

## Moving the Needle on Articulation: Progress from a Ten State Project, 5/19/15

>>Tricia Haley: We can see that a few folks are still joining. So we're going to give everybody about one or two more minutes and then we will get started. [Pause.]

Hi again everybody. This is Tricia Haley of the Administration for Children & Families. I'm going to give you just a few quick logistical announcements and then I will hand it over to our experts for the day.

First of all, you've probably noticed by now that you are on mute. It is so we can avoid any kind of background noise but I don't want you to think it means that we don't want to hear what you're thinking. Please feel free to use the question and chat box to chat and send your questions our way. Any comments that you have will be appreciated as well. We will wait and do Q&A at the end of the webinar but feel free to send your questions in all the way throughout.

Before I hand it over, I will tell you inevitably the first question that we get will be whether or not the slides are available online and the answer as of now is no. But we will post them both at the ACF website and I believe Sue Russell will be posting them on her site as well. So once we have the full audio and slides and transcripts of the webinar up and live we will send a note to our registrants and let them know where to find it.

So without further ado I will hand it over to ACF Deputy Assistant Secretary for Early Childhood Development, Linda Smith.

>>Linda Smith: Well, thanks, Tricia. We were just kidding Tricia that she's an expert now in the process of these webinars. We very much appreciate all of you getting on this webinar and having this conversation with us about a very important topic and that is articulation at the higher education level.

Today, as most of you know, there's a real recognition of the importance of the brain science on the development of young children and this recognition that this is linked in fact to the workforce, and that an untrained workforce is not going to be able to do the things that the science indicates that our youngest children need. And so we're very interested in this subject.

As you know, we at ACF have done a number of things over the last several years looking at the workforce. We released the first results of the National Survey of Early Care and Education last year about this time and there are many briefs and there is a lot of information posted on our website. But we were really happy to hear or to find out some things about the workforce that I think we were surprised about. In fact, a number, the numbers of our teachers who do have either an AA or a BA degree was surprising to us. I think we didn't expect that.

And I would say that a lot of that is in part due to the work of TEACH and the other programs around the country that have been emphasizing higher education for our early education workforce. But for the workforce serving children ages 3-5, 45 percent of our teachers have a bachelor's degree or higher and 17 percent have associates. That's really good news. And then for our babies about 19 percent have a bachelor's degree and 17 percent have the associate degree; and again good news, especially given what I said about the neuroscience and a baby's brain development. So we're excited about that.

In our work here at ACF it's very important to be able to say those things, that we have in fact stabilized our workforce, that we have seen advances in the preparation of our teachers because that shows to those in our policy world that an investment in our teachers is a good thing, that we're going to keep them and that it will produce the outcomes that we all want.

So after that, as many of you know, we did invest in the Institute of Medicine study called "Transforming the Workforce for Children Birth through Eight: A Unifying Foundation," and that was released here just very recently and we were, we are very excited about that study because now combined with the results of the National Survey of Early Care and Education and what the IOM study has told us, we now have a very clear goal of where we are going, and I think we haven't had that in early childhood for quite some time.

So we do know and the study recommends that we need teachers with degrees and we need them at all age groups. It isn't just because the babies are smaller they don't need that, and I think any of you who've seen any of the presentations on neuroscience lately understand exactly why it's as important, if not more so, for our youngest children to have qualified teachers.

So that has lots of implications for the work that Sue and her team have been doing with the TEACH project and more importantly with the continuity of programming beginning with the credentialing program and moving on into the AAs and BAs and on. Because this isn't easy when our teachers go and get their AA degree and find out that it doesn't articulate to a four-year program, and they're in fact looking at starting all over again. Nothing could be more discouraging for them.

So we are very excited to have Sue and her team here to talk to you about a project that they've been working on, funded by the Kellogg Foundation called "Moving the Needle on Articulation." They're going to share with us a 10-state articulation project that they've been working with over time.

