

Early Childhood Education Professional Development: Adult Education Glossary



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Intersections between training, technical assistance and postsecondary education

Though one method of PD delivery is generally predominant in a given situation, *training, technical assistance and education frequently overlap*. All three of these may be organized and sponsored by institutions of higher education. College and university instructors may be engaged in delivery of all three types of PD. Many college students are already working in the field and may be participating in training or TA as part of or parallel to degree completion. For example, all teacher education programs include *practical training*, sometimes called clinical practice, field experience, internship, co-op, or student teaching. All teacher education programs include observation, supervision, feedback, and reflection on practice as part of this clinical practice. Higher education institutions often include a *campus lab school or children's center* in which the children's teachers, college students and college instructors observe, practice and reflect together on their work with young children. In addition, many colleges and universities have *partnerships* with school districts, Head Start or other community agencies to organize student teaching practice, reflection, coaching and mentoring from faculty and experienced peers. Early childhood faculty may be important partners in the transition of recent education program graduates into their first teaching positions, through *new teacher induction programs*. They may participate as mentors or coaches in state or community quality improvement and professional development initiatives.

Many *teachers already working in the field take college coursework as part of their ongoing professional development*. They may take individual courses to refresh, expand or update knowledge and practice, earning college credit. Or, they may complete an educational certificate or degree program to renew certification, earn a new credential or to prepare for a new professional role in the field. Higher education institutions often include a division of *Continuing Education or Adult Education* that offers credit and noncredit courses for students who do not seek to complete a degree program but want the sustained training offered through individual courses or *certificate programs*.

Relevant Federal Legislation and Research Centers

Higher education is part of the federal and state elementary, secondary and postsecondary education system. Though workforce and higher education language varies from state to state, most of the definitions used here are established in federal and state education systems and legislation including:

- Higher Education Act of 1965, most recently amended in 2008.
<http://www2.ed.gov/policy/highered/leg/hea08/index.html>
- Carl D. Perkins Career and Technical Education Improvement Act
<http://www2.ed.gov/policy/sectech/leg/perkins/index.html>
- Workforce Investment Partnership Act
<http://thomas.loc.gov/cgi-bin/bdquery/z?d105:HR01385:|TOM:/bss/d105query.html>
- Integrated Postsecondary Education Data System (IPEDS). Sponsored by the U.S. Department of Education (DoE) / Institute of Education Sciences (IES) / National Center for Educational Statistics (NCES)
<http://nces.ed.gov/ipeds/glossary/>



Contextual Definitions

Education is a series of learning experiences with related assessments of learning; specific to an area of inquiry and related set of skills or dispositions; delivered by a professional(s) with subject matter and adult learning knowledge and skills; and offered by an accredited school, college or university. A planned sequence of courses, along with admission and graduation requirements, comprises an *education program*.

Postsecondary education or higher education follows elementary and secondary education and is defined by IPEDS as “formal instructional programs with a curriculum designed primarily for students who are beyond compulsory age for high school.”

Correspondence education is defined in the Higher Education Act as self paced education in which the institution of higher education (IHE) provides instructional materials and assessments, using postal mail or electronic methods. Interaction between the student and instructor or other students is minimal and not substantive. (Higher Education Act of 2008, section 602.3)

Distance education is defined in the Higher Education Act as relationship-based education in which the IHE provides synchronous or asynchronous methods that fit into course credit, semester, trimester or quarter structures. There is substantive and frequent interaction between students and between the student and the instructor. Distance education may use any of these technologies: the internet, satellite, cable, video cast, podcast, CD and DVD. Distance education programs may be conducted through exclusively distance methods or through blended or hybrid methods that combine distance and face-to-face coursework. (Higher Education Act of 2008, section 602.3)

Institutions of Higher Education (IHEs) are defined in the Higher Education Act, Title 34, Part 600 as education institutions (schools, colleges and universities) that provide postsecondary education, beyond elementary and secondary education. IHEs include community colleges; public and private colleges; public and private universities; and some technical, career and business schools. IHEs may be federally designated as Tribal Colleges and Universities, Historically Black Community Colleges and Universities (HBCCUs), and Hispanic Serving Institutions (HSIs). To be eligible for federal funds including student grants and loans, IHEs must be legally authorized by a state agency, admit only students who have a high school diploma or equivalent, provide educational programs that award associate, baccalaureate or graduate degrees, and be accredited by an agency approved by the U.S. Department of Education or are approved by a state agency. (Title 34, Part 600) IHEs also offer workforce, vocational and continuing education programs of one year or less (often called diploma or certificate programs); and offer both credit and non-credit courses.

