

**The Use of CosmoKidz in K-2 Classes in Oracle, Arizona to Help  
Children Develop the Social Skills Needed for Effective Citizenship**

**Final Report**

**Presented to: Libby Kingseed, Program Officer, Kettering Foundation**

**Kim Pearce, CMM Institute**

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*“My name is A. and I like to play with my baby brother. If I were a CosmoKidz, I would open my hands to help others and respect other people and be friends with them and help them go to the nurse.”* This quote is from an assignment that the kindergarten students had of indicating their name, identifying what they like to do, and choosing anything they want to be and what differences that would make. A. wants to be a CosmoKidz.

*“I asked someone if they would like to play with me and she said yes.”* From a first-grader who provided an example of how she SOARed during the week.

*“I helped my cousin up because he cut his knee. I asked him, are you ok?”* From a second-grader who provided an example of how he SOARed during the week.

Two and a half years ago, the Kettering Foundation and I embarked on a learning contract to explore a set of activities for young children called CosmoKidz and to collect data on the differences these activities are making in the social-emotional development of these children. The thinking behind the use of CosmoKidz is that it helps young children develop essential communication and relationship skills that carry-over into several domains such as peer friendships, classroom behavior, and relationships with care-givers, siblings, teachers, and other adults. We also hypothesized that the development of these skills provides the building blocks for effective citizenship and can even help young children meaningfully participate in “modified deliberations.”

For the last two and a half years, the kindergarten through second-grade teachers at Mountain Vista school in Oracle, Arizona have used the CosmoKidz activities to help children learn how to talk with each other about the issues in their social worlds such as making new friends, teasing and bullying, making quiet time, and respecting differences. The teachers are also using the acronym SOAR to point out specific SOARing behaviors and to remind the children when they are SOARing or not SOARing. SOAR stands for: Sense what’s around you; Open your hands to help others; Act with kindness; Respect other people. Among other things, SOARing behaviors help foster the more complex relationship and citizenship skills of active listening, handling conflicts in productive ways, and expressing and managing strong emotions in healthy ways.

The opening quotes from a kindergarten student, a first-grader, and a second-grader exemplify a level of relational awareness that has become part of the culture of the kindergarten through second-grade classes. This final report will provide data from the teachers, parents, and the students themselves on the differences CosmoKidz and SOAR have made. I will also provide a summary of the last two modified deliberations and what we have learned about the ability of children to engage in conversations that don't typically occur at very young ages.

### **Summary from Teachers**

I'd like to begin this section with an important learning from last year. At the conclusion of the last academic year, I learned that not all of the teachers had been using CosmoKidz as consistently as they had been instructed to do. One of the second-grade teachers only used CosmoKidz a few times a month rather than four to five days a week. One of the significant learnings from the underuse of CosmoKidz in this class was that the students didn't develop the same interpersonal skill sets as the other classes and grades. This finding occurred across contexts—in the students' ability to name SOARing behaviors and actions; in the students' interactions with their peers and other adults; and in the observations of the students' communication skills from their teacher and parents/care-givers.

This year, all of the teachers used CosmoKidz most days (with the exception of a first-grade teacher who used CosmoKidz 3 days a week) or every day for the entire academic year. Furthermore, the teachers made a concerted effort to reach out to parents/care-givers by sending home weekly information about the CosmoKidz topic of the week and encouraging parents to talk with their children about the topic.

Each teacher was interviewed twice during the year: at the beginning of the school-year to help establish a base-line of their students' behaviors and relational skills and at the end of the year to reflect on changes that occurred due to the use of CosmoKidz and SOAR. I am providing direct quotes from each teacher that capture highlights from our last extended interview:

#### ***Kindergarten Teachers***

*What can you tell me about the connection between the use of CosmoKidz and SOAR and the behavior of the children in your class?*

"CosmoKidz has allowed our students to think beyond themselves and focus on the needs, wants, thoughts, and feelings of others. With CosmoKidz, I have seen an increase in empathy and problem-solving skills and I have seen students be more aware of their actions and feelings as well as the actions and feelings of those around them. It is still a work in progress with our littlest CosmoKidz, but they are developing empathy, problem-solving skills, awareness, and kindness one little step at a time."

"My students would use the language from CosmoKidz and SOAR when we were in different settings around school which would help them to engage other students/adults in the

“philosophy” of what it meant to SOAR. They could also tell stories about their families and talk about who did and who did not use SOAR behavior.”

*As a teacher, what do you see as the strengths and challenges of using CosmoKidz in the classroom?*

STRENGTHS: “Great discussions, developing empathy and kindness, increase in problem-solving skills, being aware of others, recognizing differences, making smart choices and being conscious of feelings/emotions, demonstrating SOARing behaviors.”

“The most important strength is having the program as a structure to reinforce positive behaviors AMONG MY STUDENTS.”

CHALLENGES: “Finding adequate time every single day, some of the cards were less relevant for our kindergartners or more difficult to grasp/understand, helping the students relate the situations to their own lives and think at a higher level during discussions.”

“The biggest challenge of SOAR was to convince parents that the homework component was a conversation starter and not meant to add stress to their night at home with their child.”

### ***First-Grade Teachers***

*How often did you refer to SOAR and SOARing behavior in your class?*

“Daily. The verbiage from SOAR became an everyday part of our language in class. When redirecting, I would refer to SOAR. For example, when a student wouldn’t share the playground equipment, I would ask if they were using SOARing behavior. We would discuss how could they Act with Kindness or what could they do to Open their hands to help others. If I noticed something, I would say “Let’s sense what is around us- what do you notice?”

*What changes have you seen in how the children handle conflicts? What do the children do when there is a disagreement or conflict?*

“There is an increase of handling the conflicts on their own without adult intervention or assistance. Students now first try talking to each other. They use the “When you...I feel...” statements. I would say this solves the issue to both party’s satisfaction about 90% of the time. The other 10% of the time, they come and ask for help. Interestingly but not surprisingly, the times when the children seek my help are when they are trying to resolve a conflict with the same three students. All three students are boys, have ADD/ADHD and are in the special education program.

There has been a significant decrease in physical behaviors during conflict from the beginning of the year. Pushing, shoving, cutting, hitting have been replaced with using words and

explaining. By going over the different SOAR card scenarios and deliberating courses of action, students have other choices available to them besides their first reactionary action.

The other change I have seen is reliability. We had issues with children as reliable sources. Whether this was just how they really saw the situations in an eschewed view or if they were trying to get someone else in trouble because they were hurt, I don't know. The card about Cheating and why people cheat was a huge eye opener for the kids and this led to talks on honesty and being truthful in our relationships. They were very transparent during that card. They gave insightful reasons on why someone would cheat and they internalized and applied them. For example, I asked a student about what happened in a situation. He told me that since it's better to be honest and tell the truth so this is what happened. (Which did not paint him in a good light.) If I forget that someone owes a recess or if they earned a sticker, the majority of the students will come to me and say "I didn't earn this" and give me the sticker back or "I owe recess" and sit down on the bench."

*Overall, how well are the children selecting a course of action that helps create a better outcome for them and others?*

"My students have an easier time coming up and selecting courses of action when they are not directly involved in the situation. For example, we had a group of students playing with sticks- using them as money. They put them away under a tree. Another group of students found them and started playing with them. The first group was very upset, saying the sticks belonged to them and that the second group took their sticks. They tried talking to each other but things were getting heated on both sides. Both felt they were wronged.

We opened it up for suggestions on courses of action and several students came up with great ideas: breaking the sticks so there are more and everyone could have one, helping everyone find their own stick, etc. The first group kept finding problems with every solution and the only solution they wanted was they keep their sticks since they only had one per person. This opened up conversations and discussions. One student said sticks aren't more important than your friends. What was amazing was how they discussed the issue and the different courses of action they came up. This gives them more options to select from."

*What can you tell me about the connection between the use of CosmoKidz and SOAR and the behavior of the children in your class?*

"The use of CosmoKidz and SOAR directly influences the children's behavior. They apply and reference what they learned during Cosmokidz. SOAR gives them a standard of behavior to model themselves and gives them expectations for other's behaviors as well. The expectation is that you SOAR. SOAR gives the kids an outlet for expression. They can talk safely about how they feel when they are mad or jealous or left out. They describe in detail the colors, visuals, physical feelings of being angry or sad or frustrated- often with body movements. One student almost vibrated when describing how angry he gets- like a volcano ready to explode. These children are much more in tune with their feelings and the why behind their actions. Cosmokidz

encourages critical thinking about scenarios in their lives that carry over into their interactions with each other, creating better relationships and behavior.”

*As a teacher, what do you see as the strengths and challenges of using CosmoKidz in the classroom?*

STRENGTHS: “The strengths of CosmoKidz are it is a very friendly program to use. It is scripted but gives room for flexibility. It is easy to use and can be a quick 5 minute “lesson” or a longer lesson. The scenarios are applicable and meaningful to the children and their everyday lives.”

CHALLENGES: “I don’t really see any challenges to the program. There may be an issue with adding another curriculum or program to an already full school day; however the program when done consistently will actually create more time in the school day by reducing the time taken redirecting unwanted behaviors. Students become more independent and better citizens and that is time well spent.”

### ***Second-Grade Teachers***

*Overall, how are the children expressing and managing their strong emotions?*

“They are talking more. If we have a student that is mean to other students, I also see the students getting involved telling the “bully” why he shouldn’t treat the students that way. They also say things like, I feel this way when you... and so on.”

*What can you tell me about the connection between the use of CosmoKidz and SOAR and the behavior of the children in your class?*

“The cards and puppets are so visual. The students refer to the cards when they do nice things. They constantly say I did this... like the Cosmo card.”

“Our children have been exposed to CosmoKidz for the last three years and them showing empathy and kindness towards others comes first now.”

