Being Strategic & Intentional in the Current Early Childhood Context …
to Ensure Inclusive Environments & Effective Personnel to Work in Them

Pam Winton, FPG Child Development Institute-UNC-CH

Beth Caron, Office of Early Learning, US Dept of Ed

Phyllis Mondak, Virginia 619 Coordinator

Susan Fowler, Professor Univ of Illinois -CU *(moderator),*

IDEAs
that Work

Agenda

- Highlights of current early childhood context

- Tools & strategies for being intentional & strategic partners in early childhood systems building

- State and national applications & perspectives

Context:

Focus on Cross-Sector PD for Great EC Workforce

# State Early Childhood Development System

Early Learning

Health, Mental Health and Nutrition

Family Support
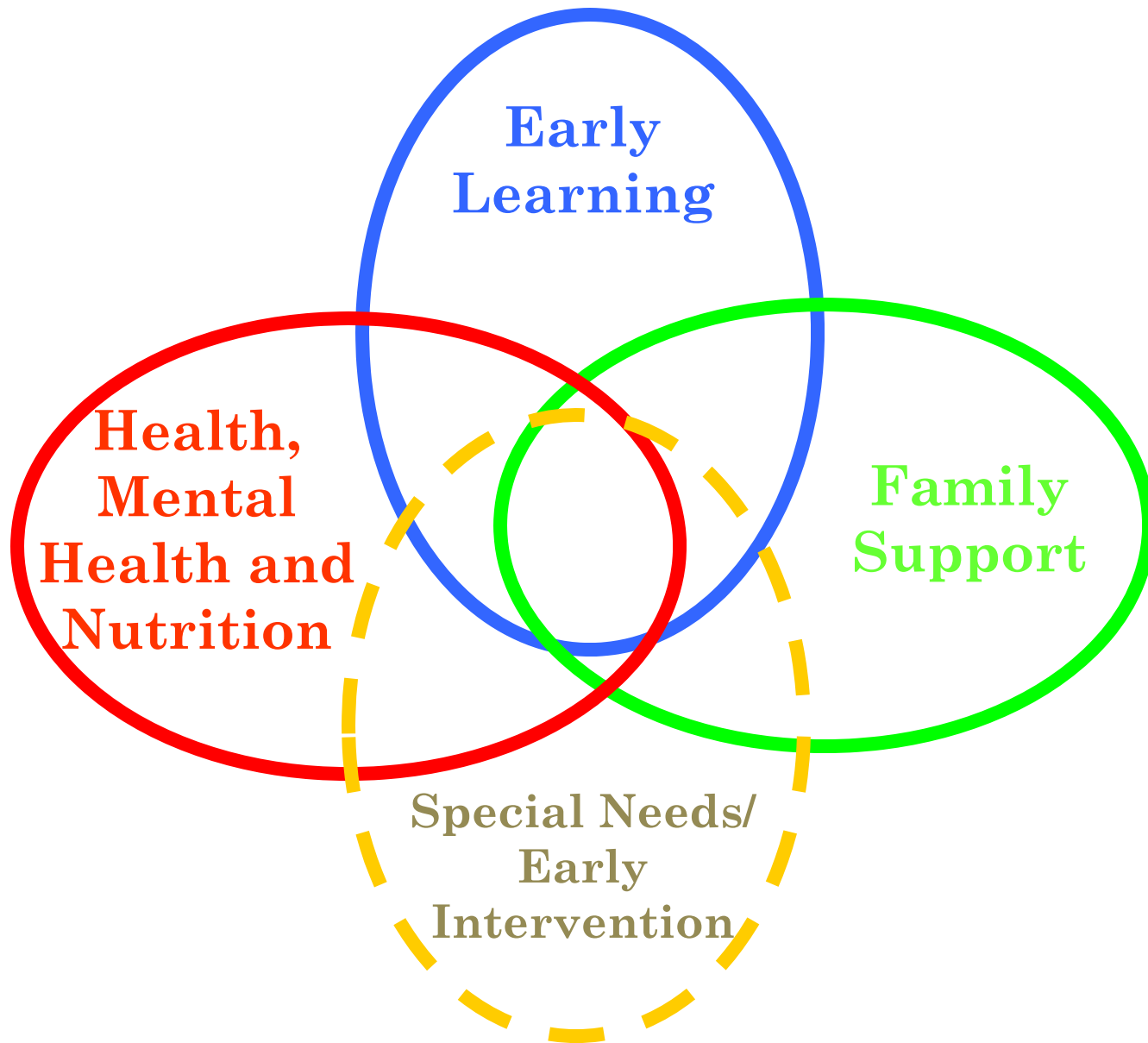
Special Needs/ Early Intervention