Instructors, Professors, Field Supervisors, and other Faculty members are employees of IHEs assigned to a department or program(s). They are hired according to state, institution and accreditation requirements and meet the qualifications of those requirements. Institutional accreditors generally require that faculty have graduate degrees in the subjects that they teach, or in a closely related field. Some accreditors define closely related fields as those with at least 18 graduate credits in the field.

College credits, courses and semesters are defined in federal, state and institution regulations and guidelines. A typical course is 3 credit hours or 3 hours of instructor-student contact per week over a 15-week period. Students are expected to engage in substantive, additional, independent learning assignments for each course, each week. A typical semester is 15 weeks of class sessions, plus a 16th week of final exams. A full time course load for undergraduates is 12-15 credits per semester. Courses at institutions on a trimester or quarter schedule may have different configurations. For example, a typical quarter system is 11 weeks long, with a full time course load of 14-18 credits per quarter.

Direct assessment methods are defined in the Higher Education Act as methods that award course credit to students who demonstrate evidence that they have already mastered course content and requirements. Direct assessment may be 1) a direct assessment of the individual student's knowledge, skills or 2) direct assessment of another training or education program or course, along with evidence that the student met performance expectations. (Higher Education Act of 2008, section 602.3) Direct assessment of student mastery may include credit for prior learning as measured by exams, portfolios, and teaching performance evaluations.

Degree Program/Program of Study/Higher Education Programs are defined in the Higher Education Act as "postsecondary education programs offered by an institution of higher education that leads to an academic or professional degree, certificate or other recognized educational credential." (Higher Education Act of 2008, section 602.3)

Program Graduates or Program Completers are those students who complete all components of a specific program of study; meet expectations on key assessments often related to institution, state or national standards; meet academic expectations related to grade point averages and timely progress toward program completion; and other graduation requirements. Students who are actively enrolled in a program but have not yet completed program requirements are generally referred to as *candidates*.

Teacher Education Programs are programs of study organized in a coherent and sequential program of coursework that includes individual study, peer learning, field experiences and performance assessments. These learning experiences are facilitated and assessed by course instructors who are employed by an institution of higher education (IHE). Many IHEs offer shorter certificate programs, programs that satisfy requirements for CDA training, ongoing professional development for current teachers, or programs that provide alternate pathways to professional roles for career changers. Successful program completers earn specialized degrees, diplomas, or certificates that may lead to national or state early childhood credentials or meet other requirements for professional roles.

Alternate route programs are post-baccalaureate programs designed for individuals who have undergraduate degrees in areas other than teacher education. Alternate route programs may include teacher residency programs, worksite based programs, Teach for America, and Troops to Teachers. When these programs include *nontraditional providers*, this should be in partnership with accredited IHEs and with accountability measures comparable to traditional postsecondary education programs.

Tech-Prep programs are defined in the Carl D. Perkins Act as programs of study that combine at least two years of secondary (high school) education with a minimum of two years of postsecondary education. These programs combine academic and vocational instruction, may be worksite based, and lead to a college degree or vocational certificate. They lead to immediate placement in a specialized career and/or to further postsecondary education. (Carl D. Perkins Act Section 203)

Field experiences and clinical practice includes field observations, field work, practica, student teaching and other “clinical” practice experiences such as home visiting. A planned sequence of these experiences supports student development of understanding, competence and dispositions in a specialized area of practice. (NAEYC 2010 Initial and Advanced Standards)

Lab Schools and Campus Children’s Centers offer educational programs to children on college campuses. They may serve children of the students and staff who study or work at the institution, as well as local community children. They may include childcare services, preschool and prekindergarten services, and elementary grades. In some cases, they include licensed infant and toddler programs, Head Start programs or state approved elementary schools. These programs often serve as observation and field sites for teacher education students. Early childhood faculty may work as teachers, supervisors, technical assistance providers or coaches in campus lab schools and children’s centers.