And hopefully, you'll have a lot of good questions and take some notes because this is the type of the work that we want to see going on in all 50 states. Because as we know, the quality of the preparation of the workforce directly relates to the quality of what goes on in these classrooms with our youngest children.

So again, congratulations to Sue and her team for the work that they're doing. We are very, very thankful that they're doing this webinar for us.

So, Sue I'm going to turn it over to you.

>>Sue Russell: Okay, thanks Linda, I really appreciate all that you all are going around the workforce, for the study, for the IOM report, and really for the attention. Because it's very much needed. And also I really appreciate the opportunity to share this information about our project with others. So we are going to take a look at the project and try to move this slide forward. Try it again. Hold on just -- there we go.

So I wanted to start with sharing some information about the states and the project goals and some of the consensus principles that we have developed. I'll also give you an overview of what the project

actually entailed. And Sharon's going to talk about the four critical elements we've defined in moving articulation forward and discuss some of the strategies states use and some of the continuing barriers they face and faced and then talk about what the states see as recommended strategy. And then I'm going to ramp up with a discussion of the outcomes and lessons learned to date and where we're headed next.

So we have had 10 great teams doing this work. They have really worked hard. The teams were coordinated by each TEACH early childhood program in the state and included lots of stakeholders, two- and four-year college faculty, individuals representing government structures in states like the Early Childhood Advisory Council or the higher education system offices. We've had Head Start collaboration directors and leadership staff and state early childhood systems, both pre-K and childcare.

The national center sent out a request for application to ready states in the TEACH network. The application required a commitment for them to pull together and lead a team through a two-year process and assessment of where the state was with its articulation practices. The team then attended the first of two summits where they were given two days of workshops, work groups, presentations and team meetings. And we had policy experts and higher ed experts join us like Dan Haggard and Beth Cassidy. Teams identified their big barriers, they set goals on how they wanted to move the needle in their state and they began work on an action plan which they had to maintain throughout the project.

Funding, as Linda indicated, came from the W.K. Kellogg Foundation who supported the two-year effort and paid for most of the travel expenses for the teams to come to the summit. They also received a \$500 stipend to support their work at home. And they were given two years to advance their articulation efforts.

During that time period, Sharon provided ongoing technical assistance. So the states held virtual state meetings, set up webinars, and conducted site visits. And states were also expected to complete regular progress reports. And then just a couple of weeks ago we held our second summit where we brought the teams back together to continue their learning but also to map out a plan for the future and to celebrate their progress.

The goal of this project was to improve articulation of course work and degrees from two- to four-year institutions in states, starting where states were or thought they were, and building strategies to move that goal. So our focus was on two- to four-year articulation.

The teams and the center collectively created articulation principles to guide the work of the project. These principles were divided into two areas, principles that support students and principles that describe the "only ifs" of articulation solutions.

The principles that support students on their education pathway basically state that pathways must be clear to students, degrees need to be affordable and articulation solutions must be early childhood education degree specific. And the solutions need to recognize the needs of students with significant course work as well as degrees.

So what that means that if you don't already have a two-year degree but you have made a lot of progress on the pathway to earn a two or four year degree, we want that recognized as well. We wanted solutions to recognize transfer, that transfer students are given the same type of support as native students on their pathway to a degree. So we had a student focus as the first part of our principles.

The teams and the center collectively created these principles and created pathways, looked at pathways towards the degree. They had to look and value equally the course work, to think about coursework for the first two years as valuable whether it happened in the community college or whether it happened at a four-year institution. We wanted all regionally accredited institutions engaged in the conversation. We believe that that's important and that means including private institutions.

We believed that faculty members need to be involved and both from the two and four year institutions to inform those solutions and we want them to be supported in that process. And then there needs to be an ongoing structure whether it's a formal structure in the higher ed system or a formal established committee that actually approves articulation agreements and monitors their implementation.

