

\*Ukulele Music\*

Keith: welcome to the LeeCoSchools Edcast number eight with mrs. Medeiros and mrs. carr who are the two first class pre-k teachers at Beauregard Elementary Wow what it just fantastic

Kyle: absolutely yeah I think when we were looking to talk about first class pre-k you had contacted the assistant principal there and she said without a doubt these are the two human things we need to talk to and she was not wrong

Keith: no she was not the most prepared podcast guests we've had

Kyle: absolutely they came in like hey um you know we made some notes we brought some things and we usually send out some information just like hey look here's some of the things we plan on talking about well they brought booklets of paper and and we were like wow this was this was actually really great and all the things I want to talk about we really enjoyed

Keith: yeah and it was very informational and these kids that they're teaching are very lucky to have these teachers

Kyle: oh absolutely it sounds like their classroom is really cool they do a lot of things that I think could translate well throughout education that we'll talk about in just a few minutes but yeah just super impressed

Keith: yeah it was wonderful so after listening to them if you find yourself with any questions comments complaints criticisms compliments colloquialisms conundrums or concerns

Kyle: also if you guys have any suggestions for a future podcast or people you'd like us to talk with or or topics any of that stuff shoot it to us we'd love to see it

Keith: we're always open to suggestions if you have any please let us know you can find us on the web at [www.lee.k12.al.us/edcast](http://www.lee.k12.al.us/edcast) on twitter @LeeCoSchools on facebook at [facebook.com/leecoschools](https://facebook.com/leecoschools) or by email at [edcast@lee.k12.al.us](mailto:edcast@lee.k12.al.us) Kyle...

Kyle: here we go

\*Funky Transition Music\*

Kyle: y'all are the first group that came with papers like with stuff written down on it

Keith: right

Kyle: That's great! No, that's fantastic!

Keith: so we are here with Miss Medeiros and Mrs. carr let me just start out by saying that when I emailed miss meals and said hey we want to talk to some pre-k teachers and I've heard y'all got good ones out there who are the ones we need to talk to y'all were the two that came up she said that y'all were just the best at other teachers from around come to observe you guys we are talking to the cream of the crop when it comes to pre-k teachers so y'all just tell us a little bit about your professional journey if you don't mind

Mrs. Carr and Mrs. Medeiros: my name is Heather Medeiros and I have taught kindergarten here at Beauregard for 16 years before I came to pre-k I was actually an intern here with Liz Kirkland I did my internship here in aw from Auburn I went to Auburn and then mr. Miller hired me the next year and I've been in kindergarten for 16 years until the last three years ago we got a grant from the state and I became a pre-k teacher so I have been here on my teaching career

Kyle: in one school

Mrs. Carr and Mrs. Medeiros: in one school in Lee County and I love it

Mrs. Carr and Mrs. Medeiros: I'm April carr and this is my second year in the pre-k program I've been teaching for 17 years when I first started my very first year was in pre-k in Georgia and it was basically the same program but I guess they started it in Georgia way before they started it in Alabama after that first year that I was like I cannot drive this every single day I'm leaving my house at 3 o'clock in the morning

Kyle: how long of a drive

Mrs. Carr and Mrs. Medeiros: well we had to be there at 6:30 and then

Keith: was it in Columbus or

Mrs. Carr and Mrs. Medeiros: it was in Columbus it was the hour time change

Keith: driving from Beauregard

Mrs. Carr and Mrs. Medeiros: well no I was driving from Auburn, on Wire Road in Auburn

Keith: Oh lord, yes!

Mrs. Carr and Mrs. Medeiros: very early yeah and I love pre-k but it was like I'm just gonna have to deal and you know a different grade for a while and I got hired on in Lee County and I was in sixth grade and I taught 6th grade for two years which was a very big change at Loachapoka and then they made me to fourth grade and then that next year I transferred to Beauregard mr. Miller worked to have me transferred to Beauregard I was in 2nd grade to Beauregard up until last year and that was when I had the opportunity to go back to pre-k and I love second grade but I just I don't know I just see if I didn't get I would always regret not going because good sometimes changes changes really good and pre-k was always my heart I mean if I just was second grade was comfortable

Keith: because they're still young and innocent and fun at that age right did sixth grade the age group not the location but this age group do this sixth grade teaching so great sort of like a tour of duty you feel like you feel like I did my time in sixth grade