State approval is generally required for a community college, university or other IHE to offer early childhood degree programs as part of a state higher education system. State approval of specific degree programs may be required for graduates to be eligible for state teacher licensure. State approved *alternate routes* to licensure usually exist for those “career changers” who already have a degree in another field. State approval may be offered by the state Department of Education, Department of Higher Education, Board of Regents, or other state higher education system agency. State approval of professional preparation programs typically requires or encourages *national program accreditation*.

National Accreditation or Recognition is public recognition of IHEs and professional degree programs awarded by non-governmental agencies through a process of standard setting, self study, peer review, accreditation decision, and ongoing reporting.

National Accreditation of institutions is a well-established means of monitoring the quality of IHEs and the educational programs that they offer. The Higher Education Act of 1965 and its reauthorizations require that federal student grants and loans may go only to those IHEs that are accredited by agencies recognized by the U.S. Department of Education. Four year institutions accredited by The National Council for Accreditation of Teacher Education (NCATE) are recognized by the U.S. Department of Education.

National Accreditation of Professional Programs is valued in many states, by many employers, and by students. In most established professions, licensed practitioners are required to meet national professional standards and completion of a degree program accredited by the national profession is required before taking licensure exams. The National Council for Accreditation of Teacher Education (NCATE) recognizes NAEYC as the national professional standard setting agency for early childhood teacher education programs.

- Early childhood *associate degree programs* in IHE's earn accreditation from the NAEYC Commission on Early Childhood Associate Degree Accreditation (ECADA).
 - NAEYC also offers recognition to those *baccalaureate and graduate degree programs* that meet NAEYC standards and are sponsored by a department or school of education that is accredited by the National Council for Accreditation of Teacher Education (NCATE). However, NCATE accreditation of an IHE alone does not earn NAEYC recognition or indicate that NAEYC professional preparation standards are met.
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Credentials are academic degrees, licenses or certificates awarded to individuals who successfully complete state or national requirements to enter specialized roles in the early childhood profession.

State Teacher Licensure is the process used by a state governmental agency to grant professional recognition to individuals who meet state requirements to teach in a specialized teaching discipline, such as early childhood or special education. State credentials may be called certificates or licenses.

Professional Certification is the process used by a non-governmental state or national agency to grant professional recognition to individuals who meet the requirements of the agency. The Council for Professional Recognition and the National Board for Professional Teaching Standards offer national early childhood credentials.

Induction programs are comprehensive staff development programs designed by a school or other employer to support, train and retain first year teachers. Induction programs may be part of professional or leadership development plans and can include peer-to-peer networks, teacher learning communities, mentoring, and coaching. Induction programs are often a partnership between the IHE and school or other early education setting, supporting the college students' transition from clinical practice as part of degree completion to first years of work in a new professional role.



Additional Characteristics of Postsecondary Education Programs

Focus

- **Initial teacher education programs** prepare candidates for first early childhood teaching licensure (pre-service education) or for settings that do not require licensure. They may be offered at associate, baccalaureate or graduate degree levels.
- **Advanced teacher education programs** prepare candidates for advanced positions in the field such as accomplished or mentor early childhood teacher, early childhood administrator, state early childhood specialists, teacher educators and researchers. They are offered at master's and doctoral levels.
- **In-service or Continuing Education** is PD in which early childhood professionals enhance their skills and maintain current knowledge and practice. Continuing education may be required in order to maintain individual licensure or advance to a new level of licensure, to meet employer expectations, or to meet other local, state or federal requirements for early childhood professionals working in the field.
- **All teacher education programs** provide learning experiences and performance-based assessments of individual learning related to understanding young children, their families and communities; child assessment; planning and implementing effective practices; mastering and applying academic content disciplines; and professional responsibilities. These components are shared by the national CDA competencies, InTASC standards, NCATE standards, and NAEYC professional preparation standards.

