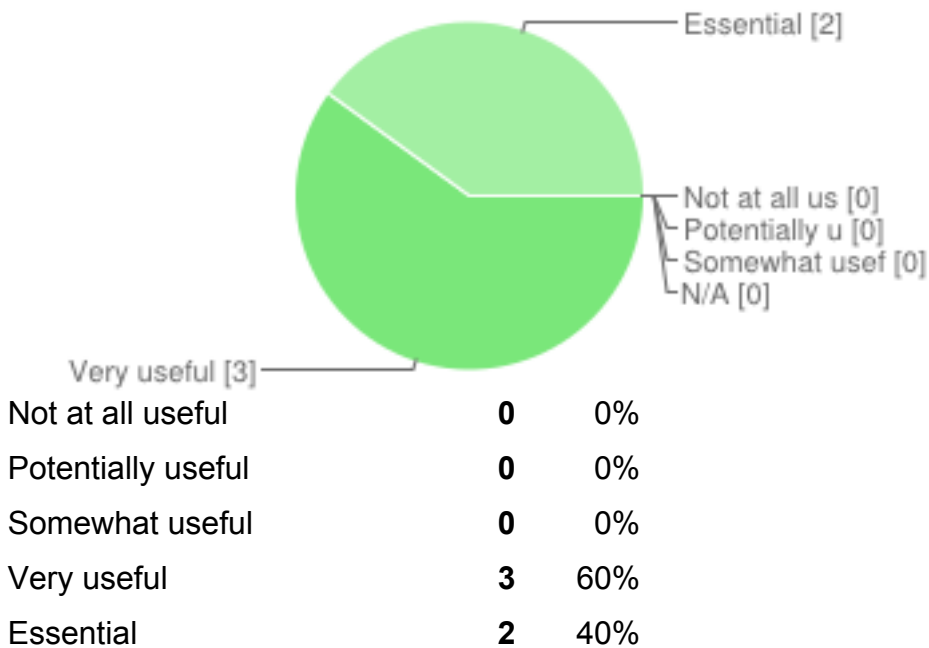
13i Group training in the uses of documentation technology
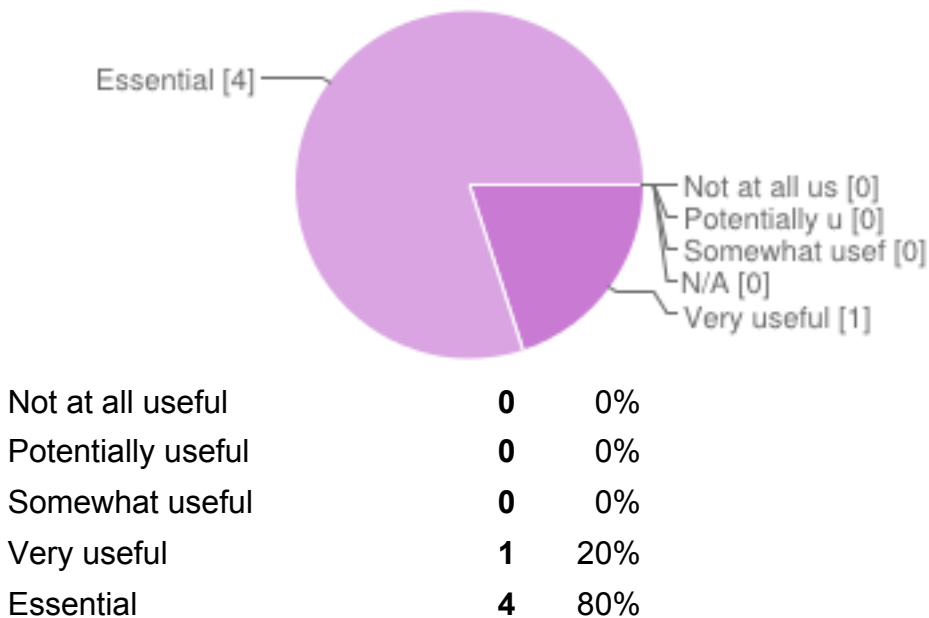
Very useful [4]

