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SRCD State Policy Fellow Portfolio Abstracts: Elizabeth Tremaine, M.S.

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Portfolio Entry 1: Ambitious Instruction Qualitative Themes

Project Overview:

Background: Oregon is a participating state in the Ounce of Prevention Fund's Partnership for Pre-K Improvement (PPI). Ambitious Instruction (AI) is one of the five essential supports of classroom practices highlighted in the PPI work. The ELD's Programs team has gathered open-ended qualitative surveys from Early Learning professionals on the topic of AI in order to refine the model of AI for Oregon's teachers.

Goals: To learn how experienced Pre-K teachers and other Early Learning professionals interpret the model of AI and deepen the ELD's understanding of excellent early teaching in ELD's Pre-K programs. To inform the creation of an AI intensive training program for Pre-K teachers.

Contributions of Fellow:

- Conducted a qualitative analysis of AI surveys: created themes around the AI conceptual model and gathered supporting quotation evidence.
- Wrote a memo reporting back the qualitative themes and supporting evidence to ELD's Preschool Improvement Specialists.
- Developed a quantitative self-assessment of and qualitative short-form survey about AI for Pre-K teachers participating in an AI intensive training program.

Activity Focus Keywords: Qualitative Data Analysis, Written Report, Survey Design
Policy Area Keywords: Professional Development, Classroom Quality, Continuous Quality Improvements

Portfolio Entry 2: Preschool Development Grant (PDG) Needs Assessment

Project Overview:

Background: The ELD is conducting a state-wide Strength and Needs Assessment as part of its PDG activities. The ELD has partnered with external researchers to facilitate the assessment.

Goal: To comprehensively describe the reach of Oregon's services to children (birth to five) and their families by assessing the risks that exist at the county-level and the presence of services designed to mitigate those risks at the county-level.

Contributions of Fellow:

- Reviewed existing needs assessment reports to help develop the conceptual and logistical approach for Oregon's PDG Needs Assessment.
- Served as a liaison between the ELD and the external research partners.
- Shared GIS and R programming resources with the research partners.
- Attended stakeholder and cross-agency meetings about data collection.
- Participated in the Parent Voice qualitative methods work group.

Activity Focus Keywords: Stakeholder Engagement, Cross-Agency Collaboration, Literature Review
Policy Area Keywords: Preschool Development Grant, Parent Voice, Needs Assessment

Portfolio Entry 3: Workforce Focus Groups

Project Overview:

Background: The ELD wants to hear from Oregon's EC workforce about their experiences with Oregon's Professional Learning system in order to make improvements to the system. Center-based teachers are historically difficult for the ELD to engage, since directors are the primary points of contact at the center-level. The ELD wants to explicitly engage center-based members of the workforce.

Goal: To conduct focus groups with center-based lead teachers, assistant teachers, and aides to understand their experiences with Oregon's Professional Learning System and how they would like to see the system changed to better support their professional development.

Contributions of Fellow:

- Developed focus group protocol.
- Helped determine focus group locations and sampling of priority populations.
- Co-facilitated focus groups across the state.
- Disseminated summaries of focus groups to participants.
- Qualitatively analyzed focus group data and lead the writing of the final report.

Activity Focus Keywords: Focus Groups, Qualitative Analysis, Written Report, Disseminate Findings
Policy Area Keywords: Center-based Child Care, Professional Development, Quality Rating and Improvement System, Workforce, Professional Learning System