Race to the Top – Early Learning Challenge defines Early Childhood Educators as…

- center-based and family child care providers;
- infant and toddler specialists;
- early intervention specialists and early childhood special educators;
- home visitors;
- related services providers;
- administrators such as directors, supervisors, and other early learning and development leaders;
- Head Start & EHS teachers;
- preschool and other teachers; teacher assistants;
- family service staff;
- health coordinators;

Fiefdoms of Early Childhood
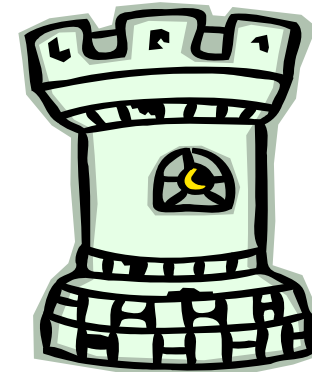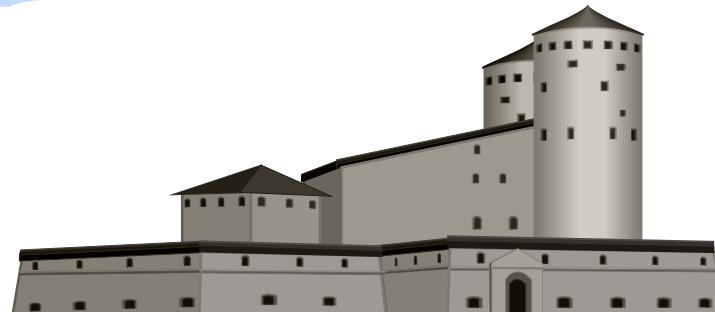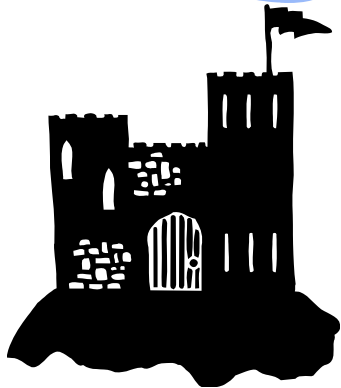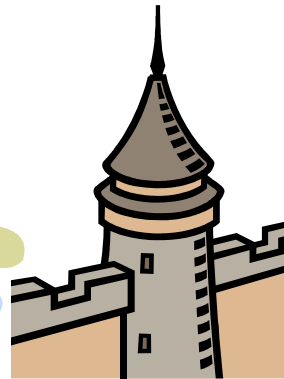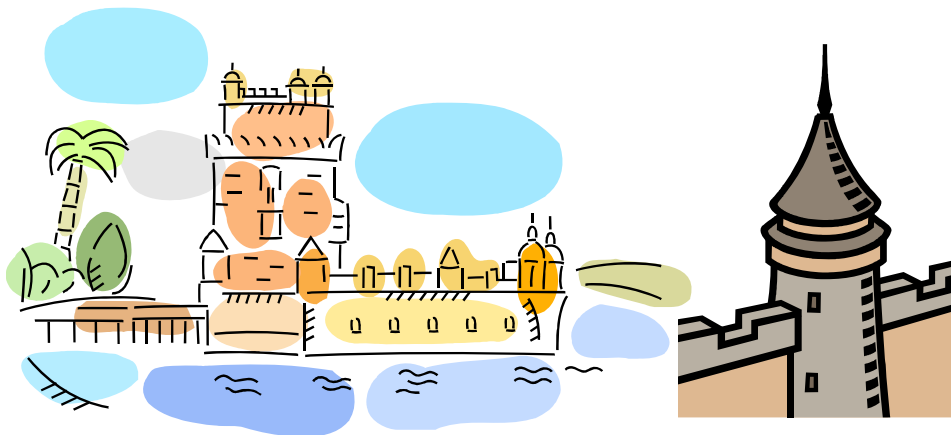
Link between college degrees and high quality is not a given

