

Role, Relevance, Reinvention:
Higher Education
in the Field of Early Care and Education

A report by Valora Washington with the following signatory partners:

Aspire Institute,
The CAYL Institute,
The Council for Professional Recognition,
National Black Child Development Institute,
National Head Start Association,
National-Louis University,
Pre-K Now, and
Wheelock College

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National Black Child Development Institute

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Executive Summary

“Leadership is open to anyone who has the courage and skill to try to mobilize people to address their most difficult issues, what we call their ‘Adaptive Challenges’.”

Marty Linsky and Ronald Heifetz

Early childhood higher education programs are facing adaptive pressures and dynamics for which they are unprepared. Advocacy is growing to mandate bachelor’s degrees for teachers and administrators of pre-kindergarten children. However, schools, colleges, and departments of education are finding that they do not have the capacity to meet growing community needs as they are understaffed and under resourced at all levels. While innovations continually emerge from individual institutions and some state governments, much of the dialog is occurring among early educators and the college units that support them.

We eight organizations have written this paper as a call to leadership for the preparation of staff for the field of early care and education. We make this call because we believe this to be a defining moment to establish public expectations for both the standard of care for young children and the qualifications of those who provide that care. We seek to focus attention on the early years of life, to create common ground in this fragmented field, and to augment the existing public will to invest in and execute these initiatives. Establishing a firm foundation for this work requires greater recognition and investment by both public and private entities. Chief among these entities are the colleges and universities whose work defines, reflects, prepares, and certifies the value of this professional work.

The paradox is clear. On the one hand, public awareness about the importance of the early years of life is growing as is the knowledge base about the education, skills, and expertise necessary to be an effective teacher of young children. Yet on the other hand, as more early educators enroll in college courses, angst-filled questions emerge about what they should know and be able to do. We characterize these questions as issues about the role, relevance, and capacity to reinvent higher education’s interface with the field of early care and education.

- In a field that historically has relied extensively on informal apprenticeship, the **role** of college credentials as a qualifying element of workforce participation evokes passionate debate.
- The **relevance** of teacher education programs to the effective, developmentally appropriate preparation of staff serving diverse young learners in a variety of settings is questioned.
- And, the capacity of colleges and universities to **reinvent** its content, infrastructure and delivery system is uncertain. Can colleges meet the needs of both recent high school graduates and adult learners with extensive work experience from numerous backgrounds?

Will —and how will— institutions of higher education address these adaptive challenges in the field of early care and education?

The opportunity to lead must first be grounded in unsentimental analysis of our current situation. We eight organizations have come together to offer our point of view and to suggest recommendations for moving forward. Our focus here is on those who work with children from birth to age five and the two- and four-year colleges and universities that prepare them.

We ask every college president and dean to ask the questions: *What is the current state of our early care and education programs, and, how can we make them better?* The answers may be a surprising source of adaptive change.

This report is divided into four sections:

- Section I: Examines the **role** of adaptive pressures and dynamics on institutions of higher education with respect to the field of early care and education. Five of these adaptive pressures and dynamics are particularly evident: 1) The need to prepare staff for a diverse generation of children being supported from infancy in many settings; 2) Public policy that both promotes degree acquisition and depresses workforce qualifications; 3) Inconsistent research on the value of a baccalaureate degree; 4) Declining numbers of early care and education teachers with baccalaureate degrees in recent decades; and 5) both the escalating demand for, and deep ambivalence about, college degrees within the field of early care and education.
- Section II. Explores the **relevance** of institutions of higher education in the field of early care and education. We ask three inextricably related questions. What is the collective capacity of higher education institutions to: Meet the growing enrollment demands? Offer a highly-qualified collegiate faculty? Present appropriate content for diverse groups of children?
- Section III. Illustrates existing **reinvention** strategies, including both state efforts (e.g., New Mexico and New Jersey) and private, non-profit initiatives (National Head Start Association, National Association for the Education of Young Children, and unionization).
- Section IV. Offers recommendations for change. A key element for change lies in the emergence of new champions—people with vision and leadership to elevate these concerns from an elite few to more public dialog and concern.

Will—and how will—institutions of higher education adapt to these leadership opportunities in the field of early care and education?

We acknowledge that the call for higher education reform extends beyond the early care and education field, particularly in view of current fiscal challenges. We recommend seven action items to facilitate change.

1. We join with many others in recommending the **attainment of a bachelor's degree** in early care and education by all key staff, including program administrators and lead teachers of children aged birth to five-year-olds, as a necessary but not sufficient element of change.
2. There must be a stronger federal role in **financing and supporting the work of staff** in the field of early care and education.
3. We call upon **members of the field of early care and education** to better organize themselves in order to articulate our values, knowledge base, and needs.
4. We call for a stronger strategic voice from **accrediting bodies and national organizations**, as well as from states and state boards of education. To strengthen access, we recommend additional financing strategies as well as the more routine awarding of credit for prior learning and transferability between institutions of higher education. We recommend increased focus on non-traditional college student support and advising.
5. Absent state-wide leadership, individual colleges, universities, and communities have a high level of autonomy and a variety of options they can undertake to improve student success. We encourage individual colleges to take efforts to **improve both access to and the quality of teacher education** for early care and education staff. We emphasize the need to upgrade the quality of teacher education programs. We recommend that the entire institution, not just a single

teacher or education faculty, must become more responsible for the preparation of early care and education staff.

6. A strong targeted effort must be given to both **increase the diversity of faculty** and to ensure that all faculty can provide appropriate content for our diverse population of children and families.
7. Stronger links between **staff compensation and their credentials** is demanded.

Notably, the shortcomings of teacher education cannot be resolved at the current level of dialogue, despite many innovative strategies that some organizations are using to increase the access and supply of higher education opportunities. Nation-wide and state-wide agreements about the field of early learning must be forged; high quality teacher education must be founded on those agreements; and broader leadership throughout the entire university and community leadership must join the cause.

Systematic thinking is required—and we now have historic opportunities to redefine early care and education’s role in influencing the future of our children and the teaching profession.

Introduction

“Leadership is open to anyone who has the courage and skill to try to mobilize people to address their most difficult issues, what we call their ‘Adaptive Challenges.’”

Marty Linsky and Ronald Heifetz¹

We eight organizations have written this paper as a call for leadership to face the adaptive challenges in the preparation of staff for the field of early care and education.² We make this call because we believe this to be a defining moment to establish public expectations for both the standard of care for young children and the qualifications of those who provide that care. Public will is both the goal and the driver of collective action among us who seek to focus attention on the early years of life, and to create common ground in this fragmented field. Establishing a firm foundation for this work requires greater recognition and investment by both public and private entities. Chief among these entities are the colleges and universities whose work defines and reflects, prepares and certifies the value of professional work.

The paradox is clear. On the one hand, public awareness about the importance of the early years of life is growing, as is the knowledge base about the education, skills and expertise necessary to be an effective teacher of young children. Yet on the other hand, as more early educators enroll in college courses, angst-filled questions emerge about what they should know and be able to do. We characterize these questions as issues about the role, relevance, and capacity to reinvent higher education’s interface with the field of early care and education.

- In a field that historically has relied extensively on informal apprenticeship³, the **role** of college credentials as a qualifying element of workforce participation evokes passionate debate (Objectors frequently state: *“Some of my best teachers don’t have degrees.”*).
- The **relevance** of teacher education programs to the effective, developmentally appropriate preparation of staff serving diverse young learners in a variety of settings is questioned (*“The degree doesn’t help you deal with the real kids.”* *“That degree has little to do with my job in family child care.”*).
- And, the capacity of colleges and universities to **reinvent** its content, infrastructure, and delivery system is uncertain. (Can faculty encompass most recent research about effective practice into their coursework? *“My faculty workload is already overwhelming. I don’t have time to keep up or spend a lot of time with programs.”* Can colleges serve well both recent high school graduates and adult learners with extensive work experience from numerous backgrounds? Some students say: *“I can’t afford to go to college.”* *“I have to work when classes are offered.”* *“I don’t understand English that well.”* Some faculty say: *“Teaching on nights and weekends is not part of my job.”*)

Will—and how will—institutions of higher education address these adaptive challenges in the field of early care and education?

The reality is that states are increasingly naming a “bachelor’s degree” as an indicator of “highly qualified staff” even as the proportion of the early care and education workforce with this degree declines. This dynamic atmosphere exemplifies the need for adaptive leadership because it is characterized by the lack of preexisting answers and the need to resolve conflicting values.⁴

The opportunity to lead must first be grounded in unsentimental analysis of our current situation. We eight organizations have come together to offer our point-of-view and to suggest recommendations for moving forward. This paper is designed to provide both a framework for understanding the complex leadership challenge and a platform from which we “call the question.”⁵

Will—and how will—institutions of higher education adapt to these leadership opportunities in the field of early care and education?

Our focus here is on the intersection of preparation for those who work with children under age five⁶ with schools of education⁷ and related colleges that prepare early educators at both two-year and four-year institutions. We also recognize the importance of two broader influential forces on adaptive capacity:

1. The persistently low compensation of people who work with young children, regardless of their credentials or the dynamics of supply and demand; and
2. The broader university enterprise because the call for higher education reform⁸ extends beyond the early care and education field, particularly in view of current fiscal challenges.

We ask every college president and dean to ask the questions: *What is going on with our early care and education programs, and, how can we make them better?* The answers may be a surprising source of adaptive change.

This report is divided into four sections:

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| Section II. | Explores the relevance of institutions of higher education in the field of early care and education. |
| Section III. | Illustrates existing reinvention strategies. |
| Section IV. | Offers recommendations for change. |

Section I:

The Role of Higher Education in Early Care and Education: Adaptive Pressures and Dynamics⁹

Many new realities have been thrust upon institutions of higher education, realities that are not easily remedied by a technical solution or “simple tactic” (e.g., adding a course taught in Chinese for students for whom English is not their first language). Because they are not amenable to preexisting solutions, these new realities are best framed as “adaptive pressures” that require a “change in thinking” in advance of effective “change in doing.”

The intersection of the early care and education field with higher education is a place with multiple, competing adaptive pressures. Although these adaptive pressures have been building for quite some time they do not replace long standing facts, such as the lack of access to higher education for many members of the early care and education field. However, the accumulation of thousands of discrete events—such as comprehensive career development systems, Quality Rating and Improvement Systems, wage enhancement initiatives, Teacher Education and Compensation Helps (T.E.A.C.H.), and accreditation—have now gathered energy and momentum, which none had in isolation. These efforts now focus the leadership challenges and opportunities more clearly. Five of these adaptive pressures and dynamics are particularly evident:

- The need to prepare staff for a diverse generation of children who spend time in many settings from birth through age five;
- Public policy that both promotes degree acquisition and depresses workforce qualifications;
- Inconsistent research on the value of a baccalaureate degree;
- Declines in the number of early care and education teachers with baccalaureate degrees in recent decades; and
- Both the escalating demand for, and deep ambivalence about, college degrees within the field of early care and education.

