

**EARLY CARE AND EDUCATION
PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT COMMITTEE AND
HIGHER EDUCATION CONSORTIUM**

Meeting Minutes: September 6, 2002

Attended: Linda Abercrombie, Jerry Brewer, Suzi Brodof, Sally Byard, Judy Curry, Pat Gracey, Mary Jo Graham, Diana Grych, Judy Hale, Kathy Herrington, Lynn Jones, Judy Kachelereis, Teresa Lawlor, Susan McCoy, Charles "Mack" McDaniel, Chrissy Miller, Ann Nutt, Cindy O'Brien, April Puzzuoli, Bobbie Warash, Charles Wood, Mel Woodcock

I. Introductions and Review

Introductions were made, new members were welcomed and the August meeting minutes were reviewed and approved and Charles Woods will be added as being in attendance at the August 7 meeting.

This was a joint meeting between the Professional Development Committee and Higher Education Consortium. For the benefit of new members, Lynn Jones reviewed the work to-date of these two committees during the past 5-6 years related to development of WV STARS (State Training and Registry System), which includes core competencies, a Career Pathway, a training approval system, coordinated training system which includes making college credits more accessible to practitioners and limited scholarships.

II. SB 247 - Early Childhood Program

A summary of the legislation and draft procedural rule were distributed and reviewed. Judy Curry reviewed the Personnel Standards and Staff and Development Training portions of the draft rule, with the following discussions.

The higher education representatives reported their school's early childhood programs:

- WVU - has a new Birth to 5 teacher certification, an early childhood undergraduate and graduate program, an elementary education teacher certification program with a PreK-K endorsement, a Master's level early childhood special needs certification program, and a new endorsement in interdisciplinary/disabilities studies.
- Marshall - has and early childhood program, an elementary education program with PreK-K endorsement, a master's level early childhood special education program, and within two years should have the new Birth to 5 teacher certification program. Marshall

Community and Technical College also has an Associate Degree in Occupational Development with an Early Childhood Specialization.

- Concord - has an early education and early childhood special needs joint program at the Bachelor's level, an elementary education with a PreK - K endorsement, and an Associate Degree in Occupational Development with an Early Childhood Specialization (articulating the ACDS into this degree). They now accept all of the 33 credits given toward the AAS degree from the ACDS program into their four year program. They also accept 25-30 hours toward an AA from Bluefield State.
- Shepherd and Glenville both have elementary education programs with a PreK-K endorsement and early childhood programs. They also have the Associate Degree in Occupational Development with an Early Childhood Specialization (articulating the ACDS into this degree).
- Fairmont has an early childhood/family studies degree and the Associate Degree in Occupational Development with an Early Childhood Specialization (articulating the ACDS into this degree). They also articulate the CDA (Child Development Associate) credential into college credits.
- W. Va. State- have the Associate Degree in Occupational Development with an Early Childhood Specialization (articulating the ACDS into this degree).
- Northern Community and Technical College - have the Associate Degree in Occupational Development with an Early Childhood Specialization (articulating the ACDS into this degree) and an Associate Degree in Child Development. They also count 18 hours of credit for the CDA credential.
- Southern Community and Technical College - have the Associate Degree in Occupational Development with an Early Childhood Specialization (articulating the ACDS into this degree) and an Associate Degree in Early Childhood.
- Bluefield State College - has the Associate Degree in Occupational Development with an Early Childhood Specialization (articulating the ACDS into this degree)

Ten community colleges award between 28 & 33 college credits for the Apprenticeship for Child Development Specialists Program (ACDS) program toward an Associate degree in Occupational Development with an Early Childhood specialization.

The Higher Education Consortium has been working on articulating credit hours granted for the ACDS program to AAS degree into four year programs. This has been difficult because the

credits given for the ACDS program are usually electives and do not match specific Bachelor level courses. A suggestion was made that the committee seek a national certification for apprenticeship in order to make it easier to count hours toward a four year degree. Another suggestion was to look at examinations, such as the PRAXIS, but there is none for pre-school. The Higher Education Consortium will explore these suggestions.

Judy Hale expressed concern, under the current draft procedural rule, that teachers with degrees in early childhood special education would not be qualified to teach without a permit would have to return to school to receive a PreK-K endorsement. The three colleges/universities that offer both early childhood and early childhood special needs programs are Concord, Marshall and WVU. Graduates of Concord will not need additional credits since it is a joint early childhood and early childhood special needs program. Graduates of the early childhood special education programs at both Marshall and WVU will need additional regular early childhood courses to teach in the four year old public school programs. If additional classes are required, they are available at Marshall and WVU at both the undergraduate and graduate level. The Higher Education Consortium will work on infusing typical early childhood studies into special education classes and vice versa.