Not at all us [0]
Potentially u [0]
Essential [0]
N/A [0]
Somewhat usef [1]
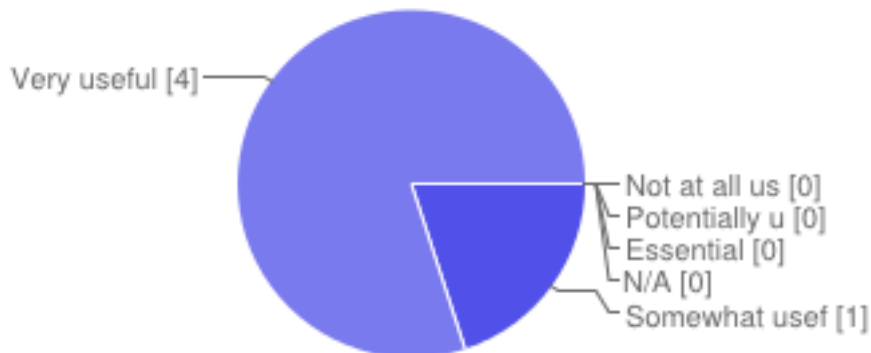
Not at all useful	**0**	0%
Potentially useful	**0**	0%
Somewhat useful	**1**	20%
Very useful	**4**	80%
Essential	**0**	0%

13j Individualized training in the uses of documentation technology

Very useful [3]

Not at all us [0]
Potentially u [0]
Essential [0]
N/A [0]
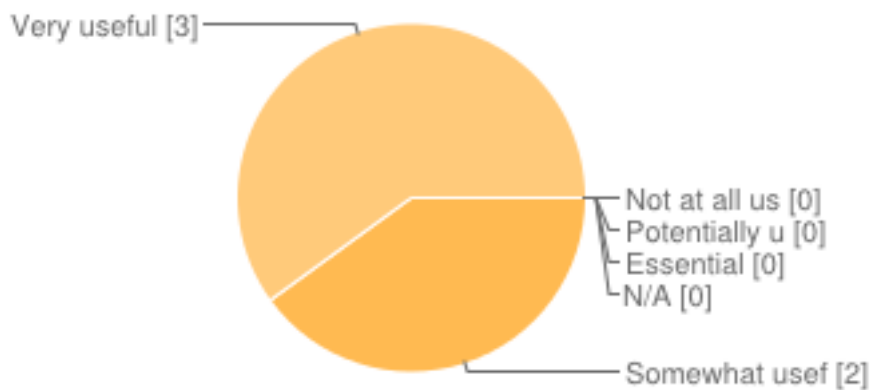
Somewhat usef [2]

Not at all useful	**0**	0%
Potentially useful	**0**	0%
Somewhat useful	**2**	40%
Very useful	**3**	60%
Essential	**0**	0%

13k Availability of documentation panel materials (paper, photo paper, etc.)
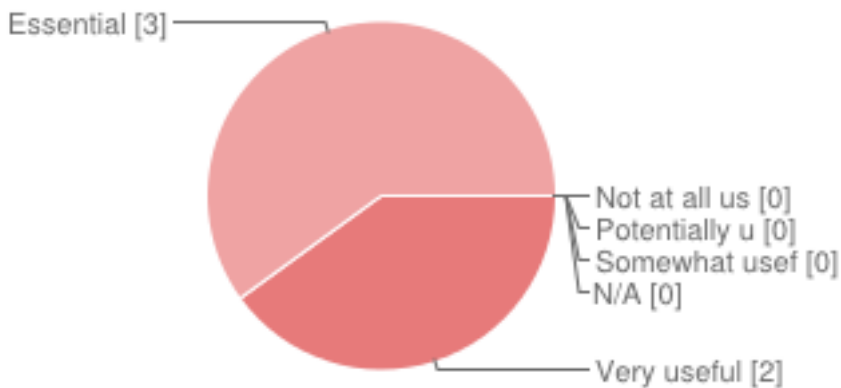
Not at all useful	**0**	0%
Potentially useful	**0**	0%
Somewhat useful	**0**	0%
Very useful	**2**	40%
Essential	**3**	60%