So, as Linda mentioned, on April 1st, at least as far as I'm concerned, the early childhood community was given a gift from the Institute of Medicine and the National Research Council. "Transforming the Workforce for Children From Birth to Age 8" is an incredible document that validates the importance of the work of the early childhood teacher. And it really looks at the systems of support needed by those teachers that ultimately benefit our young children. The report provides lots of research and a set of recommendations that should keep us all busy for a number of years.

We've included this quote from Chapter 9, as it recognizes the important educational pathways that our two-year community college institutions provide us as we try to build a workforce that begins with a degree in early childhood education, a four-year degree.

So I am going to pass this on now to Sharon who's going to talk to you a little bit more about the project.

>>Sharon Sullivan: Good afternoon, everyone. I think the one thing we want you take away from this slide is that we are working with the 10 states and we're interested in systemic articulation. We've been through enough of those efforts that were successful but small and didn't lead anyplace.

And there are going to be four themes that you're going to hear throughout the rest of the presentation. You're going to see we're going to talk about dynamic committees and alliances. You're going to hear the term "student focused" a lot. You're going to hear us talk about meaningful relationships with faculty and other stakeholders and strategic processes for transfer of content.

Because we all work better with a picture, this is the articulation elements in a graphic form. The first thing I think we want to say to those of you who've been doing articulation it's something you already know. Articulation work is hard and it's complex. Perhaps more complex than most of thought it was going to be.

As we listened to and worked with the 10 states, Sue and I would say over and over again that this report is about the work of the 10 states. We began to group the work into these elements that help us identify issues and address them. The grouping was influenced by the principles that Sue talked about and by the literature.

If you dig deep into the articulation literature you're going to see these words come up in slightly different forms but often. And ultimately by who we are TEACH as an organization, and organization that's focused on the educational success of the early childhood education workforce.

The order is not random. We focused first on the two elements that the early childhood folks are probably least aware of. So we started with oversight and evaluation, and for us oversight and evaluation means digging in to the dynamics of the higher education system.

And secondly, we brought up student focus, and I think that's important for us to say here, although we would all say we are about the student. We are not always about looking at the issues in higher ed from the student's perspective, and that's what we want to try and do here. Then we move on to the more familiar issues of faculty interactions and transfer of content.

We are going to start with oversight and evaluation. And with oversight and evaluation, we're looking at all those issues that the early childhood workforce doesn't deal with on a regular basis but we need to know about. Those include governance structures in each state and the groups that influence the governance structures and ultimately, how agreements are evaluated and monitored.

So, for example, among our states, some states have single higher education governance systems. Others have different structures for baccalaureate and different structures for associate level. And in some states the associate institutions are tied to K-12 systems, and in others they're not. Legislative structures are very different. In some states they have a direct control over the higher ed and in other states they don't. But what we've learned repeatedly over the last two years is that it always pays to pay attention to what the governor of your state wants.

Some specific issues that we looked at is the transition and funding strategies that are going on across the country. We are going probably almost nationwide from a system based on full-time equivalence of what we used to call FTEs; that is, how many students came in the door. Now what we're finding is that many states are going to performance-based funding, that is, how many students successfully exit the higher ed system. We are talking about completion rates.

Another issue is, who responds, if anyone, if an institution publishes an articulation agreement and then doesn't honor it. Like, for example, a story that came to us. They published an agreement. It wasn't accepted by a baccalaureate faculty member because she didn't like the agreement. She stated that she thought she should not have to honor something she didn't agree with. There is such acceptance of the faculty's autonomy and authority on forced transfer that her decision wasn't questioned even though the student could produce a written articulation agreement.

So, some of the states' greatest successes have to do with creating an articulation committee, and what that committee is, is a robust and diverse group of stake holders and faculty that really create a well-informed advocacy effort.

Initially, as Sue indicated, almost every state had the state TEACH staff, faculty, some state government agencies and some representation from other groups. But as the states have talked to each other, now almost every state has that original group of constituents and early learning councils and Head Start collaboration directors and higher ed governance members and philanthropy and business leaders.