Focus on Clinical Practice

NCATE — The Standard of Excellence in Teacher Preparation

TRANSFORMING TEACHER EDUCATION THROUGH CLINICAL PRACTICE: A NATIONAL STRATEGY TO PREPARE EFFECTIVE TEACHERS

Fall, 2010

Practitioners are Expected to Use Evidence-Based Practice

PD Providers are Expected to Incorporate EBP into PD

Context:
Accountability–Results Matter!!!

o What "results" are you
accountable for?
o And to whom are you accountable?

PAIR & SHARE

Quality Movement = Multiple Quality Initiatives

Head Start Performance Framework

OSEP Monitoring and Accountability

licensing

ELG

program standards

QRIS

accreditation criteria

personnel standards

Multiple Data Systems & Initiatives

- Quality Rating & Improvement Systems (QRIS)

- OSEP Early Childhood Outcome Reporting

- Early Childhood Training Registries

- State Longitudinal Data Systems

- IHE National Survey Data

PERSPECTIVES ON INCLUSION & QRIS?

- An analysis report on trends & challenges related to QRIS addressed in the 35 state applications for RTT-ELC (Stoney, 2012) did not mention children with disabilities.

- Nor did the author express concern that children with disabilities were overlooked in her interpretation of the findngs.

"GRASSROOTS" PERSPECTIVES ON QRIS & INCLUSION

Survey of child care directors (n=48) in 8 states about benefits and challenges of participating in QRIS indicated appropriately addressing program quality for children with disabilities was a concern

(Schulman, Matthews, Blank, & Ewen, 2012)

GRASSROOTS PERSPECTIVES: FINDINGS FROM SURVEY (CONTINUED)

- Childcare directors discussed "the importance not only of standards appropriate for children with special needs, but also of assessors with knowledge in special education who could recognize appropriate practices for children with special needs"

- Example: for children with autism, room set-up to reduce distractions is not in accordance with requirements for specific number of materials of certain types in the classroom

(Schulman, Matthews, Blank, & Ewen, 2012, p.27)

RTT-ELC Context: Focus on Cross-Sector PD Systems, Data & Accountability, & High Needs Children

# Poll: Is EI/ECSE at the Table?

- Are you or other EI/ECSE partners (Part C, 619, PTI reps) involved in the early childhood systems-building in your state?

Tools, products, resources to support strong **EI/ECSE voices** at the Early Childhood Systems Building Table …