Relationships

- All education programs are strengthened by trusting and respectful interactions **between instructor and student, and between students**. Because educational programs include multiple sessions, students benefit from intentionally developed opportunities to build positive relationships between and among instructors(s) and participants.
- All teacher education programs benefit from reciprocal, respectful relationships between **the IHE, the early childhood degree program, and community field sites**. Individuals and organization partners value each other as resources for learning, for sharing expertise, and for strengthening each other's work.
- All education programs benefit from engagement with **community stakeholders**. In early childhood programs, representatives from the following stakeholder groups are typically invited to participate in a formal advisory group: program alumni, employers of program graduates, community child care and Head Start programs, local school districts, local businesses, NAEYC affiliates or chapters, and local or state early childhood initiatives.
- Relationships **between students** are facilitated through peer tutoring programs and study groups; student clubs; online discussions and social networking; mentoring from

students who have successfully completed a course, completed the program, or transferred to a higher level degree or institution; and cohorts of students that share common challenges and support each other through the duration of the program.

- Early childhood programs also foster relationships *between students and the larger early childhood professional community* through facilitation of Early Childhood Student Club activities, field placements, job fairs, graduation ceremonies, and capstone portfolio reviews.

Process

- *Program design, course design, and instructor teaching strategies* incorporate adult learning principles including interactive learning activities, exercises, and instructional aids (handouts, audiovisuals, and other components of instruction) to facilitate learning experiences that support defined outcomes.

- *Faculty engage in* reflective practice both individually and with peer instructors, including reflection on own practices, observation of peers, observation and feedback from peers, and other evaluations. Program faculty use student performance data to inform decisions about program design, course design, teaching and learning.

- *Students engage in* substantive, meaningful independent or group learning projects each week, in addition to instructor contact time.

- *Student advising* helps students understand program requirements and institution process and procedures. Faculty and admissions office staff work together to plan and offer student advising that is responsive to the needs of the early childhood program and its students. Stable faculty members advise the students over time to support faculty-student mentoring relationships.

- *Completion* of education coursework leads to college credit. Completion of education programs leads to a credential, certificate, diploma or degree. These should be embedded in the recipient's broader professional development plan.

Duration

- *Credit, course, semester, and program duration* meets institution, state and federal requirements. An associate degree is at least 60 credit hours of college level course work. A bachelor's degree is at least 120 credit hours of college level course work. A master's degree can be an additional 30-50 credits depending on focus and certifications.

- To support *student retention and timely completion*, IHEs offer a range of services including admission and financial aid offices, student learning centers, easily accessible catalogs of program requirements and semester offerings, advising related to program progress and course selection, and advising related to long term career planning.

- To preserve the meaning and *integrity of the diploma or other credential* 1) All program completers meet comparable and objective performance standards. 2) Duration depends upon academic readiness and progress. 3) Developmental or remedial courses do not count as college credit. 4) College credit is earned only for satisfactory grades. 5) There are limits on the number of times a student can retake a course. 6) Each course counts only one time.