Another piece that's been really important here is that our articulation committees have learned to link and create alliances, and those alliances have been with other early childhood groups. And also, an interesting strategy has been to link with other fields teaching articulation. Nursing and engineering are two common ones. But in these discussions early childhood is one of several fields seeking articulation and not the primary focus.

I wish I could say that we have solved it but we haven't. Articulation that happens up at college level is a reason to celebrate but several of our states have had experience with how fragile such agreements can be. So, if faculty, as we just talked about, or administration changes, then our articulation effort goes away. New initiatives supplant the time and effort that was formerly given to articulation and it doesn't go to the top of the priority list. De-emphasis is one those reasons that it happens.

Even in states that have a need for an early childhood workforce to meet their pre-K issues, early childhood may not be valued. And what we're also beginning to see is that the IOM report makes a fundamental transition to knowledge incompetency. How that will be addressed in each state is likely to begin at the systems level. In one of our states we already have a higher ed governance group saying, in their transfer guidelines, that they are transitioning from courses and seat time to achievement of competence.

So Sue told you we just finished the summit. One of the things we asked our states to do is to comment on each of your stories and tell us what they see as the biggest recommendation. If you'll look at this list you'll see there's pretty much either systemic or statewide responses. Although some of them will not likely be achieved any time soon, I think what we're seeing is an understanding from faith in the process that needs to be systemic.

So we also talked about student focused. You may see in the literature student centered, student focused. However it's titled, this is about putting students as primary in the articulation discussion. There has been a little faculty pushback on this one. The assumption has been from some faculty that a student focus is at the expense of program rigor, and we don't think that that has to happen. We think there's a space for faculty to focus on the academic rigor of their program and still put students up front.

The discussion section also looks at some of the new electronic advising tools and records that would support students. We start with the idea of the student as a consumer and encourage our TEACH states to help students to be a good consumer. We think that purchase of an education is a life-changing purchase and needs as much consideration and protection as we would provide someone buying a

house. We're also talking about using electronic systems that the institution must keep current and reliable. In this age of technology it's not really feasible for an institution to put a disclaimer on the website that says material may not be current and up to date.

We'll also see that some of our states didn't go for articulation agreements as we had meant them but for full-program transfer guides that were transparent and available to the student in both written and electronic form. We also encourage our TEACH states to leverage their dollars and to use their dollars to the greatest benefit of students.

We mentioned that we believe that students have a right to an education that does not leave them in debt. When we have as a country have a \$1.2 trillion student debt, we don't want our students contributing to it. So we want our students to get the most credit for their dollar as possible which means, as Linda talked about initially, we don't want them duplicating courses. There are pathways, Sue's talked about those. We want direction as early in the student's career as possible. We have to really think that our students need an appeals process. If you've ever tried to appeal a faculty's decision you probably have some understanding of what an uphill battle that is.

Here our states recommend again the empowerment of students as consumers and to improve advising and academic coaching. You have to remember that at the state level each of our states' organization works directly with colleges. At TEACH we have our own counselors and those counselors have conversation with college counselors.

What we're finding is that we need better counseling across the board. And again, this whole idea about a culture for transfer students is essential. We don't want a system where over and over we find students coming to a baccalaureate institution as second-best students.

Okay. We are going to take a deep breath, and I'm going to talk a little bit about faculty relationships. In the TEACH world, faculty are often our colleagues and our friends. We meet with them regularly. We talk with them but we sometimes forget that an expectation to have them come to a meeting is not something that they can always do. They may not always be able to help us with an initiative both for time reasons and simply priorities. However, we cannot have articulation without strong faculty involvement.

And with faculty involvement we really need two things. We need their knowledge of the curriculum and of students learning but we also need their buy-in. We've seen articulation agreements created without strong faculty involvement that end up where we were earlier with the faculty member who could not sign-off on articulation because she didn't agree with it. We have to have faculty buy-in. We have to understand the limitations of the faculty.