…………to ensure high quality inclusive environments and personnel

CONNECT
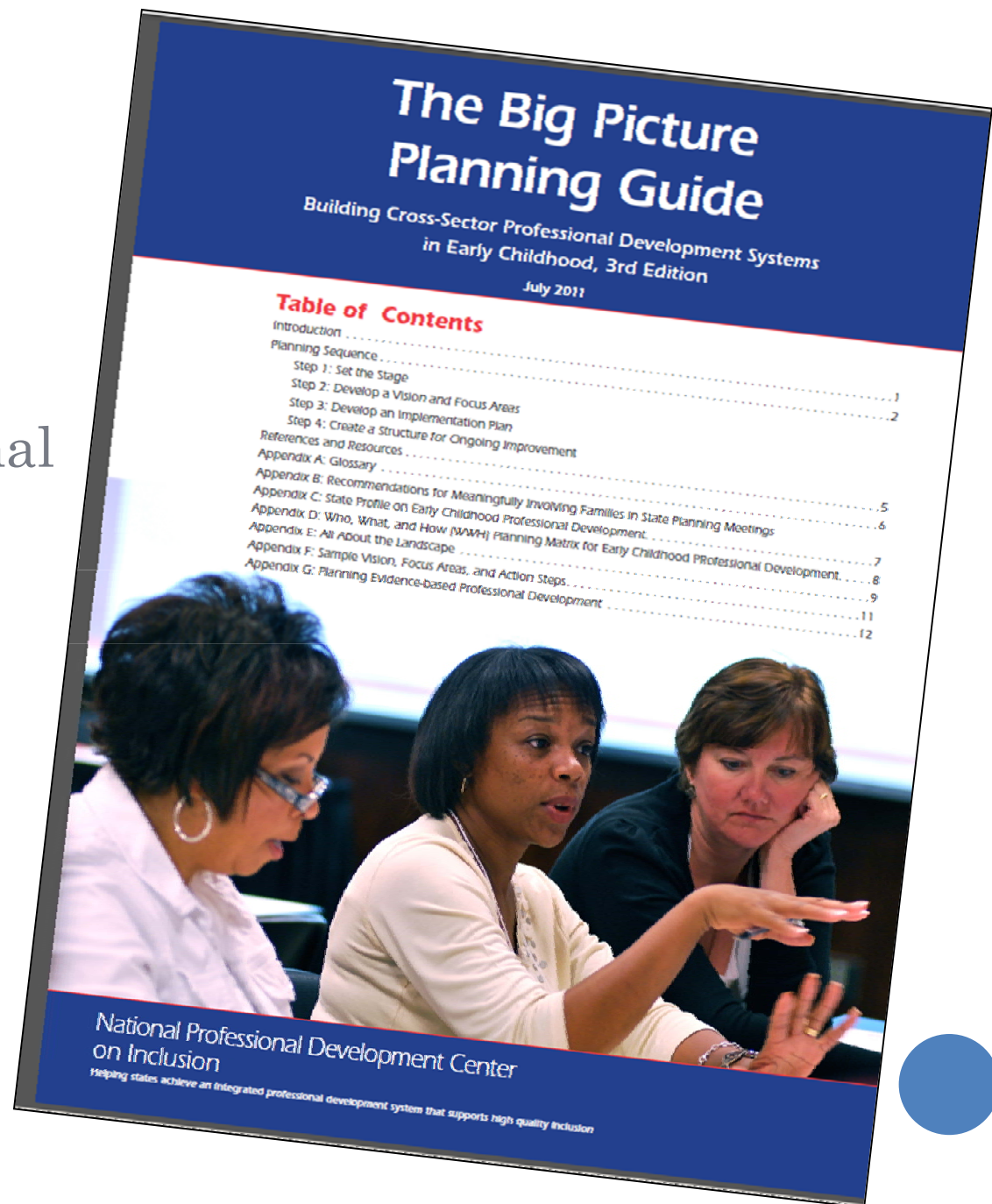The Center to Mobilize Early Childhood Knowledge
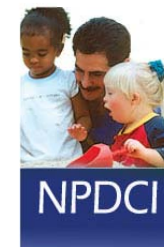
NPDCI

Collaboration Principles for Collective Impact Undergirding NPDCI Planning Tools

- Shared vision and common agenda

- Shared measurement system related to impact

- Mutually reinforcing activities

- Continuous communication

- Backbone support organizations

—Kania & Kramer, 2011

The *Big Picture Planning Guide* is designed to support state-level planning leading to an integrated professional development system across all early childhood sectors.

The Big Picture Planning Guide

Building Cross-Sector Professional Development Systems in Early Childhood, 3rd Edition

July 2011

National Professional Development Center on Inclusion

Helping states achieve an integrated professional development system that supports high quality inclusion

Big Picture Planning Guide:
Planning Sequence

- **Step 1:** Set the Stage

- **Step 2:** Develop a Vision and Focus Areas

- **Step 3:** Develop an Implementation Plan

- **Step 4:** Create a Structure for
             Ongoing Improvement

Defining
Professional Development

National Professional Development Center on Inclusion

Helping states achieve an integrated professional development system that supports high quality inclusion

What Do We Mean by Professional Development in the Early Childhood Field?

Almost everyone recognizes the importance of an having effective early childhood workforce in programs that serve young children and families. Less clear is how to ensure that all early childhood practitioners have the essential knowledge and skills they need to be effective. Increasingly, policy makers are turning to professional development as the solution to adequately preparing practitioners or helping them improve their instructional and intervention practices. This focus on effective practices is associated with the goal of improving child outcomes as part of the

NPDCI Definition of Professional Development (2008)

"Professional development is facilitated teaching and learning experiences that are transactional and designed to support the acquisition of professional knowledge, skills, and dispositions as well as the application of this knowledge in practice ...