There is increased recognition that higher education must do more¹⁰ to be a relevant contributor to societal needs, including the well being of children. Faculty at colleges and universities are undoubtedly aware of three facts:

- Children’s introduction to non-familial environments begins well before school age. Millions of today’s young learners are part of a generation that typically spends some portion of the week in out-of-home care, given the high levels of labor force participation among all parents.¹¹ Given that the extent of new knowledge about brain development and the learning capacity of infants and toddlers has expanded,¹² a standard of care far exceeding “custodial” is more appropriate.
- Children’s early education occurs in many settings, not just traditional classrooms. Largely and traditionally focused on formal school settings, colleges and universities must recognize that the public is supporting widespread expansion of early care and education in community-based organizations. Among the more than 40 states that currently fund or are developing preschool programs, many are attempting, with various degrees of success, to use a mixed delivery service model that requires multiple agencies to work together.¹³ This can be a particularly difficult idea for some school of education faculty to grasp as many have a “K-12” perspective of the system.
- Our nation is in the midst of substantial demographic change, the results of which are most evident among the young.¹⁴ Large proportions of young learners have special needs or are immigrants, first generation Americans, English language learners, or poor. At a time when the United States lags behind other nations in providing equitable learning opportunities for young

children,¹⁵ more children have characteristics associated with pre-kindergarten “achievement gaps”¹⁶—gaps that can be reduced with high-quality early care and education programming.¹⁷ It must be recognized that early care and education settings are often global environments which bring both challenges and opportunities. The staff, too, represents a wide diversity of cultures, languages, and literacy levels.

There is considerable evidence that college curricula has neither kept pace with nor incorporated these new realities about how children are being raised and educated in our country. In many ways “schooling,” and the preparation of staff to work with children and families, have barely begun to appreciate the young child’s phenomenal and untapped capacity to learn, and to recognize that their “babysitters” are really “teachers” requiring commensurate preparation, compensation, and support. The dichotomy between “child care” and “early education” is an increasingly dysfunctional paradigm; we must upgrade the qualifications of “teachers” currently working in various settings, as well as induct new members into the field.

Public Policy both Promotes Degree Attainment and Depresses Workforce Qualifications

Another adaptive pressure is the need for higher education to expand its research and policy focus to issues of young children. The higher education industry will be deeply impacted as advocates successfully promote degree attainment, often including a major in early care and education or state certification,¹⁸ as a priority strategy to ensure outcomes for children from birth to age five.¹⁹

There is wide variation in state regulations about the educational background of preschool center staff.²⁰ States traditionally have had few regulatory barriers to enter the field,²¹ in some states being 18-years-old, having a driver’s license, and a lack of criminal record is all that is required.²² Even today, in a large proportion of states, staff are not required to have anything more than a high school diploma and a few hours of professional development each year.²³ This lack of standardized qualifications exists for many reasons, including cost and the philosophy that low-entry requirements encourage individuals from the children’s own families and communities to begin and advance in a career in early care and education.

Even in view of recent legislation, generally the United States’ federal government has been silent on workforce standards.²⁴ Silence does not indicate a lack of influence: federal efforts to expand child care as a “means” to other “ends” (such as facilitating the employment of welfare recipients) has had the effect of depressing workforce qualifications for two reasons:

- Implementation tactics rely on informal unregulated care;²⁵ and
- Focus on the quantity, rather than the quality, of care has predominated.

This effect contrasts sharply with the intentions of recent federal “education” policy that fosters degree attainment. For example, the “No Child Left Behind” federal legislation and “Good Start Grow Smart,” its early childhood companion, stresses the importance of “highly-qualified” staff to children’s success; an indicator of “highly-qualified” is an appropriate college degree. Clearly there are disproportionately more funds for child care as a means of welfare reform than for the “highly-qualified” provisions of No Child Left Behind.

Federal funds to enhance workforce qualifications for preschool staff have been available, however, for staff of the federally-funded Head Start program, an early adopter of increased workforce education requirements following congressional mandates.²⁶ About 27 percent of Head Start lead teachers had a bachelor’s degree in 2003.²⁷ By 2013, 50 percent of teachers and education coordinators are mandated to have bachelor’s degrees and an early care and education focus.

At the state level, The National Institute for Early Education Research (NIEER) State of Preschool 2007 report states that prekindergarten programs serve 1,026,037 children in 38 states, most of whom are three and four year olds. Fewer than half of the 38 prekindergarten states required all lead teachers in their programs to hold a bachelor’s degree. NIEER states that “the lack of progress in this area is particularly disappointing.”^{28 29}

It is important to note that the policy promotion of a bachelor’s degree represents a clear movement in the field (as least for the preschool years)—but is not a requirement that has yet threatened the employment of most pre-kindergarten staff. A stunning and widely-reported analysis of preschool teachers (excluding public schools) discovered that recent decades are characterized by an overall decline

in educational attainment in the field³⁰—just at the time when this knowledge base is most firmly established and graduates of these programs are most in demand. The gap between the policy thrust toward degree attainment and the matriculation status of the actual workforce widens.

We must recognize that associate degree programs are a critical component of inclusive professional development systems for a diverse workforce. Currently, two-year colleges enroll nearly 60 percent of all Hispanic students and 50 percent of all African-American, Asian/Pacific, and Alaskan Native students in the United States.³¹

It is still true that only a fraction of those teaching young children have a baccalaureate degree; most of the teachers with degrees work in public school settings.

Overall, national studies suggest that only 50 percent of the approximately 284,277 preschool teachers have a B.A. of any kind; many of them have neither a teaching credential nor expertise or specialized training in early care and education.³² Limited degree attainment has had at least two effects:

1. **Inequity:** For example, in Massachusetts, only 10 percent of those teaching in early childhood centers serving low income children have degrees, in contrast to 61 percent in centers with middle and upper income children.³³
2. **Staff Mobility:** Once a degree is earned, many early educators seek higher compensation by moving to a different setting or auspice within the field. Given the gap in academic demand relative to workforce qualifications, this mobility is often achieved by transferring to administrative jobs or by continuing teaching in a public school rather than in a community-based agency.

Where are the Teachers with Bachelor’s Degrees?

Saluja, Early and Clifford (2002) locate these teachers as follows:

- By auspice: 87% public schools;
- 30% Head Start;
- 39% for profit centers.¹

Within state funded pre-kindergarten programs:

- Ranges from 14.6% in Alaska to 98.9% in New York¹;
- 70% of pre-kindergarten teachers have B.A. even in absence of requirement due to incentives to both programs and teachers.

“Losing Ground”

In 2005, Herzenberg, Price, and Bradley reported that “the position of ECE [early care and education] in the labor market has changed for the worse since the early 1980s.”

- Fewer center based teachers and administrators now hold a four-year college degree (43% in 1983-85 and 30% in 2002-04).
- More teachers and administrators are now working in the field with a high school education or less (25% in the early 1980s to 30% now).
- More people in the field have now completed some college (33% in 1983 and 40% in 2004).
- This overall decline in educational attainment is most pronounced among workers under 40, with the most educated cohort now in their late 50s or older.

Research Findings on the Impact of a Bachelor's Degree are Inconsistent

Because young children are in environments led by staff with a wide range of educational backgrounds, many studies have sought to determine the relationship between teacher education, classroom quality, and child outcomes.³⁴ Generally, teachers with the most advanced education are most effective³⁵ and more likely to enact developmentally appropriate curriculum practices that extend children's knowledge and skills.³⁶ Teachers with associate of arts degrees and holders of the Child Development Associate (CDA)³⁷ certificates were more effective than teachers with some college or just high school plus informal workshops.³⁸

The matter is far from settled. Given differences in the research questions, definitions, and methodologies, examinations of the relative influences of the college degree, academic major, or certification status have yielded mixed results.^{39 40} We are careful to point out that the findings should not be interpreted to mean that the bachelor's degree is unimportant; there are many confounding factors that may explain these results.⁴¹ These findings do suggest, however, that policies focused solely on increasing teacher education may not suffice for improving classroom quality or maximizing children's academic gains⁴² absent some focus on the quality and appropriateness of teacher education programs for the field of early care and education.

All of this reinforces the long established idea of the "iron triangle" of "good things that go together" to predict high quality in early care and education⁴³—smaller ratios of children to adults, higher salaries, and educational background of the teacher. It is difficult to isolate the relative importance of each of these factors; once multiple parent and center variables known to be linked to quality are considered, the influence of higher education alone may disappear.⁴⁴ Other issues are whether the actual work environment supports teachers to implement what they learned about developmentally-appropriate practice, and whether these baccalaureate-holding teachers have ongoing professional development and mentoring beyond their novice teacher experiences.

An Undercurrent of Loss, Ambivalence

Policy is not necessarily sensitive to the subtleties of academic research, and therefore policy—if not funding—continues to herald the bachelor's degree as the prized currency for early care and education staff. Given this policy interest in promoting degrees, it is not surprising that the demand for college-level child development and early education courses is increasing and is expected to remain high.⁴⁵

But the rush to college courses should not be interpreted as a universal welcoming of degree attainment as a goal. Although occupations historically have become "professionalized" by advancing the minimum qualifications of its workforce, there is no question that the early care and education community remains quite ambivalent about the role of credentials.⁴⁶

One reason for the ambivalence is a foreboding sense of loss to the field's culture. The field has as its heritage a strong sense of being "inclusive" and open to all who care about children. The field's self-identity has often been crafted as being distinctive from "professional" educators because of deep traditions of respect for diversity, closer ties to families, and engagement with communities. There is concern that these values will be lost, and that valued, effective colleagues will be pushed out, in the rush to employ those with "official" credentials.

Also, part of the ambivalence about higher education is its content. There is widespread suspicion and doubt about the "value-added" of higher education credentials in actual practice, particularly with diverse populations. It is not uncommon for practitioners to argue defiantly that "the best" staff with young children and their families are warm, loving, deeply-committed "true believers" in the field's culture. These qualities are presumably at risk of being undermined as higher education increases."⁴⁷ In this respect, members of the field face painful debate, difficult decisions, and the potential for loss of historically-cherished choices.

Ambivalence also stems from the historically weak connection, outside of public schools, between credentials and compensation and career or salary growth. Wages and benefits have remained stubbornly stagnant at very low levels.⁴⁸ Indeed, child care teaching staff earned less than half as much as comparably educated women.⁴⁹ This does not encourage personal investments in higher education by this segment of the field, particularly when one year of that education may cost more than one can reasonably expect to earn. The cost of degrees is becoming unattainable even for the middle class.

Section II: Relevance

Potential culture clashes abound.⁵⁰ As early educators express anxiety about credentials, we must remember that higher education is a credentialing system; in other words, a primary purpose of higher education is to award degrees and certificates. The adaptive pressures and dynamics reviewed here leave little doubt that there is a great deal of leadership required—both within and external to the higher education community.

Will—and how will—institutions of higher education adapt to these leadership opportunities in the field of early care and education?