13l Group training in developing documentation design techniques
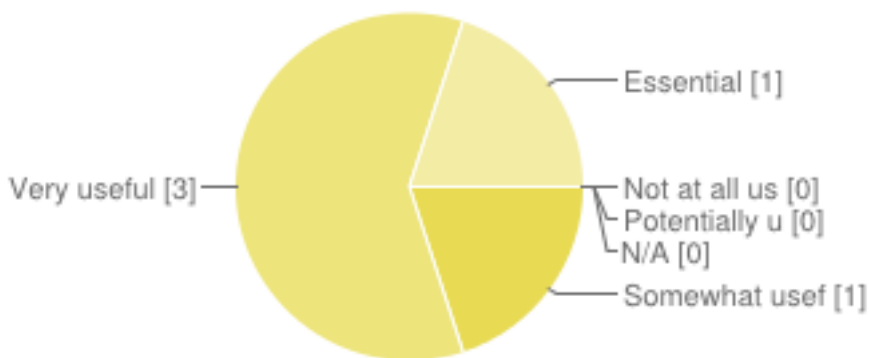
Not at all useful	**0**	0%
Potentially useful	**0**	0%
Somewhat useful	**1**	20%
Very useful	**3**	60%
Essential	**1**	20%

13m Individualized support in developing documentation design techniques

Not at all useful	**0**	0%
Potentially useful	**0**	0%
Somewhat useful	**0**	0%
Very useful	**3**	60%
Essential	**2**	40%

13n Writing support for written elements of documentation

Not at all useful	**0**	0%
Potentially useful	**1**	20%
Somewhat useful	**0**	0%
Very useful	**3**	60%
Essential	**1**	20%
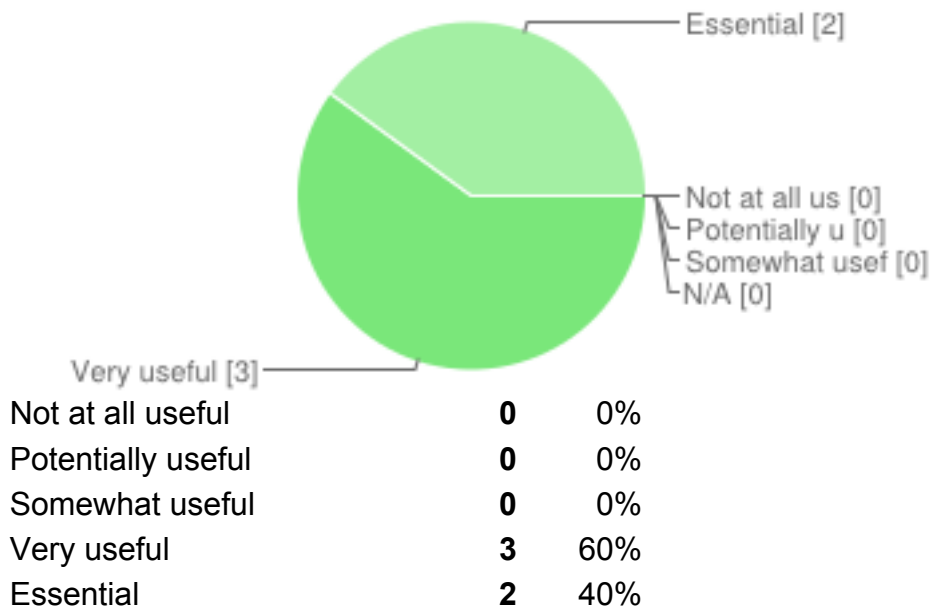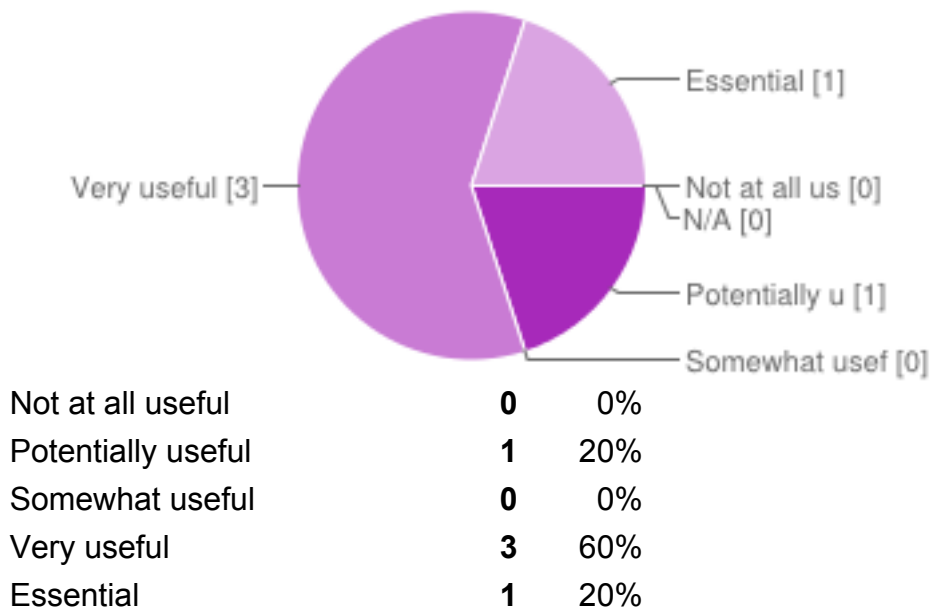
Appendix J.