Definition (CONTINUED)

The key components of professional development include:

a) *characteristics and contexts of the learners (i.e., the "who");*

b) *content (i.e., the "what" of professional development); and*

c) *organization and facilitation of learning experiences (i.e., the "how")."*

NPDCI Professional Development Planning Matrix

Part 1: WWH – Learners				
Who are the major funding agencies for early childhood PD?	To whom does this agency provide PD?	What is the content of the PD?	How is the PD delivered?	Is this PD integrated with quality initiatives & infrastructure supports?

Part 2: WWH – PD Providers				
Who are the PD providers?	Who provides support & resources to the PD providers?	What is content of the PD for PD providers?	How is it delivered?	Link to infrastructure?

—NPDCI, 2011

PD Planning Matrix

- Purpose:
  - to facilitate discussion about PD system (i.e., Who, What, How, Links to Infrastructure)
  - To identify gaps, duplications and mutually reinforcing PD activities
- Respondents: state-wide or regional cross-sector agency or entity leaders
- Format: Online format for entering information followed by face to face discussion
- For use at state, regional level

Professional Development Landscape

National Professional Development Center on Inclusion

Helping states achieve an integrated professional development system that supports high quality inclusion

The Landscape

A Statewide Survey for
Providers of Professional Development
in Early Childhood

www.fpg.unc.edu/~npdci

Purpose

This survey is designed to gather information that will produce a descriptive landscape of professional development in early childhood in your state across multiple sectors. The intended respondents are **professional development providers**—those who provide learning opportunities and support for practitioners (the learners) who work directly with young children (birth to 8) and their families. The information gathered by *The Landscape* can be

Landscape

- Purpose:
  - to systematically gather cross-sector about PD system
    (i.e., Who, What, How, Links to Infrastructure)
  - to facilitate discussion about PD system
    (i.e., Who, What, How, Links to Infrastructure)
- Respondents: PD providers from multiple sectors
- Format: Online
- For use at state level

APPLICATIONS IN VIRGINIA

Phyllis Mondak, 619 Coordinator

Virginia Cross-Sector Professional Development (VCPD) State Team

- An dynamic cross-sector forum of all relevant PD providers in VA that provides a portal of entry for other national TA initiatives coming to the state. Membership included 15 agencies and entities including IHEs (all RTT-ELC sectors)

- Serves as a *backbone organization to create shared vision and agenda & provide continuous communication*

# VIRGINIA CROSS-SECTOR PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT (VCPD) STATE TEAM

- Membership

  - **VA Office of Early Childhood Development**
  (EC AC)
  - **VA Department of Education**
  - **VA Department of Health**
  - **VA Department of Social Services**
  - **VA Resource and Referral Network**
  - **VA Part C Office**
  - **VA Integrated Training Collaborative**

VIRGINIA CROSS-SECTOR PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT (VCPD) STATE TEAM

- Membership, con't

  - **The ARC of VA**
  - **Partnership for People with Disabilities (UCEED)**
  - **Head Start Collaboration Office**
  - **VA Early Childhood Foundation**
  - **VA State Technical Assistance Centers**
  - **VA Institutes of Higher Education**
  - **VA Military Childcare**
  - **VA Star Quality Rating Initiative**

