

D6: Implementation and Testing of Coordinated Workforce Development and Quality Improvement Initiatives: Supporting Equitable Child Care and Early Education Workforce Outcomes

Thursday, June 29, 2023

10:45 a.m. – 12:00 p.m. | Gallery II

1. Descriptive Information

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| <p>D6: Implementation and Testing of Coordinated Workforce Development and Quality Improvement Initiatives: Supporting Equitable Child Care and Early Education Workforce Outcomes</p> <p>How can we better incentivize, recognize, and reward workforce members for their engagement and participation in quality improvement (QI) activities? This roundtable will discuss how we can strengthen QI coordination and alignment with workforce development initiatives across research, policy, and practice. QI initiatives often require practitioners to engage in improvement activities (e.g., coaching routines and professional development sessions) not explicitly tied to established career pathways. These activities may strengthen early learning program quality and child outcomes; however, more can be done to improve workforce member-level recognition and advancement. Using various strategies, we will explore opportunities for program designers and administrators to expand and strengthen career development. These will include incentives and rewards tied to QI/Quality Rating Improvement Systems (QRIS) engagement, completion of initiative requirements, and skills demonstrations (e.g., registered apprenticeship programs, scholarships/credentialing programs, competency-based incentives, QRIS-linked wage supplements). Together we will dive deep into current design efforts, implementation, and testing of joint workforce development and QI initiatives. This session is part of a series focused on supporting equitable outcomes for the child care and early education workforce. Participants are welcome to engage in a single session in the series (Session 3 of 3).</p> | <p>Presenters</p> <p>April Crawford, Children’s Learning Institute</p> <p>Kathryn Tout, Child Trends</p> <p>Wendy Robeson, Wellesley Centers for Women</p> <p>Daryl Greenfield, University of Miami</p> <p>Anne Douglass, University of Massachusetts Boston</p> <p>Scribe</p> <p>Lindsay Bell, ICF</p> <p>Number of Attendees: 15</p> |
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2. Documents/Presentations Shared

CCEEPRC D6 – RC3 session 3

3. Brief Summary of Presentations

- **Summary of Presentation #1: Kathryn Tout** - Implementation and Testing of Coordinated Workforce Development and Quality Improvement Initiatives: Supporting Equitable Child Care and Early Education Workforce Outcomes
 - **Summary of Sessions 1 and 2 of series**
 - Part of a research collaborative focusing on integration of workforce development and quality improvement
 - Workforce development and quality improvement programs often not aligned or integrated
 - Refer to slide four for a Venn diagram of activities in workforce development and quality improvement
 - Workforce knowledge skills – think of the evidence-based workforce development
 - When thinking about policies supporting recruitment and retention, need to think about how to link with quality improvement
 - Who has access?
 - Who is participating?

- Who are they serving?
 - How does that affect program quality?
- **Summary of Presentation #2: Anne Douglass**
 - Case Study 1: Instructional leadership in community-based centers in Boston participating in universal Pre-K
 - Quality improvement initiative uses workforce development strategies, opportunity to earn college credits, receive \$1000 stipend upon completion
 - Pay parity definition for Boston UPK programs: UPK teacher receives same salary for one year as a public school teacher receives for the 9 month school year
 - Case Study 2: Early childhood fellowship
 - Enter with 60 credits, complete remaining 60 credits of BA
 - Graduate debt-free, all expenses paid through stipend, paid to complete teaching practicum if not already in the field, partnership with ECE employers in the communities where the fellows work or will work
 - Make sure all the knowledge they're gaining is translating into improved quality – employer partnerships increase the capacity to implement the knowledge they've gained without resistance
 - Funding to program partners (teachers and/or directors) to support their work with the fellow
 - Induction supports – technical assistance to director on how to support the fellow and leverage their knowledge across the program
 - Would not have been possible for many fellows to complete their degree without this program and the funding available to them – this is what happens when you remove a whole set of barriers
- **Summary of Presentation #3: April Crawford**
 - Case Study 3: Texas School Ready Registered Apprenticeship Program (RAP) [refer to slides 6 and 7 for details]
 - Work with coach on monthly basis on how to implement the practices they're learning
 - Teachers are already investing the hours that would be needed for RAP, already doing on-the-job training, already have an option to learn credentials – why not do a RAP?
 - Starting to implement RAP in fall
 - Require wage progression embedded in program
 - Milestones are competency based, not time based
 - Many college programs not ready to use competency-based approach, so they are evaluating curriculum and offering equivalent credits
 - Achieve the equivalent of a BA
 - Case Study 4: Texas Rising Star Mentoring Service [refer to slide 8 for details]
 - Record interactions with students, submit video, receive competency badge, build up to earning micro-credentials
 - Statewide revision on pathways, strong support for competency-based pathway that runs parallel to degree-based pathway
 - Need to get to a place where colleges understand the value of the competency-based pathway
- **Summary of Presentation #4: Wendy Robeson**
 - Case Study 5: Project Flourish (western MA)
 - Apprenticeship program sponsored by state DOL, not EEC
 - Recruit those that want to enter ECE but had barriers
 - Become state certified as lead teachers, receive CDA and college credits
 - No cost for classroom training
 - Competency-based wage increases
 - Coach/mentors with extensive experience and receive stipend
 - Employer recruit highly trained workforce and have flexible training system
 - Missing a focus on QI – only have positive workplace culture and interactions included
 - Case Study 6: Good Jobs Metro Coalition Boston [refer to slides 12-14 for details]
 - Includes family child care educators – not common
 - Create a child care workforce sourcing, development, and employment system
 - Diverse workforce, mentors, and employers working together to increase educator workforce

