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SRCD State Policy Fellow Portfolio Abstracts: Ann Partee, Ed.M.

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Portfolio Entry 1: Virginia's Birth-5 Unified Early Learning and Development Standards

Project Overview:

Background: As part of the Commonwealth's plan to better align best practices for the delivery of quality services to families and children across all age bands, a new set of early learning and development (ELD) standards for children birth to age five are being developed. The birth-5 ELD standards will replace the Virginia Department of Education's *Foundation Blocks for Early Learning* (four-year-old standards) and the Virginia Department of Social Services' *Milestones of Child Development* (birth to kindergarten standards). The birth-5 ELD standards will help unify Virginia's publicly-funded early childhood programs by providing consistent guidance to teachers on what children should know and be able to do as well as promoting

collaboration across program types.

Goal(s): To collaborate with early childhood leaders across Virginia on the development of a new set of birth-5 early learning and development standards.

Contributions of Fellow:

- Attended planning meetings with project's core team (i.e., researchers at Virginia Commonwealth University and James Madison University, project manager, and VDOE) and stakeholder meetings (i.e., engagement of larger community around standards work).
- Provided feedback on drafts of the standards document (e.g., language use, developmental expectations).
- Cross-walked VA B-5 standards to the Head Start Early Learning Outcomes Framework (HSELOF) to determine areas of alignment and misalignment.

Activity Focus Keywords: Community Collaboration; Cross-Agency Collaboration; Development of State Early Learning Standards
Policy Area Keywords: Center-based Child Care; Pre-kindergarten (PreK); Title 1 Pre-K; State-funded Preschool; School Readiness

Portfolio Entry 2: PD Rubric and PD Questionnaire

Project Overview:

Background: As part of a plan to improve classroom quality in Virginia Preschool Initiative (VPI), the state-funded preschool program, VDOE and the University of Virginia's Center for Advanced Study of Teaching and Learning (UVA CASTL) are partnering to implement a set of quality improvement initiatives. One aspect of this work is to improve the quality of professional development (PD) that VPI teachers receive, by providing school division leaders with individualized consultation around the PD they deliver to VPI teachers. In order for the consultation to be individualized to each school division's needs, school divisions' initial PD quality is being rated using a tool called the PD Rubric. The PD Rubric describes six elements of effective PD across four levels of quality.

Goal(s): To develop and implement a process that systematically assesses the quality of VPI school divisions' PD that will inform individualized consultations between UVA CASTL and VPI leaders.

Contributions of Fellow:

- Translated research on effective professional development to create a PD Rubric for use in a statewide quality improvement initiative. Developed a PD Questionnaire aligned to the PD Rubric.
- Delivered a webinar to VPI leaders introducing the PD Rubric, PD Questionnaire, and PD consultation process.
- Rated divisions' responses on the PD Questionnaire using the PD Rubric to generate data on each division's initial PD quality; these data informed individualized consultations between UVA CASTL and VPI leaders.
- Managed ongoing data collection and analysis of PD-related data.
- Presented descriptive findings on PD quality to VDOE.

Activity Focus Keywords: Framework Development; Implementation Research; Survey Design; Presentation
Policy Area Keywords: Continuous Quality Improvements (CQI); Professional Development; Research-Practice Partnerships; State-Funded Preschool

Portfolio Entry 3: Serving Three-Year-Olds in the Virginia Preschool Initiative (VPI)

Project Overview:

Background: The Virginia Preschool Initiative (VPI), the state's preschool program, has historically been available only to four-year-olds who meet eligibility requirements. A pilot program to serve three-year-old children in VPI is being offered for two years starting in 2020-2021. School divisions who have capacity and wish to expand access to serve three-year-olds may apply to participate in the pilot three-year-old program. As most school division leaders will likely have limited experience serving three-year-olds, the VDOE wants to provide some guidance and resources to support divisions participating in the three-year-old pilot.

Goal(s): To develop a resource that provides guidance to school divisions starting to serve three-year-old children in the state's preschool program through a new pilot for three-year-olds.

Contributions of Fellow:

- Conducted phone interviews with select leaders whose school divisions have been serving three-year-olds through Title 1 funding or Head Start.

- Reviewed relevant literature and other state preschool programs' guidance and policies related to serving three-year-olds.
- Developed a written document that provides tips and resources for serving three-year-old children in VPI and is aligned to the typical VPI guidelines for four-year-old children.

Activity Focus Keywords: Conduct Interviews; Literature Review; Written Resource Document
Policy Area Keywords: State-Funded Preschool; Expanding Access; School Readiness

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