*As a teacher, what do you see as the strengths and challenges of using CosmoKidz in the classroom?*

STRENGTHS: “The strengths are the flexibility of the program. I love that I can choose a topic that matches the behaviors in the classroom.”

“The strengths are that they get exposed to it every day and that it reminds them to be a compassionate person and to be helpful.”

CHALLENGES: “It is a challenge to make it a priority and always fitting it in between academics.”

“The challenge is that we can’t go home and teach it to the parents and other family members and society!”

My take-away from conversations with each teacher is that the children are indeed learning relational skills and abilities because of CosmoKidz and SOAR and these skills are carrying over into other contexts. One such context is the ability to problem-solve while thinking about the feelings and needs of others. This is an enormous developmental leap that some adults don’t even achieve as evidenced by the current public (and private) discourse around complex social issues. This also increases the ability for these young children to meaningfully participate in modified deliberations (more on this later in this summary report).

It is also important to note that many of these children come from challenging backgrounds. Many live in families that are struggling economically. Oracle has a higher than average unemployment rate with the percentage of those living in poverty at 17.3. Many live in single parent homes or with a care-giver that is not a parent. Some have parents in prison and a handful of these children have had a parent murdered or killed in accidents. Consequently, many of these children are not learning these essential social-emotional and communicative skills in their home. This is one of the reasons the teachers have encouraged parents to talk with their child about the CosmoKidz topic of the week. We want parents to participate in these conversations as well.

### **Summary from Parents**

One of the questions that this research is attempting to answer is to what extent there is carry-over of CosmoKidz and SOAR skills to other contexts. In addition to the classroom, a primary context for children is their home life. In an attempt to better understand how much carry-over might be occurring at home, all kindergarten through second-grade teachers sent home two questionnaires for parents. One questionnaire was sent home three months after the beginning of the school year in November. A summary of the data from this questionnaire was included in the mid-year report to the Kettering Foundation in January, 2016. A second questionnaire was sent home at the end of this school year in May. This section compares the two questionnaires and summarizes the data from this most recent questionnaire.

Figure 1 provides an example of the questionnaire. Appendix A provides a summary of the May, 2016 results by grade level.

Figure 1

May, 2016

Dear Parents/Caregivers:

One of our research questions is seeking to know how much the children are sharing CosmoKidz and SOARing behavior with you. Would you please take about 5 minutes to answer the following questions, as this will help us know what kind of carry-over is occurring?

1. **Since the beginning of the school year, is your child *mentioning* SOAR or SOARing behavior?**  
Frequently \_\_\_\_\_ Sometimes \_\_\_\_\_ Never \_\_\_\_\_

2. **Does your child *point out* SOARing behavior? (For example, saying something like, “She is opening her hands to help others”)**  
Frequently \_\_\_\_\_ Sometimes \_\_\_\_\_ Never \_\_\_\_\_

3. **Is your child *exhibiting* SOARing behavior more than s/he was at the beginning of the school year?**

*Sensing what’s around him/her*  
More frequently \_\_\_\_\_ About the same \_\_\_\_\_ Not as much \_\_\_\_\_

*Opening his/her hands to help others*  
More frequently \_\_\_\_\_ About the same \_\_\_\_\_ Not as much \_\_\_\_\_

*Acting with kindness*  
More frequently \_\_\_\_\_ About the same \_\_\_\_\_ Not as much \_\_\_\_\_

*Respecting other people*  
More frequently \_\_\_\_\_ About the same \_\_\_\_\_ Not as much \_\_\_\_\_

4. **How often do you and your child talk together about the CosmoKidz topic of the week in your child’s class?**  
Four or more days a week \_\_\_\_\_ One to three days a week \_\_\_\_\_ Never \_\_\_\_\_

5. **How often does your child sing the SOAR song at home?**  
Four or more days a week \_\_\_\_\_ One to three days a week \_\_\_\_\_ Never \_\_\_\_\_

6. **Since the beginning of the school year, what differences are you noticing in your child’s behavior?**

## ***Parents of Kindergarteners***

Seventeen parents answered the first questionnaire that was sent home in November, 2015. Fifteen parents answered the same questionnaire that was sent home in May, 2016.

The first two questions ask to what extent their child is either *mentioning* SOAR or SOARing behavior or *pointing out* SOARing behavior. The data between the first and second questionnaires is fairly consistent with regard to these two questions. About 80% of the students are mentioning SOAR and SOARing behavior sometimes or frequently while just over 50% of the students are pointing out SOARing behavior sometimes or frequently. In both cases the most frequent response was “sometimes” rather than “frequently.” About 20% of the students never mentioned SOAR and just under 50% never pointed out SOARing behavior.

The third question asks about their child’s behavior and what changes the parent has observed in the child’s SOARing behavior since the beginning of the school year. The tabulated responses from both questionnaires were fairly consistent. In terms of their child “Sensing what is around him/her” a bit more than 50% of the parents said that they are noticing this behavior more frequently with the rest saying the behavior is about the same. Over half the parents said they are noticing their child “Opening his/her hands to help others” more frequently than at the beginning of the school year with the rest saying the behavior is about the same. Sixty percent of the parents observe their child “Acting with kindness” more frequently. Only one parent thought that his/her child is not acting with kindness as much as s/he did at the beginning of the school year. Almost 50% of the respondents said that their child “Respects other people” more frequently than at the beginning of the year. About 10% of parents think their child is not respecting other people as much as the child did at the beginning of the school year.

When asked to describe some of the differences they are noticing in their child’s behavior, the responses included:

- He is sharing and being more respectful to others
- He wants to be a helper
- Very helpful to others. Uses manners more frequently
- Better at putting clothes away and picking up toys but attitude and tone of voice has gotten more sarcastic
- Very helpful and maturity (sic)
- He has become more aware of his actions and how they can effect (sic) others. He has also become more helpful around the house
- Talks about being friends. Being nice. Listening more often
- Some change in attitude

The fourth question asks about the frequency of the parent/child conversations about the CosmoKidz topic of the week. Eighty percent of the respondents said that they talk with their child about the CosmoKidz topic one to three times a week. Twenty percent said that they never talk with their child about CosmoKidz.



### ***Parents of First-Graders***

Fourteen parents answered the first questionnaire that was sent home in November, 2015. Seventeen parents answered the same questionnaire that was sent home in May, 2016.

Almost 90% of the parents responded that their child sometimes or frequently mentions SOAR or SOARing behavior. Two parents responded that their child never mentions SOAR. A bit more than 75% of respondents said that their child sometimes or frequently points out SOARing behavior with four parents indicating their child never points out SOARing behavior.

In terms of their child exhibiting SOARing behavior, more than 50% said their child is “Sensing what’s around him/her” more frequently; about 60% said their child is more frequently “Opening his/her hands to help others”; about 55% said their child is “Acting with kindness” more often; and, about 60% said their child is “Respecting other people” more frequently. Between 10-15% of parents said their child is not showing these behaviors as often as s/he did before the start of the school year.

Parents described the differences they are observing in their child in this way:

- He has manners!! He points out the good in people!
- She has opened up a lot more and (is) not as shy
- (child’s name) has only been with the school for a few months (all of this parent’s responses were in the “never” or “not as much” categories)
- N/A (all of this parent’s responses were in the “never” or “not as much” category)
- No difference
- He help (sic) others, he respect (sic) and is more kind to others
- She likes to help others. She has more patience with her younger cousin
- He has come a long way. He now shakes people’s hands and responds when spoken to
- He is behaving better

Somewhere between the timeframe of the first and second questionnaire, parents began talking less with their child about the CosmoKidz topic of the week. In November, eighty percent of parents said they talked with their child each week about the CosmoKidz topic while 20% said they never did. By the end of the school year, sixty percent of parents said they talked weekly with their child while 40% said they never talked about the CosmoKidz topics.

### ***Parents of Second-Graders***

Fifteen parents answered both of the questionnaires that were sent home.

As the year progressed, parents said their child mentioned and pointed out SOARing behavior more frequently. Over one-third of the students were frequently pointing out SOARing behavior while a bit more than 10% of students never pointed out or mentioned SOARing behavior.

Seven of the fifteen respondents said their child is now more frequently “Sensing what is around him/her” with an equal number saying their child’s behavior is about the same. Only one parent said his/her child is less able to do this. Seventy-five percent of parents said their child more frequently “Opens his/her hands to help others.” The rest of the respondents said the behavior is about the same. More than 75% said their child “Acts with kindness” more frequently with the remaining parents saying the behavior is the same. Sixty percent of parents said their child is more frequently “Respecting other people.” Only one parent said his/her child is not doing this as much as s/he did at the beginning of the school year.

When asked about how often the parent talks with his/her child about the CosmoKidz topic of the week, over 50% said they talk at least 4 days a week. This is significantly higher than any of the other grade levels. Twenty percent said they never talk with their child about the CosmoKidz topic, which is about the same as the kindergarten parents and lower than the first-grade parents. The rest of the parents said that they talk with their child about the CosmoKidz topic between one and three times a week.

When asked to describe the differences the parent is noticing in his/her child’s behavior, respondents said:

- She is always a good girl
- She is so much nicer to her little sister at home and has made a lot of new friends at school this year
- Overall my son is much nicer and willing to help others
- He is working harder at class and at home
- Acting with kindness and helping his tata more
- All around better behaved
- She is offering a helping hand and thinking of others more
- She has grown so much! What an amazing program

I will say more about the parents’ observations in the next section.