Mrs. Carr and Mrs. Medeiros: well I will say I had the choice when I went to school I would not have even been able to teach sixth grade right that was just the way the program is set up a double major basically to where I have an elementary degree that's K-6 but also in early childhood degree you had to get it off you couldn't separate and say yes that was a very big shock especially coming from pre-k yeah and then I'd always when I was in college all through college I taught pre-k at a church in Montgomery and so I've been in pre-k for a while before my actual first year at Lee County and so to jump all the way to sixth grade I felt like I was in a foreign land

Kyle: and I've talked to teachers from early and secondary and they all have a sweet spot and like you know I can teach ninth graders how to do lots of things like I could not teach 9th graders

Mrs. Carr and Mrs. Medeiros: a lot of people in the higher grades are like I do not want pre-k bless you

Kyle: yes it's like everyone has this one little range

Mrs. Carr and Mrs. Medeiros: I'm like bless you for teaching the high school because I do not want high school

Kyle: I don't need 'em talking back I need them real, like you said young and sweet

Keith: well it's a pre-k through 12 is not for me when they're in college

Mrs. Carr and Mrs. Medeiros: we have some interesting days in pre-k it is very fun I do think you have ages that you just click with better I mean my personal kids that was my favorite age with the pre-k age yeah and then my oldest is in sixth grade now and that's probably one of my least favorite ages

Kyle: right

Keith: that's when they start getting lippy I think isn't it

Mrs. Carr and Mrs. Medeiros: and I guess we need both of us have our masters you just finished your masters in curriculum and then both my degrees are in early childhood

Keith: she made sure second grade and no further put that line in the sand

Kyle: right okay so the thing is called first class pre-k tell us about first class pre-k

Mrs. Carr and Mrs. Medeiros: it's a wonderful program it is it's funded by the state of Alabama it is under the office of school readiness the Department of early childhood education in Montgomery we pick our children from the lottery the children come in the parents register them they bring in the information they need to and it is a lottery we just had our lottery a couple weeks ago for spring break and everybody's name goes into a basket and you pull one name at a time and that's how the children are selected for the classes

Kyle: so how many classrooms do you guys have at Beauregard

Mrs. Carr and Mrs. Medeiros: we have two

Kyle: just two

Mrs. Carr and Mrs. Medeiros: and we start out with 16 we we can have up to 18 in our class okay by the end of September but we start out with 16 and we give us a couple of weeks to kind of get in the groove and see if we have any children that have special needs that we might need to help with they might count and we might not get the extra two we might add just one more it just kind of depends that's a great thing that they have done to the program so we'll start out with each of us will start out with sixteen this next year we have and then we can add two more by the end of September

Keith: that's one of the benchmarks as the class size is under 20 right and we do have an auxiliary each of us have an auxiliary in a classroom they're wonderful help us we couldn't do our job without it

Keith: because then it's no more than 10 students per staff member or something like

Mrs. Carr and Mrs. Medeiros: yeah I do that we work as a team you know our both of us always work in the name we do so it's really it's good it's a good number

Keith: okay AL.com had a thing today that said that Alabama first class pre-k tops the nation and quality for the 12th year so I was I was looking at some of these benchmarks that they talked about and stuff and what are some of the magic behind that how do we how's Alabama toppin something these days how

Mrs. Carr and Mrs. Medeiros: well they're following research would be my biggest thing and like she said a minute ago I just finished and curriculum and instruction on my masters and so I did a lot of research through that and the program when I went through was all research was the entire program basically and so I basically you can base it on what you want to base it on say of course it's in pre-k I based it all on pre-k studies and they follow all of the early childhood research that's what everything's based on it's based on the high quality education that prepares children for school it's hands-on learning the children are very hands-on no worksheets whatsoever

Kyle: very tactile

Mrs. Carr and Mrs. Medeiros: yes it's very interactive we do not sit down very long at all we're moving I mean it is very interactive with us and with their peers yes and I think it surprises parents to begin with because OSR which is like we said the first class pre-k they define school readiness as children having an enthusiasm for learning an ability to function in a social setting with other students age appropriate communication and problem-solving skills and optimal health and they base all of this on the studies they people fighting on the researcher but there's been a lot of research on what says in the long run matters the most when kids enter kindergarten and you would think that it mean a parents a lot of times they'll be like well what about them writing their name or you know today right why did they need to read they know their ABCs well when the studies have been done on these kids they took a group of kids that were in kindergarten and they followed them all the way through high school and those kids the ones that had those four factors ended up doing better in the long run than the kids who came in and didn't have those factors but maybe knew how to write their name and knew how to if you're important for us to teach them how to interact with their peers and with us because I mean if we think back April and I were talking about that just earlier we wish that it you know we feel like the older grades would do better with behavior everything if they we were all taught to

