

**Task Force on Professional Levels and Competencies [PLC Task Force]  
April 29, 2009  
DMACC West Campus  
West Des Moines, IA**

**Key Decisions**

- Approved teacher and teacher assistant/teacher aide as distinctive roles for the purpose of identifying performance levels and associated competencies.
- Approved the definition for and components of the term *core competency*.
- Approved a sequence for accomplishing the Task Force's work relative to developing teaching staff competencies by performance level, teaching role, and age cohort.
- Agreed to additional competency areas for teaching staff in order to update NAEYC's 2003 Personnel Preparation Standards.
- Approved three (3) Performance Levels for teaching staff.
- Approved labels and operational definitions for describing and differentiating Performance Levels of teaching staff.

**Meeting Notes**

**Opening Remarks – Penny Milburn, Consultant, Iowa Department of Education**

Penny welcomed everyone, expressed pleasure with the accomplishments of the first meeting, and emphasized her enthusiasm for the Task Force's work. She introduced Judith Nye, Head of the Department of Education at Luther College, as a new Task Force member. Barbara Grundlger has taken on a new position. As a result, she no longer is able to participate on the Task Force and has resigned from her appointment.

Penny reminded members to stay grounded in their charge. She noted that effort is underway on two fronts in response to questions that have been received and the desire to ensure that the work continues to move forward: (1) Determining the decision making process that will be used by the Department of Education and ECI Steering Committee on Professional Development once the Task Force recommendations have been received, and (2) identifying next steps following the recommendations' approval. Information regarding the first item hopefully will be available at the June meeting and on the second item by either the July or August meeting.

**Review of Meeting Agenda – Stacie Goffin, PLC Task Force Facilitator**

Stacie reinforced for members that their Charge offers them the opportunity to help define the future of the ECI professional development system; so Task Force members should try and avoid being overly restrained by the constraints of the present. She reviewed the meeting agenda, highlighting the meeting's planned results:

- Determine the role relationship between teacher and teacher assistant/teacher aide;
- Craft an operational definition for the term "core competency";

- Determine the need for additional rubrics/indicators to update NAEYC's 2003 personnel preparation standards;
- Decide on the sequence of their work relative to performance level, teaching role, and age cohort;
- Make a final decision regarding performance levels for teaching staff; and
- Begin the work of developing developmental competencies for teaching staff.

### **Foundational Decisions**

Building from their work at the March 20<sup>th</sup> meeting, the PLC Task Force approved the following – and additional - foundational decisions:

- Relative to developing core competencies by performance level and age cohort, there are two distinct teaching staff roles: teacher and assistant teacher/teacher aide.
- Operational definition of a “core competency”: The demonstration by a teacher or assistant teacher/teacher aide of observable skills derived from their knowledge and dispositions.
  - Components of a core competency: Description of an observable skill.
- Starting point and sequence of future work by the Task Force and its work groups:
  - Teacher Role (First complete the competencies of all performance levels for teachers, followed by the competencies of all levels for the assistant teacher/teacher aide)
  - Level 2, 3, 1
  - Preschool, Kindergarten, Infant/Toddler

### **Additional/Updated Information to NAEYC's 2003 Personnel Preparation Standards**

Task Force members identified the following information as necessary additions to NAEYC's 2003 Personnel Preparation Standards. These additions are based on new research, Iowa's 2004 *Core Body of Knowledge for Best Practices*, and state-relevant program standards:

- Diversity of children's culture, language, and ability/disability;
- Support to families;
- Knowledge of appropriate use of assessment tools;
- Alignment of assessment strategies with curriculum content;
- Use of assessment data to plan for the group's and individual children's learning;
- Intentional teaching;
- The role of the physical environment;
- Knowledge about children's health, safety, and nutrition as it relates to their learning and development;
- Effective and appropriate use of technology;
- Developing children's competencies in literacy, language, math, science, and social studies that reflect understanding of developmental sequences within these domains;

- The connection between cognitive development and children's content knowledge; and
- The role of complex play to children's learning and development, including teacher instructional strategies that facilitate a variety of play forms.

### **Performance Levels for Teaching Staff**

The five (5) Work Group chairs provided input to the Task Force from their members on the three (3) proposed performance levels outlined on March 20th. Following discussion, the Task Force affirmed three (3) performance levels and decided on their labels and the operational definitions for describing and differentiating among them:

- The ***Progressing Professional*** demonstrates a basic level of knowledge, skills, and dispositions. At this performance level, the teacher and teacher assistant/teacher aide:
  - Begins to evaluate practices based on stated outcomes.
  - Begins to engage in reflective teaching and on-going professional development.
  - Requires ongoing supervision/mentoring.
- The ***Skilled Professional*** demonstrates knowledge, skills, and dispositions relevant to the characteristics of the learner. At this performance level, the teacher and assistant teacher/teacher aide:
  - Evaluates and refines practices based on stated outcomes.
  - Engages in reflective teaching and on-going professional development.
  - Performs independent of continuous and/or direct supervision.
- The ***Mastery Professional*** consistently demonstrates knowledge, skills, and dispositions relevant to the characteristics of the learner. At this performance level, the teacher and teacher assistant/teacher aide:
  - Continuously evaluates and refines practices based on stated outcomes
  - Engages in reflective teaching and on-going professional development.
  - Serves as role model/mentor/coach.

The Task Force recognized that these labels and descriptions might be refined as its work progressed. Consistent with the Charge to the Task Force, these three (3) levels address the competencies expected of teaching staff at different developmental levels in their practice. They do not, at this point in the professional development system's evolution, relate directly to existing degrees, endorsements, and/or credentials.

### **Drafting Competencies for Teaching Staff by Level, Role, and Age Cohort**

In their work groups (which are based on each of NAEYC's five (5) personnel preparation standards), members began drafting competencies, beginning with teachers at Level 2, as agreed to in the morning. After some initial work had been completed, members were given copies of each other's work for review and comment. This initial work will go forward to the work groups for their review, refinement, and additions.

Approved May 11.2009

### **Next Steps – Stacie Goffin, PLC Task Force Facilitator**

The Task Force's work groups are to be convened a minimum of three times during the task forces' work. Work Group chairs have discretion to add more meetings. Stacie will provide chairpersons with helpful tools, as well as a due date for the drafts of the work groups' suggested competencies so they are available to the Task Force prior to its next meeting.

The next Task Force meeting is two days in length. It is scheduled for Tuesday and Wednesday, June 23<sup>rd</sup> and 24<sup>th</sup>, from 9:00 a.m. to 3:30 p.m., at the Living History Farms Comfort Suites.

### **Closing Remarks**

Members discussed possible challenges that may get in the way of completing this work, as well as possible solutions for dealing with these challenges.

### **Adjournment**

The PLC Task Force meeting adjourned at 3:26 p.m.