### **Summary from Students**

The data that we sought from students included their ability to name what the acronym SOAR stands for and to provide specific examples of their own SOARing behavior. Each student was given a written test to measure their recall of SOAR. The first- and second-grade students were given this same test at the beginning of the school year to test their carry-over knowledge of SOAR from the previous year. This same test was given to all kindergarten through second-grade students at the end of this academic year. There were no visible signs of SOAR in the classroom when the students took this test. One of the kindergarten teachers told me later that this kind of test is difficult for this age group as some of them still do not have the hand-eye coordination to circle the correct response. Consequently, the responses from the kindergarten students may not accurately reflect their knowledge of SOAR. Figure 2 provides a sample of the test and Appendix B provides the composite scores for all three grade levels.

**Figure 2**

This year you learned about SOARing behavior. What does SOAR stand for? Please circle the correct phrase for each letter in SOAR.

S:            Seek out a friend  
               Sense what's around you  
               Stand up straight  
               Say you're sorry if you have hurt someone

O:            Only talk when you're called on  
               Offer candy to your friends  
               Open your hands to help others  
               Own toys that you'll share

A:            Act with kindness  
               Ask someone to be your friend  
               Allow a friend to play with your toys  
               Always look both ways before you cross the street

R:            Read when you can  
               Rely on your friends for help  
               Rest everyday  
               Respect other people

Draw a picture of something you did this week that showed you were SOARing. Write one sentence to describe what you did.

### ***Kindergarten Students***

The ability of the five and six year-olds to recall what the acronym SOAR stands for ranged from just over 75% to just over 80%. Interestingly, these percentages correlate with the feedback we received from their parents. About 80% of parents said their child mentions SOARing behavior and about 80% of parents said they talk with their child about CosmoKidz each week. At least 50% of parents also noticed their child exhibiting SOARing behavior. The teachers of these students have also observed examples of SOARing behavior. One teacher told me that she observes the children in her class showing empathy and compassion toward other children at least every other day. She also said they are very good at helping the special needs kids in her class. The other teacher told me she has watched her students develop greater awareness

of how their actions are affecting other people. Additionally, she has witnessed students making an attempt to choose their words wisely and use SOAR vocabulary. This indicates that the children are not just able to recall information but they are also exhibiting some of the SOAR skills.

### ***First-Grade Students***

The first-grade students were just shy (by one person) of a 100% recall of the first three letters in SOAR. Ninety percent of the students were able to recall the R in SOAR. These students entered the school-year with a range of 69% to 88% carry-over in their recall of SOAR. Almost 90% of parents said their child is mentioning SOARing behavior, while about three quarters of the children are pointing out SOARing behavior. Fifty to sixty percent of parents also indicated that their child is exhibiting SOARing behavior more frequently than they were at the beginning of the school year.

The teachers, however, had mixed observations of their students. One teacher (who used CosmoKidz everyday) observed a noticeable difference in her students' abilities to show SOARing behavior. She observed improved interactions through better listening, problem solving, empathy, and turn taking. She said that about 95% of her students were productively expressing their thoughts and feelings by the end of the school year. The second teacher expressed more frustration and difficulty with her students. She used CosmoKidz three times a week and observed her students attempting to exhibit SOARing behavior but "reverting back" to unproductive behavior. She recognizes the importance of reinforcing positive behavior but she also found it difficult to work with an "energetic group that usually responds negatively." This teacher saw some improvement with her students but not nearly as much as the other first-grade teacher.

### ***Second-Grade Students***

The second-grade students were able to recall between 95% to 100% of the SOAR acronym. This was mostly up from their carry-over knowledge of SOAR which ranged from an impressive 88% to 98% recall at the beginning of the school year. This is the group that has had the most exposure to CosmoKidz and SOAR (half of the second-graders began learning about CosmoKidz in kindergarten). This is also the group that, according to parents, talks the most about CosmoKidz with their parents (more than half of the parents talk with their child about CosmoKidz at least four days a week). This group of children showed the highest percentage of improvement over the course of the year, according to parents.

The teachers also observed heightened communication skills and sensitivity towards others. One teacher told me that her students have made significant strides in problem solving ("they work together to make a compromise that suits everybody's needs"), selecting helpful courses of action ("they are thinking about what they are saying before they speak to prevent hurting others"), managing strong emotions ("they approach the other child and tell them how their actions made them feel"), and conflict resolution ("they are working things out verbally and not

requiring teacher intervention so often”). The other second-grade teacher observed the increased compassion the children show toward each other. She says, “There seems to be less bullying and tattling. They are better at taking turns and sharing. I see a lot of encouragement now. They are also complimenting each other all of the time. I love to hear that. We are calling it bucket filling.” Two of her students have also made the connection between “bucket filling” and SOARing. One says, “A bucket filler is someone who is nice. A bucket filler is someone Being and SOARing.” A second student said, “A bucket filler is someone who makes you happy and someone who is nice and someone who SOARs.” One last comment to make about one of the teacher’s observation came from a teacher who only used CosmoKidz infrequently last year (twice a month). This teacher also had a very difficult class last year. She used CosmoKidz daily this year as well as keeping two of the CosmoKidz cards openly displayed throughout the year. The two cards were “making quiet time” and “expressing anger.” In addition to the CosmoKidz topic of the week, she would refer to these two cards as needed throughout the year. This teacher told me that she could see a significant difference with this group of students. She thought that, in addition to the brief but daily CosmoKidz conversations she was having, these students were exhibiting essential social-emotional relational skills because they had been using CosmoKidz since kindergarten. This teacher really saw the difference that having daily conversations about children’s social worlds can make.

There is one last observation that I made that has piqued my curiosity. I learned from one of the teachers that this group of second-graders as a whole made “off the chart” improvements in their standardized test scores. Most of these scores were not incremental improvements but noteworthy increases. It is difficult to know all of the factors that made this difference possible (there are bound to be several). I wonder to what extent the children’s increased communicative skills and their social-emotional development contributed to their improved learning? There is no doubt some connection, but whether there is a statistically significant connection is a question worth pursuing in the future.

### **Summary of the Final Two Modified Deliberations**

I spent the second half of this academic year experimenting with a form of “modified deliberations” that more closely resembles an NIF structure. The teachers chose “real issues” for the children to deliberate, vote on, and implement. The first round of deliberations occurred in March. Each teacher acted as the primary facilitator, with four adult helpers leading small break-out group conversations of approximately 4-6 children. The adult-led small group discussions provided an opportunity for the students to discuss what they liked and didn’t like about each of the choices and to imagine what each choice would “look like” in real life if they voted to implement it. The second round of facilitations that occurred in May was similar with the exception of one of the first-grade classes. We decided to experiment with this class to see if it was possible for the teacher to facilitate the entire process without the help of adult facilitators. I will say more about this later in this summary.

In March, the topic that the kindergarten children deliberated was, “how their afternoons will be spent for the remainder of the school year?” The first-grade and second-grade students had

been accruing class “reward” points during the year. All four of these classes deliberated three choices for “how they will use their class points?” The topic in May was consistent across all three grade-levels. The teachers wanted to experiment with a modified deliberation that was part of a lesson plan about Earth Day. The teachers wanted to begin with a lesson plan introducing Earth Day followed by three options for Earth Day projects that the class would deliberate and choose among. The choice that received the most votes would become the Earth Day class project. Two classes used a slight variation with the children themselves (rather than the teacher) thinking of three possible Earth Day projects that would then become the options that they would deliberate.

There were two aspects of these discussions that I was most interested in. 1. What is the quality of the conversation? Are the children able to provide realistic pros and cons for these options? Are the children able to stay engaged and interested for an entire hour that a process like this requires? 2. Do any of the children change their mind as a result of the conversation?

Using a secret ballot, the children voted for their favorite choice before the small group discussion and then again after their small group discussion and after hearing the summaries from the other groups. Appendix C provides a summary of the deliberations in March and Appendix D summarizes the deliberations in May.

The format for the hour-long discussion included nine steps. I provided the written instructions you are about to read for teachers and we had a brief face-to-face meeting to ensure that they were comfortable with each of these steps:

1. Introduce the topic and explain to the children what they will be deciding and why it’s important for them to participate in the discussion and the decision.
2. Introduce the two choices that you want the children to deliberate (for the March deliberation only).
3. Ask the students if there is a third possible choice that the class can discuss and vote on. You will facilitate this process, making sure that whatever third choice the class chooses is a realistic option. If there is more than one possible third choice, you can ask the children to vote for only one choice and allow the majority to rule. If the students can’t think of a third choice, the children will deliberate the two predetermined choices. (As a post script, every class thought of a third choice.)
4. Now that you and the children know what the 3 choices are, ask the students to vote for the choice they like the best. This will be a secret ballot. I (Kim) will provide sticky notes for each student. They only need to write the number of the choice they like the best and their initials. I will give the sticky notes to you so you can tabulate the responses while they are in their small groups. This vote will give us the “baseline” of what the students like before they have their small group conversation about the pros and cons of each choice.
5. Break the students into four groups, keeping best friends in different groups. We want to avoid kids saying they like or don’t like something because their best friend says so.
6. The small groups should be in the four corners of the room, if possible. Each group will have a facilitator and flip charts/pens that I will provide.

7. After each group has gone through the pros and cons of each choice, you will ask each group for a report out (we will talk about one choice at a time). The small group facilitators will talk about agreements or differences across the groups. We want the kids to see what each of the groups have said about the choices.
8. After we have summarized the pros and cons of each choice, ask the students to go back to their seats. You will remind them of each of the choices and then ask them to vote again. I will provide sticky notes again. The students will need to choose their favorite choice (let them know it doesn't need to be the choice that they initially put as their favorite) by putting down the choice number and including their initials.
9. End the activity by letting the students know how they voted as a class the first time and then the second time. Let them know how their vote has made a difference in what the class will be doing and when they will do the activity that they voted on.