Kyle: how to interact with other human beings

Mrs. Carr and Mrs. Medeiros: yes and resolve a conflict and talk about things you know and communicate and so that is really big in our classroom

Kyle: well and I'm sure that you've got kids that are coming in from wide ranges of backgrounds and so you know where something might have flown in one household won't fly in another they all get in this melting pot and so you guys have your work cut out for you I'm sure in some of those

Mrs. Carr and Mrs. Medeiros: we have lots of personalities oh yes very very much it's fun we have a lot of fun okay you'll walk into our classrooms and hear a lot it's never quiet we're not quiet going down the hall the only time we're quiet is at nap time and they're tired

Kyle: do y'all get nap time sounds like you need it

Mrs. Carr and Mrs. Medeiros: we're tired in the afternoons oh yes I have to have my coffee every single afternoon when I get home just to function

Kyle: just so you don't go to bed at 5:30 every day

Mrs. Carr and Mrs. Medeiros: but you'll hear so much interaction and a lot of people I think especially a lot of people in our school have gotten had to get used to that because you know everything was quiet we're supposed to be quiet no Hall we're supposed to be quiet you know but it's so you can just hear the conversations and the children just learning so much from each other it's never quiet

Keith: now I saw some really cool pictures of this is probably a month or so ago of y'all teaching them about I guess the respiratory system they had these the brown paper bags or whatever over when they had the lungs which were sandwich bags and they had had a straw they could blow in to inflate them

Mrs. Carr and Mrs. Medeiros: actually nurse ellis made that for us it's like a team effort here everybody takes care of pre-k especially the beginning of the year because I mean we need the help make sure you know cuz some of them have never ever been in an environment we got away from mom or dad or anybody but nurse Ellis made those for us she's really good to us

Keith: the kids looked like they were enjoying them a lot they were very cute they made for very cute pictures on Twitter at least Mrs. Carr and Mrs. Medeiros: they had a really really good time and like right now Miss Carr's doing the rainforest and we're doing the pond so we do a lot through theme teaching

Kyle: so how long does a theme last

Mrs. Carr and Mrs. Medeiros: it depends on the kids enthusiasm and whether they excited about what we're talking about we base everything on social studies and science themes and then we integrate all of academic standards such as the literacy and writing and math and everything else through those science standards and so we start out the year learning just about them and we branch out from there and get bigger and bigger as the year goes on and say we go through several different habitats and so this isn't our first habitat but it's one of my favorite ones and so every time we go to a new habitat they plan together how they want to create the room and so they turn the entire room into whatever that theme is whether it's outer space dinosaurs and that's what our dramatic play area is based on and say they use that vocabulary and they learn like we make a list of what we need for each center they experiment explore they talk to each other about it they read stories and it's amazing what they know I mean the other day one of my kids was talking about and they relate it to other things and that's what's so nice too because earlier we were learning about the Arctic and said we learned about how polar bears are camouflage and how you know if they didn't have that white they wouldn't be able to catch food as much and then we were talking about animals in the rainforest and so we were talking about a chameleon and they saw all of his colors and how he camouflaged them with those colors and they sort of just going on about well he's camouflaged just like the polar bear was camouflage and it's things that in second grade I wanted my kids today that I couldn't I think there's going to be such a change when these same kids get to second grade having this experience for fourth grade or so on because they're doing it in the natural setting you know with their curiosity is the leading factor so they were cool sponges they absorb everything that goes on in the room you've learned from them as much as they learn from us facilitators in the classroom and if they it mean they teach us you know children are smart

Keith: I saw the pictures whenever you're doing space whenever it was and the kids coming in and out of the NASA capsules and stuff it was like gosh that just looks like a lot of fun

Mrs. Carr and Mrs. Medeiros: it is fun to come to school every day i mean I probably don't sleep as much as I should because I get so excited then I do all the research make sure I know what I'm talking about because their questions are

Keith: it is it is maddening how specific and how vexing their questions can be sometimes where it's like I don't know