There are also, unfortunately -- we need to come to the understanding that the priorities of an associate degree program and a baccalaureate degree program may not always be the same. And we have to understand and respect those priorities.

So, with that in mind, what states had to do is to step back and deliberately and methodically create ways to develop relationships with faculty. One of those ways that was somewhat simple was to build alliances with early childhood associate degree groups, like ACCESS. Across our states, not all the groups are ACCESS, but there are virtually in every state, some sort of two-year organization. Regrettably, there are not that many four-year coalitions and so it's harder to find a way to bring them into the fold.

One of the ways that that's been happening is that by the fall of this year, by October of this year, every one of our 10 states will have held at least one faculty stakeholder event. It may be called a forum, it may be called summit but whatever it's called they have deliberately created a venue for folks to come together. Sometimes states have found it best to make it focused on a topic, like practicum sites or common course curriculum, and sometimes it's been solely based on creating relationships.

The challenges are many, still. And one of those challenges is higher education budgets have been cut in almost all of our states. It was not great before but it's very limited now. Performance-based funding that I mentioned previously has also contributed to some of that difference in revenue. What we find is college administrators may not encourage and may even limit faculty participation. It's a dollar-and-cents issue for them.

And again, even though it's better there are still conflicting priorities between associate and baccalaureate degree institutions and what we end up with is the lack of time for face-to-face meeting. Most of our states have been embracing some technology but we still need some face-to-face. The initial \$500 stipend that Sue mentioned was almost always was gone within the first one or two meetings at state level.

Now here come an interesting set of recommendations from our states, and the first is that faculty should be required to participate and faculty participation needs to be supported. So we've said it nicely in terms of allocating time and requiring participation but what we mean by this is that faculty have to have time taken away from their other duties and are given to them to do articulation. And articulation has to be important enough to the institution to allow faculty to do that.

The other piece that is in here is when we're talking about securing administrative leadership and support, we need faculty to come to those meetings with the authority to participate. They need to have a process where they can offer things legitimately and go back and discuss them with their administration and then come back and talk to the group. It's not enough to have faculty come to a meeting and say "I'm simply here."

Last but not least -- it's probably one of the thorniest issues in our discussion and that's transfer of content; we've saved it for last, not just because it's difficult, but without more understanding and more development of other areas, it's unnecessarily difficult -- and we're talking about transfer of content because these discussions across the early childhood world and certainly within our 10 states, also include the transfer of non-credited training, things like credit for prior learning and credential. However, we are looking for credit and about credit. This is also the area that the early childhood workforce has spent much of their effort over the last 30 to 40 years.

We're good at developing training and we develop it all over the place but the result of that is that we have great ownership of everything from workshops to credentials, diplomas, courses to degrees; all developed to meet a specific need and it's all done with the best intentions, the best information and skills available at the time.

But when we're trying to create a system, and Linda alluded to this earlier, where all that content can be aligned and organized into a continuum -- I think the IOM report refers to this as stackable -- that will support articulation, we are talking about a mammoth task and then laden with potential conflicts.

So when we start looking at the transfer of credits and the strategies, what you see here is folks that have tried a number of delivery pieces. We're looking at pilot projects that have happened in a few of our states. We are looking at whole degree transfer guides which I talked about earlier.

Probably the most common strategy is a regional articulation agreement. One or two colleges in a geographic area work out an agreement together but serve a large group of students and finally a few, and in this case two, implemented state-wide articulation agreements. It has always been the hope of our 10 states that what they did would lead to a state-wide process. Two of our states do have state-wide agreements but they're different. One is driven by state-wide universities that articulate with multiple community colleges. The second is a state-wide community college system that articulates with multiple state baccalaureate programs. One is in legislation and one is not.