Nursery School Responses to Survey Question 13: How would you rate the following statements with regard to resources that might aid in your development of documentation skills?

13a Time outside the classroom *during* the school day for teams to work on documentation
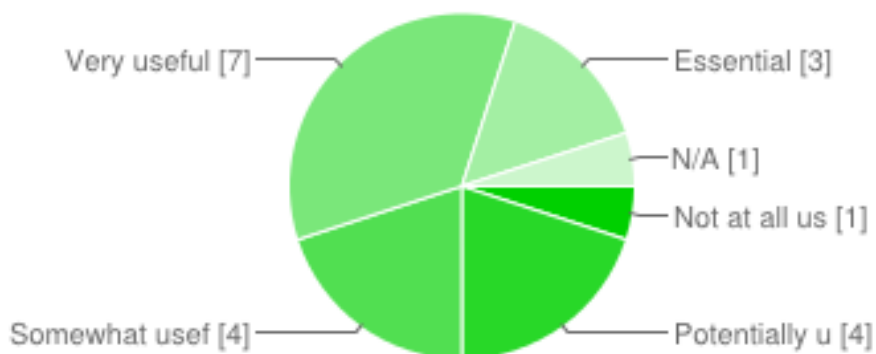
Not at all useful	**1**	5%
Potentially useful	**4**	20%
Somewhat useful	**4**	20%
Very useful	**7**	35%
Essential	**3**	15%
N/A	**1**	5%

13b Time outside the classroom *after* the school day for teams to work on documentation
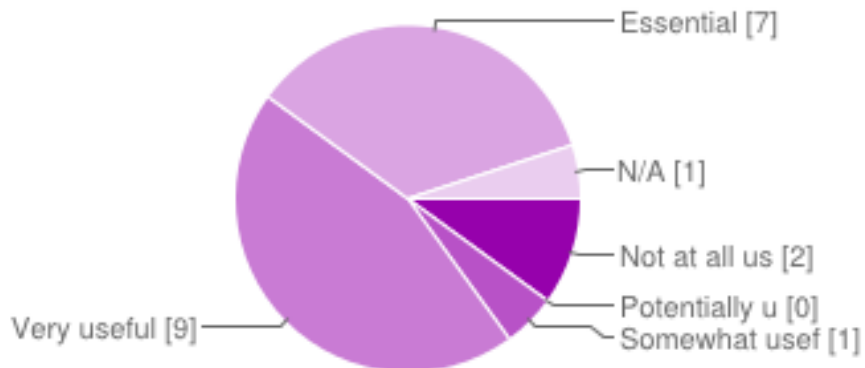
Not at all useful	**2**	10%
Potentially useful	**0**	0%
Somewhat useful	**1**	5%
Very useful	**9**	45%
Essential	**7**	35%
N/A	**1**	5%