Mrs. Carr and Mrs. Medeiros: we Google things a lot pull it up on a smartboard

Kyle: let's all learn together

Mrs. Carr and Mrs. Medeiros: I'll tell them, I don't know let's look it up which is one of our standards, too. A lot of times, even if we do know if you want to know this what are some ways that we can go and figure mountain I mean sometimes it's for hands-on experiments they come up with sometimes it might be let's go down to the library and ask miss vordenbaum for yes I want to make sure walk and find and one thing we go on nature walks a lot in our classroom love going out the big field we have bearded dragon and so they catch crickets for them all the time well we went out there before spring break and we found tadpoles in this little pond thing I'm gonna find a real pond it's like this and yeah I get the water and said they caught the tadpoles and we brought him in over I'm never really tap how to deal with the NA well we still had the frogs and I read them we now have nothing around in the little and so we created that habitat to make sure you know we have a little fruit fly what they eat say the whole time they went in and they would be writing about it they would go over there every day and observe and write I mean just that way they sound out words and are actually writing sentences without help I mean it's not as formally teaching them they know their country are the beans and are how we let them learn

Kyle: just thinking is like teaching them how to learn how to gain information is something you could teach it every level in K12 because there's plenty of people that just you know I mean eighth ninth tenth eleventh graders that are just sitting there they just get fed whatever they get fan and they don't think about well if I could just learn how to get this information to be better and Keith: I think learning how to learn is more important than memorizing facts

Mrs. Carr and Mrs. Medeiros: that is exactly the way I feel and I think those things that we talked about with the school readiness and they are where the kids are ready to come into school the enthusiasm for learning I mean just if you don't care then you don't have that but if you already have that enthusiasm before you so our k12 then you know they don't kind of carry over and the ability to function and communicate and problems up because then you can teach yourself anything and to me that is very more important now there's some things of course you have to be taught but a lot of it if you know how to find that measurement then they do it right I mean it's just like math I came I've never been great at math it's never been my strong point my sixth graders in sixth grade math and yes I've even taught sixth grade math but I mean I still have to get back on there reteach myself how to do some of the stuff we have some stuff I haven't seen them write you know 17 years and she's asking how to do it let me just double check and make sure I had that right but I put it they had I figure out how to write teach myself say to me yes that's a lot more important than just being able to regurgitate information

Keith: yeah so we have the lottery system for the for the pre-k so obviously not all the children are able to go we're gonna have the pleasure of going through pre-k with you guys or any of the other first-class pre-k teachers so some of them their first encounter is going to be in kindergarten as you mentioned those first two or three years sometimes more their only interaction is with family and their families friends so what kinds of things can parents do with them during that time to help get them started and headed in the right direction because I was reading some research today about kids and the amount of talking that goes on around them and the quality of the talking that goes on around them and the sad correlation between the amount and quality of speech around them in those first three years or a little more and their socioeconomic status and the positive affirmations with them and those kinds of things and I mean it was like there's a possibility of if it's extrapolated correctly a thirty million word gap between those at the lower levels and so what are those kinds of what are those kinds of things that parents can do with those kids during those first three to five years that will help them because then they said they went back and looked during when they were not in ten and saw that that trend continued with them as they got older so what are

Mrs. Carr and Mrs. Medeiros: we were just talking about that talk to your children have conversations with your children talk about anything talk about what they like to do and listen I think that's the other big thing talk but also listen to what they say and we talk at kids but actually stop and talk to them and let them talk to you and see what their interests are and expand on that because I mean I really feel like when they're that small those interests are gonna carry on over into I remember when I was three my favorite thing to play was school and then I remember sitting there putting out all my little stuffed animals and teaching them how to do all kinds of little things I think that whatever their interests are right does have an impact later on in life and so I mean you just never know our program has also taught us to like get on your child's level like physically get on your child's level make eye contact you see us on the floor a lot on our knees a lot