- Partnering with labor unions, community colleges, family child care training, and includes supportive services (life coaches assist with finding resources for barriers – housing, food, transportation, healthcare, etc. – work with employer and participant to make sure they stay in the program)
 - Union recruits (especially non-English speakers), offers professional development, connect to community colleges
 - Missing a focus on QI
 - Common problem with DOL sponsored apprenticeship programs, they focus on workforce development and not quality improvement
- **Summary of Presentation 6: Daryl Greenfield – EarlyScienceInitiative: Unleashing the Power of Science in Early Childhood**
 - Case Study 7: EarlyScienceInitiative [refer to slides 15 and 16 for details]
 - Co-constructed with educators and families to leverage local context and culture
 - Programs across the US in a variety of demographics, won't work the same in every locality because local context and culture influences children's interest
 - Not a curriculum, but an equity-based birth to 5 developmental adaptation of the Framework for K-12 Science Education
 - Can't get kids interested in science material through rote learning in unconnected subjects, need a small set of big ideas learned through doing and thinking
 - Focus on data utilization for QI – to stakeholders and teachers
 - No cost to programs, they committed to forming science committee that included teachers, families, infant and toddler providers, and administrators
 - Science Alliance Project: allows subset of teachers to get more intensely involved in the project without requiring the whole school to make the same commitment
 - Subscription box model – materials every month
 - Open ended resources, allow for flexibility in implementation – discuss in communities of practice
 - How does context influence this program?
 - Children build what they see in their environment – use blocks to build bridges in neighborhoods with bridges, sky scrapers in neighborhoods with scrapers. They learn about the engineering of these structures that are relevant to them
 - Support the idea that educators are experts in understanding how to integrate children's interest in their education
 - Give opportunities to participate in conferences – build their confidence in their expertise and contribute their perspective to research and policy development
 - No additional financial compensation to teachers, but after this workgroup they will be looking into that

4. Brief Summary of Discussion

- What difference does it make to have a strong connection with the program the fellows are placed in? Does it help address retention?
- What are the qualities of programs that have the most success in retaining teachers and paying the best salaries possible?
- Similar programs to Bachelor's fellowship in San Diego have reported hesitancy to enroll in the program due to fear that the change in salary will cause a benefit cliff effect
 - a. Did an economic analysis that found you need to double the salary to create a change that can meaningfully better their situation
- Is there a standard of quality for education programs in the RAP?
 - a. Offered for providers already approved for Texas school-ready
 - b. Recruit programs that are struggling and need improved quality – so needed to include a strong program director support component to assist with implementing the RAP
 - c. Building quality at program level and honoring the commitment teachers have shown to the QRIS
- The workforce is the quality

- a. Quality may not be explicitly included in policy, but there are a lot of the components of quality in those policies because the number one component of quality is the workforce
 - b. This concept is not explicit in policy conversations – increasing compensation does not naturally translate into improved outcomes – how can we make that more explicit?
- Having mentors that are teachers at the same program – does that lead to higher turnover?
 - a. Texas – program directors are mentors, not teachers in the program
 - b. Mentors can leave and then what happens to the apprentice?
 - c. It's okay to leave one program if you're staying in the system – Texas program that gives an incentive to educators that stay in the system
 - d. Boston uses a 3-year commitment – they can move within the ECE system. There's not always an opportunity for advancement in their current program
 - e. Rhode Island has a pandemic retention bonus that requires staying with employer as a focus of continuity of care for children, not for employer
- Pandemic money is running out – will the crisis get worse?
- What is the hierarchy of needs? Build upon basic needs and get to CQI. Haven't had the capacity to engage in QI during pandemic because they needed to survive
 - a. Paradox of stabilizing force for individuals, ECE field – often think we need baseline level of stability needed to engage in QI process, but could a basic structure of support that meets the basic needs of provider be the basis for engaging in QI? What is the precursor to engaging in QI?
 - b. This is why we need to co-create QI with educators
 - c. Early QI focus on “quality for a day” set up only for quality in observation as basic compliance, not sustainable beyond that
- RAP – what is perception of incoming workforce?
 - a. Texas – participants are not aware of RAP opportunities, take the approach that we are adding support and funding to elevate what they're already doing and create more opportunities for workers
 - i. Few existing RAPs that focus on quality
- How are we tracking increasing program quality and progress toward goals?
 - a. Need funding
 - b. Would love to do a pre/post study
 - c. Texas – using core competency pathways to measure outcomes – keep track of credentials, retention in workforce, placement
 - d. The ways we measure quality make it difficult to track
 - e. How can you look at compliance data to gauge how well the program is doing? Use the data from a QI perspective

5. Summary of Key issues raised (facilitators are encouraged to spend the last 3-5 minutes of sessions summarizing the key issues raised during the session; bullets below are prompts for capturing the kinds of issues we're looking for)

- Need to find ways to make sure the knowledge and skills educators are gaining in these programs can be translated into practice in their centers – build a process for supporting implementation in the workplace into initiative
- When addressing increasing compensation, need to make sure the increase in compensation is actually benefitting the workforce and not assume it will automatically lead to improved outcomes
- Alternative career pathways offer ways to engage people that are interested in ECE but have barriers to entry in the workforce and create systems to reward the training and professional development educators are already doing and translate that into credentialing and advancement
 - Some parts of the system are not ready for competency-based credentialing, need to improve awareness and understanding of the competency-based pathway as equivalent to degree-based pathway
- Need to identify standards or practices for tracking changes in program quality and progress toward goals in initiatives