Early Childhood Degrees in Context
Marcy Whitebook, Ph.D.

Transforming the Early Childhood Workforce in Nebraska:
A Conference for Higher Education Faculty
Lincoln Nebraska, October 5, 2015
A Report Based on Findings of The National Council of Jewish Women

WINDOWS ON DAY CARE

By Mary Dublin Keyserling
Preparation: Status of ECE Degree Programs Today
Early Childhood Higher Education Degree Programs: By Default or Design?

- Complex array of programs
- Varying primary purposes
- Misaligned monikers and goals
- Responsive to state certification policy
Primary Goal of the Degree Program:
To Prepare Students for Teaching and/or Administrative Roles

California
(AA=115, BA=35)

Nebraska
(AA=9, BA=15)

- 50% Associate Degree
- 29% Bachelor’s Degree
- 67% Associate Degree
- 47% Bachelor’s Degree

Domains Included in Early Childhood Education Degree Programs

- Child development and learning
- Teaching
  - Teaching diverse child populations
  - Teaching and curriculum
  - Teaching skills in early childhood settings
- Leadership and administration
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Nebraska</th>
<th>New Jersey</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Associate Degree (N=9)</td>
<td>89% (Birth through 2 years)</td>
<td>93% (Birth through 2 years)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>100% (3 and/or 4 years (Pre-K))</td>
<td>100% (3 and/or 4 years (Pre-K))</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Bachelor's Degree (N=15)</td>
<td>73% (Birth through 2 years)</td>
<td>65% (Birth through 2 years)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>100% (3 and/or 4 years (Pre-K))</td>
<td>100% (3 and/or 4 years (Pre-K))</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Associate Degree (N=17)</td>
<td>94% (K through grade 3 or higher)</td>
<td>100% (K through grade 3 or higher)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>100% (K through grade 3 or higher)</td>
<td>100% (K through grade 3 or higher)</td>
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</tbody>
</table>
Importance of Inclusion of Domains: Mathematical Knowledge and Literacy Development
Faculty Reporting “Very Important”

- Birth - 2 years
  - Mathematical knowledge: 20% (Associate), 37% (Bachelor’s)
  - Literacy development: 60% (Associate), 76% (Bachelor’s)

- 3 and/or 4 years (Pre-K)
  - Mathematical knowledge: 60% (Associate), 76% (Bachelor’s)
  - Literacy development: 64% (Associate), 69% (Bachelor’s)

- Birth - 2 years
  - Mathematical knowledge: 64% (Associate), 69% (Bachelor’s)
  - Literacy development: 96% (Associate), 88% (Bachelor’s)
Changing Demographic Landscape

- Child (0-4): Non-Hispanic White 69%
- Adult (18+): Non-Hispanic White 84%

Source: Kids Count Data Center, The Annie E. Casey Foundation
Field-Based Experience: Student Teaching and Practicum Required, by Degree Program

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Degree Program</th>
<th>California</th>
<th>Nebraska</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Associate</td>
<td>39%</td>
<td>100%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Bachelor's</td>
<td>32%</td>
<td>93%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Associate</td>
<td>33%</td>
<td>100%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Bachelor's</td>
<td>100%</td>
<td>100%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Notes:**
- Percentages are based on the specified number of students (N) for each program.
- The bar chart shows the percentage of students participating in student teaching and practicum for both California and Nebraska, categorized by degree level (Associate, Bachelor's) for each state.
Access to Leadership Content

- Supervision
- Program Operations
- Policy and Advocacy
Supporting Faculty

- Additional full-time and more diverse faculty
- Resources for faculty professional development, including travel
- Effective mentoring opportunities
- More individual planning time
- Resources for increasing funding
Assessing Quality Improvement Efforts Through a SEQUAL Lens

How can we “amend the soil” to ensure that “planted seeds” take root?
Assessing What Teachers Need to Help Students Succeed

**Five SEQUAL Domains:**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Domain</th>
<th>Description</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Teaching Supports</strong></td>
<td>Curriculum and Child Assessment, Materials, Support Services for Children and Families, Staffing</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Learning Community</strong></td>
<td>Professional Development Opportunities, Applying Learning</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Job Crafting</strong></td>
<td>Making Decisions in Your Classroom, Teamwork, Input into Your Workplace</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Adult Well-Being</strong></td>
<td>Economic Well-Being, Wellness Supports, Quality of Work Life</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Program Leadership</strong></td>
<td>Supervisor, Leader</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Economic Well-Being: Pay & Job Duties

- Percentage Agree
- Percent Disagree

- Being paid for attending center staff meetings that are held outside my regular work hours: 68.8% Agree, 31.2% Disagree
- Being paid for late child pick-up if I am working at the end of the day: 62.5% Agree, 37.5% Disagree
- Having planning time during my paid work week: 60.0% Agree, 40.0% Disagree
- Being paid for required professional development or training activities: 55.3% Agree, 44.7% Disagree
- Being paid for work outside of regular work hours: 50.3% Agree, 49.7% Disagree

I Can Depend On...
Abysmally Low Wages

Selected Occupations Ranked by Mean Annual Salary, 2013

Mean Annual Salary of Teachers with a Bachelor's or Higher Degree, by Occupation and for the Civilian Labor Force, 2012

![Bar chart showing mean annual salary by occupation for teachers with a Bachelor's or higher degree.](chart)

1Current Population Survey (CPS), United States Census Bureau: http://www.census.gov/hhes/www/cps tables/032013/perinc/pinc03_000.htm. Civilian labor force information was only for males and females over 25 years old.


Pervasive Economic Insecurity Among ECE Practitioners

Percentage of Teaching Staff Worried¹ about having Enough Food for Their Families, by Wage, Educational Level, and Parental Status²

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Wage</th>
<th>Education</th>
<th>Parental Status</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Teaching staff who earn less than $12.50 per hour (n=393)</td>
<td>Teaching staff with some college or less (n=314)</td>
<td>Teaching staff with at least one child &lt;18 years (n=229)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>54%</td>
<td>53%</td>
<td>57%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Teaching staff who earn $12.50 or more per hour (n=153)</td>
<td>Teaching staff with an AA degree or higher (n=283)</td>
<td>Teaching staff with no children, or with adult children only (n=343)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>35%</td>
<td>42%</td>
<td>42%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

¹Teaching staff classified as "worried" about a particular item indicated that they somewhat to strongly agreed with a given statement, as represented by a 4 or higher on the Likert Scale.
²The sample was drawn from one state’s for-profit, non-profit, and public early care and education programs. See endnote #12.
Pervasive Economic Insecurity Among ECE Practitioners

Participation Rates in Public Support Programs, by Selected Occupations, and for All Workers and Their Family Members
(Annual Averages, 2007-2011)

“The major funding sources for child care and early education should set aside a dedicated portion of funds to support initiatives that jointly improve the qualifications and increase the compensation and benefits routinely provides to children’s nonparental caregivers.”
– Neurons to Neighborhoods, 2000
How the Climate Feels