Keith: it's another reason I couldn't do pre-k my knees couldn't take it

Mrs. Carr and Mrs. Medeiros: but I mean you get on their level and make eye contact with them and talk to them mate I mean be present with them and not just kind of uh-huh you know really interact with them have conversations with him about what they like what they did today or what they would want to do just being and expand on their thinking I guess like taking that further because they are very interested in everything I mean that's what's so great about it a little bugs gone down there a it is interesting to them and say take it and expand it a step further use the resources in our community take them to the library and they have something that they're interested in and find out more about it take it a step further because I was reading something the other day that said and I think it was like between the ages of either three and five or three and six when your brain is able to absorb more information than at any other time in your life and so it's so much easier for them to absorb the information at that time then if you're trying to do it when they're in second grade and say yeah just take their interest and expand on what they already on the but you can they can talk about the color what kind of lies about is it big or is it small lots of inquisitive questions ask them what kind is they could go find out what kind it is things like that talk to him in the car play games with them in the car at the grocery store at the grocery store you go somewhere in the shop you know you could count in a car you could do your letters in the car just do the ABCs if you see letters in the car if you see letters on signs I mean your environment is such a great place to learn and you're not sitting down like at a table like this is a or anything you know yeah I mean books are great to read but a very very good I mean reading is very important to that one

that's one thing we talked about to a meeting with the talkin talk to them like he would talk to another adult don't just talk to him like their baby right respect them right respect them but like if you use the same language with them you would ease with another adult like don't dumb down the vocabulary again because they did pick it up like I said they're sponges during this time and say it's easier for them to pick those words up and use them than it is if you're literally trying to teach them the words later on and so I mean don't change a word from something that you think it's too big for them to say or to understand because if you're easing it an everyday conversation you never have to teach it to them they automatically name it just like they know any other word you would be

Keith: so he and I were just talking about this this morning as a matter of fact when I go back and I watch the cartoons that I watched when I was a kid like Looney Tunes Bugs Bunny and all those there's language in there that you don't see in TV sometimes these days that's where I got exposed to most of the classical music that I would know about us from the old Looney Tunes cartoons and stuff so you know how much of even just some of the picking the programming that they might watch but when they're at home at that time how important is that kind of stuff not saying we should Park a kid in front of the TV all day

Mrs. Carr and Mrs. Medeiros: and limit their screen time a little bit but it is important to watch what they're watching you know some of the times they talk and they're like oh I learned that on TV or my brother was watching that or my parents right it's not the vocabulary like you were talking about and a lot of the vocabulary is things you don't want them using lesson and say if you think about like when we were little and they had all this get that vocabulary coming in and say you know you're expanding your vocabulary well they're expanding their vocabulary too, but books are good you know books have stayed about the same you can bring in the books well and they meet and that's another thing besides just talking they need to read every day with their child like that would be the next most important thing I mean because that just determines what kind of reader they're going to be right down the road and they love to listen to it and I mean that is one thing they will be still for just for a little bit is to listen to books and they love they love the books at this age and that and you want to instill that in them I really do

Keith: because mom would read to me at night every night before him in a bed and then at a certain point it turned the tables and I was reading to her and I think that helped I think that helped

Kyle: oh yeah we are reading Judy B. Jones is what we're on right now we got the 15 book collection

Mrs. Carr and Mrs. Medeiros: children like playdo miss carr and I were talking about this earlier you know you can use play-doh at home that's really inexpensive we even talked about getting out in the yard and the dirt and you know start to write your name a little bit just form those letters just things that are just at the house you sticks use leaves to do your names or letters or numbers just things that are around that they love to play with you know the boy I mean other girls do too love to play with the sticks and their rocks and understand something you can use rocks to form letters or numbers

Kyle: but they don't have to be with a pen or pencil on a piece of paper well it can be part of a play that

Mrs. Carr and Mrs. Medeiros: you learn through play yes yes and any of the fine major stuff helps with that nothing anything without having to pinch and grab I mean give them some tweezers and let them just me bite let me take tweezers outside and pick up leaves and move them to another area because



that movement strengthens their hands so that they will be able to write a really good you can cut leaves you cut anything you know and we have to talk about that when they get to pre-k that we don't cut our hair or anything

Keith: tell the story tell the story

Kyle: so my son is seven my wife is a nurse and so there's mornings where you know her day starts her super early and so I take him to school whatever and so it's one of those mornings where we're late or whatever I'm trying to get ready and he's trying to tell me something and I look up and he has cut his hair all just straight and just right here where it looks like a goalpost and so we got to have early morning fix the hair buzz

Keith: there's no fixing up it was the right center of his forehead all the way the scalp basically

Kyle: I think it's fairly common about the end those things and you look up and go okay okay

Mrs. Carr and Mrs. Medeiros: a lot of parents don't like to give them scissors because of things like that but you can use them outside to you know cut leaves my personal diary is my personal own child which she never cut her own hair well she didn't cut anybody at school but like she cut well her American Girl doll I came in and was butchered I think I was more upset about that than if she had cut her own hair because I was like it doesn't grow back