Moving from Fiefdoms to Collaboration
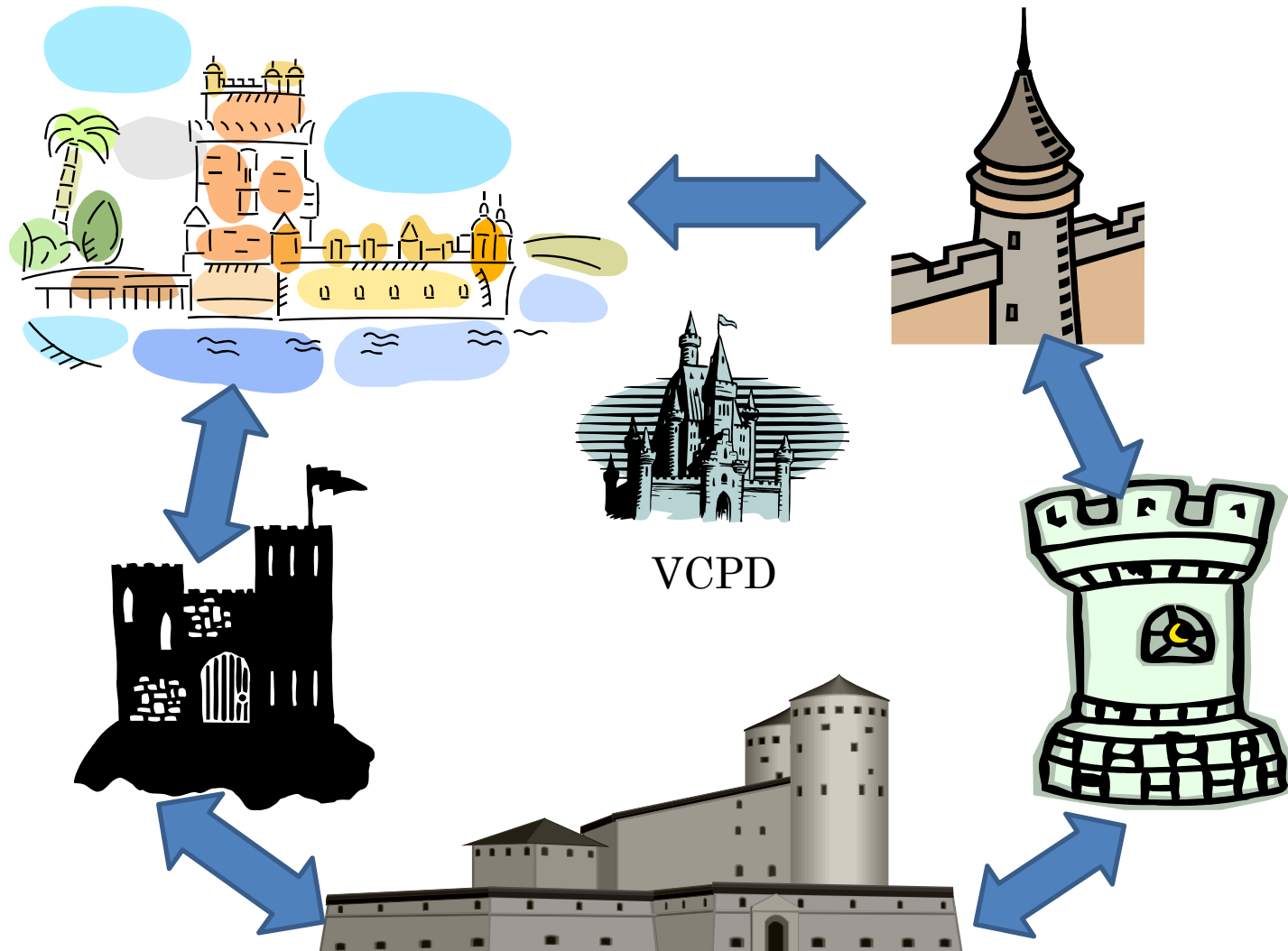
VCPD

Sample Accomplishments of VCPD
(*mutually reinforcing activities*)

- A systematic statewide exploration of the status of Early Childhood PD in VA through NPDCI tools (*Landscape* and *Matrix*) (shared measurement system)

- Revised early childhood competencies to reflect inclusion

- Two Train-the-trainer initiatives

- Expansion of IHE Council to be inclusive (e.g., 2-year programs, local PD providers)

- OSEP paraprofessional grant working with network of 2-year IHEs, using CONNECT modules as part of enhanced curricula

Ongoing VCPD Activities

- Regional PD consortiums

- Involved in development of cross-sector trainer registry with broad and aligned career lattice

- Updating QRIS to address inclusion

- Exploration of unified B-K licensure with articulation to 2-year early childhood programs

