2009 CCPRC Annual Meeting
Breakout A-1
Thursday, October 29, 2009, 10:30 a.m. – 12:00 p.m.

Coordination Across Professional Development and Training Systems:
A Critical Look at the Role of Institutions of Higher Education

Description:
This facilitated discussion involved a critical look at the role of higher education in supporting State initiatives to enhance quality and build a high quality workforce. The session began with a quick overview and context setting across four major areas related to addressing coordination of professional development systems: 1) developing a State infrastructure to support articulation across training and higher education programs; 2) faculty resources to build knowledge, skills and abilities of faculty to address and support quality initiatives within a State (including supporting faculty in providing professional development/relevant course work that addresses all children and families); 3) supporting non-traditional students (including those with limited preparation for higher education and limited English speaking) through distance technology and other non-traditional methods; and 4) assessing and evaluating competency through licensure, certification, and credentialing. Discussion followed with a focus on specific issues States are facing, strategies that are working, and major areas of need related to research and evaluation.

Through this session participants were encouraged to:
- Identify the pros/cons of different approaches to coordination of professional development;
- Discuss ways to involve early childhood higher education faculty in developing and implementing a State-wide professional development system;
- Discuss complexities of working with institutions of higher education; and
- Develop a research agenda related to coordination across professional development systems.

Moderator:
Beth Rous, University of Kentucky

Panelists:
Pamela Winton, University of North Carolina, Chapel Hill
Stephany Hewitt, Trident Technical College
Dan Haggard, New Mexico Children, Youth and Families Department
Kate Tarrant, Columbia University

Scribe:
Carolyn Swaney, Xtria, LLC

1. **Documents in session folder**
   - "Coordination Across Professional Development and Training Systems: A Critical Look at the Role of Institutions of Higher Education".
   - "National Professional Development Center on Inclusion" (handout).

2. **Summary of Presentations**
   - *Key areas for discussion (Beth Rous):*
     o Developing a State infrastructure to support articulation.
     o Faculty resources.
     o Supporting non-traditional students.
     o Assessing and evaluating competency.
   - The group broke into two discussion groups across four topical areas which were led by the following panel members:
     o Group 1: Faculty Resources (Pamela Winton) and Assessing and evaluating competency (Kate Tarrant)
     o Group 2: Articulation (Dan Haggard) and non-traditional students (Stephany Hewitt)
   - Each group was asked to address the following:
     o What specific issues are States facing in these areas?
     o Are there strategies that are working?
     o What are the major areas of need related to research and evaluation?

   - *Summary from Group #1: Kate Tarrant*
     o Major challenges States are facing: Tremendous fragmentation in training, education, and certification.
     o Identified opportunities to address these challenges:
       - Tap into junior faculty at institutions of higher education—they are motivated and connected to the field.
       - Bring people together into workgroups and engage higher education administrators; buy-in by Deans is important.
       - Interagency collaborations.
       - Talk to providers about their professional development needs, and ask, "How are colleges and universities currently addressing these needs?"
       - Integrating research.
       - Demographic issues (i.e., changes in children, teachers, and teacher candidates in terms of ages, experiences, cultures, and linguistics.
       - Incorporating new information that is available on children with disabilities and recognizing that the needs of faculty and teachers in this area are dynamic.
     o Talked about evidence-based practice and how to incorporate it into our work.
       - How do we define limitations?
       - Improving the potential for instructing teachers.

   - *Summary from Group #2: Wendy DeCourcey*
     o Group identified three main issues: Articulation, access, and goals:
       - Articulation: Coordination across the settings (2-year versus 4-year colleges).
         o Development of standardized early childhood education across settings.

- o Inclusive across settings.
- o Common core goals.
  - ▪ Access: Understanding workforce (barriers and strengths).
  - ▪ Designing curriculum for students having trouble with college-level courses (break down into smaller credit hours).
    - o Standardization of basic courses.
    - o Shifting presentation.
    - o Goal: High quality, trained professionals.
    - o What needs to be in place: Decision processes—some States are just focusing on teacher qualifications.

3. **Summary of Discussion with Presenters and Participants**
   - The group also discussed national credentialing versus State credentialing. Efforts at the national level could be a barrier for States that have appropriate infrastructure. Progressive States sometimes are hampered. How do we support States from the national level? Head Start does not recognize a State equivalent.
   - National standards for certification or licensure are important. If we don't provide guidance, every State will reinvent the wheel.
   - What is "Do no harm?" It could be harmful if a State goes in a narrow direction. Broaden ages to at least 8 or 12; there are different standards for higher ages.
   - System infrastructure: What system should States use and what are the implications for a national agenda?
   - We're in a transformational stage. Head start is not just Head Start, it is also child care. Public schools are providing pre-K and HS. It's all early childhood, so conducting research only in child care is restrictive. These systems that are being developed for only one system are not going to work.
   - From the college perspective, the most regulated department is the school of education. All this calls for standards. There is no evidence that more regulations lead to better outcomes for students. What are the regulations based on?
   - This calls for research. It's challenging to figure out the research; we have to look at it on a State level.

4. **Key Themes and Issues:**
   - Articulation:
     - o 2-year and 4-year institutions of higher education need to work together.
     - o Coordination needs to cross all settings (e.g., semester/quarter systems).
     - o Development of standardized early childhood education across settings.
   - Access: Understanding the workforce:
     - o Multiple languages.
     - o Shift in mindset—shift in presentation.
   - Faculty resources:
     - o Are we perpetuating the problem if we are just changing the existing structure? We need to know the impact of our professional development (PD) standards and competencies, etc., for teaching and children's learning as we work toward building and improving these PD systems.

- o Who: Identifying the characteristics of effective PD providers (e.g., Minnesota, Pennsylvania, and Georgia competencies).
  - o What: What do they need for support? How do we assess what faculty do?
  - o How: How to inform and update PD content and PD delivery systems?
- Ideas for future directions/next steps:
  - o Opportunity to work with junior faculty, to come together to address these issues in a way that is linked to tenure.
  - o Needs to be an interagency supported effort.