- **Traditional teacher education programs** offered on the IHE campus, work in close collaboration with multiple community field sites to plan and implement student field observation and practice assignments. There are multiple opportunities for face-to-face interaction between faculty and students, and between students. Early childhood students are encouraged to engage in campus life beyond class attendance.
- **Correspondence education** is self-paced with minimal interaction between the student and instructor or peers. It should not be considered the first choice for most students and should not comprise an entire early childhood teacher education program. Where correspondence courses are offered, students are encouraged to engage in peer and instructor interaction beyond the course structure.
- **Distance education** offers asynchronous schedules and minimal travel to campus. The design is relationship-based with substantive and frequent interaction between students and between the student and the instructor. Distance technologies (the internet, satellite, cable, video cast, podcast, CD and DVD) are chosen for best fit to course content and processes and for accessibility to all demographic student groups.
- **Key assessments** should be aligned with national standards and implemented consistently across all course sections and delivery methods. *Direct assessment* methods may be used to award credit in lieu of course completion when students can demonstrate mastery of course content and requirements. This may be through 1) “testing out” of a course through satisfactory performance on one or more key assessments or 2) “transfer in” of a course from another training or education program. When there is not a one-to-one course match, direct assessments should consider equivalency of blocks of courses or of programs as a whole, focusing on course assessments or outcomes rather than course numbers, titles or other inputs.
- **Field or clinical experiences** help students develop professional skills and dispositions, understanding and integrating theory and practice. These experiences begin early in the program and lead to capstone experiences, helping students to integrate the content and practice components of each course and to build increasing competence over time. Across all delivery methods, there are clear expectations for field sites, with substantive and frequent interaction between instructor and cooperating teachers and administrators in the field. Cohorts of students interact regularly to share experiences, reflect on practice, and receive guidance and mentoring from both master teachers and faculty. Faculty supervisors regularly observe student practice and communicate with cooperating teachers and administrators. Over time, partnerships with field sites support professional relationships and ongoing improvements in both programs – the adult education program and the children’s early learning program. Field and clinical experiences are implemented with comparable methods and resources across different sites and across local and distance programs.

APPENDICES

Appendix A — Technical Assistance Strategies and Implications for Postsecondary Education Programs

This Appendix expands upon Appendix A as published in the NAEYC and NACCRRRA Training and Technical Assistance Glossary, adding a new row “Implications for education programs.” Mentoring, Coaching and Consultation are strategies common to early childhood training and education programs and defined in the NAEYC and NACCRRRA Training and Technical Assistance Glossary. This table is designed to allow easy comparison between and among these strategies, which are often similar in practice and intent and often overlap in practice. Because these strategies are often integrated into the clinical practice components of postsecondary education programs, the last row in the table identifies some implications for implementation of these strategies in higher education.

Table I

| | Mentoring | Coaching | Consultation |
|-------------------|--|--|--|
| Definition | Mentoring is a relationship-based process between colleagues in similar professional roles, with a more-experienced individual with adult learning knowledge and skills, the mentor, providing guidance and example to the less-experienced protégé or mentee. Mentoring is intended to increase an individual’s personal or professional capacity, resulting in greater professional effectiveness. | Coaching is a relationship-based process led by an expert with specialized and adult learning knowledge and skills, who often serves in a different professional role than the recipient(s). Coaching is designed to build capacity for specific professional dispositions, skills, and behaviors and is focused on goal-setting and achievement for an individual or group. | Consultation is a collaborative, problem-solving process between an external consultant with specific expertise and adult learning knowledge and skills and an individual or group from one program or organization. Consultation facilitates the assessment and resolution of an issue-specific concern—a program-/organizational-, staff-, or child-/family-related issue—or addresses a specific topic. |
| Focus | Addresses a specific topic or the protégé’s holistic professional growth. | Supports the development of specific skills and practices; it is focused on a performance-based outcome(s). | Resolution of a specific concern or set of concerns. |
| | Supports the reflective processes that professionals need to translate the theories and information learned through education and/or training into best practices. Should be included in the recipient’s broader professional development plan. | Should be embedded in the recipient’s broader professional development plan that provides the theoretical foundations related to the specific skills being addressed. | Capacity-building approach to facilitate the recipient’s continued use of the process employed during or as a result of the consultation. |

