Indicators of ECE Quality for Multiple Purposes

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Session Outline

Brandon: why are we here?

Tout: CT scan of various requirements for quality-related data

Malone: examples of (multi-) state data systems serving multiple purposes

Kreader: moderate discussion by participants

Session Purpose

❑ Understand the environment in which quality-oriented data systems are being developed.

❑ Consider opportunities, supports for the ECE field.

❑ Discuss the levels and elements of a desirable quality-oriented data system based on a logic model.

❑ Consider balance between ideal data systems and operational and fiscal constraints, as exemplified by state and local experience;

❑ Reflect different reporting and research requirements; promote cross-state comparability, reliability.

❑ Build on past INQUIRE work, provide analytic base for future efforts to assist states and researchers.

Pressures for Quality-Oriented Data
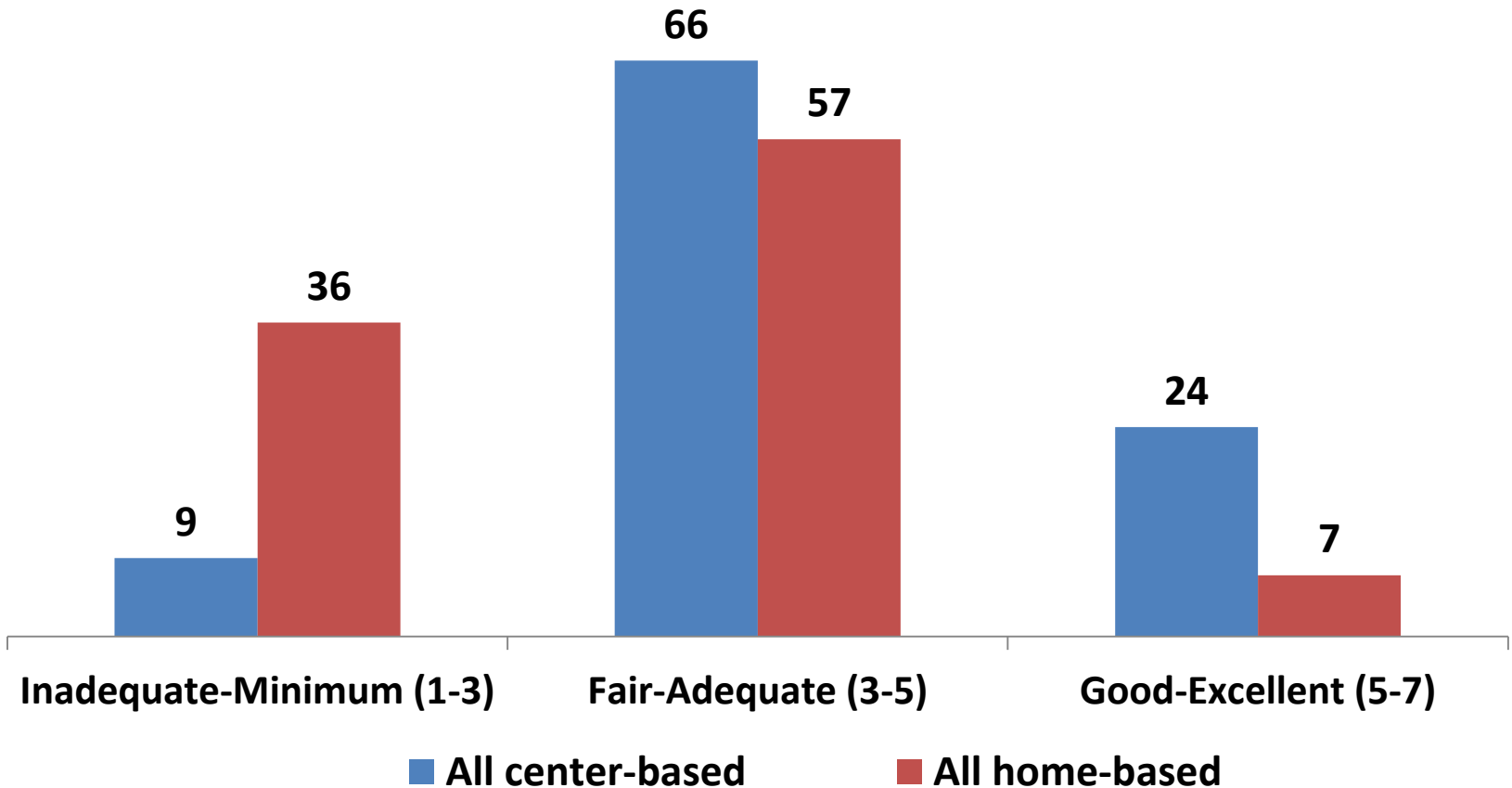
Internal to ECE Agencies:
❑ Improve programs and policies
❑ Operate QII/QRIS
❑ Measure impact of QII/QRIS
❑ Understand, monitor ECE workforce
❑ Reliable within and across-state comparisons