Just as children are located in many settings, the professional development and preparation of staff is also provided under the auspices of a wide range of organizations, including resource and referral agencies, community colleges, universities, and local education authorities. Very few states have undertaken comprehensive analysis of their early care and education preparation options and used those findings to bring greater coherence and effectiveness to those systems.⁵¹ And, many of the informal systems of training that exist clearly have a vested interest in continuing with the status quo.

What now exists is a fragmented system characterized by multiple constituents as well as a wide range of goals and standards.⁵² The relevance of “traditional” higher education is frequently challenged by emergent alternatives; some of the alternatives have been developed from within the colleges themselves. Responding to challenges can be difficult because early childhood teacher education is an under-researched endeavor.⁵³ Little is known about the context, content, and needs of institutions that offer early care and education degrees and credentials.⁵⁴ Addressing these adaptive pressures, we ask three inextricably related questions: What is the collective capacity of institutions of higher education to:

- Meet the growing enrollment demands?
- Offer a highly qualified collegiate faculty?
- Present content that will be useful for a wide range of children?

What is the Capacity of Institutions of Higher Education to Serve the Field?

As currently organized,⁵⁵ about 55 percent of American Association of Colleges for Teacher Education (AACTE) member institutions offer early childhood education programs at the baccalaureate level.⁵⁶ Of the 4,539 institutions of higher education that offer associate, bachelor's, master's, or doctorate degrees in any field, it is estimated that 1,349—almost one third—offer an early childhood teacher preparation degree.^{57 58} Three examples illustrate concern about capacity:

- Even when California provided resources to help pay for credentials of early educators, only half of the institutions of higher education were engaged in preparing these teachers, with three-fourths of these at the community college level.⁵⁹ The capacity in California was also affected by administrative challenges, including the transfer of credits from two-year to four-year institutions, and the extensive use of part time faculty. There are very few upper division programs available to students.
- Unclear that traditional universities had the capacity to serve their constituents, the Head Start community's *HeadsUp!* Network was designed external to, but in partnership with, colleges.
- New Jersey is an example of a state's ability to quickly expand its capacity in unique circumstances: when the New Jersey Supreme Court expanded preschool opportunities for young children, the state's institutions of higher education (with financial support from the state) created specialized pre-kindergarten to third grade certification programs utilizing both alternate and traditional approaches to teacher education.⁶⁰ It must be clearly understood that substantial resources were made available to both students and to colleges and universities to facilitate this change.

Are the Faculty who Teach Credible Experts?

The relevance issue also involves questions about the faculty. Intensive and personal interaction between faculty and students is a critical piece of becoming an early childhood teacher. The perceived credibility of the faculty takes at least four factors into account: their number and status within the higher education industry, their experience and expertise in early care and education settings, their racial and ethnic backgrounds, and their readiness to meet the needs of their student populations.

Status within the institution.

Early care and education is low on the higher education hierarchy. It is even low in status within many teacher education programs. This status is reflected in the staffing pattern: Early childhood departments have a disproportionate number of part-time and adjunct faculty members, and as a result, the ratio of students to full-time faculty in early care and education programs is 61 to 1 as opposed to 39 to 1 in higher education overall.⁶¹ Part time faculty make up 57 percent of total faculty across two- and four-year institutions.⁶² Moreover, much of this faculty is aging; meaning that they may either retire soon or need additional professional development support.

Who are the Faculty?

Maxwell, Lim and Early (2006) present these characteristics of the faculty teaching in early childhood teacher preparation (in percentages):

Characteristics	Two-year colleges	Four-year colleges
White, non-Hispanic	78	79
Works part-time	69	41
Has a doctorate degree	7.5	52.4
Has had a job with direct experience working with children under age five	84.4	63.6

Faculty training and experience.

Many early childhood faculty typically lack both training and specific work experience with young children. Lab schools, once a source of such experience for some, have been in demise. In a national study of two- and four-year institutions, about 53 percent of early childhood faculty had a degree in early care and education or a related field, and only 64 percent had experience working with three- or four-year-olds. About 36 percent of faculty holds doctorate degrees, with about 56 percent at four-year colleges and eight percent at two-year colleges.⁶³ Faculty at four-year institutions are less likely than those at two-year colleges to have either a degree in early care and education that specifically covers ages zero to four or direct employment experience working with young children compared to faculty at two-year institutions. This creates several problems: the faculty lacks credibility with the students and the colleges' degree requirements makes it difficult to find faculty with credible experience. This is partly due to the limited number of graduate programs specific to the early care an education field.



Who are the Students?

Maxwell, Lim and Early (2006) present these characteristics of the students in early childhood programs in institutions of higher education (in percentages):

Characteristics	Associate's	Bachelor's	Master's	Doctorate
White, Non-Hispanic	54	68	65	63
Almost all (at least 75% of students) work full time	36	11	65	



Racial and ethnic diversity.

Teacher education faculty is much less diverse than their students or the child population. For example, although most students in California early childhood teacher preparation programs are people of color, nearly one half of programs have a 100 percent white, non-Hispanic, full-time faculty, and one quarter have a 100 percent white, non-Hispanic, part-time faculty.⁶⁴ Similarly the profile of faculty in Long Island, New York is 83 percent female and 93 percent white with master's degrees at both two- and four-year institutions, a profile similar to the rest of the state.⁶⁵

Readiness to meet the needs of the student population.

Many teacher preparation programs across the United States report that one of their biggest challenges is responding to "the competing work and family responsibilities" of their students.⁶⁶ This is not surprising when one considers that a large proportion of potential new college enrollees are "non-traditional students".⁶⁷ The average early care and education teacher is female, approximately 39 years of age,⁶⁸ and may only be starting her studies toward a bachelor's degree. These new college students often need language support, may lack academic preparation, and bring to the institution issues of access and articulation.⁶⁹ All of these factors combine to suggest that, without additional support, these students are much more likely to leave college without a degree.⁷⁰ Many of the faculty have no or outdated information about how to work with these students. Also not helpful is the culture within higher education, particularly among full-time faculty, that resists offering courses other than during the academic year and daytime. But if institutions rely only on adjunct and part-time faculty, new efforts are less likely to be championed within the department or school.

Does the Curriculum Serve the Needs of All Children?

In addition to questions of enrollment capacity and faculty credibility, there are concerns about the relevance of the curriculum to adequately prepare teachers who can educate *all* children.⁷¹ This concern is partly rooted in the field's inability to define or agree on what staff should know or be able to do in order to work with young children;⁷² perhaps inadequate available evidence exists to inform practice.⁷³ Issues of relevance concern whether the curriculum (1) is rooted in a current knowledge base, (2) has an appropriate diversity focus, and (3) facilitates sufficient practice experience.

Knowledge base and conceptual framework.

Although the content of the curricula is influenced by National Council for Accreditation of Teacher Education (NCATE) and the National Association for the Education of Young Children (NAEYC) standards, it has been argued that many teacher education programs are based more on ideology than on what is known about effective curriculum and pedagogy.⁷⁴ Recognizing that linkages between teacher education and student learning are complex,⁷⁵ questions emerge about whether programs:

- Convey outdated child development knowledge that could lead early care and education teachers to underestimate the competence of young children;⁷⁶
- Provide adequate depth of coverage for each age group since many programs offer preparation to work with a wide range of ages;
- Have consistency in course offerings and quality;
- Are aligned with professional standards;⁷⁷ and
- Prepare teachers and administrators for important parts of their roles (25 percent of the bachelor's and master's programs did not cover early childhood program administration; and 40 percent of the bachelor's and master's programs did not cover adult learning and development).

Diversity focus.

Despite significant demographic change and teaching standards,⁷⁸ a large sample of accredited bachelor's degree programs found that very few hours of coursework and practice are devoted to teaching diverse groups of children effectively.⁷⁹ Only 43 percent required at least one course in working with culturally and ethnically diverse children.⁸⁰ Even in the newly developed New Jersey program targeted to educationally underserved populations, only 28 percent of programs required a full course.⁸¹ Not surprisingly, a study of teachers' perceptions of their professional preparation found that less than half felt that they were skilled to work with children with special educational needs or who were English-language learners.⁸²

Practical Experience.

In order to be able to make use of the content they are learning in their coursework, preschool staff must have direct experience (observations, practice, and student teaching) with young children in a variety of settings.⁸³ Developmentally appropriate supervised practicum experience has been found to be more likely to affect teacher knowledge and use of developmentally appropriate practices.⁸⁴ Finding appropriate field settings is a challenge in early childhood teacher education; working with bilingual students was least likely to be covered as part of a practicum in any of the levels of degrees offered.⁸⁵

Monolingual

In a national sample, Maxwell, Lim and Early (2006) found:

- Working with bilingual students was the least likely to be covered as part of a practicum in any of the levels of degrees offered.
- 20% of the CDA/associate and 10% of the bachelor's programs did not cover English language learners.

Section III: Reinvention

High-quality early learning opportunities for all children require higher education programs that will produce diverse and well-educated teachers with an enlightened view of early care and education.⁸⁶ As indicated by the data reviewed so far, it will require significant reinvention of higher education to consistently produce this result. Content issues of professional development emerge both at the start and at the end of the degree—and for both seasoned practitioners as well as by recent high school graduates.

Will—and how will—institutions of higher education adapt to these leadership opportunities in the field of early care and education?

Reinvention in education has been difficult given the multiple levels of decision-making which differ from state to state. Education policy and teacher licensure requirements are set primarily at the state level, and each state has agencies that oversee program approval. Within this context, institutions develop their own policies and practices related to teacher preparation.⁸⁷ As reinvention is occurring in many states, institutions are being asked to collaborate with others in state efforts to design a career development framework and to respond to the need for teacher preparation for all children.

Promising Initiatives

Several entities have made considerable strides toward developing opportunities for the early care and education workforce to obtain college degrees. Many of these efforts are still “works in progress.” Here we present brief illustrations of what might be achieved when policymakers, constituents, and educational leaders work together. These illustrations include:

- State efforts (e.g., New Mexico and New Jersey);
- The private, nonprofit sector (National Head Start Association, NAEYC, and unionization).

***The HeadsUp! Network of the National Head Start Association.*⁸⁸**

Facing the need to achieve congressionally mandated education requirements for teachers, Head Start recognized that most colleges were not prepared to provide the then 55,000 highly diverse Head Start teachers with appropriate training. To support the staff, the National Head Start Association (NHSA) created the *HeadsUp!* Network, a distance learning program using satellite television, the Internet, and locally trained facilitators.

Generously funded by a range of private and public sources, *HeadsUp!* quickly became one of the nation’s largest distance learning programs, reaching 6,000 staff at 2,000 centers in all 48 contiguous states. Its benefits were immediately apparent:

- Quality: Leading experts in the field bring consistently high quality content including the latest research and teaching techniques to staff who would otherwise not have access to these human and material resources.
- Cost: The cost of the service is low and affordable for virtually all early care and education providers. Some areas, however, experienced a high cost to install receivers.
- Convenience and Reach: Training sites are local and can access even the most remote locations through Head Start centers, libraries, and colleges among others.
- Partnerships with State Governments: *HeadsUp!* efforts have become embedded in the state’s existing comprehensive early care and education strategies.

