

2008 CCPRC Meeting
Session 17 (Breakout C-4)
Friday, August 1, 10:45-12:00 noon

Professional Development and Systems-Building Overlap

Description

States have increasingly begun to plan and implement cross-sector professional development systems. Panel members opened discussion of cross sector professional development systems and opportunities with an overview of examples from the perspective of research, practice and policy. Specifically, panel members presented:

- Summary of research in one state on cross-system professional development systems.
- Experiences and efforts to balance diversity with increased educational requirements.
- Experiences in developing state cross agency professional development teams to support inclusive opportunities for young children.

Opportunities for discussion of challenges and strategies for supporting cross-sector professional development were provided, along with implications for research and state policy development.

Moderator

Beth Rous, University of Kentucky

Panel Members

Virginia Buysee, University of North Carolina, Chapel Hill
Dina Castro, University of North Carolina, Chapel Hill

Scribe

Patti Banghart, Research Connections, National Center for Children in Poverty,
Columbia University

Documents in Session Folder

Discussion Notes

Beth Rous

- The Kentucky professional development (PD) system is wrapped around quality rating systems (QRS), standards, an assessment guide, and a data system. Two things to think about for PD systems—look for gaps and then add to the system. Had training scholarships for prekindergarten (preK) teachers and personnel preparatory grants. Required us to look at what we had and not to duplicate anything.
- In our research grant funded through ACF, we collected data related to child outcomes, training, technical assistance (TA), scholars, program quality, for public preK, child care, Head Start. Key research questions were linked between PD, quality, and outcomes. What level and intensity of PD supports provide the most benefit? Quality scores increased as the number of training sessions and training hours increased; topic training had an impact; and the work environment related to quality. An examination of training did not include TA.

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- Work environment should be more inclusive than just job satisfaction. Kentucky has some data on the work environment beyond job satisfaction.
- When controlling for PD components (such as Child Development Associate), a bachelor's degree did not affect quality.
- Ongoing challenges include maintaining and building relationships, understanding policy and practice contexts from multiple perspectives, building a congruent system over time, and constructing measures. Strategies might involve researcher involvement and support for key administrators.

Dina Castro

- Balancing diversity with increased educational requirements. Workforce in center-based care does not reflect the diversity of the overall population. Increased concern about the qualifications of early care and education (ECE) teachers. Fewer than half of lead teachers of 3- to 4-year-olds have a 4-year degree, and among teachers with less than a 4-year degree, many are from minority groups. This situation could occur because minority teachers tend to live in isolated areas where education programs and recruitment programs are less available. In addition, faculty members in higher education ECE programs are 80 percent white, and the content of the programs may not be culturally appropriate.
 - Another factor could be the low compensation of ECE teachers, which does not attract those with higher education and makes it difficult to pursue such education.
 - There are differing opinions on how to include cultural diversity information into a curriculum. Supporting this policy may help retain minority teachers in the field. Several resources could be used to aid this policy.
 - Increase the diversity in the ECE workforce, develop collaboration between 2- and 4-year schools, increase the level of outreach in high schools and community schools, increase the level of diversity among faculty members, fund teacher aid outreach programs, promote loan forgiveness, and support scholarships.
 - Other experiences—faculty in career education programs (only have 35 credits of ECE) steer teachers; differences between Associate of Arts and Bachelor of Arts programs. Illinois has an associate's degree that does not transfer to 4-year school, but the State is trying to help students at 4-year schools obtain an ECE degree.

Virginia Buysee

- National Professional Development Center on Inclusion—Developing State cross-agency PD teams that were providing targeted intensive TA to eight States, and providing resources to all States that were interested. Started by summarizing information on inclusion. Looked at the research on the effects of inclusion and collaboration. A joint definition of inclusion from the National Association for the Education of Young Children and Division for Early Childhood. Developed a framework for inclusion. Highly effective teaching and intervening is at the center of PD influenced by an infrastructure comprising PD, approaches to PD, and the characteristics of learners and the contents. Have a State resource that includes seven steps for building a State PD plan and system, which would include a plan for evaluating PD systems.

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- Level of intensity was specific for limited number of States to try to create a template of this type of TA.
- Workshops for TA may also be productive and increase quality (e.g., Ramey study). Workshop quality and intensity (3-day) could be the difference. The difference between planned workshops and community-based training. Kentucky has workshops at several levels, and they are content-focused. Teaching workshop trainers to go into depth on a topic.
- Organizing around the topic of inclusion was the focus, but the center could be used more broadly because it is still organizing ECE systems. How to prioritize with a focus on inclusion? Illinois wanted to include inclusion across the board for special needs children.
- Structural issue of transition from 2-year to 4-year degree programs. The NCLB program set up a system for discouraging ECE content because of its birth-to-3rd-grade focus. Teachers have to retake certain courses.