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SRCD State Policy Fellow Portfolio Abstracts: Christina Padilla, Ph.D., M.P.P.

2019-2020 State Policy Post-doctoral Fellow at the Division of Early Learning (DEL), District of Columbia Office of the State Superintendent of Education (OSSE)

AUTHOR

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Portfolio Entry 1: Preschool Development Grant, Birth Through Five Needs Assessment

Project Overview:

Background: In December 2018, the Office of the State Superintendent of Education (OSSE), on behalf of the District of Columbia (the District), was awarded a $10.6 million federal Preschool Development Grant, Birth through Five (PDG B-5). As part of the PDG B-5, OSSE worked with an external group of researchers at Georgetown University's Early Childhood Innovation Network to oversee and execute the grant evaluation. The primary purpose of the evaluation was to provide data for the District's PDG B-5 needs assessment. OSSE and the Georgetown team conducted an initial family survey with caregivers of children age birth to five at the beginning of the grant period.

Goal(s): To establish a baseline for population-level parent awareness and access to programs, benefits, and early care and education options available to throughout the District at the start of the PDG B-5 grant period; to help the District measure and understand outcomes of PDG B-5 programming in the early childhood mixed-delivery system.

Contributions of Fellow:

- Collaborated with evaluation partners on family survey analysis plans, framing of findings, and final report
- Supported evaluators throughout the course of the fellowship year
- Reviewed the PDG B-5 needs assessment

Activity Focus Keywords: Document Review; Needs Assessment; Written Report
Policy Area Keywords: Access to Services; Preschool Development Grant B-5; Research-Practice Partnership

Portfolio Entry 2: Classroom Assessment Scoring System (CLASS) 2019-2020 Data Collection and Quality Assurance Protocols for Community-Based Organizations

Project Overview:

Background: OSSE launched a new, redesigned Quality Rating and Improvement System (QRIS) in 2016, called Capital Quality. All licensed child development facilities in the District that enter into and maintain a Provider Agreement for Subsidized Child Care with OSSE must participate in Capital Quality, and licensed child development facilities that do not accept child care subsidy vouchers may choose to voluntarily participate. Capital Quality participants' quality ratings are based on their scores on research-based classroom observation metrics, including the Environmental Rating Scales (ERS) and the Classroom Assessment Scoring System (CLASS). OSSE created data collection and quality assurance protocols for ERS and CLASS data collection for the 2019-2020 program year.

Goal(s): To ensure a valid, reliable, and high-quality observation process for community-based organizations (CBOs) and local education agencies (LEAs).

Contributions of Fellow:

- Supported and collaborated with data collection vendors on all aspects of data collection, including scheduling, inter-rater reliability processes, report development, and the response to the COVID-19 public health emergency
- Reviewed all vendor written products
- Served on the appeals committee for when providers appealed their scores
- Reviewed and contributed to DEL's communications with providers about data collection, including the data collection and quality assurance protocols

Activity Focus Keywords: Data collection; Document Review; Inter-Rater Reliability
Policy Area Keywords: Classroom Quality; Community Based Organizations (CBOs); Local Education Agencies (LEAs); Quality Rating and Improvement System (QRIS); State-Funded Preschool

Portfolio Entry 3: Capital Quality Internal Data Report

Project Overview:

Background: In the fall of 2019, OSSE calculated ratings for Capital Quality, the District's redesigned QRIS. There was interest among DEL leadership in understanding the distribution of these quality ratings and how ratings related to important facility characteristics, such as the age of children served at the facility, District ward, and the amount of technical assistance (TA) the providers had received.

Goal(s): To describe and explore data on child development facilities' quality designations for Capital Quality; to inform TA efforts; to inform future decisions about Capital Quality policy.

Contributions of Fellow:

- Collaborated with Division of Early Learning (DEL) and Data, Assessment and Research (DAR) teams
- Analyzed data, created graphics, wrote report
- Presented findings to DEL and DAR leadership

Activity Focus Keywords: Data Analysis; Data Visualization; Presentation; Observation Data; Written Report
Policy Area Keywords: Birth-to-Five; Classroom Quality; Continuous Quality Improvements; Pre-Kindergarten; Quality Rating and Improvement System (QRIS)

Portfolio Entry 4: State Early Childhood Development Coordinating Council (SECDCC) October 2019 meeting slides: "Measurable Indicators of Progress: The Early Development Index (EDI) and the Neighborhood Risk Index (NRI)"

Project Overview:

Background: The Early Development Instrument (EDI) is a population-based measure of school readiness that is used to support children, teachers, and local education agencies. OSSE collects EDI data from pre-k teachers of 3-year-olds along with partners from the University of California Los Angeles (UCLA) Center for Healthier Children, Families and Communities.

Goal(s): The goals of the October 2019 SECDCC meeting were to share progress on prior waves of data collection with the early childhood community in the District, announce goals for the upcoming wave of data collection, and to introduce the Neighborhood Risk Index (NRI). The goals for using the EDI and NRI data more broadly are to fuel stronger focus on an equitable vision for the District, share a cross-sector measure of school readiness, and inform place-based projects across the District.

Contributions of Fellow:

- Supported data collection and project management
- Acted as a research consultant and thought partner with the DEL and UCLA teams
- Supported in creation and editing of SECDCC slides and preparation for the October meeting

Activity Focus Keywords: Data Collection; Presentation
Policy Area Keywords: Pre-Kindergarten; Research-Practice Partnerships; School Readiness

Portfolio Entry 5: Quality Improvement Network (QIN) Self-Assessment Report

Project Overview:

Background: The Quality Improvement Network (QIN) is the result of an Early Head Start-Child Care Partnership (EHS-CCP) grant, which OSSE oversees. The QIN brings Early Head Start services (e.g., family engagement, coaching, technical assistance) and standards to a number of child development centers serving vulnerable children and families throughout the District. Per the Head Start Program Performance

Standards (HSPPS), every EHS and Head Start (HS) program undergoes an annual self-assessment in order to examine progress towards achieving goals, objectives, and expected outcomes.

Goal(s): To highlight strengths, identify performance gaps, provide insight on the everyday workings of the QIN, and evaluate the progress of program goals to ultimately understand where and how the QIN can further improve outcomes for children and families.

Contributions of Fellow:

- Participated in the QIN interagency district steering committee and a number of programs' qualitative self-assessments
- Analyzed results of family satisfaction survey & QIN community survey
- Created graphics and wrote sections of the self-assessment report pertaining to the family satisfaction survey and the QIN community survey

Activity Focus Keywords: Community Collaboration; Cross-Agency Collaboration; Data Analysis; Document Review; Evaluation; Written Report
Policy Area Keywords: Early Head Start; Family Engagement; Self-Assessment

Read more about Christina's Fellowship Experience