- **Partnerships with Higher Education:** More than 70 colleges and universities offer the program for college credit toward an associate or bachelor's degree. In addition to college credits, the training can result in hours toward the CDA credential, continuing education units, and in-service training hours.

The training delivered using the *HeadsUp!* Network includes *HeadsUp!* Reading, a research-based college course on early literacy delivered in collaboration with the Council for Professional Recognition and RISE Learning Solutions. Classes and materials are offered in English and Spanish with site facilitators to complement the live, simultaneous translation of the television broadcasts. An important component of the course is a rigorous interactive Web site that supports learners who come to the course with various goals. The Web site supports the 15 two-hour television classes through additional exercises, content reinforcement, readings, and links to other resources. As several states⁸⁹ have made *HeadsUp!* Reading a cornerstone of their strategy to improve early literacy, initial evaluation results reveal that teachers are more intentional in their responsiveness to children's needs.

The *HeadsUp!* Network reveals the untapped potential to use technology to meet the educational needs of the early care and education workforce. Despite its initial success, however, the effort faces significant challenges. Since 2004 it has been rebroadcasting its archive of 149 hours of programming. The effort is challenged to find funding to expand its program offerings and thereby revive interest in the network.

Unionization as a strategy to increase access to training.

A recent and growing trend to unionize home-based child care providers could be a promising strategy for securing increased public investment in early care and education and improving working conditions for providers, according to *Getting Organized: Unionizing Home-Based Child Care Providers*, a report by the National Women's Law Center.⁹⁰

In recent years, there has been a flurry of union organizing among child care providers who care for children in the providers' homes. These providers are typically women who have low earnings and few benefits, which make them good candidates for union organizing campaigns. Across the country, several unions have been involved in organizing home-based child care providers, but the American Federation of State, County, and Municipal Employees (AFSCME) and the Service Employees International Union (SEIU) have been the most active.

Of the seven states that have authorized union representation of home-based providers, three—Illinois, Oregon, and Washington—have signed contracts with unions. The contracts in all three states provide for improvements in compensation, training, and treatment for home-based providers. In addition, in all these states, the governors not only requested additional funding for the home-based providers covered by the contract, but for child care centers as well.

National Association for the Education of Young Children (NAEYC).

NAEYC has been involved in a number of efforts to support higher education programs and degree attainment for the early childhood workforce. The 2001 publication *Preparing Early Childhood Professionals: NAEYC's Standards for Programs* offers a national vision that describes what early childhood professionals should know and be able to do. Core standards are shared across associate, baccalaureate, and graduate degree levels. They are aligned with the standards of the Council for Exceptional Children/Division for Early Childhood and with the National Board for Professional Teaching Standards. The alignment of these standards supports credit transfer and articulation across degree levels. The standards can be applied across multiple professional roles and settings, are inclusive of children with developmental delays and

disabilities and support children and professionals from diverse socioeconomic groups, cultures, and linguistic backgrounds.

Furthermore, NAEYC's new Early Childhood Associate Degree Accreditation opened for public application in spring 2006. This initiative complements NAEYC approval of baccalaureate and graduate level teacher education programs through the National Council for Accreditation of Teacher Education (NCATE). It was developed in collaboration with ACCESS (American Associate Degree Early Childhood Educators) and field-tested by early childhood faculty and students in six states. As of fall 2008, more than 160 programs from thirty-six states are working toward accreditation. Fifty-one programs have earned accreditation.

Most recently, NAEYC is undertaking a new state professional development and career systems initiative that formulated a state policy blueprint for cross-sector, integrated professional development systems. The blueprint was developed in collaboration with other organizations, experts, and state stakeholders who are working to strengthen professional development and career systems for the early childhood workforce. Additional project activities include collaboration opportunities for state policy leaders and administrators, an interactive online clearinghouse of state professional development system policies, technical assistance with states, and other materials.

New Mexico.⁹¹

An innovative leader, New Mexico has been working towards an inclusive, intentional model of support for early care and education staff for over twenty years. Grassroots advocacy, supportive legislation, inter-organizational collaboration, and external funding enabled New Mexico to establish their "Comprehensive Professional Development System."

New Mexico is a notable exception of a state that has undertaken a comprehensive analysis of their early care and education preparation systems and used those findings to bring coherence and effectiveness to those systems. State officials and early childhood faculty in two- and four-year colleges met over a number of years to determine the outline and elements of a comprehensive state-wide early care education and family support professional development system.

The key elements of the New Mexico system are:

- "Common core content with seven competency areas and areas of specialization" enabled New Mexico to have a common thread with which to unify and weave all professional development activities, including those in institutions of higher education. There are two areas of specialization—one in family, infant, and toddler studies—and the other in early childhood program administration.
- Universal articulation between two-year and four-year programs. The "Higher Education Early Childhood Articulation Task Force" created a framework whereby over 20 colleges and universities forged an articulation agreement for a seamless system from A.A. to B.A.
- A network of "training and technical assistance" programs across the state increased accessibility to and opportunities for learning. Although they are not part of the higher education system, they are an important part of New Mexico's Professional Development System. One of their main responsibilities is to provide entry-level training to staff in center- and home-based settings to meet the child care licensing regulations. The training they provide is based on the seven core content areas and core competencies that have been established.
- Incentives were instituted through a Quality Rating and Improvement System.
- A "career lattice" with three levels of certification leading to a license at the bachelor's degree level enables individuals to move horizontally, vertically, or diagonally, and to

enter the field at any point in their professional development. Licensure and corresponding certification within the career lattice are shared by different systems, so one can move between systems. In other words, there is unified use of the certification and licensure lattice across the four primary early childhood sectors—Head Start, public school, child care, and early intervention.⁹²

- A “common catalogue of courses” established a common set of courses that would be used at all institutions of higher education in the state with approved early childhood programs that would have the same course titles. This would enable students to transfer between associate’s or bachelor’s programs and easily transfer credit and enter into a new program where they had “left off.” “Prior learning assessment system” acknowledged the competencies of adult learners and enabled them to transition into any institution in the state they wished to attend.
- Imbedded attention to issues of cultural and linguistic diversity brought credibility and access to the system for multiple populations. New Mexico felt it was important to develop college course content that was not only translated into native languages, but to also revisit content to support cultural competence and the developmental needs of children. For example, Dine College (a tribal institution) developed a 45-hour entry-level course in the Navajo language, based on Navajo culture, using the competency indicators from the existing 45-hour course. Native tribes offer agreements to fund degrees if they come back to reservations to teach. A professional development registry has been recently established.

Although at first glance, New Mexico’s system includes components used by others, it is both the very early adoption of these elements, as well as the collaborative processes by which they built their system, that sets them apart from other states. New Mexico was the first state in the nation to reorganize their state agency to a new system of service delivery for all children, youth, and families. There was strong support from their governor and legislature throughout the process.

Among their impressive results: The University of New Mexico (main campus) increased the percent of minority students enrolled in their Early Childhood Multicultural Education program from 26 percent (all Hispanic) in the spring of 1998 to 43 percent Hispanic and 8 percent Native American in fall of 2001. New Mexico State University translated 45-hour entry-level course into Spanish. San Juan College negotiated with Navajo Nation to obtain funds to support students and to hire a Student Success Coordinator.

The system is not without ongoing challenges, however. These include lack of funding from the state to continually improve the system. There is a need for financial aid for “non-traditional students”. Further, the impact of the system on the compensation and retention of the workforce is yet to be ascertained.

Nevertheless, from New Mexico one sees the possibility of creating a comprehensive, culturally sensitive system on a state-wide basis. The New Mexico example shows what can be so done in a small state with a state university and community college system that are all linked to the state effort.

New Jersey.⁹³

The New Mexico example focuses on restructuring of teacher education programs already in operation, but what happens when a state gets the opportunity to develop a new set of teacher certification programs?⁹⁴

In a series of rulings handed down since 1998, the New Jersey Supreme Court mandated that the state’s poorest school districts provide high quality preschool to all three- and four-year-olds. The “Abbott” decision, as it is known, mandated a research-based curricula, small class size (limit of 15 per class), teacher qualifications, and salary equity in a mixed delivery system, including Head

Start, public schools, and community-based programs. All Abbott district teachers had to have a bachelor's degree and "specialized" training for four years from the time of the decision.

Indeed, this was a radical change that was supported with a rapid infusion of financial support. When fully implemented, it is estimated that total enrollment will reach 60,000 children with a funding increase of \$330 million, bringing total funding to approximately \$850 million.

Teachers who taught in New Jersey's public school preschool classrooms already had to have a bachelor's degree and a teaching certificate, and as long as they had two years of experience teaching preschool, the state waived the four years of specialized training. However, the majority of teachers in private child care classrooms were not qualified to teach under the new regulations. Prior to the Abbott ruling, in order to teach in most of the private centers in the state, teachers needed to have a minimum of a Child Development Associate (CDA) credential, requiring 120 hours of training. These teachers were now required to have the same qualifications as the public school preschool teachers—namely a bachelor's degree and specialized training—and they had to obtain the qualifications by September 2004. This requirement meant that large numbers of teachers were going to have to return to school. In response to this mandate, New Jersey's institutions of higher education created a specialized preschool through third grade certification program, utilizing both alternate route and traditional approaches to teacher preparation.

Prior to the Abbott decision, early childhood teacher preparation at the state's four-year institutions of higher education was integrated with elementary programs. At the time of the court's decision, no programs were specifically designed to prepare teachers to work in preschool classrooms.

Key elements of change included:

- The Department of Education created a division that focused on early childhood. This division is responsible for the development, implementation, and alignment of standards, curricula, and assessment from preschool through third grade;
- New Jersey's four-year institutions of higher education developed a preschool through third grade certification program to meet the training requirements of the Court decision;
- Districts hired early childhood specialists to oversee programs and support and mentor staff;
- New Jersey developed and implemented the Preschool Teaching and Learning Expectations: Standards of Quality, Early Learning Assessment Systems (ELAS) and Self-Assessment Validation Systems (SAVS);
- State government provided several funding sources to help institutions of higher education expand their early childhood faculties;
- A state-funded scholarship program was initiated to pay for teachers' tuition as they upgraded their qualifications;
- A comprehensive professional development program was established. Thirty-one public school district administrations were funded to develop early childhood administrative and technical assistance teams. This included an Early Childhood Supervisor, overseeing all early childhood programs, specially funded preschool special services and language education teams and master teachers who provide assistance to teachers in implementing curriculum and improving their teaching. Family workers are also assigned to Head Start and private child care centers if they are contracted to provide Abbott preschool services, dependent on the number of children served.

