



REGION 1 NEWS

MASSACHUSETTS

MAECTE president Dr. David Fernie of Wheelock College he has been working with a group of colleagues on a Position Statement from MAECTE that addresses new initiatives and issues involving early childhood education in the Commonwealth. Our organization also co-sponsors two conference each year with COMTEC and MAETE, in the fall and spring and we will be again co-sponsoring a conference in May with Wheelock College.

Marge Werner

CONNECTICUT

There is considerable activity focused on Birth – 5 in the State of Connecticut.

A new strategy for meeting the needs, time constraints, and responsibilities of all early childhood faculty at both the 2-year and 4-year institutions across the state has begun. Both groups will meet on the same day at the same location with side-by-side meetings in the morning and a joint meeting in the afternoon. Communication will be easier and relationships will be easier to forge.

A collaborative group representing 2 year and 4 year institutions of higher education as well as community stakeholders (community programs, governmental representation) has been formed to address the identified Workforce needs for many additional teachers for publicly funded programs (i.e., School Readiness, Head Start, etc.). This group has been charged with the development of standards for an early childhood teacher credential that will be attainable at the 2 year and/or 4 year degree levels. This group has also subdivided into committees to work on articulation between 2 and 4 year schools, alternate routes and accelerated track options, assessment of programs and students and issues relating to practicum. This group is operating under the umbrella of the CT Department of Higher Education. This group regularly reports out at CT-AECTE meetings and several members of the CT-AECTE group are part of the Standards group.

The CT Early Childhood Alternate Route to Certification (CT-ECE ARC) has just launched a second cohort. This cohort consists of 17 students. The first cohort consisted of 8 individuals. These individuals have worked in the field for 3 – 5 years with backgrounds that include community preschool, public special education (preschool and elementary), kindergarten teaching, and early intervention programs. This very rigorous program was developed by the CT-AECTE group through a very collaborative process. This program is an excellent model for what can actually evolve in a small state with few resources at each individual higher education institution.

The Workforce Group has been focusing on issues of preparation of enough qualified early childhood personnel to meet the growing need for teachers of young children. The group has also made a commitment to addressing the following issues and has made critical recommendations:

1. Address the low teacher salaries
2. Develop the capacity of the higher education system
- 3: Increase Student Recruitment and Retention Support

Regina Miller

REGION 6 NEWS **(Arkansas, Louisiana, New Mexico, Oklahoma, Texas)**

ARKANSAS

At the University of Arkansas Fort Smith we have been changing our early childhood teacher education program and now offer a 3 credit Creative Arts in Early Childhood class that is taken as a block class with DAP and Children and Families in a Diverse Society. The focus in the class is how creative thought is the foundation for thinking, problem solving, and communication.

Arkansas has escaped the worst of the down economy so we have been able to add programs and increase the number of faculty. We have added a special education endorsement that students can work on before graduation. Arkansas is still moving forward with a Birth-5 License. This may mean more degree programs at some state colleges, but will not be a certification program.

News from Sara Davis

LOUISIANA

Since the last NAECTE newsletter, the LSU Provost decided not to approve the new increased admissions policy for the PK-3 and Elementary Education programs. The Faculty Senate will be investigating that issue this spring.

Visiting scholar, Janet Miller, gave an inspirational and challenging lecture asking how we can engage in projects of educating without always yielding to pressures for generalizable solutions or static versions of educative practices and relationships. She asked us to consider what it means to teach, research and provide leadership when familiar categories break down in the face of complexities of lived lives as well as of particular institutions, historical moments, cultural practices and social contexts that are unpredictable, unrepeatable and filled with differences.

Members of the AEYC at LSU will be participating in the 20th annual Earth Day celebration on April 19th in Baton Rouge. The theme for this year's festivities, and the one used 20 years ago, is "Think Globally, Act Locally" encouraging citizens to take the lead as environmental stewards of our state, nation, and earth. The LSU students will be providing creative, hands-on environmental education activities for fun and to foster

stewardship as a chance to celebrate our planet. As children engage in activities, students will be talking to parents about the importance of outdoor play, as well as the impact quality care and education have on their children.

Janie Humphries, McGehee, Professor of Early Childhood/Child Development at Louisiana Tech University-Ruston, was elected president-elect of the Southern Early Childhood Association (SECA). She will begin her term as president in January 2010. NAECTE was invited to hold a focus group at SECA Conference in Myrtle Beach, SC in January 2009 and hopefully this will develop into a closer relationship between the two organizations. Hopefully NAECTE members will join SECA in Little Rock in January 2010.

The Student Louisiana Early Childhood Association members from Louisiana Tech University have had a busy year. The officers presented a workshop at the Louisiana Early Childhood Association in October; two members received \$500 state scholarships; the members raised enough money to send three members to the Southern Early Childhood Association in Myrtle Beach in January and enough money to provide two \$300 scholarships to students for the 2009-2010 school year. Louisiana Tech University currently is looking for someone to teach classes in child development and early childhood education in addition to someone to teach family science.

Dr. Humphries was one of a group of eight individuals from Louisiana selected to attend a symposium last summer at Harvard. Groups from 14 states were selected to attend the conference. The early childhood symposium was on early childhood-science and policy. Dr. Jack Shonoff and Mr. George Kaiser were two of the speakers. They have agreed to come to Louisiana at the end of April to speak to the Louisiana Legislature and to governor Bobby Jindal on the importance of quality programs for children 0 to 5 years.
News from Teresa Buchanan, Carol Aghayan, and Janie Humphries

NEW MEXICO

New Mexico has two professional development websites:

- 1) www.newmexicokids.org <<http://www.newmexicokids.org>> offers information to families and to early care and education professionals
- 2) <http://education.nmsu.edu/projects/cyfdped/>, offers information to early care and education developing and practicing professional to individuals interested in degree attainment and other professional resources.