Keith: and thank goodness the American Girl dolls are so cheap

Kyle: see this is some of that early learning she's gonna be a hair stylist when she grows up

Mrs. Carr and Mrs. Medeiros: well she thinks she's gonna be somebody on YouTube

Kyle: they all do

Keith: well you know apparently some of those kids are making millions of dollars

Kyle: did you hear about the kid all he does is review toys this is super off-topic all he does is review toys

Keith: all he does is unbox

Kyle: unbox toys he is the highest paid person on YouTube in the millions of dollars a year

Mrs. Carr and Mrs. Medeiros: yeah girl there's all kinds that these stuff like that there's one that my child likes in this you're like why would you even want to watch that okay it's a girl oh I guess they're kids and maybe like a mom and they get these little toys out and then they play with them and so they are watching these people on TV play with these toys she's my favorite youtuber on

Kyle: my son is into minecraft so there's just one guy that does a Minecraft show yeah that's annoying minecraft builds skills do that

Mrs. Carr and Mrs. Medeiros: why watch other people do this stuff go get your own toys that are in there it's the same thing

Keith: but it is maddening also whenever I made that much money I'm like okay what am I even doing with my life I have taken a wrong turn somewhere what other resources are available for parents for kids during those formative years to help getting them ready for school

Mrs. Carr and Mrs. Medeiros: well I think that they need to be aware of milestones for kids all kids they develop differently so many names all kids are not gonna be right there on them but I mean most of the milestones especially from birth to two years old type things they're pretty on track for being correct and so they notice these things come ahead and talk to the doctor about it right go ahead and get referrals I mean when they're three they can start receiving services right and then there's things even before that that they can do and some anything are noticing that their kids not talking as much or some of the words are not as clear because it's been proven that the earlier they receive the intervention the less it's gonna affect them later on and so you know if you think about a child who has a speech problem and they start getting help when they're three years old versus waiting until maybe they come in kindergarten right but when they start get them at three their speech is normal pretty much before they even start kindergarten whereas when they start in kindergarten they may still be receiving speech services in third or fourth grade because that's the same with everything else thank you guys so much when they're that age that don't look at it as oh gosh something you know I don't want something to be wrong my child so I'm just gonna head that goes away you know be proactive with your kids go ahead and look into it and take care of it early because most likely it's not gonna be nearly as traumatic as you think it would be if you did it immediately instead of waiting and researching stays the longer you wait the longer it's gonna take to reverse those effects

Keith: so the pediatrician of the one who can refer them to do okay

Mrs. Carr and Mrs. Medeiros: but I think a lot of times it has actually initiated oh yeah oh yeah a lot of times they're not going because they don't know if your kid maybe just isn't talking because they don't want the doctor or and said they may not pick up certain things that

Kyle: they see them for a 10 minute window out of the day

Mrs. Carr and Mrs. Medeiros: yeah question ask the doctor if you don't know what the milestones are

Kyle: and don't hesitate. don't be scared

Mrs. Carr and Mrs. Medeiros: right that's what they're there for yeah okay as a teacher we want it's a team with a parent I mean we're a team it takes it takes a whole family I mean it's just not us here at school and then at home work together and then we talk to our parents twice a day because our children come and their parents drop them off and then they come back in an afternoon so we're constantly communicating with our parents and I have a great relationship with our parents but for the people then and maybe you're just a little shy don't be scared I mean we're here to help we want to help we're all a team volunteer we talked about getting along here get involved in the school in the classroom we have to have parent hours in our classroom they have at least 12 parent hours and they do man mhm and they can go on field trips with us but they can come in and volunteer in our classroom our grandparents can come in I mean it's it's great so just come in and get involved in the classroom and at school I mean at the different schools because we have hope room here that you can get involved in but

Keith: what is that the hope room

Mrs. Carr and Mrs. Medeiros: it's my parents come in and teachers leave their stuff if they need like copyin any laminating anything like that the teachers leave that and our parents come in and do all that

Keith: so the teachers leave it in the hopes that it'll get done

Kyle: in some schools it would be that way I remember from when I was out here that hope room always has someone in it

Mrs. Carr and Mrs. Medeiros: you're exactly right

Kyle: parent involvement became a big topic of conversation several years ago they put a space for volunteer parents right over there they've got a computer set up and also their stuff and so it's something