The New Jersey experiment has yielded some impressive results. Indeed, New Jersey demonstrated that it is possible in a relatively short period of time to put into place a system of early childhood teacher preparation that has the capacity to upgrade the credentials of the

workforce. Also, as a result of considerable attention and resources, the New Jersey Abbott preschool programs rank as one of the highest quality state preschool programs in the nation.⁹⁵

Challenges are also evident. As New Jersey rolls out their expansion, concerns arise regarding on-going public will. Public school principals and administrators are learning about preschool and its importance, and public preschool teachers report that they need to educate their colleagues about what they do and why. Higher education faces difficulty in hiring staff whose expertise is in early care and education. The limitations on hiring full-time faculty and reliance on adjunct staff is a factor in regard to hiring truly qualified faculty with expertise in early childhood education.

Lessons from this case suggest that policy makers and teacher educators must focus on the coordination of human and financial resources to ensure equity and quality of teacher education programs.⁹⁶ Another lesson is that, despite the fact that the program was new and presumably aware of NAEYC standards, there was a notable lack of opportunity to access diversity coursework.⁹⁷

Lessons Learned and Implications for Next Steps

Each change agent—whether a state or private entity—faces its own opportunities and challenges. Our universal goal should be to work toward expansion or replication of preparation models that provide incentives for increased education, retention, and compensation.⁹⁸ Work to reinvent higher education is important, as absent change in higher education, the education options for the early care and education workforce are severely constricted. With these brief illustrative case studies, one does see the possibilities for change. However, we are aware of at least five reasons for concern:

1. **The fiscal crisis in higher education**: Higher education institutions find it difficult to change without additional funding. While New Mexico has made heroic progress under fiscal constraints, it is clear that funds to provide long-term support for initiatives, rather than grants to initially stimulate systems change, are needed.
2. **National context**: Absent federal policy intervention, including but not limited to recent legislation, these possibilities may be limited. Other fields such as medicine, social work, and special education show precedent for federal and state intervention in supporting change.
3. **Pipeline to graduate education**: Signatories of this paper believe that it will be difficult to reinvent higher education to address the baccalaureate demand absent an expansion of master's and doctoral programs that prepare new instructors and leaders for other roles. Too few graduate level programs, especially at the upper division level where doctorates are required, have appropriate early care and education expertise which in turn weakens the teacher education programs and ultimately the degrees they issue.
4. **Cultural competence and relevance**: Higher education continues to fall short in its efforts to prepare teachers to deal with the realities of our diverse society.
5. Finally, the importance of a **comprehensive state vision** and planning effort is a critical element of change.

Section IV:

Recommendations: Access, Bridges, and Champions

As illustrated in the previous section, many critically important technical solutions or tactics have been presented in the past. These technical issues recommend change related to access and bridges of support that, if broadly enacted, would ease exposure to and success in higher education for early educators. In Table A we will reemphasize some of these techniques and call for their wider embrace. Other authors have also articulated an integrated set of approaches that would clearly define success in advancing early childhood teacher education.⁹⁹

There are many dedicated leaders at all levels working on a variety of important tactics. We celebrate and welcome these efforts because these critical tactics are hardly commonplace, even though many have been suggested for a long time. Much effort is required to ensure that tactics related to the access and bridges of the early childhood workforce become normative.

Many readers of this paper may have been unaware of much of the data presented here. But the general idea of the weak connections between higher education and the field of early care and education is well known, particularly by the academic or policy elites as well as by the students and teachers who experience limited access and low compensation. Outside of these small circles, few influential thought leaders seem to be aware of, or to give attention to, either the opportunities or challenges of this field.

It occurs to us, however, that the key element for change lies in the issue of champions—people with vision and leadership to elevate these concerns from an elite few to public dialog and concern. There are clear challenges of how to position early care and education within teacher education generally, and within the broader academic enterprise. Even more, critically important questions are:

- How to position the intersection of higher and early care and education with the public's interest in developing the minds and skills of young learners, particularly with redressing the oft-cited "achievement gap;"
- How to engage the public in understanding the relationship between early childhood teacher education and promoting economic development.¹⁰⁰

Will—and how will—institutions of higher education adapt to these leadership opportunities in the field of early care and education?

Champions

Leadership: Who will give visibility to and champion this cause of ensuring highly qualified staff for all young children? Who will facilitate shared leadership, new collaborative relationships, programs and paradigms? How can this leadership be mobilized? Who is positioned to facilitate dialog, negotiate conflict, or encourage collaborations?

While issues of the early care and education workforce preparation are pervasive, they have to date received attention primarily within its internal community and not from other constituents whose participation is essential if change is to occur. Many of these issues are shared among many fields attempting to meet the learning and professional development needs of working adults. The issues are magnified among those who work with young children, however, because of the field's low prestige, limited resources, poor compensation, and short career ladders tied to credentials and competencies. To address these issues it will be essential to break through the respective isolation of the early care and education community and the higher education community. It will also be essential to find ways to bring all the stakeholders to the table to form a shared definition of the problem and develop strategies which have sufficient buy-in to be implemented.

To facilitate change:

WE JOIN WITH MANY OTHERS IN RECOMMENDING THE ATTAINMENT OF A BACHELOR'S DEGREE IN EARLY CARE AND EDUCATION BY ALL KEY STAFF, INCLUDING PROGRAM ADMINISTRATORS AND LEAD TEACHERS OF CHILDREN AGED FROM BIRTH TO FIVE YEARS OLD;

WE FURTHER CALL FOR CHAMPIONS—LEADERS WILLING TO GIVE THESE CHALLENGES SIGNIFICANT VISIBILITY OVER TIME.

The work of champions is facilitated by the efforts of many other groups:

1. We call upon members of the field of early care and education to better organize THEMSELVES to articulate its values, knowledge base, and needs. Without greater internal coherence, it is difficult for other sectors to effectively support the strategic growth and capacity of the field. The field itself must resolve its own conflicts, controversies, and cultures as a part of any change strategy or agenda of positive change.¹⁰¹ A major component of the field's own reinvention must be clarity about its purpose, identity, and responsibility.¹⁰² The field's constant stumbling over what to call itself—as well as its incessant grappling with sector rivalries—underscores confusion about its aims, thereby inhibiting professionalization.
2. We call for a stronger strategic voice from accrediting bodies and national organizations such as American Council on Education, American Association of Community Colleges, American Association of State Colleges and Universities, National Association of Independent Colleges and Universities, American Association of Colleges of Teacher Education, and ACCESS. While several of these organizations have spoken to the early care and education issues before, their persistent, collective voice is essential. Together they could draw more attention to the adaptive pressures and dynamics, enabling more powerful paradigm shifts in ideas about who should have access to higher education and what is required for universal success. Also, their attention might have the advantage of increasing the status and prestige of early care and education in the academy. While organizations and consortia among institutions have worked together on various issues,¹⁰³ these efforts must be focused, persistent, and cross-level to effect systems change.
3. States and state boards of education, too, must show greater vision and leadership in efforts to develop a comprehensive statewide professional development system supported by a substantial infusion of resources.¹⁰⁴ They can give visibility and recognition to peer institutions that succeed in these endeavors and highlight their public good. We encourage initiatives such as quality rating and improvement systems, to realign issues such as program quality, compensation, core competencies, developmental appropriateness, state subsidy policy, role progression, and specialization. **We recommend that state boards of education create a full-time position for the coordination and alignment of curriculum and programs** in early care and education, being sure to invite the private institutions in their states to participate voluntarily in statewide transfer policies and agreements. This work must also include the articulation of core competences that address the needs of diverse children.
4. Short of state wide leadership, individual colleges, universities, and communities have a high level of autonomy and a variety of options they can undertake to improve student success,¹⁰⁵ as we will discuss in the next section. **We recommend that the entire institution must become more responsible for the preparation of early care and education staff, not just teacher education faculty.** For example, we suggest the creation of a coalition of faculty from many disciplines related to early care and education such as economics, neurobiology, health, and juvenile justice.

Each of the above four audiences, working with greater visibility will make tactics for greater access and bridges to college more effective.

5. Government at all levels must examine how federal and state policies have impacted the workforce in ways that have depressed salaries, de-linked levels of qualifications from

compensation, and sustained funding far below market rates.¹⁰⁶ In turn, the very low wages of the workforce makes higher education unaffordable and inaccessible. Increased funding will be an essential element to both assure ECE quality and to strengthen the workforce.

Access Approach and Tactics

Higher education is based on a sorting mechanism and a hierarchy that distinguishes elite institutions from those that are more accessible. In this way, higher education has a long history of being unwelcoming to adult learners, part-time students, new immigrants, and minority groups. They have varied in both their willingness and capacity to serve the early care and education community. For example, a North Carolina study of early childhood teaching showed that much early childhood teacher preparation was done better by historically black colleges and universities.¹⁰⁷

Greater access will require attention to three specific issues: financing, awarding credit for prior learning, and transferability between institutions of higher education.

Financing.

With their low salaries, many non-traditional students cannot afford a college education and many traditional students may face pressures from their families to avoid a field known for such low pay. One study found that information about financial assistance usage for early care and education students is largely unknown.¹⁰⁸ It is known, however, that many federal and state financial aid programs have exclusions for adult learners, or are irrelevant for those with low incomes.¹⁰⁹ Initiatives such as the T.E.A.C.H. Early Childhood project that provides funds for teachers' scholarships are linked to compensation incentives and are being piloted in a growing number of states.¹¹⁰

Financial incentives, like those offered to both colleges and students by the state of New Jersey, or through initiatives like T.E.A.C.H., are an essential element of access. Financial supports include financial aid, loan forgiveness in exchange for post education service, or support with the student's own child care and transportation needs. Since it is unlikely that any one level of government will finance the cost of changes needed, higher education strategies should maximize use of local, state, federal, and private resources.

Just one month ago, in August 2008, a congressional higher education act included the early educator provisions for loan forgiveness, compensation initiatives and grants to states for professional development systems. The House and Senate passed the conference bill (H.R. 4137) for the reauthorization of the Higher Education Act, which is expected to go to the President for his signature.

Credit for prior learning.

Most non-degreed staff in the field of early care and education have an extensive portfolio of workshops and other postsecondary learning experiences in addition to their work history. Translating that information into college credit is often a challenge that is redressed, often unsatisfactorily to the student, on a case-by-case basis.

We recommend that states create standardized credit for prior learning¹¹¹ policy based on the Council for Adult and Experiential Learning standards and national best practices. Acceptance of the prior learning of early educators for college credit would recognize the alternative routes to learning that characterize much of the workforce. Indeed, many staff have attained a CDA credential, which could be accepted in its entirety for six or more credits. "Testing out" is a time-honored tradition for previously mastered material.

Transferability/Articulation.

A related issue is the ease of transferability of credits across institutions and the articulation of curriculum. The primary goal of removing obstacles to transfer and creating a coherent transfer process is to help students succeed in meeting their educational goals. Effective transferability and articulation will have a positive impact on the cultural and linguistic diversity of early care and education workforce and is a critical pathway toward degree attainment, increasing the number of transfer students who earn bachelor's degrees with a minimum of loss.