Three faculty at New Mexico State University, Drs. Nancy Baptiste, Luis Huerta, and Loui Reyes were awarded in 2004, a five year Higher Education Grant from the Administration for Children and Families to support degree attainment of Head Start staff from one Early Head Start and three pre-school Head Start programs "to improve the quality and long term effectiveness of local Head Start Services for Hispanic/Latino children and their families". The three Co-PIs shared a presentation at the recent Higher Education Grantee conference in March 2009 in Washington, D.C. entitled: "More Than

We Ever Expected from our Collaboration: NMSU and Head Start Partners". The presentation emphasized the positive outcome to the local community of the collaborative efforts.

News from Nancy Baptiste

OKLAHOMA

The Wonder of Learning: The Hundred Languages of Children Exhibit is in Oklahoma! Northeastern State University Broken Arrow campus is home to the newest North American version of The Hundred Languages of Children exhibit titled "The Wonder of Learning: The Hundred Languages of Children" from Reggio Emilia, Italy. The international exhibit, hosted by Riverfield Country Day School, is one of only three stops in the US this year. The Hundred Languages of Children is a continuously updated traveling exhibition that, translated into various languages, has told the story of the Reggio educational experience worldwide to thousands of visitors for over 25 years. During this time, Reggio, infant-toddler centers and preschools, together with elementary schools, have continued to enrich their journey via in-depth exploration and continual research. Each section can be experienced separately but is interconnected by idea.

The grand opening initiative was attended by several Oklahoma faculty, and special courses were created in conjunction with the exhibit. OSU students met for class at the exhibit, studied the exhibit, studied about the Reggio Emilia schools, and read from Carol Wien's book, *Emergent Curriculum in the Primary Grades*. They completed a class assignment applying what they learned to a curriculum paper. The exhibit is open from 8:00 am to 8:00 pm Monday-Friday and departs July 1 for Indianapolis, Indiana. For more information, email hundredlanguages@riverfield.org

The Oklahoma legislature is considering a bill that would help eliminate alternative certification in early childhood, elementary, and special education.

News from Denise Da Ros-Voseles and Kathryn Castle

TEXAS

Things happening state wide in Texas teacher education:

This fall we changed from EC-4 (preschool-grade 4) to EC-6 (preschool-grade 6) certification and the number of required hours were also cut from 139 to 120-127. This resulted in having to cut out several courses from our program. Another consequence of the change is that there is a move afoot in the legislature to do away with the ECE Field of Study courses that are 4 ECE courses from the community college that could transfer into any 4 year program in the state. We still accept them in our program, but some of the EC-6 programs around the state have eliminated most of their ECE courses leaving them virtually elementary programs. Texas is going backwards! Our program at University of Houston-Clear Lake still has 21 credit hours in ECE and these courses focus on birth through 3rd grade to go along with our NAEYC Recognized program status.

As a result of the EC-6, there has been less emphasis on the birth to age 5 age group, therefore programs across Texas, including ours, have established separate Bachelor of

Applied Science in Interdisciplinary Studies programs with a major in Early Childhood Education. These programs are non-certification programs meant to fill the need for Head Start and Child Care professionals who need bachelor's degrees. These people are not eligible to teach in public school pre-k programs because you need teacher certification. Each of the BAS programs is slightly different. Our three track BAS is a 2+2 program with the community college AAS (with the addition of extra core hours). The tracks are Educator of Young Children (for the classroom teacher), Young Children with Disabilities and Early Childhood Leadership. Our program is still going through the approval process and hopefully we will be able to offer our first two BAS courses this coming fall. We have hired a new faculty member with a birth-five background who will be teaching these courses. We are very excited about it.

On the regular ECE front, the legislature is considering funding full day pre-k, but only for those who meet the qualifying criteria so it is not universal. Currently the state funds half-day pre-k and allows pre-k expansion grants where public school programs must partner with Head Start or a child care center for the other half day. These grants are going away and there is a move to have this collaboration of services model be the standard across the board for all public pre-k programs. Nothing has been decided yet.

U. T. Austin is welcoming a new member to our faculty: Jennifer Adair is joining us from Arizona State University. She studies teaching in diverse (borderlands) contexts.

The ninth annual *Start Seeing Diversity Conference*, was held in San Antonio, Texas on March 27 and 28, 2009. Ellen Booth Church was the keynote speaker and also hosted two workshop sessions. The purpose of this conference is to provide early childhood educators, advocates, administrators, and childcare providers with provocative workshop sessions that challenge adult biases and "isms" across an array of issues that focus on diversity. By challenging early childhood educators' own perspectives and raising awareness on diversity issues, the hope is that interactions with children and families will be enhanced, and that educators will be more equipped to facilitate young children's sensitivity to similarities and differences among people. This was the second year to host a two-day conference for the community. Well over 250 people attended the Friday conference session held at the Jewish Community Center and another 125 attended the second day session held at San Antonio Community College.

The planning committee consists of local early childhood advocates, center directors, region service center personnel, and professionals from the Family Service Association. NAECTE member, Michaela Cole from Our Lady of the Lake University, has served on this planning committee for four years and has presented at the conference on cultural variations in child rearing practices. Early childhood students enrolled in Early Childhood Growth and Development and Strategies for Parent Involvement served as facilitators for the conference sessions as part of a service-learning project. Each submitted self-reflections on their experiences at the conference and their own insights regarding diversity issues.

News from Rebecca Huss, Stuart Reifel, and Michaela Cole

Kathryn Castle, Region 6 Representative, compiled this news and sent an email membership recruitment letter to members in the 5 states of Region 6. If you are in Region 6 and have additional news items or regional concerns, please contact **kathryn.castle@okstate.edu**