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| Relationships | Includes the mentor and protégé establishing and maintaining a positive, trusting, and respectful relationship. | Requires interactions that build trust and respect. | Requires a collaborative relationship between the consultant and the person to whom he/she provides recommendations. |
| | Ideal match up of mentor and protégé is mutually agreed upon rather than assigned. A person may also enlist a mentor, be assigned to a mentor, or the mentor may be assigned to an individual. | A person may select a coach, be assigned to a coach, or the coach may be assigned to an individual or group. | Consultants may be engaged by the administrative leadership of a workplace. In some instances the consultancy is arranged or directed by a regulatory or funding agency or organization. |
| Process | Can be accomplished by some supervisors, but should be distinguished from supervisory processes. Should not be used as a method of evaluating job performance. | Should be distinguished from supervisory processes; however, its findings and conclusions may contribute to job performance evaluation. In these instances, the recipient of the coaching should be made aware of this possibility. | Consultants may be engaged by the administrative leadership of a workplace. In some instances the consultancy is arranged or directed by a regulatory or funding agency or organization. Begins with the joint development of goals. |
| | Begins with establishing role clarity and goal setting. | Begins with a collaborative agreement between the coach and the individual to set the guidelines and goals. | |
| Duration | Includes the facilitation of adult learning techniques such as guided self-reflection, resulting in the application of new ideas to the protégé's professional practice or personal disposition. | Includes various combinations of questioning, listening, observation, reflection, feedback, prompting, modeling, and practice. | Supports the development of goal-related solutions and the implementation strategies recommended to achieve them. Recommendations may include the provisions of other relationship-based TA methods. |
| | May include unplanned contacts between mentor and protégé when the protégé has questions or specific concerns. | Likely to occur through planned onsite contacts. | Likely to occur through planned onsite contacts. |
| | Remains ongoing or concludes by mutual consent or when the protégé has achieved her goals. | Concludes when the specified goal has been achieved. | Concludes with a summary process and an evaluation of the effectiveness of the consultation provided. |
| | Ongoing, iterative process. | Can occur one time or in a series of sessions, dependent upon the successful achievement of the goal. | Generally short term. Long-term relationships with consultants may develop if individuals, programs, or organizations use them for assistance in addressing multiple, often interrelated, concerns over time. As an example, long-term relationships with |

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| | | | consultants may evolve as they help guide overall program quality improvement processes. |
| Delivery | May be provided face-to-face (onsite or offsite) or through distance, technology-based, or hybrid methods. | May be provided face-to-face (onsite or offsite) or through distance, technology-based, or hybrid methods. | May be provided face-to-face (onsite or offsite) or through distance, technology-based, or hybrid methods. |
| Implications for education programs | <p>Students frequently turn to instructors as mentors, seeking advice related to current professional or family situations, career opportunities and direction, and issues related to the ways that higher education experience can change personal identity and relationships. These mentor relationships can last for many years after the student completes the program.</p> <p>Because childcare and Head Start settings do not have the same entry requirements as P-12 schools, students working in childcare and Head Start may already hold teacher or administrator roles when they begin their college education.</p> <p>Additionally, as the average age of college students rises, faculty and students are often age peers. This is especially true in community colleges.</p> <p>In this sense, students may have both a mentor and peer relationship with the college instructor.</p> | <p>Faculty members regularly engage in coaching as they observe students in field or clinical settings and facilitate skill building and reflection on practice.</p> <p>Adjunct faculty may hold jobs in the field and are occasionally the employer of one or more of their students. All instructors have the responsibility to fairly evaluate student work in ways that will affect the student's progress through the program. Students are aware of this aspect of the coaching relationship.</p> <p>Meeting course and degree program requirements is an explicit component of the coaching relationship guidelines and goals. An ongoing challenge is to make course expectations clear and evaluate students objectively, while simultaneously supporting honest, reflective practice.</p> | <p>Faculty members do not directly engage in consulting contracts with students. However, many instructors do serve as consultants to early learning programs in their community. In this case, the instructor's consulting relationship is probably with a program administrator.</p> <p>Often the same program administrators that seek support from consultants are the programs that encourage continuing education for staff and are engaged in a partnership with the education program as a field site or advisory group member.</p> <p>It is not uncommon for a faculty member to be serving as a consultant to an early learning program that employs his or her past, current and future students or that serves as a field site for the adult education program. It is especially important to be aware of potential conflicts of interest if an instructor engages in a direct consulting arrangement with a current student.</p> |

APPENDIX B — Project Overview and Process

One of NAEYC's three broad goals is to improve professional practice and working conditions in early childhood education. In support of this goal, NAEYC's governing board and staff review and discuss ways to enhance quality early childhood professional development. In 2009 creating a cross-sector framework for role, function, and core capabilities for those who provide professional development was identified as an important issue that could be immediately addressed.