There was a general consensus that to be qualified to teach in the inclusive four year old public school preschool programs, as currently specified in the draft rule, teachers with early childhood degree or PreK-K endorsements also need 6-9 credit hours in early childhood special education.

It was also suggested that more use be made of portfolios to demonstrate competencies on a course by course basis or testing for college credit. Most colleges and universities use the portfolio process to some extent, particularly with the Regents Bachelor's degree.

A recommendation was made, and approved by the group, to continue to have separate Higher Education Consortium and Professional Development Committee meetings and for the groups to meet together on a quarterly basis (members of each committee do serve on the other committee). This will facilitate addressing the work that needs to be done in a more timely and efficient manner.

The Higher Education Consortium would continue to report to the Professional Development Committee and continue their work to make early care and education college credits and programs more available and accessible to students through: addressing articulation issues, including exploring an exam to facilitate articulation of the AAS in occupational development program to 4 year programs; infusing early childhood and early childhood special education studies in both program areas; infant and toddler credit bearing training; granting credit for experiential learning; and development of an early care and education leadership credential.

The Professional Development Committee would continue their work on the WV STARS professional development system, address the need for ongoing staff development and training for the SB 247 procedural rule related to ongoing staff development, training on inclusion, and training on curriculum and assessment standards; work with the Higher Education Consortium on making training available for college credit; and working with the Higher Education Consortium on the early care and education leadership credential and other training/professional development issues.

It was recommended that we discuss the splitting of the group with the PIECES leadership before a final decision was made.

There was some discussion of other portion of the SB 247 procedural rule:

- some expressed concerns about requiring schools to subcontract 50% of programs in a county to other community early care and education programs - would be a problem for many school systems; there needs to be more clarification of how the subcontracting would work.
- the schools have to hire the most qualified teacher with the longest years of service when hiring for the public school programs.
- concerns were expressed on behalf of child care programs about the possible loss of programs and funds for their programs.
- there was general consensus that the community collaboration portion of the legislation and rule are critical to success.

III. Training/Credentialing Requirements for Paraprofessionals

The group was asked to recommend training requirements for early childhood paraprofessionals in the four year old classrooms. Lynn distributed the current BOE policy regarding a permanent paraprofessional certificate (126-136-25) and Marshall Community and Technical College's proposal to design a para-educator program for statewide implementation (it was not known if this proposal has been funded).

The *No Child Left Behind* federal legislation requires that paraprofessionals employed as of January 8, 2002 have either completed two years of college, hold a two-year degree or pass a state or local assessment. Marshall Community and Technical College has is proposed to develop and such an assessment for the state. After much discussion, the recommendations were made:

- A one year paraprofessional certificate should be developed through the higher education system. Kathy Herrington from Northern Community College and Charles Wood from Southern Community College will work on this and bring to the Higher Education Consortium and Professional Development Committee.

- Paraprofessionals under SB 247 procedural rule should be Level VI on the WV STARS Career Pathway (Associate degree or equivalent level). Paraprofessionals who meet requirements on Levels III through V, should be issued annual permits, renewable for up to five years. After five years, they would have to be at Level VI. Lynn and Judy will make this recommendation to Cathy Jones and the PIECES Advisory Council.

IV. Others

Governor's Summit on Early Care and Education will be held on October 8 at the University of Charleston. Information will be mailed soon.

National Governor's Association will be working with West Virginia on September 23 & 24 in Charleston on a professional development system for low-income workers and helping us with WV STARS.

V. Next Steps

1. The Higher Education Consortium will explore a national certification for apprenticeship in order to make it easier to count hours toward a four year degree, and an exam, such as the PRAXIS, in order to more successfully transfer credit from the occupational associate degree to a four year degree.
2. The Higher Education Consortium will work on infusing typical early childhood studies into special education classes and vica versa so that students will be more prepared for inclusive classrooms and serving the needs of all young children in their classes.
3. In addition to continuing developing/implementing WV STARS, the Professional Development Committee will address the staff development training requirements in the procedural rule for SB 247 and work with the Higher Education Consortium on college credits for training.
4. A one year paraprofessional certificate should be developed through the higher education system. Kathy Herrington from Northern Community College and Charles Wood from Southern Community College will work on this and bring to the Higher Education Consortium and Professional Development Committee.
5. Kathy Herrington Charles Wood will work on drafting a one year paraprofessional certificate for early care and education and bring to the Higher Education Consortium and Professional Development Committee.

6. Lynn and Judy will recommend to Cathy Jones and the PIECES Advisory Council that paraprofessionals under SB 247 procedural rule should be Level VI on the WV STARS Career Pathway (Associate degree or equivalent level). Those who meet requirements on Levels III through V, should be issued annual permits, renewable for up to five years, at which time would have to be on Level VI.