External Demands:
❑ Accountability: evolving OCC requirements, RTT-ELC, legislatures and private funders
❑ Linkages to other service systems: K-12 (SLDS), human services

Prevalence of Less-than-Good Quality ECE: Findings from ECLS

Quality of Settings for 2-year Olds

	Inadequate-Minimum (1-3)	Fair-Adequate (3-5)	Good-Excellent (5-7)
All center-based	9	66	24
All home-based	36	57	7

Author's chart from data in Mulligan & Flanagan 2006

Opportunities

❑ Better data for planning, evaluation, policy development.

❑ Richer understanding of relationships among different aspects of ECE inputs (human and financial), outputs (programs and supports) and child outcomes.

❑ Financial support for longitudinal and cross-systems data systems: SLDS, DOL, RTT-ELC

❑ Developing a voluntary cross-state data system that allows comparisons and national data for key indicators (cf. K-12 Common Core of Data)

Challenges

❑ Different conceptual bases and time referents for different pressures.

❑ Issues for which reliable scales and relevant categories have not been developed.

❑ Variation in state requirements, capacity and resources.

❑ Operational challenges in obtaining, cleaning, managing and analyzing complex data.

❑ Process for achieving voluntary agreements among states.

Simplified QII/QRIS Logic Model

Child Development Outcomes Improve: overall and elimination of gaps; Children experience higher quality ECE. [Impact]

Providers Offer Higher Quality ECE [Outcomes]

Parents Demand/Select Higher Quality ECE [Outcomes]

Supports to Providers: [Outputs]
Clear standards; objective rating
Fees/reimbursement cover standards. Incentives to improve
Stable cash flow, 'venture capital' to invest in meeting standards

Support to Families: [Outputs]
Assistance to afford higher quality ECE Information about the nature of quality and ratings

Essential Inputs

Reliable rating scales, trained raters

Funding to cover provider costs of meeting standards; prompt and stable payments

Outreach to assure high level of participation by providers, staff .

Staff registry to track qualifications.

Essential Inputs
Financial assistance structure that reaches all families needing assistance
Public information/education programs to inform parents about quality and ratings
Outreach to assure parent awareness, participation in financial assistance

Logic Model as Unifying Factor

Advantages of a Logic Model to Guide Data Development

❑ Links what we want to know about inputs, outputs and outcomes – avoids gaps

❑ Can be adapted to different programs, contexts

Draft matrix [Brandon and Isner, INQUIRE, July 2011]

❑ Distinguish 2 Tracks: Parents, Providers

❑ Include 3 Levels: Individual, Program, System

❑ Illustrates Inputs, Activities, Outputs, and Short/Long-term Outcomes for each level in each   track.

❑ Data elements: policies, services, staff and child characteristics , developmental outcomes, expenditures

Provider Track: Encourage and support ECE programs/providers to offer higher quality

- *Individual*: influence how staff members interact with children and parents;

- *Program*: influence the level of program quality through incentives, supports, regulations; achieve high participation in QII/QRIS; improve programs' quality rating over time;

- *System*: improve the overall level of quality offered in a community/market and narrowing gaps among the quality experience by more/less advantaged children.

Parent Track: Inform and motivate to seek and demand higher quality ECE

- *Individuals*: influence different groups of parents to recognize, select and demand higher quality ECE;

- *Program*: influence programs to interact positively with parents, seek and accept subsidies to assist parents to afford higher quality ECE ;

- *System*: influence all or most parents to seek and demand higher quality ECE, and participate in financial assistance programs to support their demand.

Some starting questions for discussion:

- ❑ What innovative efforts are you aware of to unify measures and data systems

- ❑ What challenges and constraints have you observed or experienced – fiscal, operational, collaborative ….

- ❑ What strategies adopted to overcome challenges, constraints?

- ❑ For what indicators would states like to able to compare themselves with others?

- ❑ How to use data for both reporting and evaluation?

- ❑ Additional purposes, opportunities ……. ?

Resource Links

ACF/OPRE Website:

http://www.acf.hhs.gov/programs/opre/about_opre.html

❑ INQUIRE briefs:

http://www.acf.hhs.gov/programs/opre/cc/childcare_technical/index.html

❑ QRS Assessment documents:

http://www.acf.hhs.gov/programs/opre/cc/childcare_quality/

❑ Research Connections:

www.researchconnections.org