

**SOUTH CAROLINA EARLY CHILDHOOD ADVISORY COUNCIL  
TEAM REPORT TEMPLATE  
TEAM 3: PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT and HIGHER EDUCATION**

**Section 1: Focus Area and over arching questions**

*Team 3 – Professional Development and Higher Education Reports*

1. What can we learn from existing efforts in SC and nationally about this focus area?
2. What are SC's specific challenges?
3. What are your team's priority goal recommendations: short term and long term?

**Section 2: Summary of your team's deliberations (# of meetings, documents consulted, public participation)**

**Meetings:** 5 team meetings – 5/17, 6/1, 6/2, 6/7, and 6/14; 3 working group meetings- 5/24, 6/1, 6/1; conference call with South Carolina Child Care Association (SCCCA) board members

**Documents:** SC Core Competencies document, ECE Career Ladder, Ways to document training, T.E.A.C.H. Scholarship Document, CCDF State Plan which includes planning for professional development in SC, Meeting Handouts, PowerPoint presentations, and meeting notes

Public participation: Face-to-face and by conference call

**Section 3: Description of current state landscape. What is working well?**

- Overall – Currently professional development is integrated to include management of a statewide system which includes: Early Learning Standards for birth to 5, ECE career ladder, core competencies, college coursework, scholarships at all levels for caregivers, trainers, and technical assistance providers, and articulation agreements all tied to ABC voluntary program standards and incentives. The system is administered by the Center for Child Care Career Development.
- ABC Performance Standards at two voluntary levels above licensing which include staff qualifications standards. Standards are tied to ABC Bonus Awards which incentivize compliance to standards.
- ABC Conference Scholarship initiative which funds providers to attend state level conferences
- Introduction to Early Childhood Development (ECD 101-entry level course available at all 16 technical colleges, serves as a gateway to early care and education coursework for college credit and is available without admission to college.) Provides foundation for early childhood coursework for college credit. Over 7,000 Early Childhood Credentials awarded for completion of this course. ECD 101 is newly revised with updated information on brain research and emergent literacy, early learning standards for 3-5 and 0-3, and many teacher resources.

- T.E.A.C.H. scholarship program in place for 10 years statewide. T.E.A.C.H. scholarships available for Early Childhood Credential, AA degree model, BA degree model.
- At least 13 of 16 early childhood departments at technical colleges are NAEYC accredited (SC leading the nation). NAEYC accreditation has led to articulation with 7 colleges and at least 3 more in process.
- Central system for professional development through CCCCD. System includes training registry system that manages annual training required by SCDSS child care regulations (16,000 individuals received training in 2009); credentialing system which includes credentials for early childhood (7,500 Early Childhood Credentials Awarded), directors, infant-toddler, and school-age; voluntary trainer certification for higher quality training (650 currently certified); technical assistance certification system; online access to training transcripts (over 17,000 are using system); management of T.E.A.C.H. scholarship program; professional development for trainers and technical assistance providers.
- Program for Infant Toddler Caregiver (PITC) specialist network to provide modules of training and technical assistance to child care providers onsite.

#### **Section 4: Identified areas where work is needed. What are challenges?**

- Statewide collaboration of professional development efforts and resources by all stakeholders.
- Communication and coordination among stakeholders and public regarding initiatives, opportunities and successes
- Lack of sufficient funds to provide certified and accessible training for all geographical areas of the state.
- Economic resources across the board
- Cost of monitoring training events for quality assurance
- Need for increased political will to prioritize high quality early childhood education for all children
- More comprehensive evaluation processes
- Availability and accessibility of high quality training and professional development throughout the state
- Increased wage supplements and benefits for child care providers
- Investment of state dollars and recognition by Legislature and the business community
- Need for pre-entry educational requirements to be employed in early care and education
- Increased state funding for early childhood education
- Lots of challenges-and always have been but need to begin the efforts and not let the challenges or lack of funds keep us from moving forward.
- Present and show all the show the work that has been done but how much more needs to be done and can be done based on what other states have done.

- Educate the Leaders—Legislators to the Value of Early Intervention—and don't stop

## **Sections 5 & 6: Short term and long term recommendations**

### **Team Three Recommendations in Four Areas:**

- A) Accessibility of Training and Education**
- B) Core Competencies**
- C) Staff Qualifications**
- D) Leveraging Existing Infrastructure**

#### **A) Accessibility of Training and Education**

##### **Long-Term Recommendations**

- 1) Leverage participation in high quality training and education to meet current early childhood professional needs.
  - **Expand the accessibility of high quality training and education in underserved areas/populations of the state.**

##### **Short-Term Recommendations**

- **Survey the early childhood workforce statewide to determine barriers to high quality training (include existing sources of information.)**
- **Work through existing entities to establish a centralized system for publishing information regarding training and professional development opportunities occurring across the state (ex, CCCCCD).**
- **Educate underserved populations as to availability of training opportunities.**
- **Create a methodology for evaluating the articulation of the high quality professional development into technical college system for college credit.**

#### **B) Core Competencies**

##### **Long-Term Recommendations**

- 1) **Strengthen universal understanding of core early childhood competencies necessary to create positive learning environments for children.**
  - **Implement SC's newly developed Early Childhood Development Core Competencies document as a model self-assessment reference.**
  - **Assist practitioners in understanding each competency, help teachers transfer knowledge to practice.**

##### **Short-Term Recommendations**

- **Plan /distribute newly developed Early Childhood Core Competencies document to include all practitioners that work in the field (including 2 and 4 year institutions).**

### **C) Staff Qualifications**

#### **Long-Term Recommendations**

- 1) **Ensure mechanisms are in place to provide quality credentials to early childhood professionals.**
  - **Increase the number of certified training opportunities across the state.**
  - **Increase the incentives for meeting higher staff qualification levels.**
  - **Explore the possibility of a Birth to 5 teacher certification.**

#### **Short-Term Recommendations**

- **Explore what incentives are working well in the state (i.e. ECD 101-Introduction to Early Childhood Development) and develop a plan to expand the current career ladder and professional development system to include professionals employed in early childhood settings other than child care (i.e., public school).**
- **Explore the possibilities for individual Licensure/Credentialing as a means of an incentive (i.e., Home Visitor).**

### **D) Leveraging the Existing Professional Development Infrastructure**

#### **Long-Term Recommendations**

- 1) **Seek information from providers and other sources on how to strengthen the SC early childhood workforce.**
  - **Use the applicable information from the Cost of Quality Study to support the existing infrastructure in the development of a long term plan to encourage individuals to pursue career advancement in early education.**

#### **Short-Term Recommendations**

- **Seek input from teachers and administrators in Head Start, child care, public school settings.**
- **Expand the existing professional development system to include training in comprehensive services of early care and education (i.e. Head Start model, home visitation.)**
- **Educate parents on components of quality care to increase provider participation in ABC incentive system.**
- **Work with state professional organizations to develop a network/consortium to work on higher education articulation issues.**