Mrs. Carr and Mrs. Medeiros: it's a room just for them that we drop our stuff off anything we need they and if they have a question they come in they come to us and like do you want it like this do you wouldn't like this I mean they'll do anything we ask them well I think with the hope room and I don't know about other schools but at our school in the home room we also have a lot of parent resources in there so if you need resources on something if you need help learning how to teach your child a certain topic or if you think that your child's behind and there's several different types of resources and don't hesitate to ask going back to the beam present be present because what's important to you is going to be important to your child right and so I think it's more I mean that's kind of where the parent involvement is so important it's not so much just to help your teacher it's more your child sees that it's important to you you're up at school so that's obviously a priority in your life their parent

Kyle: and so what are some things that you guys get parent volunteers to do with you play with them

Mrs. Carr and Mrs. Medeiros: we had parents bring animals in oh my chicken so the parents bring those and they go on field trips with us that we've had a Grandparents Day the grandparents come in and they we did a little thinking and you know max for the grandparents and so they play with them in the center space a very even play for an hour and a half there in front of honey it's great the parents are wonderful to be involved I really am that's great and

Kyle: it makes a big difference on the buy-in of the kids because like you said they can be there playing with mom or dad that's a lot of fun or grandparents right

Keith: the summer before I started kindergarten mom had me sitting down and writing down my name and my address and all that stuff is that's something that kids should be learning how to do before they go in and...no?...be honest, seriously be honest, this was 30 years ago you know in the 80s that was probably the thing to do but now it might not be

Mrs. Carr and Mrs. Medeiros: sitting down at a table do more hands-on yeah and be interactive you know like we were saying right in the singing right in the dirt have the play-doh I mean things instead of just having to sit now because you had all children learn differently and that might have works for you but that probably won't work for me because I have to be moved and so you know it's just different so but I think the more interaction with the learning is and it depends on their interest because some kids want to write their name and say by all means that they are ready to write their name and they're asking you to help them write their name and that's completely different than saying we're gonna sit here for 15 minutes every single day and you were going to write

Keith: I hated it. Mom, I love you, but I hated it.

Kyle: take a clue from what the child's interested in and try to play along that way

Mrs. Carr and Mrs. Medeiros: because they'll buy in to it all over again they might not mind making their name out of rocks but there's and they're still learning the letters of their name and how to form them and so it's all prewriting skills and then when they are developmentally ready they'll you know they'll take that next step and then they'll start asking I am interested in rocks and learning about rocks right I mean you know

Keith: and now you have a new geologist so we talked about the parents were there anything that other teachers that aren't as amazing as you are any tips that you'd give them so that they could get maybe not as amazing but as near as humanly possible

Kyle: as close to

Mrs. Carr and Mrs. Medeiros: I mean we talked about being positive and loving your kids yeah I mean remember why you're here that's get hard I mean you know you do get overwhelmed at times and you're thinking oh man you know it's just a whole lot and your things are coming at you from so many directions but if you just take a step back and remember why are you really here because your children I would say if you love them on high okay

Kyle: and at all ages

Mrs. Carr and Mrs. Medeiros: right right and we talked about working together as a team with your teachers you know like not a competition and I still check up on kids that are middle school because they're still mine what's nearby there are always fine yeah and I still have to know that they're okay and so it's easier gonna check up on the sixth graders because my childhood sixth grader say you know I make sure that all my kids are okay and you know if they need something we're gonna make sure of it everything so to them and they have because they're mine and I think you have to have ownership of them if you don't take some sort of ownership in your nurse thank you right and thank you but them you want what's best for them and that's just I don't know I think that's the Mesa and if you don't and you don't have a stake in it and your heart's not in it then maybe there's something else out there but that would be better for you

Kyle: that's right I think and and and I don't think that's too hard to say yeah

Keith: I don't think it's harsh no

Kyle: um you know I think we had this exact conversation with dr. Mac about you know I mean that's okay

Keith: it's a shame that they didn't realize that before they had gotten but everybody hits lumps all that but

Kyle: I think that's where when you're talking about teachers working together you know if you can if you have a good working relationship with those teachers on your hall or in your section and you can see that you know there's some

