

# HIGHER EDUCATION AS A DELIVERY SYSTEM

CONTEXTS, CAPACITY, AND CHALLENGES

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# SCOPE OF HIGHER EDUCATION AS ECE PD DELIVERY SYSTEM

- 1350 IHEs offer ECE degrees
- 44% bachelor's; 56% associate's
- Produce approx. 40,000 graduates/year

SCOPE DOES NOT EQUAL  
EFFECTIVENESS

*NEW TEACHERS FOR A NEW CENTURY:  
THE FUTURE OF EARLY CHILDHOOD  
PROFESSIONAL PREPARATION*



# “ESSENTIALS FOR EXCELLENCE”— CROSS-CUTTING THEMES FROM A DECADE AGO

1. More interdisciplinary and diversity-rich emphasis is needed
2. Faculty need expanded content knowledge
3. Better tools are needed to define, recognize, and assess high quality EC teacher preparation

# A DECADE AGO AND TODAY

## 1. More interdisciplinary and diversity-rich emphasis is needed

- Persistent “mismatches”
- Inadequate preparation for diverse teaching contexts
- Policies that fail to address range of diversity dimensions
- Lack of data



BARRIERS TO PROGRESS

# A DECADE AGO AND TODAY

## 2. Faculty need expanded content knowledge

- Faculty development initiatives since 2000 (e.g., New Scripts; Natural Allies)
- Limited impact data
- Content gaps evident in faculty surveys
  - E.g., low priority given to helping students use research in their practice
  - E.g., minority of faculty unclear about what constitutes “theory” and “research”

## A DECADE AGO AND TODAY

### 3. Better tools are needed to define, recognize, and assess high quality EC teacher preparation

- Continuing lack of well-designed research on impact of program design, pedagogy, etc.
- Difficult to use accreditation as proxy for quality

# SOME ADDITIONAL CHALLENGES THEN AND NOW

1. Placing baccalaureate programs within broader PD context
2. Linking standards (child outcomes; state teacher competencies) to teacher preparation
3. Assessing future teachers' performance

# PLACING BACCALAUREATE PROGRAMS IN WIDER PD CONTEXT

THEN: Limited articulation or coordination  
between bacc and associate degree programs

NOW:

- Expanded articulation, system-building, other comprehensive efforts
- Often, higher ed still not significant player
- Limited alignment
- Much higher ed expertise remains untapped

# LINKING STANDARDS (CHILD OUTCOMES; STATE TEACHER COMPETENCIES) TO TEACHER PREPARATION

THEN: Standards movement just beginning to influence ECE field

NOW:

- Widespread impact of child outcome standards
- Limited alignment with content of teacher education

--CAUTION--

Alignment does not ensure quality

# ASSESSING FUTURE TEACHERS' PERFORMANCE

THEN: Move toward performance-based  
teacher ed standards just beginning

NOW:

- NCATE/NAEYC: IHEs required to submit evidence of performance assessment linked to standards
- Difficulties on part of faculty in designing and using appropriate candidate assessments

# TOWARD THE FUTURE--- PROMISING INNOVATIONS



# AT THE SYSTEMS LEVEL

- State efforts to strengthen role of higher education in ECE systems-building
- ECACs as levers

CAUTION:

Presence is not panacea

# NATIONAL RESOURCES TO BUILD FACULTY CAPACITY

- *Research Connections'* Faculty Teaching Modules
- CONNECT project: modules to strengthen evidence-based emphasis on inclusion
- Potential higher ed impact of NRC EC Mathematics report
- College course from NCRECE

# INNOVATIONS IN INDIVIDUAL HIGHER EDUCATION PROGRAMS

## EXAMPLES----

- Owens Community College—new collaboration across faculty and child care staff to strengthen coaching and feedback to students in the field
- UNC-Greensboro: using CLASS in assessing student teaching performance
- Teachers' College/Columbia—using placement in infant/toddler practicum to shift beliefs and practices
- Northern Arizona University: innovations in linking rural ECE teachers to higher education

THEME:

Strengthening the *practice* component

QUESTION:

How bring to scale?

# CONCLUDING THOUGHTS