### **Observations of the Modified Deliberations Across the Three Grades**

One of the reasons that I haven't done a modified deliberation that more closely resembles NIF is because I didn't think children between the ages of 5 and 7 could participate in an hour-long conversation, especially without the use of puppets and other props that we have used in the past to keep their attention and interest. Our modified deliberations during the last two years have lasted approximately 20 minutes and we have role-played with puppets and age appropriate scenarios to keep the children's attention and to help them visualize the situation we are discussing. These last two deliberations were based exclusively on small group conversations facilitated by an adult (and in one class in May, without any adults). Moreover, the entire process in all three grade-levels lasted for a minimum of one hour, which is a *very* long time for 5 to 7 year-olds. So what did we learn from this experiment?

First, all of the children were able to, more or less, engage in this activity. As one would expect, the children were squirmy with the kindergartner's attention span being shorter than the first-grade students, and the first graders' attention span being shorter than the second graders. But even so, every class in every grade was able to complete the task of thinking together about the pros and cons of each choice. As one would also expect, the quality of the conversation improved with each grade level. The kindergarteners were good at "first turns" of thinking about what they liked and didn't like about each of the options. What they weren't able to do, as the second-graders were, is to talk in more detail about what a choice might really look and feel like. Every class had similar responses across the four small groups but each group also had their unique ideas for why they liked or didn't like a particular choice. This speaks to the ability of the children to go beyond the obvious and to talk in small groups with their peers about specific preferences and dislikes regarding the choices.

The first- and second-grade classes also seemed to enjoy and learn from the small group report-outs. We used this as an opportunity for some of the children to read aloud the pros and cons on their group's flip chart. Other children placed stickers next to an idea that another group had that was also on their group's flip chart. This kept the children's attention and interest in

ways that didn't occur for the kindergarten students who are still too young to read and participate in this way.

The small groups also made it easier for each child to speak and be heard. The facilitators made it possible for the quiet students to chime in and for the extraverted students to listen; this is something that I know would not have happened if we had not broken up the class into four small groups.

This exercise also provided the students with a "real topic" and the opportunity of experiencing democracy in action. Every class was able to think of at least one realistic third choice (the first-grade students were able to choose all three choices) and to vote for the choice that they liked the best. Each teacher told the students that they were going to make a decision that would affect how they would spend their time, and the students seemed to enjoy the process of voting, talking about the choices, and then voting again. Although we don't know how the facilitation affected students' choices, we do know that every class had students who changed their mind and, in the case of six of the twelve deliberations, the first-place choice changed after the facilitated activity.

Each of these facilitations came full circle when the choice was actually implemented. This provided the children with a real-life experience of "choice-work in action;" these weren't just conceptual exercises but ones that led to real outcomes that affected what students did and how they spent their time.

The modified deliberation that I thought was not possible given the maturity level of these young children actually occurred with one of the first-grade classes in May. This teacher wanted to experiment with a deliberation that didn't include any outside adults. Both she and I were curious to know if she could engage the class in an hour-long facilitation, without the assistance of other adults. In place of adult facilitators, she chose 8 students to help: Four were asked to help lead one of four small group conversations and 4 students with good writing and spelling skills were asked to record the ideas from their group on a sheet of paper that the teacher provided (these are six year olds!).

This activity worked because the teacher was extraordinarily detailed in her instructions for the children. She clearly described every aspect of the deliberation one step at a time; she provided instructions for the "next step" of the activity and then asked the students to do it. She told the students how long they would have for the current step in which they were engaged. She walked around the room to keep the students on track and answer any questions they had. I was amazed that these children were able to complete the tasks that each step required of them. The children who led the small group discussions were asking questions and listening well. The recorders were writing what their peers said. And the group participants listened and responded to the questions of their peer leader. This activity was so successful that one of the second-grade teachers began using a similar process with her students. She, too, found that she could lead her class in a modified deliberation using peer leaders to help facilitate and record the small group conversations.



I am extraordinarily encouraged by my observations that this kind of deliberative process can occur with young children. With enough of these experiences, children will learn the rudimentary skills of seeing decision making as a process that can involve several possible choices. They develop the ability to see and describe pros and cons of each choice, to think about trade-offs, and possibly even change their mind as they think more deliberately about the choices and what each choice might look like in reality. All of the kindergarten through second-grade teachers see the benefits of these modified deliberations and they would like to continue to experiment using various formats. Each teacher also told me she thinks the conversations using CosmoKidz topics and our first several deliberations using puppets, scenarios, and role-playing provided the necessary scaffolding (i.e., learning turn-taking and listening skills; exploring different perspectives; respecting differences) that made the later hour-long deliberations possible.

I strongly encourage the Kettering Foundation to continue working with the youngest of our children in pre-schools and primary schools to learn the best ways of teaching these essential communication and relational skill sets. Our two-and-a-half year research project at Mountain Vista has shown that the essential communication skills upon which dialogue and deliberation rest can be learned and practiced with children as young as four. And as this research also suggests, brief but daily (or almost daily) conversations/activities about aspects of children's social worlds increases awareness, fosters compassion, and carries over into non-classroom contexts. If conversations like these continue, children have a better chance of becoming the kind of citizen this county and the world so desperately need.

**Appendix A  
Composite Parental Responses**

**Kindergarten Parental Responses  
N=15**

May, 2016

Dear Parents/Caregivers:

One of our research questions is seeking to know how much the children are sharing CosmoKidz and SOARing behavior with you. Would you please take about 5 minutes to answer the following questions, as this will help us know what kind of carry-over is occurring?

**1. Since the beginning of the school year, is your child *mentioning* SOAR or SOARing behavior?**

Frequently: **3**                      Sometimes: **9**                                      Never: **3**

**2. Does your child *point out* SOARing behavior? (For example, saying something like, “She is opening her hands to help others”)**

Frequently: **1**                      Sometimes: **7**                                      Never: **7**

**3. Is your child *exhibiting* SOARing behavior more than s/he was at the beginning of the school year?**

*Sensing what’s around him/her*

More frequently: **8**      About the same: **7**                                      Not as much: **0**

*Opening his/her hands to help others*

More frequently: **8**      About the same: **6**                                      Not as much: **0**

*Acting with kindness*

More frequently: **9**      About the same: **5**                                      Not as much: **1**

*Respecting other people*

More frequently: **7**      About the same: **6**                                      Not as much: **2**

**4. How often do you and your child talk together about the CosmoKidz topic of the week in your child’s class?**

Four or more days a week: **0**      One to three days a week: **12**                                      Never: **3**

**5. How often does your child sing the SOAR song at home?**

Four or more days a week: **0**      One to three days a week: **3**                                      Never: **12**

**6. Since the beginning of the school year, what differences are you noticing in your child’s behavior?**

- **He is sharing and being more respectful to others**
- **He wants to be a helper**
- **Very helpful to others. Uses manners more frequently**

- Better at putting clothes away and picking up toys but attitude and tone of voice has gotten more sarcastic
- Very helpful and maturity
- He has become more aware of his actions and how they can effect others. He has also become more helpful around the house.
- Talks about being friends. Being nice. Listening more often.
- Some change in attitude

### First-Grade Parental Responses

N=17

May, 2016

Dear Parents/Caregivers:

One of our research questions is seeking to know how much the children are sharing CosmoKidz and SOARing behavior with you. Would you please take about 5 minutes to answer the following questions, as this will help us know what kind of carry-over is occurring?

**1. Since the beginning of the school year, is your child *mentioning* SOAR or SOARing behavior?**

Frequently: **6**                      Sometimes: **9**                                      Never: **2**

**2. Does your child *point out* SOARing behavior? (For example, saying something like, “She is opening her hands to help others”)**

Frequently: **6**                      Sometimes: **7**                                      Never: **4**

**3. Is your child *exhibiting* SOARing behavior more than s/he was at the beginning of the school year?**

*Sensing what’s around him/her*

More frequently: **8**      About the same: **6**                                      Not as much: **3**

*Opening his/her hands to help others*

More frequently: **10**      About the same: **5**                                      Not as much: **2**

*Acting with kindness*

More frequently: **9**      About the same: **6**                                      Not as much: **2**

*Respecting other people*

More frequently: **10**      About the same: **5**                                      Not as much: **2**

**4. How often do you and your child talk together about the CosmoKidz topic of the week in your child’s class?**

Four or more days a week: **2**      One to three days a week: **8**                                      Never: **7**

**5. How often does your child sing the SOAR song at home?**

Four or more days a week: **1**      One to three days a week: **8**                                      Never: **8**

6. Since the beginning of the school year, what differences are you noticing in your child's behavior?

- He has manners!! He points out the good in people!
- She has opened up a lot more and not as shy
- \_\_\_ has only been with the school for a few months (all of this parent's responses were in the "never" category and the "not as much" category)
- N/A (all of this parent's responses were in the "never" category and the "not as much" category)
- No difference
- He help others, he respect and he is more kind to others
- She likes to help others. She has more patience with her younger cousin.
- He has come a long way. He now shakes people's hands and responds when spoken to.
- He is behaving better

### Second-Grade Parental Responses

N=15

May, 2016

Dear Parents/Caregivers:

One of our research questions is seeking to know how much the children are sharing CosmoKidz and SOARing behavior with you. Would you please take about 5 minutes to answer the following questions, as this will help us know what kind of carry-over is occurring?

1. Since the beginning of the school year, is your child *mentioning* SOAR or SOARing behavior?

Frequently: 5                      Sometimes: 8                      Never: 2

2. Does your child *point out* SOARing behavior? (For example, saying something like, "She is opening her hands to help others")

Frequently: 6                      Sometimes: 7                      Never: 2

3. Is your child *exhibiting* SOARing behavior more than s/he was at the beginning of the school year?

*Sensing what's around him/her*

More frequently: 7      About the same: 7                      Not as much: 1

*Opening his/her hands to help others*

More frequently: 11      About the same: 4                      Not as much: 0

*Acting with kindness*

More frequently: 12      About the same: 3                      Not as much: 0

*Respecting other people*

More frequently: 9      About the same: 5                      Not as much: 1

**4. How often do you and your child talk together about the CosmoKidz topic of the week in your child's class?**

Four or more days a week: **8** One to three days a week: **4** Never: **3**

**5. How often does your child sing the SOAR song at home?**

Four or more days a week: **3** One to three days a week: **2** Never: **8**

**6. Since the beginning of the school year, what differences are you noticing in your child's behavior?**

- She is always a good girl
- She is so much nicer to her little sister at home and has made a lot of new friends at school this year
- Overall my son is much nicer and willing to help others
- He is working harder at class and a home
- Acting with kindness and helping his tata more
- All around better behaved
- She is offering a helping hand and thinking of others more
- She has grown so much! What an amazing program.

