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SRCD State Policy Fellow Portfolio Abstracts: Melanie Fish

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AUTHOR

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Portfolio Entry 1: Department of Early Learning (DEL) and Office of Superintentent of Public Instruction (OSPI) Joint Statement on Early Learning and Dual Language Learners

Project Overview:

Background: Two state agencies began a collaboration around addressing dual language learners (DLLs) including a focus on cognitive, linguistic, and sociocultural benefits of bilingualism, family and community engagement, instructional approaches, assessment and professional development for early childhood professionals who serve DLLs.

Goal: To develop a joint position statement between the state agencies that proposes their unified vision for dual language learners (DLLs) in Pre-K through kindergarten.

Contributions of Fellow:

- Drafted the joint position statement and coordinated ongoing editing of the document.
- Co-presented content from the joint position statement at a local conference.

Activity Focus Keywords: Written Report, Cross-Agency Collaboration
Policy Area Keywords: Dual Language Learners (DLLs), Pre-kindergarten to Kindergarten Transition

Portfolio Entry 2: Dual Language Training for Early Childhood Educators

Project Overview:

Background: State legislation mandates the development of a strategic vision around improving outcomes for dual language learners (DLLs) from Pre-K through kindergarten. The legislation was created by the state agency in partnership with a university-based research institute and a main deliverable of the legislation is a training curriculum. Training objectives include: participants' ability to demonstrate an understanding of how language, culture, and identity relate in early childhood; gaining skills for supporting DLLs in English as they continue to develop their home language; supporting children's language skills in all daily activities; learning simple, direct strategies for engaging families of DLLs, particularly in the absence of a common language; and developing a deeper understanding of how to ensure equity and culturally responsive practices in their care environments.

Goal: To support the development and refinement of an introductory-level early childhood training curriculum intended to provide early childhood educators and staff with foundational knowledge about DLLs and supportive classroom practices.

Contributions of Fellow:

- Facilitated the partnership between the state agency and university-based research institute.
- Led focus groups in the early stages of training development.

- Compiled and synthesized feedback from community stakeholder meetings to incorporate into the training curriculum.
- Assisted in editing the training curriculum throughout its development.

Activity Focus Keywords: Professional Development, Curriculum Development, Conduct Interviews
Policy Area Keywords: Dual Language Learners (DLLs), Professional Development

Portfolio Entry 3: State-Level Universal Pre-K: Comparion Chart and Program Effect Sizes

Project Overview:

Background: The Universal Pre-Kindergarten (UPK) Comparison Chart provides a summary of state-level Pre-K programs that are open to all children regardless of family income (i.e., "universal") and that serve more than 50% of four-year-olds in the state.

Goal: To create a comparison chart that provides information on key quality indicators and examine effect sizes of programs listed in the universal Pre-K outcome reports for a subset of states profiled in the comparison chart.

Contributions of Fellow:

- Conducted a literature review and online search of key quality and performance information on state universal pre-kindergarten programs.
- Developed the universal pre-kindergarten comparison chart and outcomes report, which includes effect sizes.

Activity Focus Keywords: Data Analysis, Literature Review
Policy Area Keywords: Pre-kindergarten (Pre-K)

Portfolio Entry 4: Early Care and Education as a Protective Factor Against Child Maltreatment and Welfare Involvement: Literature Review and Presentation

Project Overview:

Background: Key research stakeholders of the state's early learning and child welfare agency are interested in the role that early care and education may have as a protective factor for children and families who are at risk for entering the child welfare system.

Goal: To investigate if/how early care and education can serve as a protective factor against child maltreatment and welfare involvement and foster care placement.

Contributions of Fellow:

- Conducted literature review.
- Created annotated bibliography.
- Presented findings at the agency research planning meeting.

Activity Focus Keywords: Literature Review, Annotated Bibliography, Presentation
Policy Area Keywords: Child Maltreatment, Child Welfare