One of the things that we have not specifically listed on the slide but Sue asked me to talk about because we would be remiss not to is the issue of early childhood associate degree accreditation. It's important to note that the two states that have state-wide agreement also have the most accredited associate degree program. The accreditation process is one that many of our states are either still involved in or as a result of the process are revisiting. This third-party review and approval takes some of the stress out of an articulation agreement.

And particular since ECADA is recognized by CAPE the accreditation gains positional credibility with our baccalaureate degree program. And within this, once again, we are looking at the issue of competency. We knew about competency before but the IOM report and CAPE and ECADA both are driven by the competency that we feel we need.

When we look at the challenges, one of the things that comes up is credit-for-prior learning. And the discussion about credit-for-prior learning has many, many challenges and one that we'll have to figure how to address. We are also looking at asking baccalaureate faculty to come up with common curriculum to address issues including teacher licensure. And again, we have this discussion of competency versus just courses and it's beginning to resonate across states.

But we think that the IOM's report that this idea of competency is going to gain more and more traction. Finally, the recommendations from states you see here again, creating uniform credit for prior learning process and create common curriculum and identify strategies that allow for review.

The piece that I want to make a point of before I turn this back over to Sue, is that what we've tried to say to states is that you need to look not only for successful strategies but efficient strategies. Time is the problem since we're working with higher ed. Higher ed is very precise and very methodical and sometimes slow but what we have to do is to figure out strategies on our side that help us move the process forward.

Back to you, Sue.

>>Sue Russell: Thanks, Sharon. So I'm going to talk a little bit about outcomes. They're up on the screen and I'm not going to speak to each of them individually but the numbers there, are the numbers -- you know we had 10 states -- so how many states actually achieved these outcomes. So that's what those numbers mean.

So three states made significant advances in early childhood associate degree accreditations, for example. All the states created an articulation structure. All of them improved faculty interactions between two and four year institutions. They set their own outcome goals. We didn't set those. And really it was based on where they started, and most of the states achieved their goals. Some made more progress than others, as you would guess.

All their goals were different. So some states might have picked three of these but they're three different ones than other states picked. It was really up to them. The average number of outcomes achieved by states was four with a range of two to six.

So some states had six goals or eight goals and they achieved six, while other states may have only had three goals because their state really wasn't ready to tackle too much and so they may have achieved two out of three. So it was varying depending on where the state was and what the state was able to do.

So we have started to compile lessons learned from this work and I'm going to run you through those. The slide says "Lessons Learned: To Date." We are not quite through and we may have more to add to this as we finish up our work.

So every state has a different configuration within their two- and four-year institution as Sharon mentioned, those at the system level and within their early childhood department. And every state was in a very different place in those elements that Sharon described. And we would guess that if we picked another 10 states to do the work we would see 10 more different states. So that is definitely the lesson that we learned.

To move the needle forward, the table really has to include advocate stakeholders as well as higher ed, and hard work and while faculty know the details well, those other stakeholders are often, who represent the student voice, can keep that conversation moving.

We also learned that having 10 teams go through the whole thing together was helpful to the teams. They learned a lot from each other both successes and challenges and I would say that there might even

have been a little competition between some of the states. So we felt like that was an asset for this kind of work.

Articulation work needs champions. The status quo in most cases isn't good enough to meet the needs of students for high-quality, seamless education pathways. And someone or some team, someone on the team needs to be a catalyst to keep the processes moving forward. It is a hard thing with the leadership and advocacy piece.

Resources include both human and financial and it takes real people on the ground using their time to figure out the solutions and it takes money as Sue talked about to support travel and meetings, as well as money to support collaborative, supportive work like ECADA. So states also need to figure out where and how they can find some additional money to support this work. And we're proud to say that this money leveraged much more money back home in many of our states. We'll talk about that at some later time. States also had a resource person in Sharon that supported support but also held states accountable to moving forward.