**Appendix B  
Composite Student Responses**

**Kindergarten Responses  
N=36**

**This year you learned about SOARing behavior. What does SOAR stand for? Please circle the correct phrase for each letter in SOAR.**

- S:**           **Seek out a friend: 5**  
                  **Sense what's around you: 26**  
                  **Stand up straight: 2**  
                  **Say you're sorry if you have hurt someone: 2**
- O:**           **Only talk when you're called on: 0**  
                  **Offer candy to your friends: 6**  
                  **Open your hands to help others: 28**  
                  **Own toys that you'll share: 2**
- A:**           **Act with kindness: 31**  
                  **Ask someone to be your friend: 3**  
                  **Allow a friend to play with your toys: 0**  
                  **Always look both ways before you cross the street: 1**
- R:**           **Read when you can: 2**  
                  **Rely on your friends for help: 2**  
                  **Rest everyday: 1**  
                  **Respect other people: 30**

**First-Grade Responses  
N=37**

**This year you learned about SOARing behavior. What does SOAR stand for? Please circle the correct phrase for each letter in SOAR.**

- S:**           **Seek out a friend: 1**  
                  **Sense what's around you: 36**  
                  **Stand up straight: 0**  
                  **Say you're sorry if you have hurt someone: 0**
- O:**           **Only talk when you're called on: 1**  
                  **Offer candy to your friends: 0**  
                  **Open your hands to help others: 36**  
                  **Own toys that you'll share: 1**

**A:** Act with kindness: 36  
Ask someone to be your friend: 0  
Allow a friend to play with your toys: 0  
Always look both ways before you cross the street: 0

**R:** Read when you can: 2  
Rely on your friends for help: 1  
Rest everyday: 1  
Respect other people: 33

**Second-Grade Responses  
N=33**

This year you learned about SOARing behavior. What does SOAR stand for? Please circle the correct phrase for each letter in SOAR.

**S:** Seek out a friend: 1  
Sense what's around you: 31  
Stand up straight: 0  
Say you're sorry if you have hurt someone: 1

**O:** Only talk when you're called on: 0  
Offer candy to your friends: 0  
Open your hands to help others: 33  
Own toys that you'll share: 0

**A:** Act with kindness: 31  
Ask someone to be your friend: 1  
Allow a friend to play with your toys: 0  
Always look both ways before you cross the street: 1

**R:** Read when you can: 0  
Rely on your friends for help: 0  
Rest everyday: 0  
Respect other people: 33

## Appendix C

### Second Modified Deliberation Summary March, 2016

#### Kindergarten Classes

The topic the teacher's chose is, "How the students should spend the last part of their day?" The teachers decided on two pre-determined choices. Choice #1 is to keep things as they have been (Working in stations/fun stations). Choice #2 is to work individually and then have recess. Each teacher gave the students an opportunity to choose a third choice. Class #1 chose to play with playdo. Class #2 chose to play a video.

#### Class #1

Class #1 consisted of 8 Girls and 9 boys. During the small group facilitated conversations, the students discussed what they liked and didn't like about each of the choices.

#### **Choice #1: Rotate through work/play stations**

*What they liked about this choice:*

Responses that occurred across the groups:

- Playing in the afternoon with toys
- Playing on the computers
- Making words
- Using the Smart Board

Single groups said:

- Moving around
- Play in the math station
- Playing with blocks
- Dressing up
- Playing with the fake phones
- Trucks
- Playdo
- Playing with the beads
- Playing with the doll set
- Making a heart pig
- Playing with animals
- Reading and library time

*What they didn't like about this choice:*

Responses that occurred across the groups:



- Math Center
- Getting bored

Single Groups said:

- Computer problems
- Ms. Sloan Center
- Don't like the toys that they have
- It's too noisy
- No monster trucks

### **Choice #2: Longer afternoon recess**

*What they liked about this choice:*

Responses that occurred across the groups

- Playing outside
- Playing with friends
- Playing on the swings
- Getting a drink
- Playing zombies

*What they didn't like about this choice:*

Responses that occurred across the groups:

- Don't like being pushed
- Don't like hitting

Single groups said:

- Punching
- Kicking
- Scratching
- Don't like friends sitting on a bench when they are in trouble
- Getting dirty and messy
- Bees stinging
- It's too hot
- Tattling at recess
- People stretching my shirt
- People touching me with dirty hands
- People biting

### **Choice #3: Playdo**

*What they liked about this choice:*

Responses that occurred across the groups:

- Making lots of different things

Single groups said:

- Smelling playdo
- Time with friends
- Cleaning up
- Make shapes and cubes
- Make snow circles
- Kneading the playdo
- Building a bowl
- Make cups
- Make a slide
- Make upside down playdo
- Making numbers
- Making boats
- Making fire
- To create things
- Make a headless horse

*What they didn't like about this choice:*

Responses that occurred across the groups:

- It breaks into small pieces
- People throw it

Single groups said:

- Sometimes what you want to make doesn't work out
- Gets under your finger nails
- Don't like building a race-car
- Don't like building a house
- Cleaning up
- Staying in one place
- Getting tripped
- Getting playdo on the floor
- Getting hands gooey

**First round of voting (before facilitation):**

- Choice #1: 2
- Choice #2: 1
- Choice #3: 14

**Second round of voting (after facilitation):**

- Choice #1: 2
- Choice #2: 4
- Choice #3: 11

Although Choice #3 received the most votes both times, there were a handful of students who changed their vote after the deliberation. Choice #3 was also the choice that the students decided to add to the pre-determined choices.

## **Class #2**

Class #2 consisted of 8 girls and 8 boys

### **Choice #1: Rotate through work/play stations**

*What they liked about this choice:*

Responses that occurred across the groups:

- Working on the computers
- Playing with block patterns
- Playing with linking cubes
- Playing with playdo

Single groups said:

- Reading books
- Watching TV
- Playing Wi
- Doing seat work
- Cutting with scissors
- Moving around the room
- PBS super wide
- Alpha pig

*What they didn't like about this choice:*

Responses that occurred across the groups:

- Computer time

Single groups said:

- Kids blocking me
- The work is too hard
- Linking cubes coming off
- Playing with blocks
- Stations are boring
- Working with letters and words
- Too noisy
- Trip when moving around
- Spilling playdo

## **Choice #2: Longer afternoon recess**

*What they liked about this choice:*

Responses that occurred across the groups:

- Playing outside
- Making up games
- Playing on the playground
- Playing on the swings

Single groups said:

- Playing a school game
- Playing with my friends
- Playing hide and go seek
- Playing zombies
- Play house
- Play duck duck goose
- Riding bikes
- Playing tag
- Fun math and homework
- Worksheets
- Using sunglasses
- Playing mind craft

*What they didn't like about this choice*

Responses that occurred across the groups:

- Bugs that bite and sting

Single groups said:

- People don't always let me play
- Sometimes people fight
- It can be cold and rainy
- Falling down
- Riding bikes
- Swinging
- Homework
- Papers fall off desk
- Forgetting stuff
- Getting in trouble
- Getting hurt

## **Choice #3: Work at seats and then watch a video or Go-Noodle**

*What they liked about this choice:*

Responses that occurred across the groups:

- Go Noodle—lots of stuff to see
- Heart video

Single groups said:

- Watching shows
- Videos are fun
- Watching until you finish
- Doing Maximo
- Roller coaster
- Advancing to different levels
- Popsico
- Not boring

*What they didn't like:*

Responses that occurred across the groups:

- Don't like the roller coaster

Single groups said:

- Can be boring
- Exercises can hurt your hips
- Don't like silent screaming
- Games are too fast
- Scary videos give me bad dreams
- Falling into the river
- Too noisy
- Too much sitting

**First round of voting (before facilitation):**

- Choice #1: 5
- Choice #2: 10
- Choice #3: 1

**Second round of voting (after facilitation):**

- Choice #1: 3
- Choice #2: 11
- Choice #3: 2

This class also had a handful of students changing their vote, although the students' overall favorite choice didn't change after the deliberation.

### **First-Grade Classes**

The topic both teachers chose is, "How to 'cash in' the class points that the students have earned during the year?" Both of the teachers asked their students to decide all three choices that they would deliberate. One teacher used this as an opportunity to talk about why the

students get to choose the choices that they will deliberate and ultimately decide. She introduced the topic of “agency” (getting to choose because they worked hard to achieve their class points), “trade-offs” (getting to think about the pros and cons of each choice and what they may have to give up when they choose one choice over another), and democracy (voting for the choice they like the best, but respecting the overall decision of the class based on the choice that gets the majority of votes).

### **Class #1**

Class #1 chose these three options: Choice #1—Math game day; Choice #2—Stuffed animal picnic; Choice #3—Pizza party with a movie. This class consisted of 6 girls and 13 boys.

