

## The Power of Diversity of Understanding

Male: [00:00] Like, I think that diversity in what the children understand ...

Female: Mm-hm.

Male: ... is—is something to not be afraid of.

Female: Yeah.

Male: But to welcome.

Male: Yeah.

Male: Right? And, like, when I see it in your classroom, right? When, you know, there's the—those views from space, right?

Female: Mm-hm.

Male: You know, imagine what you would—what you would see when you look back at the Earth, right? You know, there's—there's such diversity in those pictures and all of those things are representative of the types of ideas that, you know, that little children will have ...

Female: Right.

Male: Right.

Male: ... about things. And, but you know, it would be—it would be an impoverished situation, really ...

Female: Mm-hm.

Male: ... if all of them were the same.

Male: Mm-hm.

Male: And if all of them were meeting some particular curriculum expectation ...

Female: Exactly.

Male: ... of what a grade—of what an SK child should know, right? It's ...

Female: And we don't do that with other topics.

Male: Yeah. No.

Male: No(?).

Female: We don't say, with reading, that I'm going to, you know, "You're supposed to all be reading like this when you walk into my SK."

Male: Mm-hm.

Female: “And you’re all going to be reading like this when you leave.” We don’t do that. We look at what their skills are when they come in and then we—we’re tracking the progress and it needs to be the same ...

Male: Mm-hm.

Female: ... with—with knowledge-building and inquiry.

Male: Yeah.

Female: We’re tracking the progress of the individual within the larger community.

Male: Mm-hm.

Female: I interrupted you.

Male: And when you say “we” ...

Male: No, no, that’s okay.

Male: Sorry, when you say “we” you’re talking about the community, you know?

Female: Mm-hm.

Male: Assessment is, you know, we talk about assessment as learning. The children are looking at the work that’s archived, the—the journey that they’ve undergone, and they’re seeing how the ideas have evolved. They can tell the story of ...

Female: Mm-hm.

Male: ... the learning. And so, in that case, assessment is not to show what the children—you know, it—it’s not about a deficit model.

Female: Mm-hm.

Male: Of course, there are going to be things that will change as they acquire new information, but it’s to help us understand as a community what we know and what we don’t know. In both of your classrooms, you know?

Male: Mm-hm.

Male: In all the classrooms here, an assessment for learning in order to—it’s sort of what I see in—in your settings is that the children use the assessment, as do you, to figure out what to do next.

Female: Yeah.

Male: You know, it’s—it’s embedded. It’s—it motivates the next step. It’s not simply a conversation between the student and a teacher, you knowing what I can or cannot do.

Male: Mm-hm.

Male: It’s a conversation amongst everyone about ...

Female: Mm-hm.

Male: ... what we've done, what we need to do, how we're going to need to do it next.

Male: Mm-hm. And ...

Male: Please.

Male: And I think, you know, the thing, again, is that those—when—when assessment does function like that ...

Male: Mm-hm.

Male: Right? When it is about us all together understanding what we need to do, what we know ...

Male: Yeah.

Male: ... what we could know better, what we need to know more about or what we've kind of figured out as a group, I think both the learning for the children is better, right?

Male: Yeah.

Female: Mm-hm.

Male: And the assessment of the children ...

Male: Yeah.

Male: ... is also better ...

Male: That's true.

Female: Mm-hm.

Male: ... in the sense that when—when the assessment is carried out like that and the dialogue is not just between one person and a teacher, well then, right, you know, what you know is strengthened by what Carol(?) knows.

Male: Mm-hm.

Male: And what Carol knows is strengthened by what I and everyone else in the room knows, right?

Female: Mm-hm(?).

Male: So you know, it's—it's kind of like, well, the understanding of five people is naturally going to be ...

Male: Yeah.

Male: ... better than the understanding of one, right? I mean, it's math, I guess. But so, you know, I think it naturally makes that learning situation better. But also, you know, the—the assessment of the children becomes—becomes more clear because you're asking them to do—and they do naturally—all of those high level things that we beg for them to do ...

Female: Mm-hm.

Male: That's true(?).

Male: ... in assessment. All those metacognitive tasks. All those, like, think about what you know and what you could improve, and all of those things.

Female: They do it naturally.

Male: They do it naturally because they're not just talking about themselves.

Male: That's how we learn. We do it naturally.

Male: They're talking about ...

Male: Yeah.

Male: They're talking about everything. They're talking about here's—here's the contribution we all have to make, right?

Male: Mm-hm.

Male: And so, you know, it's not this sort of navel-gazing that we ask them to do.

Male: Mm-hm. Mm-hm.

Male: But it's purposeful.

Male: Yeah.

Male: It's for the group.

Male: And transformative.

Male: Yeah.

Female: And they say ...

Male: And they do it.

Male: Yeah.

Female: And you can hear it ...

Male: Yeah.

Female: ... in the way they talk ...

Male: Yeah.

Female: ... because they don't say, "I need to know this."

Male: Mm-hm.

Female: They say, "We need to know this."

Male: Mm-hm.

Female: "We need to find out about this." They—they use the collective ...

Male: Mm-hm. Yeah.

Male: ... in the way they talk to each other in those big groups.

Male: That's right.

[END OF RECORDING – length, 04:33]