Mrs. Carr and Mrs. Medeiros: you can rely on them you know I mean you work together you plan together that helps tremendously because desk it almost competitive at times I think and I think sometimes teachers forget that like it's not just their class that matters it's the overall whole that's right

and so if you have another teacher on your grade level but struggling get into them and try to help them with that because it's not just that are suffering it's those kids and then it's you know you're separating and it carries over into the next grade and the next grade and if you've all worked together and you're willing to work together and take that responsibility as a whole it makes it easier and everybody and it's just better for the kids I don't know I just feel like you want all your kids to succeed not just kids are in their immediate classroom looks

Kyle: like the state of mind takes a village it can't just be that classroom versus this classroom each one of our silos I mean we talked about silo as a bunch people just have their own things that they're doing and that just what they're focused on but if you can have a bigger organization or some type of reaching out work and this

Mrs. Carr and Mrs. Medeiros: the state is really good with us we have a coach that comes in once a month a monitor that comes in and they're really good about supporting us if we ever need anything you know bounce ideas off them we all work together as a team with them too so we have we're lucky we have the state and then we have we're here at school too so we have

Keith: well and y'all are obviously doing something right

Kyle: something's working

Keith: something's working because you got these other teachers that come in to see what you guys are doing so obviously

Kyle: your kids are lucky to have y'all because obviously you're in it to win it last question what are some of the things you got to do as a part of the first class pre-k

Mrs. Carr and Mrs. Medeiros: oh we got a conference every year they're really good about providing a lot of PD for us professional development we have a conference every year down in mobile that we go to it's usually three days we go to two or three days we get to go down there and have lots of wonderful things that we get to choose from to go to to help us in our classrooms so that is really fun we do that every year and then they offer other professional developments along too that we can go for free yeah and say we just attended one called conscious discipline and that's probably the overall best professional development that I've never sent in and then we will go back to two more it's a series over the next two or years I don't know I never get at least two more and then possibly more than that and it's all about the development and children um how you discipline this that is really good about teaching a have enough all the up-to-date research and they're giving that to us and we can implement in our classroom

Keith: and so there's I mean I guess we have to be just this marked this mark a difference between where they first come in in August to when you release them back into the wild in May

Mrs. Carr and Mrs. Medeiros: there's a huge difference we have some interns in our range right now and we tell them this is nothing like it is in the beginning I have an intern and they just come just for though the first few weeks of the semester or the last two weeks but she was the saint she was a lab student last semester so she saw these same kids at the beginning of the school year and then she hasn't seen them for maybe three months and she just came back and she was thank you don't we see them every

almost everything we don't realize it looking back you can see and the data we have to keep a lot of data and so you look back at that Wow look how far this little friends gone

Keith: so what kind of data do are you have to keep

Mrs. Carr and Mrs. Medeiros: we have think all goal that we have to do it's for this state and we have goal documentation that we have to do everyday it's an online portfolio so it's all based on what they are doing in class and so we take notes and it's not a sit-down formal test of any sort we don't sit down and say what letter is that right write your name it's all based on what they are doing in class I can't wear this when they're playing around in centers we go around and observe what they're doing and if that's part of one of our gold objectives then we take a picture of it and we document it you don't sit down and test them Wow some kids might be displaying never three-year-old level on one thing which it's not it's kind of against what they just put their color right everybody we're son might be doing things that you expect to see a kindergartner or first grader and so your documentation lines up and you have to go in and look and see where they fall on that scale and say they need mark batten so that's how you're able to get back in and really see you know well yeah

Kyle: and all that without having to give any assessments there's something to be learned from that

Keith: you're extrapolating too much there

Kyle: one question that I want to ask if someone is interested in getting first-class pre-k in their district how do they do that

Mrs. Carr and Mrs. Medeiros: we have a website Department of early childhood education you go to first-class pre-k and you had to on a grant that's what we did our very first year we wrote a grant and you submit it and then it needs to be all the guidelines are online but I'm not sure we had to have our first one submitted by March okay and then that you submitted and then they review it and then they call you and let you know if you hide it or not

Kyle: okay so by the time this airs and of course be too late for this coming year but you can prepare the service

Mrs. Carr and Mrs. Medeiros: right actually yeah yeah

Keith: okay well we really appreciate y'all taking the time and coming so well prepared you all just continue to be awesome the kids are enjoying it I know the kids are benefitting from it

Mrs. Carr and Mrs. Medeiros: y'all need to come visit one day

Kyle: when is a good day?

Mrs. Carr and Mrs. Medeiros: any day

Kyle: any day?

Keith: this is on the record we just drop in

Mrs. Carr and Mrs. Medeiros: yes, please drop in

\*Ukulele Music\*