#### **Choice #1: Math game day**

##### *What they liked about this choice*

Responses that occurred across the groups:

- You get to do math
- You get to read books
- Math games are fun
- You get to learn a lot

Single groups said:

- You can try different kinds of math
- You can “chill”
- There’s food
- You can use toys to try different math problems
- You can get different colored cards
- You can talk to your friends
- It makes you think
- You can play and learn at the same time

##### *What they didn’t like about this choice*

Responses that occurred across the groups:

- It’s hard
- It’s hard to read
- It’s a lot of work
- Don’t like math

Single groups said:

- Nothing—I like everything about math
- You can’t play
- It’s hard to play video games
- It’s hard to help your friends with homework
- It’s hard to spell the word you forgot

- Too many pages to go through
- You may have to sit out if you do something wrong
- It can be exhausting

### **Choice #2: Stuffed animal picnic**

#### *What they like about this choice*

Responses that occurred across the groups:

- Eating with your stuffy
- Playing with your stuffy
- You get to bring your stuffy to school
- You get to eat outside

Single groups said:

- You get to play with your friends
- You can eat, read, and play with your teacher
- Having fun
- Get to roll around in the grass
- Learn about nature
- Get snacks
- You'll get to stay with the class and not get lost

#### *What they didn't like about this choice*

Responses that occurred across the groups:

- Might not get to eat the food you like
- There might be fights with the stuffies

Single groups said:

- If you're bad you'll have to sit out
- You might not get to sit with your friends
- You might not get to play with your friends
- Your stuffy might get dirty
- There might be bugs around
- Some people might not like picnics
- Maybe you don't have a stuffy that you like
- There might be disagreements about the food

### **Choice #3: Pizza party and a movie**

#### *What they like about this choice*

Responses that occurred across the groups:

- Get to eat pizza
- Get to watch a movie

Single groups said:

- We get to sit in a different chair
- We can talk and play
- Get to sit with your friends
- You can eat with your teacher and friends
- We can watch all kinds of movies
- There aren't snakes inside the room
- You can lay down while watching a movie

*What they didn't like about this choice:*

Responses that occurred across the groups:

- You might not like the pizza

Single groups said:

- You can only have 2 pieces of pizza
- You might not like the movie
- People might disagree about the movie to watch
- You have to sit still

**First round of voting (before facilitation):**

- Choice #1: 0
- Choice #2: 8
- Choice #3: 11

**Second round of voting (after facilitation):**

- Choice #1: 1
- Choice #2: 6
- Choice #3: 12

Although it appears as if only a few students changed their minds, in actuality 7 students changed their mind.

### **Class #2**

Class #2 chose these three options: Choice #1—Pizza and a movie; Choice #2—Games, crafts, and pizza; Choice #3—Field trip to the movie theater to see a movie. This class consisted of 6 girls and 10 boys.

**Choice #1: Pizza and a movie**

*What they liked about this choice*

Responses that occurred across the groups:

- It's fun to watch a movie and eat pizza
- Laying down while watching a movie

Single groups said:

- Eating popcorn



- I don't have to wear my glasses
- We get to watch a movie while eating pizza
- Being able to whisper
- Sitting in a chair while eating
- You can choose the movie
- You can make it a pajama day—we could bring a stuffed animal, blanket and pillow
- We would have fun
- We wouldn't have to do math
- Pizza has yummy ingredients

*What they didn't like about this choice*

Responses that occurred across the groups:

- You can't talk

Single groups said:

- You can't play games
- Sitting in chairs during the movie
- Don't like eating at the desk
- The movie can take too long to watch
- Don't like some of the ingredients in pizza
- Don't like candy
- Don't like to watch a movie in the classroom
- You might choke if you are eating pizza while you are laying down
- We can't go to recess

## **Choice #2: Games, crafts, and pizza**

*What they liked about this choice*

Responses that occurred across the groups:

- We like playing games
- We like eating pizza
- We like "heads up, 7 up"

Single groups said:

- We like musical chairs
- It's fun to play on the smart board and the computer
- We can move around the room
- We can plant flowers and plants
- It's fun to draw and paint
- We can do adding and subtracting
- There are a lot of different games we can play
- It's fun to think of new games to play
- Crafts can be fun and exciting
- We get to have fun

- We get to play with each other
- We can find friends to play with
- We get to pick colors
- We can eat snacks

*What they didn't like about this choice*

Responses that occurred across the groups:

- You might lose craft pieces
- You can't watch a movie

Single groups said:

- You might not get to do what you want to do
- It can take too long; you can run out of time when you're making a craft
- Don't like musical chairs
- We can't play on the computers
- We can't do math
- People might bother me when I'm working on a craft
- What if the game doesn't work?
- People might misbehave if they are out of the game
- What if no one wants to play with you?

### **Choice #3: See a movie at the movie theater**

*What they liked about this choice*

Responses that occurred across the groups:

- Eating popcorn, candy and drinking soda
- Seeing a dinosaur movie
- Your parents can come

Single groups said:

- We could take a bus
- We could choose a favorite movie
- Movies are funny
- I wouldn't have to wear my glasses
- It would be fun to go to a theater
- We can watch a movie with music

*What they didn't like*

Responses that occurred across the groups:

- You can't play
- You have to be still

Single groups said:

- We can't watch our own movies

- Movies can take too long
- You can't talk to your friends
- We can't see a scary movie
- We might have to wait in line and then not get in
- The movie might be bad

**First round of voting (before facilitation):**

- Choice #1: 2
- Choice #2: 8
- Choice #3: 6

**Second round of voting (after facilitation):**

- Choice #1: 3
- Choice #2: 4
- Choice #3: 9

Several students in this class changed their vote, which ultimately resulted in a "choice" change.

### **Second-Grade Classes**

One of the second-grade teachers facilitated both second-grade classes. She set up the scenario by congratulating each class for reaching their desired class points and indicating they would spend the next hour thinking about three possible ways to use the class points. She introduced the first two predetermined choices ("Having a class party" and "No reading homework for a week") and led the class in a discussion about what the third possible choice might be. The first class chose a "Computer lab party" and the second class chose an "Extended recess" as their third choice.

#### **Class #1**

Class #1 consisted of 8 Girls and 4 boys. During the small group facilitated conversations, the students discussed what they liked and didn't like about each of the choices.

#### **Choice #1: Having a class party**

*What they liked about this choice*

Responses that occurred across the small groups:

- It's fun
- Free time
- We get snacks and food
- We get to play games
- We get to play with friends

Single groups said:

- We get to have Centers

- We get to play with the computers
- You can help people get up
- Time with teachers
- Read books
- Draw

*What they didn't like about this choice*

Responses that occurred across the small groups:

- Too much candy/sweets
- Might get hurt
- We'd make a mess
- Too noisy

Single groups said:

- You might get food in your face
- No jumping
- No cutting paper
- No playdo
- Some people might not behave
- Some friends might get left out
- Missing school work

## **Choice #2: No reading homework for a week**

*What they liked about this choice*

Responses that occurred across the small groups:

- We get to relax
- We can watch TV
- There's more free time
- We get to play more
- You get to be lazy

Single groups said:

- We get to help mom and dad
- We get to do our chores faster
- We can make cookies with grandma
- We can help our little brothers and sisters
- You can go to bed
- You won't get behind in your homework
- You won't lose your homework
- You won't get bad grades

*What they didn't like about this choice*

Responses that occurred across the groups:

- Your parents not believing that you don't have homework
- You don't get a grade
- You don't learn much about reading
- You don't know your spelling words
- We won't get to practice writing our spelling words
- We won't learn sentences

Single groups said:

- You would be bored
- You might forget everything
- You might get bad grades
- You won't earn points for doing homework

### **Choice #3: A computer lab party**

*What they liked about this choice*

Responses that occurred across the groups:

- We get to play computer games
- We get out of classroom work
- It's fun
- You get to learn to type
- Learning new games

Single groups said:

- You can text your friends
- You can watch TV
- You need to be quiet
- You can google stuff and look up things

*What they didn't like about this choice*

Responses that occurred across the groups:

- Your eyes can burn
- Your neck gets sore
- You might get mad and throw your mouse on the floor
- The computers could shut down
- People might drag head-phones and misuse them
- You can't have food or drinks
- You have to be careful and patient
- You might get in trouble

Single groups said:

- You would miss out on school work
- You can get dizzy playing games
- It's a long walk to the computer lab

**First round of voting (before facilitation):**

- Choice #1: 3
- Choice #2: 0
- Choice #3: 9

**Second round of voting (after facilitation):**

- Choice #1: 4
- Choice #2: 0
- Choice #3: 8

Three students changed their vote after the facilitated discussion, although Choice #3 was the clear winner both times. This choice was also the option that the class chose as a third possibility for spending their class points. One of the surprising outcomes of this facilitation is that no one voted for “a week without homework.” The teacher chose this option because her students continually complain about their reading homework; the fact that no one voted for this option greatly surprised her.