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From 2009 through mid-2010 NAEYC hosted multiple focus groups and facilitated input sessions on states' critical policy questions, strategies, challenges, ideas, and needs related to professional development methods and the core capabilities of those who provide it. Several of these sessions were convened with national partners including NACCRRRA, the National Professional Development Center on Inclusion, and National Louis University: McCormick Center for Early Childhood Leadership. Participants in these focus groups included representatives from all sectors of the early childhood field (e.g., child care, Head Start, schools, early intervention) and its varied roles, including direct service practitioners (center- and school-based teachers and family child care providers); those who provide professional development and supports (trainers, technical assistance providers, mentors, coaches, consultants, advisors, higher education faculty, and others); program, agency, and system administrators; national, state and local policy makers; and researchers both within and from outside of the early education field.

During this year-and-a-half dialogue, three main issues were consistently raised as most urgent:

- consistent, national definitions and standards to help further clarify and move forward state and local efforts, particularly in relation to technical assistance (including mentoring, coaching, consultation, and advising);
- core competencies for those who provide professional development; and
- evaluating, measuring, and tracking training and technical assistance.

In February 2010 NACCRRRA partnered with NAEYC in a joint effort to develop national definitions for training and technical assistance. The two organizations spent several months engaged in a review of new and historically significant related research as well as existing state definitions and associated quality improvement and assurance efforts. The organizations decided that this joint work should start from where states' system policy efforts are, using practice and system policies as a foundation for definitions development; the project lens and focus was practice and state policy-based. During the drafting process the definitions work expanded to include training, TA, and education definitions, as well as contextual information about the early education field and workforce.

In September 2010 an early draft was circulated for review and feedback to key experts representing early childhood researchers, national and state technical assistance networks, state professional development system administrators, policy consultants, and higher education faculty. A second early draft was also used for a

state feedback discussion at The National Registry Alliance annual conference in late September. From October through December 2010 targeted feedback was solicited from additional key national organization and association partners, including ACCESS and the National Association for Early Childhood Teacher Educators (NAECTE), and state stakeholders representing the varied roles of the field.

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Based on the feedback provided, as well as the time-sensitive needs expressed by state policy and system administrators, NAEYC and NACCRRRA decided to move forward with the finalization of the glossary of training and TA definitions. NAEYC and the Alliance of Early Childhood Teacher Educators continued to explore and develop national education-related definitions for the next edition of the glossary. Early drafts were developed by a workgroup that included NAEYC staff, ACCESS and NAECTE board members representing the Alliance of Early Childhood Teacher Educators. Development of definitions included a review of recent teacher education research and policy papers as well as terminology established in current federal legislation. Final input was solicited from ACCESS and NAECTE members and during a national feedback discussion at the 2011 NAEYC Annual Conference.

During this twelve-month dialogue, work focused on

1. Additional contextual definitions that provide common understandings of terminology used in P-12 and postsecondary education policy and practice
2. Shared understanding of and vision for characteristics of postsecondary education programs
3. Recognition that technical assistance strategies are often embedded into clinical practice components of teacher education programs and related implications

Additionally, NAEYC, NACCRRRA, and the Alliance of Early Childhood Teacher Educators will explore the core knowledge and capabilities of those who provide professional development and what national resources may be helpful to support related state efforts.

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The Writing Group members were Nancy Beaver, Eastfield College, Dallas Community College District; Sara Davis, University of Arkansas-Fort Smith; Libby Etheridge, University of Oklahoma; Nancy Freeman, University of South Carolina; Carrie Nepstad, Harold Washington College, City Colleges of Chicago; and Alison Lutton, NAEYC staff.