13c Additional staffing support in the classroom
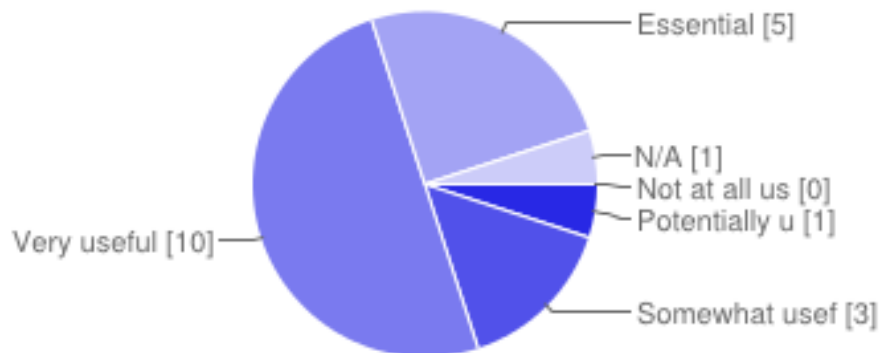
Not at all useful	**0**	0%
Potentially useful	**1**	5%
Somewhat useful	**3**	15%
Very useful	**10**	50%
Essential	**5**	25%
N/A	**1**	5%

13d Time to collaborate with other staff members on documentation
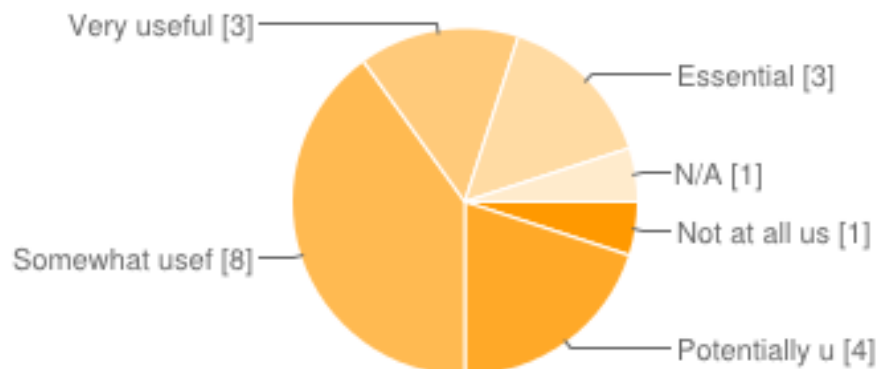
Not at all useful	**1**	5%
Potentially useful	**4**	20%
Somewhat useful	**8**	40%
Very useful	**3**	15%
Essential	**3**	15%
N/A	**1**	5%

13e Group training in documentation philosophy and Reggio practices
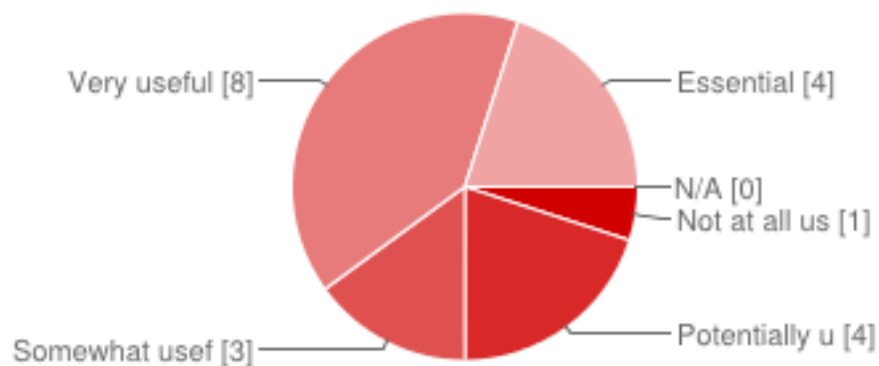
Not at all useful	**1**	5%
Potentially useful	**4**	20%
Somewhat useful	**3**	15%
Very useful	**8**	40%
Essential	**4**	20%