**Class #2**

Class #2 consisted of 9 girls and 9 boys

**Choice #1: Having a class party***What they liked about this choice*

Responses that occurred across the small groups:

- It's fun
- You get to play with your friends
- You get to talk a lot
- We get snacks
- We can play games
- We can play with each other
- We get to hang out
- We get free time
- We can watch a movie
- We get to play with toys

Single groups said:

- You can't run around
- You might get hurt
- You might hurt someone else
- No biting or hitting or pinching

*What they didn't like about this choice*

- It might not be fun
- You might fight and lose a friend

- You don't get exercise
- You can't go outside
- It will be loud and noisy
- The teacher won't let you play if you're bad
- You might have to play a girl's game if you are a boy
- The classroom will be a mess
- You would miss classwork and need to catch up
- You can't just get snacks whenever you want

### **Choice #2: No reading homework for a week**

*What they liked about this choice*

Responses that occurred across the small groups:

- You get to play
- More time to play (there were lots of examples of what they would play)
- You have more time to do other homework

Single groups said:

- More time for the computer
- You get a break
- I wouldn't have homework on my birthday
- The teacher wouldn't have to grade
- We wouldn't have to worry about homework
- We would have less work
- We wouldn't have to answer questions
- We wouldn't have to read

*What they didn't like about this choice*

Responses that occurred across the groups:

- We would get lazy
- We would get bored
- We won't get a grade
- We wouldn't learn as much
- We would get behind on our homework

Single groups said:

- My mom wouldn't believe me that there is no reading homework
- You may get lower grades
- You aren't practicing what you are learning

### **Choice #3: A recess party**

*What they liked about this choice*

Responses that occurred across the groups:

- We get more exercise
- It's fun
- We get to play games
- We get to play with our friends
- We can play different things with extra time

Single groups said:

- More time to talk with friends
- We can snack
- It's nice outside
- You don't have to be quiet
- You can run around
- You can push your friends on the swing

*What they didn't like about this choice*

Responses that occurred across the groups:

- You can get hurt
- You might fall

Single groups said:

- No time for video games
- We don't learn as much
- Other people might yell in your ears
- You might get in trouble
- People can get left out
- Some people might throw food
- You could lose your toys
- If you forget something you'd have to walk back to the class

**First round of voting (before facilitation):**

- Choice #1: 9
- Choice #2: 2
- Choice #3: 7

**Second round of voting (after facilitation):**

- Choice #1: 8
- Choice #2: 1
- Choice #3: 9

Four students changed their vote after the facilitated discussion. The change of votes also resulted in a change of choices.



## Appendix D

### Third Modified Deliberation Summary May, 2016

The third modified deliberation was on the topic of an Earth Day Project that each class would implement to celebrate Earth Day.

#### Kindergarten Classes

##### Class #1

Class #1 consisted of 8 Girls and 9 boys. The three possible Earth Day projects that the class deliberated are: Choice #1: Clean up Garbage Around the School; Choice #2: Make Earth Day Posters; and, Choice #3: Make Bird Feeders

#### **Choice #1: Clean up Garbage Around the School**

*What they liked about this choice:*

Responses that occurred across the groups:

- It will make the Earth cleaner
- We like a clean school
- Animals won't get sick and die from eating garbage

Single groups said:

- It will keep the school from stinking
- The school will be shinier
- We like to help
- We can pick up cans and make pencil holders
- We can make recycle built stuff
- The Earth will be pretty and fresh
- People won't trip on the trash
- Picking up trash will make you tired so you can rest and take a nap at home

*What they didn't like about this choice:*

Responses that occurred across the groups:

- You might get tired
- You get dirty

Single groups said:

- It's a lot of work
- I don't like doing it when it's cold
- You can get sick
- Picking up hot cans can burn your hands

- You might fall down or bump into someone because you're looking down
- I don't like how I feel when I pick up trash—it makes me nuts
- No one else is helping
- It's yucky

## **Choice #2: Make Earth Day Posters**

*What they liked about this choice:*

Responses that occurred across the groups:

- It's fun to make drawings and painting about the Earth
- It teaches people about the Earth
- It's fun

Single groups said:

- We can put animals on the posters
- We get to sit still
- We can use stickers
- We can make the posters with sparkles and glitter
- We learn about animals
- They can be hung around the school
- People will see the posters and want to help
- We can make posters and take them other places—to the zoo and the park
- You can tell grown-ups and kids to pick up garbage where ever they go
- You can open your hands to help others (the O in SOAR)

*What they didn't like about this choice:*

Responses that occurred across the groups:

- It's messy—your hands will get dirty
- We don't like painting

Single groups said:

- The paper might be too big and hard to paint on
- We might not be able to use paint
- We will need to sit still
- It's boring
- Holding up a poster makes your arm hurt
- You might trip holding a poster
- Someone might ignore you when you're holding a poster and that makes me sad

## **Choice #3: Make Bird Feeders**

*What they liked about this choice:*

Responses that occurred across the groups:

- It will make the birds happy
- Painting the bird feeder
- You can decorate with recycled boxes

Single groups said:

- We can watch the birds run
- We like doing projects
- You can watch the birds
- You can hear the birds singing
- It's good for the birds to have food to eat
- It's a house for the birds to sleep and be comfortable
- Feeding the birds will keep them healthy
- It gets you out of Fun Centers to help the world

*What they didn't like about this choice:*

Responses that occurred across the groups:

- The birds might bite you
- Bird poop

Single groups said:

- It might be scary
- Birds might throw food at you
- You might get dirty
- It's too high to get up in a tree
- It's boring
- Someone might knock the bird feeder and get seeds all over
- Someone might throw a rock and hurt a bird
- Bees and baby bees might be scared

**First round of voting (before facilitation):**

- Choice #1: 3
- Choice #2: 11
- Choice #3: 4

**Second round of voting (after facilitation):**

- Choice #1: 1
- Choice #2: 11
- Choice #3: 6

The first place choice remained the same, although some students did change their vote.

## Class #2

Class #2 consisted of 15 students. The possible choices for an Earth Day Project were: Choice #1: Creating Earth Day Treat to Eat; Choice #2: Making a Bird Feeder; Choice #3: Doing a Nature Scavenger Hunt

### **Choice #1: Creating Earth Day Treat to Eat**

*What they liked about this choice:*

Responses that occurred across the groups:

- We like to eat treats
- It will taste good

Single groups said:

- It will be fun to make
- It will be fun to clean up
- There are different ingredients

*What they didn't like about this choice:*

Responses that occurred across the groups:

- We might not like the ingredients

Single groups said:

- Don't like salty things on the pretzels
- It might be messy
- We will have to clean up
- We will have to sit still for too long
- We might have to do this alone
- It's yucky to mix different foods

### **Choice #2: Making a Bird Feeder**

*What they liked about this choice:*

Responses that occurred across the groups:

- It's fun to use peanut butter to make the seeds stick
- We're feeding the birds
- It makes you happy to help the birds
- It helps the birds stay alive

Single groups said:

- We get to recycle toilet paper rolls
- The birds will sing
- We get to be in nature
- It keeps the birds healthy

- It's an outside activity—we get to watch the birds eat
- Birds might like water
- Birds might like peanut butter

*What they didn't like about this choice*

Responses that occurred across the groups:

- It can be messy

Single groups said:

- Bird poop
- We have to sit still
- You might be doing this activity by yourself
- Other animals might kill a bird and eat their food
- I prefer to eat the food that we're feeding the birds
- It's not fun

### **Choice #3: Doing a Nature Scavenger Hunt**

*What they liked about this choice:*

Responses that occurred across the groups:

- We like walking
- We like finding things on the list
- Seeing beautiful things in nature

Single groups said:

- Doing this with our friends
- Being active
- Getting to play afterwards
- Bringing things home
- Capturing bugs and a butterfly to watch

*What they didn't like:*

Responses that occurred across the groups:

- There might be snakes
- Don't like stinky bugs and spiders

Single groups said:

- We might get hurt walking through the grass
- We might get tired
- Spiders might crawl on you
- You might get hot and thirsty
- It might get noisy
- We don't like seeing things that are dead
- We don't like mosquitos

- Our hands will get messy
- Someone might trip and get hurt

**First round of voting (before facilitation):**

- Choice #1: 9
- Choice #2: 3
- Choice #3: 3

**Second round of voting (after facilitation):**

- Choice #1: 5
- Choice #2: 4
- Choice #3: 6

Several students changed their vote that also led to a change in their desired choice.

**First-Grade Classes**

**Class #1**

Class #1 consisted of 7 Girls and 12 boys. The three possible Earth Day projects that the class decided are: Choice #1: Make Earth Day Posters; Choice #2: Clean up Garbage Around the School; and, Choice #3: Pick up Paper to Recycle

**Choice #1: Make Earth Day Posters for the School**

*What they liked about this choice:*

Responses that occurred across the groups:

- It will make the Earth cleaner
- It will teach others how to recycle

Single groups said:

- It will teach people how to take care of the Earth
- You can make creative posters
- We can make them glittery
- We can show the world about Earth Day
- We can make a picture to show people how to pick up garbage
- If people don't pick up garbage, animals will die
- We can make cool posters
- We can teach people how to keep the Earth alive

*What they didn't like about this choice:*

Responses that occurred across the groups:

- Older kids won't look at our posters
- Some kids might take the posters down

- Kids might not like our posters

Single groups said:

- Posters might not teach people anything
- If people take our posters down, it will litter the campus even more
- Posters can make a mess
- The posters might get wet if it rains

## **Choice #2: Pick Up Trash Around the School**

*What they liked about this choice:*

Responses that occurred across the groups:

- It helps keep the Earth clean
- It keeps the Earth healthy
- It helps the animals

Single groups said:

- It helps the school environment
- If there's trash in the garden and it's not picked up, it will hurt the plants
- We could recycle the bottles and make creations
- It sets a good example for other kids to pick up garbage
- We can compost what we pick up
- It's fun and we get cougar bucks
- We get to save the earth because the worms come out
- We can ask others to help us

*What they didn't like about this choice:*

Responses that occurred across the groups:

- We can get dirty
- Bigger kids might throw more trash on the ground

Single groups said:

- It's not teaching responsibility for throwing your own garbage away
- It might not make a difference
- It's boring
- People might make fun of me
- We don't like it
- It's a chore
- We can get hurt from glass
- Some people might not want to help
- It makes us tired
- Other kids might think we're in trouble
- Bugs can bite us

### **Choice #3: Recycling Paper and Composting**

*What they liked about this choice:*

Responses that occurred across the groups:

- None

Single groups said:

- It will help the soil
- It will help the plants grow
- It helps keep the Earth clean
- We can make creative recycle and compost bins
- Recycling is good
- We can reuse the recycled products
- We can learn what needs to be recycled
- Leaving class to pick up bins from other classes
- Others will start to recycle at home
- It's fun
- It's better than picking up garbage
- You can feed it to the worms
- It can be used to make new paper
- We can put it in the recycling bins
- We're being green
- We can put paper in the compost machine

*What they didn't like about this choice:*

Responses that occurred across the groups:

- People might throw the trash in the wrong bin

Single groups said:

- People might not take care of the compost
- People may throw the trash on the floor instead of in the bin
- Bins can get dirty from cans and candy wrappers
- Some people won't recycle
- We may get bit by a spider from picking up the bins
- People won't recycle everyday
- You can get paper cuts
- It's not fun
- People push you and then your paper falls down
- You can get cut by glass

**First round of voting (before facilitation):**

- Choice #1: 8
- Choice #2: 9
- Choice #3: 2



### **Second round of voting (after facilitation):**

- Choice #1: 8
- Choice #2: 4
- Choice #3: 7

Not only was there a choice change, but there was a significant number of students who changed their vote.