Both two- and four-year faculty have been at the table within state higher ed systems across the country. Money has been tight, leaving faculty with higher course and advising roles. And this is just another task which we've talked about on an already too-full plate, but it is essential that we figure out or states figure out how they can be meaningfully involved.

And then finally, articulation conversations must be dynamic and ongoing. Agreements need to be implemented, monitored and updated on a regular basis. Two states had major agreements in place when we started or they thought they did when in fact they were not really being implemented at all. That was a huge a-ha moment for those states and for all of the states.

So the next step for the project. We are winding down this stage and we'll be getting final reports in and doing some more summary, look at what has happened. You can expect to see fact sheets and reports and presentations and we are in the process of throwing together an early childhood articulation compendium with lots of resource materials, including much more thorough writings on those components that we briefly described. That should be on our website by mid-summer and we're happy to share all of this and all of those resources that we've developed.

One of the pieces that will be in a much more expanded piece will be the bibliography that we are creating. And so we've just for this presentation put together a few notations but there will be much more that you'll find in the compendium. This will be a part of both the PowerPoint and a compendium.

So, you can reach either Sharon or me at the email address on the slide. And as we talked about earlier, this presentation will be up on our website and on the ACF website as well. So we welcome your questions or comments now and we both thank you very much for participating today.

I don't see any questions. I don't know if there's -- happening but --

>>Sue Russell: Hello.

>>Sharon Sullivan: Yes.

>>Marsha Basloe: Oh, good. We'd thought we'd lost you.

>>Sue Russell: Nope. We're here.

>>Marsha Basloe: Well, thank you.

>>Sue Russell: We were waiting for questions. We didn't have any. So we were wondering if folks were writing them in.

>>Sharon Sullivan: But we don't see any.

>>Marsha Basloe: We're going to check to see if there are questions. You know, I think one of the things that came up in conversation here was you talked a little about the fact sheets and the final reports and the presentations, and one of the things that ACF talks about and we try to do is that the work that we do we try and share with all 50 states which is why of course we're have this webinar and giving you the chance to present with all states.

How will this work be shared? Will you have the states actually go out and talk about the work that they've have done to other states? Will you have them partner with non-articulation project states?

>>Sue Russell: Well, we're hoping that we'll have some continuation funding to do some more work like that, Marsha. We will be doing presentations and engage some of our states in those at various conference venues. We're happy to talk to other states about this work. If they have questions or are interested in it, and of course, all of the materials and presentations and fact sheets we create will be available on our website.

>>Marsha Basloe: So we actually have a few questions coming in, and so if it's okay with you, I'm going to actually try and get a few of them answered by you and then we can see how many we can get through.

The first, of course, is one that you may or may not be able to answer but the question is, "Is there a chance that funding will be continued in the future so that this work can continue on?"

>>Sue Russell: Well, we hope so. Although we haven't gotten final word on it. We certainly have asked for continuation of funding. We think it's important. We actually are interested in having a national articulation meeting. It isn't so much state-team based but actually focused on some of the larger players in the whole system, that is, folks like ACF but also folks who are in our various accrediting, regional accrediting bodies of folks who are really work on higher education.

So we can have some kind of dialogue about the importance of this at the national level. And we'd love to figure out a way to partner with you. While to do that, I think it's really long past time to have that kind of dialogue because our field needs it so desperately.

>>Marsha Basloe: Thank you. Another question is, "What were some strategies that institution used to engage the high-level administrators?"

>>Sharon Sullivan: I would say that's tough. I think what happened that there needed to be a driver, Marsha. What we found is that it happens best when the state had the need. So in some states this was a spin-off of efforts from the Head Start issues and in other states it was spin-off from a pre-K discussion. But that was also the importance of having a variety of people on that articulation committee.

We've used the words "robust" and "diverse" group. But that was important because we had people on the committee who could talk to administrators and get their ear. We also saw more and more of that level of person being added to teams as states went along because they saw other states doing it and so they figured out how they could make that happen.