Transfer is a shared responsibility among higher education institution leaders, faculty and administrations, by state agencies and legislation, and by students. **We recommend that every state have statewide transfer agreements that are an outcome of regular and sustainable faculty collaboration across institutions focused on the establishment of common student learning outcomes compatible with academic quality and integrity.** Further, transfer students must be treated comparably to native students by the receiving institutions. Also **we recommend that states build a directory of state-wide early childhood education and general education course to course equivalencies** in recognition that a significant number of community college students transfer prior to completing an associate degree. Work toward some common course names and numbers, especially for lower-level courses. Articulation arrangements are typically local but could be fostered by support of some large state universities with potential for affecting large numbers of students.

Bridges

We recommend increased focus on non-traditional college student support and advising as many early care and education staff arrives at college without adequate prior education or a strong liberal arts background. Bridges will be best constructed in the context of established principles of practice that focus on student success, promote a shared responsibility, sustain academic quality and institutional integrity, faculty collaboration, evaluation of prior learning, and welcome independent institutions.

We suggest:

- Mentoring. Although the processes of mentoring and induction are receiving increased attention in teacher education, there is so far little concern for these processes in early care and education;^{112 113}
- The use of student cohorts and learning communities for English language learners and other groups;
- Student advising and counseling to help familiarize students with an institution's structure and offerings, guide them through their coursework and educational paths, and support transfer of community college students to four-year institutions;
- Academic and educational support;
- Offering classes and services online and at non-traditional hours, making classes more geographically accessible;
- The professional development school or site-based model tends to blur the differences in status between teaching faculty in higher education institutions and teachers in schools or other early care and education settings. This could aid in bridging the differences between the two cultures;¹¹⁴
- Evaluative research on the effectiveness of student support services.¹¹⁵

We also recommend that specific attention is given to upgrade the quality of teacher education programs. Both across and within states, teacher education programs, certification requirements, and student teaching experiences vary widely.¹¹⁶ Skills, competencies, and standards expected of early care

and education teachers need to be established with adequate resources to institutions of higher education programs and certification systems aligned with such standards.¹¹⁷ In view of what has been learned about the teacher education faculty, **we recommend closer contact between college faculty and ECE programs, along with the provision of more and higher quality field experiences for students.**

We recommend that targeted efforts are made to increase the diversity of faculty and to ensure that all faculty can provide appropriate content to all prospective teachers. This is a matter of reinventing the curriculum philosophy and structure, not merely adding a few “multicultural” resources to the existing curriculum.¹¹⁸ Significant reforms in early care and education teacher preparation are necessary to incorporate an understanding of child development from ecological and cultural perspectives.¹¹⁹

As a way to produce more teachers, there are a growing number of alternative certification competitors to higher education and it will be in the best interest of children to sort out issues of quality in these programs. While such programs would have appeal for some constituents, they could lessen meaningful collaboration with the higher education community that this paper promotes.¹²⁰ **We recommend that institutions work together to develop and disseminate best strategies for alternative routes to certification.**

Table A

Recommended Tactics

TACTIC	FEDERAL	STATE	COLLEGES & THEIR ACADEMIC DEPTS.	COMMUNITIES	STUDENTS
ACCESS					
1. Scholarships	X	X	X	X	
2. Loan forgiveness	X	X	X	X	
3. Private/public partnerships	X	X	X	X	
4. Signing bonuses	X	X	X	X	
5. Pension portability	X	X	X	X	
6. Pay equity across sectors	X	X	X	X	
7. Standard credit for prior learning policy		X	X	X	
8. CDA for credit		X	X	X	
9. Statewide transfer agreement		X	X	X	
10. State directory of equivalencies		X	X		
11. Common course names and numbers		X	X		
BRIDGES					
1. Mentoring			X	X	X
2. Learning communities/ Cohorts			X		
3. Academic support		X	X	X	X
4. Technology support		X	X		

5. Professional development school		X	X	X
6. Site based models		X	X	X
7. Closer contact with school districts		X	X	X
8. High quality field experiences		X	X	X
9. Common definitions and standards for education	X	X	X	X
10. Diverse faculty	X	X	X	X
11. Curriculum inclusive of diversity	X	X	X	X
12. Develop best practices for alternative certifications	X	X	X	X

OVERALL

1. More research	X	X	X	X	X
2. Advocacy for greater public investment birth to five	X	X	X	X	X
3. Public awareness of birth to five	X	X	X	X	X
4. Portability of teaching credentials across states & institutions	X	X	X		
5. Common expectations for ECE curriculum & credentialing	X	X	X	X	
6. Measure and reward success	X	X	X	X	

7. Data collection/use for planning	X	X	X	X	
8. Policy leadership	X	X	X	X	X
9. Recognize/reward innovation	X	X	X	X	X
10. Link 2 and 4 year colleges		X	X		

Conclusion

Higher education programs for the field of early care and education are facing adaptive pressures and dynamics for which it is unprepared. Advocacy for the bachelor's degree is growing for teachers of pre-kindergarten children. However, schools, colleges, and departments of education are finding that they do not have the capacity to meet community needs and are understaffed and under resourced at all levels. While innovations continually emerge from individual institutions and some states, much of the dialogue is occurring among early educators and the college units that support them.

We have reached two conclusions:

First, we conclude that the promotion of the bachelor's degree for early care and education staff is a necessary but not sufficient element of efforts to improve and sustain the quality of both the workforce as well as the effectiveness of child development and education initiatives. Supporting all children and alleviating achievement gaps will require a broad range of supports and activities. More research is needed on the role of higher education in the preparation and development of teachers for early care and education.¹²¹

Second, the shortcomings of teacher education cannot be resolved at the current level of dialog, although many wonderful tactics are being used to increase the access and supply of higher education opportunities. Nation-wide and state-wide agreements about the field of early learning must be forged; high quality teacher education must be founded on those agreements; and broader leadership throughout the entire university and community leadership must join the cause.

Change strategies must focus on both issues internal to higher education (faculty experience) and issues external to higher education (what children need, federal policy disincentives, and poor working conditions, wages, and benefits)

Change strategies must highlight the connection of higher education credentials to broader issues such as the under compensation of the work force and the lack of public awareness.

Systems thinking is required—and most faculty and early childhood workers may not have those skills or connections to powerful allies who can join us in resolving them.

We now have historic opportunities to redefine early care and education's role in influencing the future of our children and the teaching profession. We must work to be champions ourselves and to enlist new champions working toward this goal.

A stronger field that's more professional counts for a lot. Access for students means that universities and colleges cannot just wait for customers but must actively do outreach. Increasing new recruits into the workforce is an important part of the equation.

“Leadership is open to anyone who has the courage and skill to try to mobilize people to address their most difficult issues, what we call their ‘Adaptive Challenges.’”¹²²

In the context of all that is known about early childhood teacher education,

Will—and how will—institutions of higher education address these adaptive opportunities in the field of early care and education?

Endnotes

¹ Goffin, S., & Washington, V. (2007). *Ready or not, leadership choices in early care and education*. New York: Teachers College Press, Forward, ix.

²Goffin and Washington argue that the term “early care and education” is an imprecise, transitional term referring to “those programs that directly seek to support and enhance children’s early development and learning, regardless of the program’s auspices.”(p 4) the “field” is called by several names including child care and early childhood education, reflecting ambiguity about the field’s overarching purpose.

³Goffin, S. , & Washington, V. (2007)

⁴Heifetz, R. A. (1994). *Leadership without easy answers*. Cambridge, MA: Belknap Press of Harvard University Press.; Heifetz, R.A., & Linsky, M. (2002). *Leadership on the line: Staying alive through the dangers of leading*. Boston: Harvard Business School Press.

⁵Goffin, S., & Washington, V. (2007)

⁶NAEYC defines the field of early care and education as work with children between birth and eight years, although there is wide disagreement in the field about what ages are actually served by the field. See Goffin and Washington, (2007). In this paper, early care and education is used to refer to the preparation of teachers and auxiliary staff to work with children between the ages of birth and five years old as it is the time before formal school entry that faces these specific challenges related to higher education.

⁷Schools of education appear to be the most typical administrative units for early care and education teacher preparation programs, according to Maxwell, K. L., Lim, C-I, & Early, D.M. (2006). *Early childhood teacher preparation programs in the United States: National report*. Chapel Hill, NC: The University of North Carolina, FPG Child Development Institute. In a personal communication August 4, 2008, Marcy Whitebook, Ph.D., Director/Senior Researcher, Center for the Study of Child Care Employment, Institute for Research on Labor and Employment (ILRE) at the University of California, Berkeley, stated: “This is really a big issue that should be addressed...In California, our six BA cohort programs for working adults are issuing degrees with 4 different titles (child development; liberal studies; child and adolescent development; and education with nary an ECE!)”

⁸Haveman, R., & Smeeding, T. (2006), The role of higher education in social mobility. *The Future of Children*, 16(2). 125-150.; US Department of Education. (2006, September). *A test of leadership: Charting the future for U.S. higher education*. Washington DC: U.S. Department of Education.

⁹Heifetz, R.A.and Linsky, M. (2002) *Leadership on the line: staying alive through the dangers of leading*. Boston: Harvard Business School Press.

¹⁰For example see: American Associations of State Colleges and Universities (2004). *Teacher education: Scan of issues, roles, activities and resources*. Washington D.C.

¹¹Federal Interagency Forum on Child and Family Statistics. (2007) *America’s children in brief: Key national indicators of well-being*. Washington D.C.: U.S. Government Printing Office. In *America’s Children*, it is reported that, in 2005, 61 percent of children ages 0-6 who were not yet in kindergarten (about 12 million children) received some form of child care on a regular basis from persons other than their parents. This is about the same proportion of children in child care as in 1995. Also see Iruka, I.U., & Carver, P.R. (2006). *Initial results from the 2005 NHES Early Childhood Program Participation Survey (NCES 2006-075)*. U.S. Department of Education. Washington, DC: National Center for Education Statistics. Iruka and Carver reported that approximately 60 percent of children were reported to be in at least one weekly nonparental care arrangement. Among these children, 60 percent were reported to be in center-based care, 35 percent in relative care, and 22 percent in non-relative care arrangements.

¹²Knudsen, E., Heckman, J. Cameron, J., & Shonkoff, J. (2006, July 5). Economic, neurobiological and behavioral perspectives on building America’s future workforce. *PNAS*, 103(37), 10155-10162.

¹³Early, D., & Winton, P. (2001). Preparing the workforce: Early childhood teacher preparation at 2- and 4-year institutions of higher education. *Early Childhood Research Quarterly*, 16(3), 285-306.

¹⁴ Genishi, C. & Goodwin, A.L. (Eds.) (2008). *Diversities in early childhood education: Rethinking and doing*. New York: Taylor & Francis Group, Routledge. Between 1999 and 2002 there was a five percent increase in the number of children with at least one foreign born parent. The percentage of children under 18 years of age who are white is decreasing at the same time the number of children from Asian and Latino backgrounds continues to rise.

