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Higher Education & the Early Childhood Workforce

Sponsored by the Birth to Five Policy Alliance
Facilitated by the National Association for the Education of Young Children

Supporting State Advisory Councils initiative

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Welcome

Helene Stebbins
Birth to Five Policy Alliance



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POLICY ALLIANCE

Overview

Sarah LeMoine

Director, State Workforce Systems Policy
National Association for the Education of Young Children

- Goals
- Discussants
- Agenda



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5 Strategies to Consider

1. Take a partnership approach with others working on higher education issues
2. Determine the number and characteristics of programs in the state that have ECE degrees at all levels (associate, baccalaureate, advanced)
3. Investigate your state early childhood teacher certification
4. Examine existing state supports for students working in the field and for recruiting to the field
5. Develop a vision, explore current and future direction and goals

Definitions and Initial Approach

Richard Gonzales

Senior Advisor for Early Childhood Development & Education
Administration for Children & Families
US Department of Health & Human Services



www.acf.hhs.gov/earlychildhood

Higher Education Assessment

- The State Advisory Council shall assess the capacity and effectiveness of 2- and 4-year public and private institutions of higher education in the State toward supporting the development of early childhood educators, including the extent to which such institutions have in place articulation agreements, professional development and career advancement plans, and practice or internships for students to spend time in a Head Start or pre kindergarten program

(Public Law 110-134)

What Does the Regulation Mean?

- First, there are no hidden meanings or expectations related to this identified responsibility of the Council.
- Second, the language in the legislation is intentionally “general” to allow different States to approach this task somewhat differently based on the realities within a given State.

Where is Your State in its Higher Ed Assessment Development?

- Recognize that States are at different stages of development related to this and other tasks assigned as responsibilities of the State Advisory Councils
 - Some States have already assessed capacity and effectiveness; some just capacity.
 - Some States have planned how they might start to get this task done.
 - Some States are just beginning to think about what this task means for them.

Re-phrasing the Need

- In the end we want you to be able to assess what you know about higher education in your State as it relates to supporting the development of early childhood educators in your State.
- What can 2- and 4-year public and private institutions of higher education in our State do to support the development of early childhood educators?

Some Types of Capacity

What types of capacity are we assessing:

- What degrees and or certificates are available to support EC educators?
- What curriculum, courses and/or trainings (PD and career advancement opportunities) are available – or need to be developed?
- What articulation agreements are in place?
- What opportunities exist for internships?

Capacity and Effectiveness

- Assessing capacity gets you to understand what exists, what is possible, what is needed – this is what we do now; this is what we are capable of doing.
- Assessing effectiveness comes about only after assessing capacity and only where something exists where there is an intended or expected result – this is what we thought we were accomplishing; this is what we are, in fact, accomplishing - or not accomplishing.

1 of 5 Strategies to Consider

Take a partnership approach with others working on higher education issues

- Bring together others in your State who have higher education knowledge
- Share with them what you know about early childhood educator needs (or maybe you will need to do this assessment also?)
- Plan together and learn from one another
- Identify recommendations of next steps

Digging into the Strategies to Consider

Alison Lutton
Senior Director
Higher Education Accreditation & Program Support
National Association for the Education of Young Children



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2 of 5 Strategies to Consider

Determine the number and characteristics of programs in the state that have ECE degrees at all levels (associate, baccalaureate, advanced)

- How many early childhood preparation programs already exist in your state?
- Are they accessible? What does that mean in your state?
- How many programs meet NAEYC's professional preparation standards?

3 of 5 Strategies to Consider

Investigate your state early childhood teacher certification

- Does your state have early childhood teacher licensure or certification?
- What age groups or grade levels are included?
- What settings are included?
- Who must have certification?

4 of 5 Strategies to Consider

Examine existing state supports for students working in the field and for recruiting to the field

- What scholarships are available, especially to part time working students?
- What are the barriers to enrollment, retention and graduation in your state?
- Are degree programs offered in ways that meet your state's accessibility issues?