13f Individualized training in documentation philosophy and Reggio practices
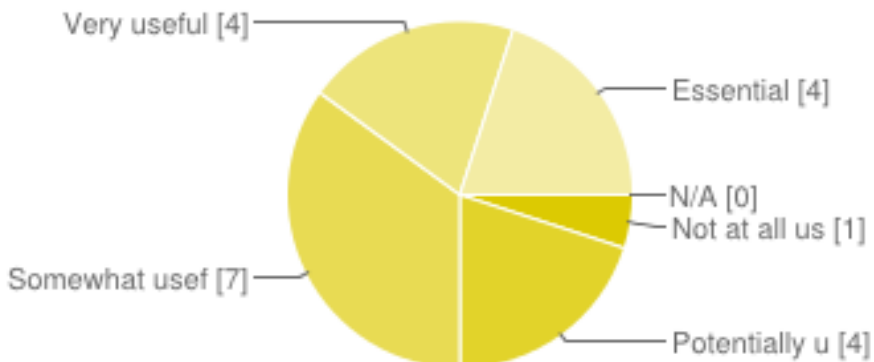
Not at all useful	**1**	5%
Potentially useful	**4**	20%
Somewhat useful	**7**	35%
Very useful	**4**	20%
Essential	**4**	20%

## 13g More access to articles and research about documentation practices for independent reading
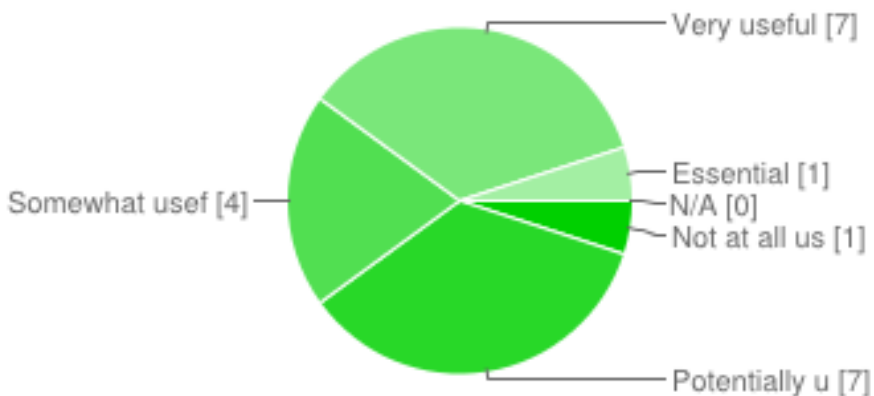
Not at all useful	**1**	5%
Potentially useful	**7**	35%
Somewhat useful	**4**	20%
Very useful	**7**	35%
Essential	**1**	5%

13h More access to technology for documentation (computers, cameras, video recorders, audio recorders, iPads, etc.)
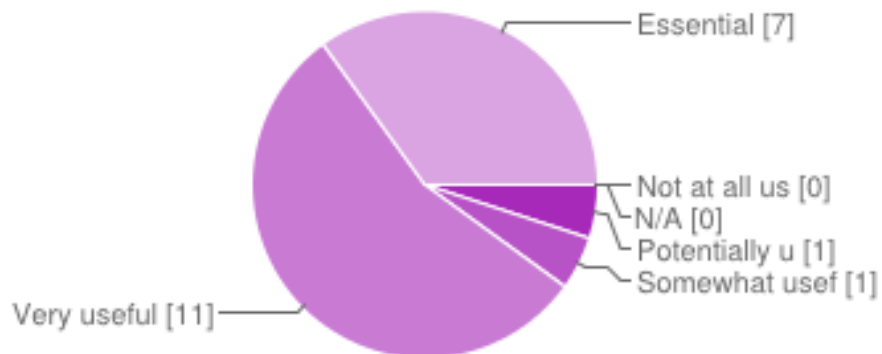
Not at all useful	**0**	0%
Potentially useful	**1**	5%
Somewhat useful	**1**	5%
Very useful	**11**	55%
Essential	**7**	35%

