

**Topic: Adjusting postsecondary curriculum to reflect the teacher skills and competencies needed to address the physical, social, emotional, and academic needs of preschoolers preparing for entry into school**

❖ ***Recommended strategies and action steps...***

- At the program level
  - Align course objectives with competencies developed by the National Association for the Education of Young Children (NAEYC)
  - Develop collaboration mechanisms and advisory boards for coordination
  
- At the institutional level
  - Develop collaboration mechanisms with colleagues in programs that address early childhood education (e.g., Child Development, Psychology, Education)
  
- At the system level
  - Develop collaboration mechanisms with colleagues throughout the system
  
- Across systems
  - Find ways to create community among systems
  - Work toward a shared vocabulary across early childhood stakeholders
  - Develop collaboration/communication mechanisms among the stakeholders
  
- At the State level
  - Require a background in early childhood education for all teacher/administrator candidates (as appropriate)
  - Use NAEYC foundations as major categories for teacher knowledge and skill; set up work groups to develop domains of knowledge and skill necessary for teachers in this field
  - Develop a “tool kit” (strategies for immediate implementation) based on these competencies for entry-level teacher candidates
  - Ensure a voice of early childhood education faculty/leaders/practitioners on the development of Early Learner standards

***Additional Salient Points***

Principles for preparing teachers:

- Theory and practice must be developed concurrently.
- Use the 5 NAEYC foundations as major sections for teacher competencies:
  1. promoting learning and development
  2. family and community relationships
  3. observation, documentation, assessment
  4. teaching and learning
  5. professional development

- Operationally define specific knowledge and skills in each area.
- Work with teachers to be able to articulate their early childhood education / early learning philosophy.
- Build an understanding that children learn in the context of their relationships and their routines.
- Develop an understanding of the early childhood / early learning population
  1. multicultural
  2. multilingual
  3. range of abilities (issues of inclusion)
  4. range of SES
  5. range of experience
  6. range of values

Concerns:

- Not so much the what of curriculum, but the how of instruction.
- We must build on what we have (e.g., NAEYC, former Early Childhood Education Emphasis credential established by the Commission on Teacher Credentialing).
- We are concerned about losing the diversity of the teaching force as requirements for teachers are expanded.
- We are concerned about the loss of play as an important, necessary, and valued vehicle for learning.