5 of 5 Strategies to Consider

Develop a vision and explore current and future direction and goals

- Identify the existing challenges and strengths for your state, perhaps for different populations in your state
- Identify existing leaders and resources
- Build on existing strengths and use state and national resources

Growing High Quality Programs

- Quantity is not sufficient, need to grow high quality programs that prepare teachers for diverse children and families, birth through age 8, and inclusive settings.
- Currently 123 NAEYC Accredited associate degree programs in 24 states
- Currently 363 NAEYC Recognized bachelor's and graduate programs in 34 states



Minnesota's Experience

Mary Vanderwert

Minnesota Head Start State Collaboration Director
State ECAC member
Co-chair of the ECAC Professional Development Committee



Minnesota's Early Childhood Advisory Council

- Established by Executive Order, September, 2008 as advisory to the governor and legislature
- 18 members including legislators and parents
- Developed a vision and have a start on a comprehensive plan
- Much of work done in 4 committees
 1. Access and Finance
 2. Accountability
 3. Program Standards
 4. Professional Development

Professional Development Committee

- Provided recommendations for ARRA funding
- Worked through the NAEYC Policy Blueprint to determine gaps
- Developed a vision for a PD system
- Developed our approach to the assessment of higher education
- Currently proposing a comprehensive state early childhood education PD system

Minnesota's Higher Education System

- **System of 2 and 4 year institutions**
 - MnSCU governs community/technical colleges/public universities
 - U of M governed by a board of regents
 - Private institutions
 - Curriculum determined by Board of Teaching (BOT) and Core Competencies
 - Faculty Associations
 - Articulation negotiated between individual institutions and approved by BOT
 - Credit for prior learning inconsistent



www.mnncpd.org



- Career Lattice
- Core Competencies
- Credentials
- Trainer and Training Approval
- Relationships Based PD
- Career Guidance
- Higher Education
- Funding/Scholarships
- Infant Toddler
- Job Board
- Resources

Minnesota's Struggles and Strategies

- Committee has representatives from both 2 and 4 year institutions of higher education and early childhood education staff
- Population in state is changing
- Budget challenges limit possibilities
 - First recommendation to form a workgroup but costs kept it from being considered

Three Pronged Approach

- ARRA contract to gather existing data, analyze and make recommendations
- Survey to employers and recent graduates to determine the level of preparedness for teaching in programs
- Work with MnAECTE and ACCESS
 - Survey questionnaire to MnAECTE with a request for any related data
 - ACCESS staff are helping us gather their self-assessment information

Minnesota's Additional Perspective on

5 Strategies to Consider

1. Take a partnership approach with others working on higher education issues
2. Determine the number and characteristics of programs in the state that have ECE degrees at all levels (associate, baccalaureate, advanced)
3. Investigate state early childhood teacher licensing policies and procedures
4. Examine what supports exist in your state for students working in the field and for recruiting to the field
5. Develop a vision and explore current and future direction and goals

Q & A

Participants & Discussants



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Related Resources and Assistance

www.naeyc.org/policy/ecwsi

- Online state policy database
- State policy blueprint, briefs, planning guide, and additional tools
- Online peer-to-peer forum
- Annual national PD policy summit
- State technical assistance
- Webinars
- Linkages to additional NAEYC state and Federal policy and professional development resources, including the professional preparation standards



NAEYC's Early Childhood Workforce Systems Initiative (ECWSI) is generously supported by the Birth to Five Policy Alliance and the McCormick Foundation

Supporting State Advisory Councils initiative

- A series of monthly webinars on key issues that councils are charged to address.
- A listserv to promote communication among advisory council leadership, staff, and content experts; and
- A webpage with dedicated space for each of the webinar topics, plus space for additional resources and more technical discussions.
 - <http://birthtofivepolicy.org>
 - Click on “Policy”
 - Select “Early Childhood Advisory Councils”

Thank you!



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