¹⁵Hodgkinson, H.L. (2003). *Leaving too many children behind: A demographer’s view on the neglect of America’s youngest children*. Washington D.C.: Institute for Educational Leadership.

¹⁶Bridges, M., Fuller, B., Rumberger, R. & Tran, L. (2004). *Preschool for California's children: Promising benefits, unequal access. Policy Brief 04-3*. Berkeley, CA: Policy Analysis for California Education, PACE.;

Burchinal, M.R., Roberts, J.E., Riggins, R., Zeisel, S.A., Neebe, E., & Bryant, D. (2000). Relating quality of center child care to early cognitive and language development longitudinally. *Child Development*, 71, 339-357.

¹⁷Haskins, R. & Rouse, C. (2005). *Closing achievement gaps*. The Future of Children, Policy Brief. Princeton, New Jersey: Princeton-Brookings.

¹⁸Barnett, W.S. (2004). *Better teachers, better preschools: Student achievement linked to teacher qualifications* (2nd ed.). Preschool Policy Matters. New Brunswick, New Jersey: National Institute for Early Education Research.

¹⁹Bowman, B., & Donovan, M. (2000); Bogard, K., Traylor, F., & Takanishi, R. (2008) Teacher education and PK outcomes: Are we asking the right questions? *Early Childhood Research Quarterly* 23, 1-6.

²⁰Ackerman, D. (2004). States' efforts in improving the qualifications of early care and education teachers. *Educational Policy*, 18 (2), 311-337.

²¹Ackerman, D. (2004)

²²Azer, S., Clifford, R.M., Morgan, G., and Crawford, G.M. (in press). Regulation of child care (NCEDL Research and Policy Brief No. 2). Washington DC: U.S. Department of Education.

²³Ackerman, D. (2004)

²⁴At the time of this publication, August 2008, a congressional higher education act included the early educator provisions for loan forgiveness, compensation initiatives and grants to states for professional development systems. The House and Senate passed the conference bill (H.R. 4137) for the reauthorization of the Higher Education Act, which is expected to go to the President for his signature.

²⁵Bellm, D., & Whitebook, M. (2006) *Roots of decline: How government policy has de-educated teachers of young children*. Center for the Study of Child Care Employment, Institute of Industrial Relations at University of California at Berkeley.

²⁶When Head Start was reauthorized in 1998, federal lawmakers mandated that at least 50 percent of all Head Start teachers nationwide in center-based programs have a minimum of an associate degree in early childhood education or in a related field with preschool teaching experience, by September 30, 2003. Federal lawmakers also required that each classroom in center-based programs without such a degreed teacher have a teacher with a Child Development Associate (CDA) credential, a state-awarded certificate for preschool teachers that meets or exceeds the CDA credential requirements, or a degree in a field related to early childhood education with experience in teaching preschool and a state-awarded certificate to teach in a preschool program. (Source: the Coats Human Services Amendments of 1998, Public Law 105-285.) Based on 2002 data, Head Start had met this 1998 mandate because 52 percent of Head Start teachers nationwide had the appropriate education credential. This represented more than a 14 percentage point increase in teachers with such degrees since 1999, according to the GAO. (Source: General Accounting Office (2003). Washington, DC: GAO). Head Start increased percentage of teachers nationwide have required degrees, but better information on classroom teachers' qualifications needed.. In December 2007, federal lawmakers reauthorized the Head Start program again by approving the *Improving Head Start for School Readiness Act of 2007*. This act required that by September 30, 2013 at least 50 percent of Head Start teachers nationwide in center-based programs have a baccalaureate or advanced degree in early childhood education or a baccalaureate or advanced degree and coursework relating to early childhood education and experience teaching preschool-aged children. Source: Public Law 110-134. The latest available Head Start Program Information Report data for the 2006-2007 program year shows that 40 percent of these teachers met this new requirement. (Source: Head Start Program Information Report for the 2006-2007 Program Year. Also see: Hart, K., & Schumacher, R. (2005). *Making the case: Improving head start teacher qualifications requires increased investment*. Washington, DC: Center for Law and Social Policy.

²⁷Hart, K., & Schumacher, R. (2005). According to the latest fact sheet from CLASP, based on 2006 data, 36 percent of Head start teachers have bachelor's degrees. See http://www.clasp.org/publications/hs_pir_2006.pdf.

²⁸Barnett et al. (2006); Barnett, W.S., Hustedt, J.T., Robin, K.B., & Schulman, K.L. (2005) *The State of preschool: 2005 state preschool yearbook*. New Brunswick, N.J.: National Institute for Early Education Research, Rutgers University.

²⁹Helburn, S.W., (Ed.) (1995). *Cost, quality and child outcomes in childcare centers* (Tech.Rep). Denver: Department of Economics, Center for Research in Economics and Social Policy, University of Colorado at Denver.; Whitebook, M., Howes, C., & Phillips, D. (1990). *Who cares? Child care teachers and the quality of care in America*. Final report of the National Child Care Staffing study. Oakland, CA: Child Care Employee Project.

³⁰United States Government Accountability Office. (2007, November). *Education: Tuition continues to rise, but patterns vary by institution type, enrollment, and educational expenditures*. Washington, DC: GAO.

³¹Saluja, G., Early, E., & Clifford, R. (2002). Demographic characteristics of early childhood teachers and structural elements of early care and education in the United States. *Early Childhood Research and Practice*, 4 (1). Retrieved February 15, 2008, from <http://ecrp.uiuc.edu/v4n1/saluja.html>.

³²Kappner, A.S., & Lieberman, A. (2002, June 24). Joining forces: The role of higher education in preparing the early childhood workforce. Proceedings of *A Joint Funders' Symposium*, New York City.

³³For example see: Pianta, R., Howes, C., Burchinal, M., Bryant, D., Clifford, R., Early, D., & Barbarin, O. (2005). Features of pre-kindergarten programs, classrooms and teachers: do they predict observed classroom quality and child-teacher interactions? *Applied Developmental Science* 9 (3), 144-159.

³⁴Burchinal, M.R., Roberts, E., Riggins, R., Zeisel, S.A., Neebe, E., & Bryant, D. (2000)

³⁵Helburn, S.W. (Ed.) (1995). Kontos, S., & Wilcox-Herzog, A. (1997). Teachers' interactions with children: Why are they so important? *Young Children*, 52(2), 4-12. Whitebook, M. (2003). Bachelor's degrees are best: Higher qualifications for pre-kindergarten teachers lead to better learning environments. Washington D.C.: The Trust for Early Education.

³⁶The Child Development Associate is an individual who has successfully completed the CDA assessment process and has been awarded the CDA credential. The CDA credential is an instrument for career advancement in the early care and education profession. CDA's are able to meet the specific needs of children and work with parents to nurture a child's physical, social, emotional and intellectual growth in a child development framework. There are CDA competency goals that a CDA performs in center based or family child care settings. Go to www.cdacouncil.org for more information.

³⁷Arnett, J. (1989). Caregivers in day care centers: Does training matter? *Journal of Applied Developmental Psychology*, 10, 541-552.; Berk, L. (1985). Relationship of caregiver training to child oriented attitudes, job satisfaction, and behaviors to children. *Child Care Quarterly*, 14, 103-129.; Howes, C. (1983). Caregiver behavior in center and family day care. *Journal of Applied Developmental Psychology*, 4, 99-107; Howes, C. (1997, July). Children's experiences in center based child care as a function of teacher background and adult: child ratio. *Merrill-Palmer Quarterly*.; Ruopp, R., Travers, J., Glanz, F., & Coelen, C. (1979). *Children at the center: Final results of the national day care study*. Cambridge, MA.: Abt Associates.; Vandell, D., & Powers, C. (1983). Daycare quality and children's free play activities. *American Journal of Orthopsychiatry*, 53, 293-300.; Whitebook, M., Howes, C., & Phillips, D. (1990); Howes, C., and Olenick, M. (1986). Family and child care influences on toddler compliance. *Child Development*, 57, 202-216.;

³⁸Arnett, J. (1989); Berk, L. (1985); Howes, C. (1983); Kontos, S., & Fiene, R., (1987). *Child care quality: Compliance with regulations and children's development: The Pennsylvania Study*. In D. Phillips (Ed.), *Quality in child care: What does research tell us?* Washington, D.C: National Association for the Education of Young Children.; Ruopp, R., Travers, J., Glanz, F., & Coelen, C. (1979)

³⁹Ritchie, S., Maxwell, K., & Clifford, R.M. (2007). *First School: A new vision for education*. In R.C. Pianta, M.J. Cox, K.L. Snow (Eds.), *School readiness and the transition to kindergarten in an era of accountability* (pp. 85-96) Baltimore, MD, Brookes.

⁴⁰One plausible reason for the inconsistent relationships between teacher degree, major and certification and preschool outcomes may be the wide variation in teacher education programs and state certification requirements. One idea to standardize teacher preparation similar to recognized professions such as medicine and law is the creation of "signature pedagogy", a rigorous post BA program with extensive classroom teaching combined with mentoring. Bogard, K., Traylor, F., & Takanishi, R. (2007).

⁴¹Early, D.M., Maxwell, K.L., Burchinal, M., Alva, S., Bender, R.H., Bryant, D., et al (2007). Teachers' education, classroom quality, and young children's academic skills: Results from seven studies of preschool programs. *Child Development*, 78, 558-580.; Phillips, D.A., (Ed.). (1987). *Quality in childcare: What does the research tell us?* Washington, DC: National Association for the Education of Young Children.

⁴²Helburn, S.W., (Ed.) (1995).; Whitebook, M., Howes, C., & Phillips, D. (1990).

⁴³See: Blau, D. (2000). The production of quality in child-care centers: Another look, *Applied Developmental Science*, 4(3), 136-148.; Phillips, D.A., Mekos, D., Scarr, S., McCartney, K., & Abbott-Shim, M. (2000). Within and beyond the classroom door: Assessing quality in child care centers. *Early Childhood Research Quarterly*, 15, 475-496.; Phillipsen, L.C., Burchinal, M.R., Howes, C., & Cryer, D., (1997). The prediction of process quality from structural features of child care. *Early Childhood Research Quarterly*, 12, 281-303.

⁴⁴For example, see: Lekies, K., Blackburn, E., & Cochran, M. (2006). *Preparing teachers to teach: Strengthening early childhood education*. Garden City, N.Y.: Rauch Foundation.

⁴⁵Kappner, A.S., & Lieberman, A. (2004) p 4; Goffin, S. and Washington, V. (2007)

⁴⁶See: Goffin, S. and Washington, V. (2007); Howes, C. (1997) found that the most advanced teacher preparation was associated with sensitive and responsive teaching. She notes that the constructs of sensitivity and responsiveness are often considered personality traits; in contrast the data suggest that advanced training may help teachers behave in a sensitive manner to all children rather than relying on their first level emotional reactions.