13i Group training in the uses of documentation technology
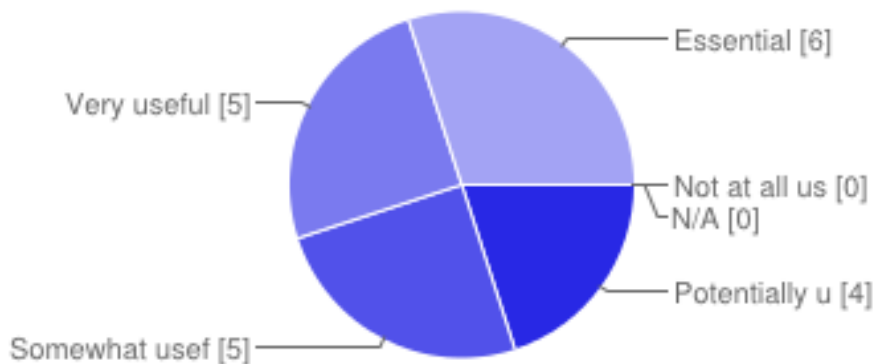
Not at all useful	**0**	0%
Potentially useful	**4**	20%
Somewhat useful	**5**	25%
Very useful	**5**	25%
Essential	**6**	30%

13j Individualized training in the uses of documentation technology
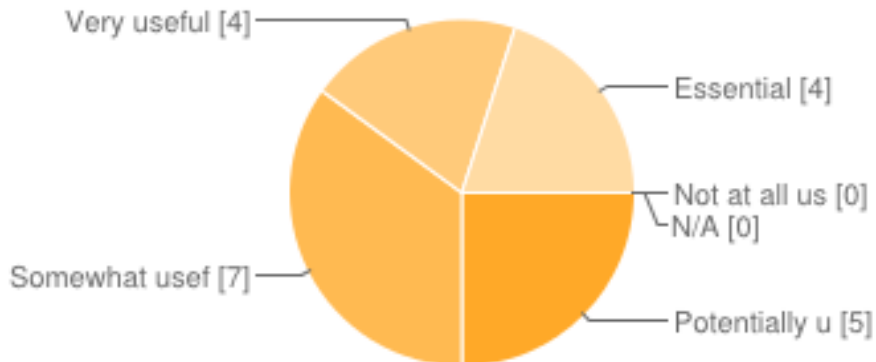
Not at all useful	0	0%
Potentially useful	5	25%
Somewhat useful	7	35%
Very useful	4	20%
Essential	4	20%

## 13k More availability of documentation panel materials (paper, photo paper, etc.)
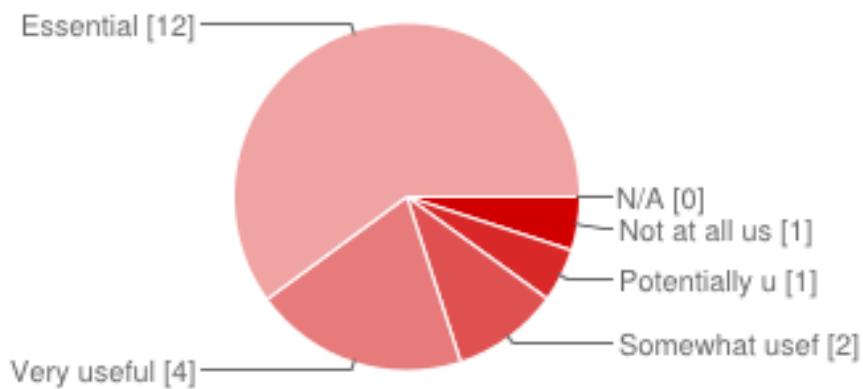
Not at all useful	1	5%
Potentially useful	1	5%
Somewhat useful	2	10%
Very useful	4	20%
Essential	12	60%

