

Session # B-2

Title Aligning Quality Rating Systems and Professional Development Systems

Moderator: Valerie Krajec, State Technical Assistance Specialist, Region I, National Child Care Information Center

Policy perspective--Carolyn Drugge, State CC Administrator, Maine

Distance Learning--Debra Torrence, Education and Program Consultant, Center for the Child Care Workforce

Registry and data tracking--Jill Soto, Project Director, Center for Early Childhood Professional Development, University of Oklahoma

SUMMARY OF PRESENTATION

The goal of QRS is to increase quality of programs through system-wide improvements. QRS can:

- Increase the quality of ECE
- Increase parents, understanding of and demand for high quality care (parents can grasp onto and understand ratings)
- Increase professional development of the ECE workforce

QRS has value because it:

1. Creates alignment between licensing, subsidy and quality across ECE systems,
2. Links ECE current structures within a common framework,
3. Links financing and support to quality, and
4. Provides a system of accountability.

Oklahoma

Reaching for the Stars, OK's Quality Rating System was launched in 1998. Partnerships are key, with DHS, Center for Early Childhood Professional Development, R&R, OK State Regents and OK career tech collaborating.

The Oklahoma Registry requires directors to participate as part of director's credential, but there was low participation on the part of teachers. Director's Credential has 3 levels: Bronze, Silver and Gold, based on where directors' started, in terms of their qualifications. Licensing requires minimum of Bronze level (90 hours ECE and 40 hours of business administration, plus 2 professional contributions). 80 to 85% of directors are at Bronze; very few at silver level.

Oklahoma has a **professional development ladder** (2000), with 10 steps, ranging from 20 hours of training to BA/BS ECE w/24 credits in ECE. Level 5 is Certificate of Mastery that can be earned at community colleges. Great success getting people to move from CDA (or Oklahoma equivalent) to the level 5 Certificate of Mastery. They are seeing that once people reach level 5, they want to move on to AA, and there is a state scholarship program to support degree attainment.

- Their registry has 2 FTE staff; .5 intake staff, .25 managerial support. Database and technical support are critical to registry success. In 2006, there were 767 people in the data registry; in 2007 that number went up to 2,232. They are requiring people to get on the data registry to get the state salary supplement (REWARD program). Want the registry to be part of the QRS, but to do that, need greater participation.
- Data verified by the registry includes: education, experience and training. They require original transcripts and check the accreditation status of the educational institutions on transcripts.
- Registry creates monthly reports on director credentials, practitioner levels (I-X), and we interface. OK did a pilot project with the National Registry Alliance and the NAEYC with 2 other states (Maine and Missouri) to look at how state registries can be used to verify data for accreditation. This has positive implications for the QRS.

Maine

Maine has had a PD system in place since 2001. Components include: Career lattice, provider registry, trainer registry, core knowledge training and scholarships to help providers move into higher education. They are planning how their PD system will be support their QRS.

- Articulation agreements have enabled providers to transfer core knowledge training into 9 credits. NAEYC and NFCC accreditation are supported. A TA network has been put in place to support the QRS and there has been work to define the levels of TA, from level one to 4, based on the duration and intensity of training and support provided.
- Maine has developed teacher certification for 0-5. In process are an infant/toddler credential with 3 levels (based on the level of training), a director's credential, and a youth development credential.
- The QRS will have 4 steps. They are now in the process of aligning the career lattice and the QRS steps. The registry will link to QRS as well, and training is automatically entered into the registry. Courses on implementing the early learning guidelines will be required to participate in the QRS.
- They are now working on aligning their QRS PD requirements with those of the accrediting organizations. Their current standards exceed those of accreditation.

North Carolina

NC has a think tank that is thinking about how to integrate PD into every aspect of child development systems. Their PD system is holistic, incorporating the elements of:

- Access and outreach
- Qualifications and credentials
- Quality Assurances
- Core Knowledge
- Funding

Distance learning is an emerging part of their PD system. The community college system has created a virtual learning hub that instructors can use. NC's focus is use of the internet.

Challenges for distance learning: creation of a secondary digital divide (streamlining content so people without advanced computers can access courses), literacy, capacity to manage student workload, equity, technology skills, relevance, content that is appropriate for distance learning, preferences of students (center directors got on line early morning; family child care during naptime, center teachers after a pm), community of learners are connecting with each other on-line, some students are going even deeper into content, portability (will it transfer across state lines) outcomes (weakest part). Question is how to push quality of classes, and transfer of knowledge to the classrooms. Courses should have no more than 20 to 25 students and faculty needs time to develop courses for this new modality.

Opportunities include: flexible learning, addresses student transportation needs, opens students to a world of resources, access to wider options, opportunities to increase literacy and computer skills, models for dependents and colleagues to be tech savvy. Distance Learning can provide an opportunity to talk about content of Early Learning courses, because it is a new modality and people are open to re-thinking their approaches, outcomes, etc.

The Center for the Child Care Workforce did a national scan of distance learning. They found success in the areas of access and content; shortfalls in outcomes.

Improvements in DL systems include:

- Technical support and literacy skills development
- Placement tests and use of prerequisites
- ESL support
- Community resources to help with access to computers, internet
- Better use of instructional design and adult learning technologies
- Use of enabling technologies, such as PDAs

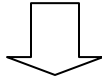
SUMMARY OF DISCUSSION

Concern was expressed about the digital divide especially for tribes, many of which not only don't have access to computers, but also lack internet access. Debra Torrence agreed that this is an economic issue and one that we must address to create economic security and equity. For the most part, this divide is disappearing, with nearly everyone, from grandmas to kids having computers. She urged that we think of computers as textbooks, and how we can use community resources to gain access to computers for all students.

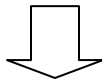
KEY POINTS

1. It's critical to align professional development, registries/career lattices and all related data verification with the QRS.
2. Professional development systems need to incorporate:

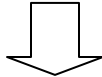
effective teaching and learning practices



content informed by early learning standards



content transfer to teacher performance



child outcomes