⁴⁷Herzenberg, S., Price, M., & Bradley, D. (2005). *Losing ground in early childhood education: Declining workforce qualifications in an expanding industry, 1979-2004*. Washington, DC: Economic Policy Institute

⁴⁸Barnett, W.S. (2003). *Better teachers, better preschools: Student achievement linked with teacher qualifications*. Preschool Policy Matters (2). New Brunswick, NJ: National Institute for Early Education Research.; Whitebook, M., Howes, C., & Phillips, D. (1990)

⁴⁹Kappner, A.S. and Lieberman, A. (2004)

⁵⁰Cochran, M. (2006)

⁵¹Early, D., & Winton, P. (2001)

⁵²Bredenkamp, S. (1996)

⁵³Early, D., & Winton, P. (2001)

⁵⁴Gillam, W., & Marchesseault, C.M. (2005). *From capitals to classrooms, policies to practice; state funded prekindergarten on the classroom level*. National Prekindergarten Study, Technical Report #1, New Haven, CT.: Yale University.; Ray, A., Bowman, B. & Brownwell, J.O. (2006). Teacher-child relationships, social-emotional development, and school achievement. In B. Bowman & E. K. Moore (Eds.), *School Readiness and Social Emotional Development: Perspectives on Cultural Diversity* (pp. 7-22). Washington, DC: National Black Child Development Institute.; Ray, A., Bowman, B., & Robbins, J. (2006). *Preparing early childhood teachers to successfully educate all children: The contribution of four year undergraduate teacher preparation programs*. Project on Race, Class and Culture in Early Childhood. Chicago, IL: Erikson Institute,

⁵⁵American Association of Colleges for Teacher Education. (2004, June). *The early childhood challenge: Preparing high quality teachers for a changing society*. Washington, DC. June 2004.

⁵⁶Maxwell, K.L., Lim, C-I, & Early, D.M. (2006); A national directory of institutions that offer programs for early childhood teachers has been published by the National Center for Early Development & Learning (NCEDL), based at the University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill, and the Council for Professional Recognition (CDA), a nonprofit corporation in Washington, DC. The National Directory of Early Childhood Teacher Preparation Institutions, which contains listings for nearly 1,400 two and four-year colleges, is available on line at the CDA website: www.cdacouncil.org and in print from CDA.

⁵⁷Early, D., & Winton, P. (2001)

⁵⁸Whitebook, M., Bellm, D., Lee, Y., & Sakai, L. (2005). *Time to revamp and expand: Early childhood teacher preparation programs in California's institutions of higher education*. Berkeley, CA: Center for the Study of Child Care Employment, University of California at Berkeley, found in a California sample that most students in California's early childhood teacher preparation programs are people of color, working at least half time and many speak English as a second language.

⁵⁹Darling-Hammond, L. (2000). Teacher quality and student achievement: A review of state policy evidence. *Educational Policy Analysis Archives* 8(1), 1-50.; Lobman, C., Ryan, S., McLaughlin, J., & Ackerman, D. (2008). *Educating preschool teachers: Mapping the teacher preparation and professional development system in New Jersey*. New Brunswick: Graduate School of Education, Rutgers, the State University of New Jersey.

⁶⁰Early, D., & Winton, P. (2001)

⁶¹Maxwell, K.L., Lim, C-I, & Early, D.M. (2006); Whitebook, et al. (2005) found that about two-thirds of faculty members at California's early childhood teacher preparation programs are part time adjunct faculty; on average those programs employ fewer full time faculty members than other programs of their institutions and serve more students than do faculty in other programs.

⁶²Early, D., & Winton, P. (2001)

⁶³Whitebook, M., Bellm, D., Lee, Y., & Sakai, L. (2005)

⁶⁴Lekies, K., Blackburn, E., & Cochran, M. (2006)

⁶⁵Early, D., & Winton, P. (2001)

⁶⁶Whitebook, M., Bellm, D., Lee, Y., & Sakai, L. (2005) found that most of California's early childhood students are working full time. Choy, S. (2002). *Non Traditional Undergraduates*, NCES 2002-012, by Susan Choy. Washington, DC: U.S. Department of Education, National Center for Education Statistics report states that the traditional undergraduate is characterized as one who earns a high school diploma, enrolls full time immediately following high school, depend on parents for financial support and either does not work during the school year or works part time is the exception rather than the rule. About 73 percent of students are in some way nontraditional. Students typically, despite the pervasiveness of the image, the "traditional" college student; the recent high school graduate enrolled full time with financial dependence on parents, is only a small fraction of those in post secondary education today. The non-traditional student is typically categorized to mean students who have one or more of the following characteristics: older than age 24, financially independent of their parents, part time attendance, delayed enrollment students, first generation parents, English language learners, employed, welfare recipient, working full time typically at low wage jobs, speak a language other than or in addition to English. These have significantly lower rates of college retention and graduation rates. These patterns typify early childhood education students both nationally and in state college and university teacher preparation programs.

⁶⁷Saluja, G., & Early, D. (2002); From 1990 census data, in 2001, Fuller and Strath reported that the median center based teacher was 34 years old, reported having completed some college and was married.

⁶⁸Dukakis, K., Bellm, D., Seer, N., & Lee, Y. (2007). *Chutes or Ladders? Creating support services to help early childhood students succeed in higher education*, Center for the study of childcare employment. Berkley: Institute for Research on Labor and Employment, University of California at Berkeley

⁶⁹Dukakis, K., Bellm, D., Seer, N., & Lee, Y. (2007)

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¹⁰⁰Kappner, A.S., & Lieberman, A. (2004), p 8

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¹⁰³Within higher education there must be persistent consortia of community colleges and four year colleges that address this issue. In the 1900's, the Ford Foundation provided significant funding in the area of transfer and

articulation between community and four year colleges. Currently, community colleges meet together through ACCESS to discuss early childhood workforce preparation and higher education faculty from a variety of institutions discuss these issues at NAEYC. However, with the exception of the Headstart Higher Education faculty initiative, there is no focused, cross level approach to solving this problem. Articulation arrangements are by and large local, but could be fostered by support of some large system (state universities) with potential for affecting large numbers of students.

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About the Contributing Organizations

Aspire Institute—“*Bridging College and Community*” links Wheelock College with cross-community partnerships in order to apply our academy’s tools, perspectives and research to real world challenges. Aspire envisions being a leader in advancing knowledge and policies that address complex issues of social and educational concern and ensure the success and well-being of children, families, and communities. Our work is currently focused in three areas: health and wellness, education, and social and family support systems. Contact: Adrian K. Haugabrook, Executive Director, (617) 879-2452, ahaugabrook@wheelock.edu, www.wheelock.edu/aspire.

The CAYL Institute: Community Advocates for Young Learners (CAYL) is the umbrella organization housing several well-known Fellowships, including the CAYL Schott Fellowship in Early Care and Education and the CAYL Principals Fellowship. Our vision is a nation where the right to high quality early care and education is embedded in public policy and professional practice. Our purpose is to organize, equip and empower people to create change on behalf of children. Contact: Valora Washington, President, (617) 873-0678, vwashington@cayl.org, www.cayl.org.

The Council for Professional Recognition, a national nonprofit organization, promotes improved performance and recognition of professionals in early childhood care and education. The Council administers the Child Development Associate (CDA) National Credentialing Program, which assesses and credentials early childhood care and education professionals based upon their performance. More than 200,000 caregivers have obtained this CDA Credential since the inception of the program. Contact: Kathy Ruby, Publications Manager, (202) 265-9090 x215, KathyR@cdacouncil.org, www.cdacouncil.org.

The National Black Child Development Institute exists to improve and protect the quality of life of Black children and families, by serving as an advocate to put their voices at the table of social policy, and as a resource to promote best practices that empower them from a cultural perspective. NBCDI carries out this mission through an affiliate network that provides public awareness and training in early care and education, elementary education, child welfare, and health. Contact: Carol Brunson Day, President & CEO, (202) 833-2220, cday@nbcidi.org, www.nbcidi.org.

The **National Head Start Association** is a private not-for-profit membership organization dedicated exclusively to meeting the needs of Head Start children and their families. It represents more than 1 million children, 200,000 staff and 2,600 Head Start programs in the United States. The Association provides support for the entire Head Start community by advocating for policies that strengthen services to Head Start children and their families; by providing extensive training and professional development to Head Start staff; and by developing and disseminating research, information, and resources that enrich Head Start program delivery. Contact: Carleen Wallington Kinlock (703) 739-0875 x7564, cwallingtonkinlock@nhsa.org, www.nhsa.org.

National-Louis University (NLU) has maintained a long tradition of leadership in early childhood education. At the time it was founded in 1886, the College was at the forefront of the kindergarten movement and prepared some of the first kindergarten teachers in America. Today the university is comprised of three colleges-National College of Education, College of Management and Business, and the College of Arts and Sciences. The university also houses many innovative centers such as the McCormick Tribune Center for Early Childhood Leadership. Contact: Paula Jorde Bloom, Michael W. Louis Endowed Chair at the McCormick Tribune Center for Early Childhood Leadership, (800) 443-5522 x50055, paula.bloom@nl.edu, www.nl.edu.

Pre-K Now is a public education and advocacy organization leading the national movement for high-quality, voluntary pre-kindergarten for all three and four year olds. Pre-K Now provides targeted financial and technical assistance to advocates and policymakers working to secure policy changes and public funds that will improve the availability and quality of state-funded pre-k programs. Our vision is a nation in which every child enters kindergarten prepared to succeed. Contact: (202) 862-9871, info@preknow.org, www.preknow.org.

Founded in 1888, **Wheelock College** is a private institution with the public mission of improving lives of children and families. The College fulfills this mission by providing a strong education in the arts and sciences and in its professional fields—education, child and family studies, and social work. Throughout its programs, the College reflects the multicultural dimensions of the communities and countries in which it operates. Contact: Marta T. Rosa, Senior Director of Government Relations & Civic Engagement, (617) 879-2314, mrosa@wheelock.edu, www.wheelock.edu.

About the Author

Valora Washington is President of the CAYL Institute, a Trustee of Wheelock College, and a member of the board of the Council of Professional Recognition. She directs several leadership programs for practitioners, including the CAYL Schott Fellowship in Early Care and Education, and the CAYL Principals Fellowship for Elementary school principals with prekindergarten programs. She also has co-created several institutions, such as Michigan's Children and the Early Childhood Funders Collaborative.

She has been Co-Chair of the Massachusetts Governor's School Readiness Commission; Board Chair for Voices for America's Children; Secretary of NAEYC; chair of the Black Caucus of the Society for Research in Child Development; Co-Chair of the National Head Start Association Commission on 2010; and a member of the Massachusetts Governor's Readiness Commission subcommittees. She currently serves as a trustee of the Boston Children's Museum. Since 2005, she has co-led workforce development initiatives in Massachusetts.

She is a co-author of *Children of 2010: Keeping the Promise: A Study of the Massachusetts Child Care Voucher System*; and *Ready or Not: Leadership Choices in Early Care and Education*.

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