13l Group training in developing documentation design techniques
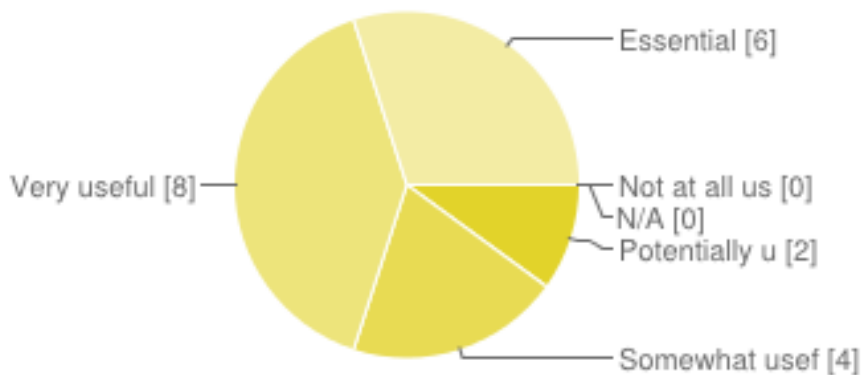
Not at all useful	**0**	0%
Potentially useful	**2**	10%
Somewhat useful	**4**	20%
Very useful	**8**	40%
Essential	**6**	30%

13m Individualized support in developing documentation design techniques
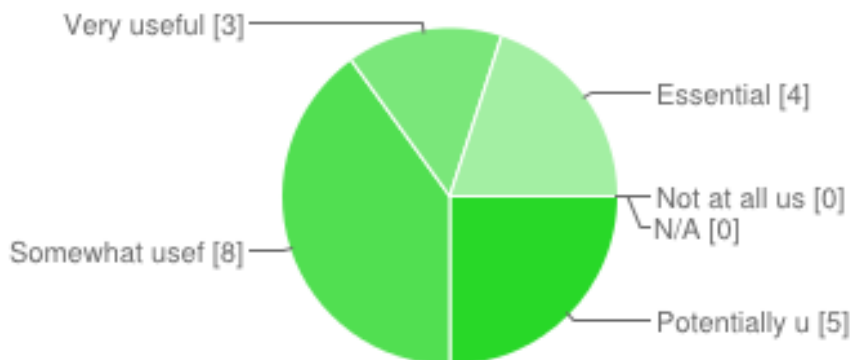
Not at all useful	**0**	0%
Potentially useful	**5**	25%
Somewhat useful	**8**	40%
Very useful	**3**	15%
Essential	**4**	20%

13n Writing support for written elements of documentation
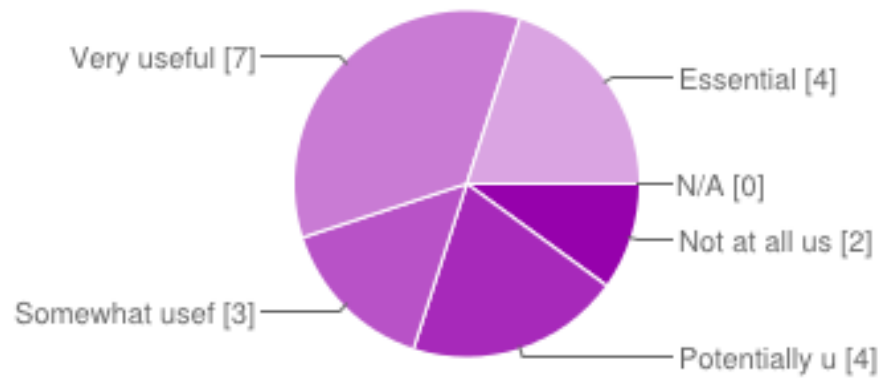
Not at all useful	**2**	10%
Potentially useful	**4**	20%
Somewhat useful	**3**	15%
Very useful	**7**	35%
Essential	**4**	20%

Appendix K.

Bibliography of articles and book chapters provided to workgroup members.

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