### **Class #2**

Class #2 consisted of 6 girls and 13 boys (NOTE: there were some children in this class that left during the exercise). The three possible Earth Day projects that this class decided are: Choice #1: School-Wide Clean-Up; Choice #2: Gather Plastic Bags from Home and Take Them to Recycling Center; Choice #3: Make a Project with Recycled Products.

This is the only class that did not have adult table facilitators. The teacher used this activity to see if her students could work in small groups with a designated student leader and recorder (these are six year olds!). The language she used for the children's deliberation were "benefits" and "trade-offs."

The teacher was very detailed in her instructions to the children. She walked the class through every step of the deliberation; she would provide instructions for the "next step" of the activity and then ask the students to do it. She walked around the room to keep the students on track and answer any questions that they have.

### **Choice #1: School-wide Clean-Up**

#### *Benefits:*

- It feels good to help out (two groups said this)
- We get to be outside (two groups said this)
- The school will be clean (two groups said this)
- We can be together
- We can tell others to clean up
- We can make signs
- We can clean up the playground

#### *Trade-Offs:*

- It might be too hot or too cold (two groups said this)
- Don't like cleaning up (two groups said this)
- There might be bugs (two groups said this)
- The trash is stinky

- We won't get to do another activity

### **Choice #2: Plastic Bag Drive**

#### *Benefits:*

- We can give back bags to be recycled (three groups said this)
- It's fun
- They can make soil with the bags

#### *Trade-Offs*

- Nothing
- It's boring
- We don't have bags at home
- Mom uses the bags for our lunches
- The bags might be dirty
- The bags might be wet
- It might be raining
- It's too hot to walk to the store

### **Choice #3: Create a Project with Recycled Materials/Garbage**

#### *Benefits:*

- You can make something (two groups said this)
- You can make a robot out of garbage
- We can bring it to school and make a craft
- You can make paper airplanes
- You can make airplanes out of metal
- Everything

#### *Trade-Offs:*

- Garbage is stinky (two groups said this)
- You might not have stuff to make a project (two groups said this)
- You have to use garbage
- It's boring
- It might take a long time
- Bugs
- Your project might break
- Nothing

**First round of voting (before facilitation):**

- Choice #1: 8
- Choice #2: 7

The first round of voting didn't include Choice #3. The teacher asked the students to decide on a third possibility after the first round of voting. The students decided on the choice of making a project out of recycled materials and garbage as their third option. Note that the second round of voting was almost a unanimous vote for the third option. All but one student changed their vote.

**Second round of voting (after facilitation):**

- Choice #1: 1
- Choice #2: 0
- Choice #3: 14

**Second Grade****Class #1**

Class #1 consisted of 5 Girls and 6 boys. The three possible Earth Day projects that the class deliberated are: Choice #1: 3D Art Project; Choice #2: Clean up Garbage Around the School; and, Choice #3: Make bird feeders

**Choice #1: 3D Art Project to Make Earths**

*What they liked about this choice:*

Responses that occurred across the groups:

- It's fun to make
- It's fun hanging the Earths around the class
- Having Earths around the class will look cool

Single groups said:

- It's a way to remember Earth Day
- The 3D Earths look real
- It's pretty
- We can put glitter on the north and south poles
- We can turn the lights off and see how the class looks
- We can take pictures of all of the Earths and put them in a book
- We could put glow sticks in the Earths so they will glow
- We could take pictures of the Earths and hang them on boards around the room
- We could put different States on the globe

*What they didn't like about this choice:*

Responses that occurred across the groups:

- The Earth could break and you would need to start over

Single groups said:

- It can be messy
- The Earths might fall
- The pieces of the Earth might get lost
- Someone could kick the ball and they could break
- It could make a mess on the floor
- The glow sticks might run out of “glow”

### **Choice #2: Pick Up Trash Around School**

*What they liked about this choice:*

Responses that occurred across the groups:

- It will make the school clean
- It will help the Earth

Single groups said:

- It will save money for the school because you won't have to pay someone to do it
- It will prevent places for snakes to hide which will keep people safe
- It's fun because you're helping the Earth
- You can clean the Earth instead of doing work
- Picking up water bottles will keep people from tripping
- It's helping to keep our State clean
- It's helping to keep Oracle clean
- It's keeping the rivers clean because trash won't be blowing into them

*What they didn't like about this choice:*

Responses that occurred across the groups:

- You might trip and fall picking up trash

Single groups said:

- I don't like picking up trash
- The 4<sup>th</sup> and 5<sup>th</sup> graders might make more trash for us to pick up
- You might get sick from touching the trash
- You could get stung if there's a bee or a bug hidden in the trash
- The bag might rip if you have too much trash in it
- You might drop the trash bag if you fall and get trash all over
- Someone might try to talk to you and bother you while you're picking up trash
- It could be hard on your back and your feet

### **Choice #3: Make Bird Feeders**

*What they liked about this choice:*

Responses that occurred across the groups:

- It helps keep the birds healthy
- It helps keep the birds happy
- It helps the birds stay safe

Single groups said:

- It makes you feel good to feed the birds
- Some of us already know how to make a bird feeder
- It will be fun
- It will be respecting the birds
- If we don't feed them, the birds could die
- Bird feeders bring hummingbirds
- We get to be creative
- The birds get a home to live in
- It looks cool

*What they didn't like about this choice:*

Responses that occurred across the groups:

- None

Single groups said:

- There is nothing bad about this project
- When making the bird feeder, the materials you use could hurt you
- It's too much work
- It's too hard to hang
- The bird feeder might fall
- There might be a bird feeder that isn't made correctly
- There might be ants and bees that are attracted to the peanut butter
- A bird can knock it down

**First round of voting (before facilitation):**

- Choice #1: 7
- Choice #2: 2
- Choice #3: 2

**Second round of voting (after facilitation):**

- Choice #1: 8
- Choice #2: 1
- Choice #3: 2

The desired choice remained the same and only a few students changed their vote after the deliberation.

## **Class #2**

Class #2 consisted of 8 girls and 8 boys

### **Choice #1: 3D Art Project to Make Earth**

*What they liked about this choice:*

Responses that occurred across the groups:

- It's fun
- It will look cool in the classroom
- It reminds us to pick up trash when we see the Earth

Single groups said:

- It's a science project
- We get to work with our hands
- You can be creative
- It helps us think about the Earth
- It reminds us to take care of the Earth
- It looks like the galaxy
- We can indicate on the our Earth where we have already visited

*What they didn't like about this choice:*

Responses that occurred across the groups:

- It's messy

Single groups said:

- You might mess up making it
- The 3D might pop out and surprise you
- The Earths might fall and break
- If they fall from the ceiling, it might destroy things on our desk
- Someone could get hurt if the Earth's fall

### **Choice #2: Pick Up Trash Around School**

*What they liked about this choice:*

Responses that occurred across the groups:

- It helps the world, the community, and our school be better
- It will make things more beautiful
- It will help the animals stay safe because they won't have trash to eat
- It will help people to not trip and fall over garbage

Single groups said:

- It will be fun
- It will help plants grow because the garbage might suffocate the plants
- It will help us to not get cut and hurt
- We can recycle the garbage and use it again

*What they didn't like about this choice*

Responses that occurred across the groups:

- It's boring
- There might be a bug or insect in the trash and it can bite or scratch you

Single groups said:

- You might slip
- You might get tired
- You could get germs
- Your hands might get messy
- Might get too hot
- There might be a snake near the trash
- You might get caught by the fence
- Picking up trash won't make a difference because people will keep littering
- You might hurt an animal that is hiding in the trash
- The trash might be over a hole that you step in

### **Choice #3: Making Bird Feeders**

*What they liked about this choice:*

Responses that occurred across the groups:

- It helps the birds
- It makes the birds happy
- It helps the birds stay alive
- It's fun
- We get to watch the birds
- Hummingbirds will come around

Single groups said:

- We get to use peanut butter
- We help give the birds energy to fly
- The food will be protein for the birds
- It will keep the birds from dying
- We know how to make a bird feeder
- The birds will have their own food to eat and they won't eat other insects
- We're helping the birds to not go extinct
- We can watch them eat
- Mother nature will be happy

*What they didn't like:*

Responses that occurred across the groups:

- The bird feeder might fall and break

Single groups said:

- It's messy
- What if the birds don't come
- We would have to add seed everyday
- The birds might attack you
- The birds might poop on you and on our things

**First round of voting (before facilitation):**

- Choice #1: 9
- Choice #2: 1
- Choice #3: 6

**Second round of voting (after facilitation):**

- Choice #1: 7
- Choice #2: 2
- Choice #3: 7

The teacher used the tie vote to teach the children about how their vote (and voice) makes a difference. As she led the class in a discussion about taking another vote to break the tie, one of the students suggested that only the two students who voted for Choice #2 should vote again since the other students' choice was still in contention for being the top choice. The rest of the class agreed. The two students voted again by secret ballot and both of them voted for Choice #3. This resulted in a "choice change" from the first to the second vote.