>>Sue Russell: We'd encouraged that from the very beginning but the beginning teams weren't nearly as strong as some of the ending teams and it would be the addition of some of that kind of leadership as the project went on.

>>Sharon Sullivan: I think I would also add that going forward we think a lot of folks are going to try and use the IOM report for some traction in that area.

>>Marsha Basloe: Good. Good. Okay. We appreciate that. Another question we had is, "Did you get into articulation discussions that went beyond early childhood and looked much more broadly at institutions of higher education to institutions of higher education agreements?"

>>Sue Russell: I'll answer one part and I think Sharon will answer another. Many states already have an AA to BA articulation agreement. That's kind of global, not specific to early childhood. So in a generalist kind of way there's in most states there's already language about that.

It's when you get into arenas that are sort of job specific or discipline specific that the barriers happen and I think the partnership in one of our states with some of those other disciplines was really great to see because you could actually -- in fact, on May 1st in that state, while we're at the summit, that statewide legislation and agreement was passed, and early childhood was part of the -- I think there were four, maybe, four disciplines that were included in that agreement, that basically said you take the whole block, that whole associate degree and it fully articulates into the degree in 17 universities in that state.

>>Sharon Sullivan: I would answer that a little bit differently. If you look at the states, most of them would say they have articulation agreements. Secretly [ph] what they mean is that they have an articulation of general education and perhaps what they call a core group of courses. What we've been advocating for is for students to be able to go from an associate degree program to junior status. What we've found is that many states think they have the problem solved but when they try and address it with early childhood they haven't found they have a viable articulation strategy.

>>Marsha Basloe: Okay. And I think will have one last question that I'm going to ask and then I probably will send you more questions. "Which state was able to actually achieve a common course curriculum?"

>>Sue Russell: We had multiple states, right?

>>Sharon Sullivan: There are multiple states that have a common course curriculum --

>>Sue Russell: But only at the two-year level.

>>Sharon Sullivan: And one state that worked on it and it almost for final approval. So I don't want to jinx it by giving you the name but we'll share it with you later, just as soon as they have it signed, sealed and delivered.

>>Sue Russell: North Carolina already has that. Who else has that? Indiana has it. Both of those states have had it for a long time. At the two-year level.

>>Sharon Sullivan: But the other thing Marsha that we would caution you about is that there's a lot of jargon out there now about this and so states don't always know what they have. We're getting lost in things like core curriculum catalog, Common Core, Common Core curriculum. So we ask each state to look carefully at what they have achieved and what they want to be sure that they're all talking the same language.

>>Marsha Basloe: "I noticed in the list of states that you worked with that they, there's a number of states that actually have tribal communities. Has any work been done with Indian tribes or tribal communities?"

>>Sharon Sullivan: Not specifically.

>>Sue Russell: Well, I mean, yeah, not specifically on this project. For sure. But certainly that's happened with the states [inaudible] those projects have worked with tribal communities around scholarships.

>>Marsha Basloe: Well, I want to thank you very much for presenting this information. We really do appreciate it. We -- many students attend more than one institution of higher education before they earn a degree. They transfer from a two year colleges to four year institutions. They transfer across colleges in the same sector. They move from four- to two-year sometimes. And lots of reasons.

We really do appreciate the work being done by TEACH. We appreciate the work being done by these 10 states to help students successfully earn a degree. And Sue and Sharon thanks for participating in this webinar. You mentioned early on, and Linda mentioned in the introduction, the NAS study has recommendations for the decade ahead and we really appreciate your work to really move this forward.

I want to mention before we all hang up, if your state or community is working on an innovative area focused on the early childhood workforce, please feel free to share your information and success stories and challenges with ACF. We often highlight states and communities in our early childhood development monthly newsletter and you can sign up on our website.

Sue and Sharon, thank you again for your work and for sharing your time and this information with us today.

>>Sharon Sullivan: It's our pleasure. Thank you.

>>Marsha Basloe: Thanks.

[END]