HIGHER ED PERSPECTIVES

Susan Fowler, Professor, Special Education

HIGHER ED SYSTEMS CHANGE ACTIVITIES

- Be at the table for state Early Learning Council
  - By attending meetings as an observer regularly and responding consistently to requests for feedback (Service commitment)
  - By conducting needs assessment in state
  - By developing in-service training modules
  - By establishing a state data tracking system
  - By developing policy internships
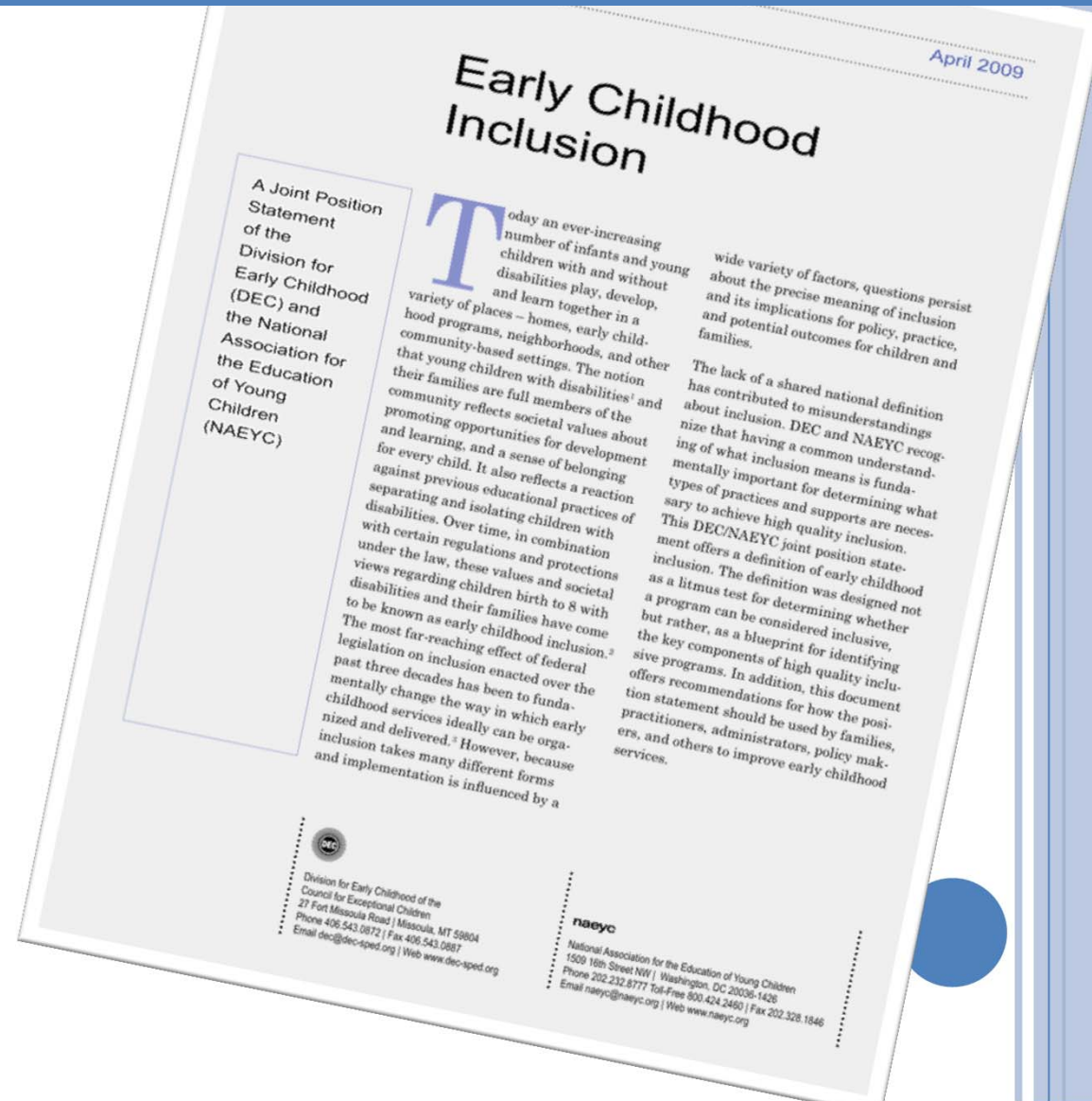 - Other ways?

Small Group Discussion

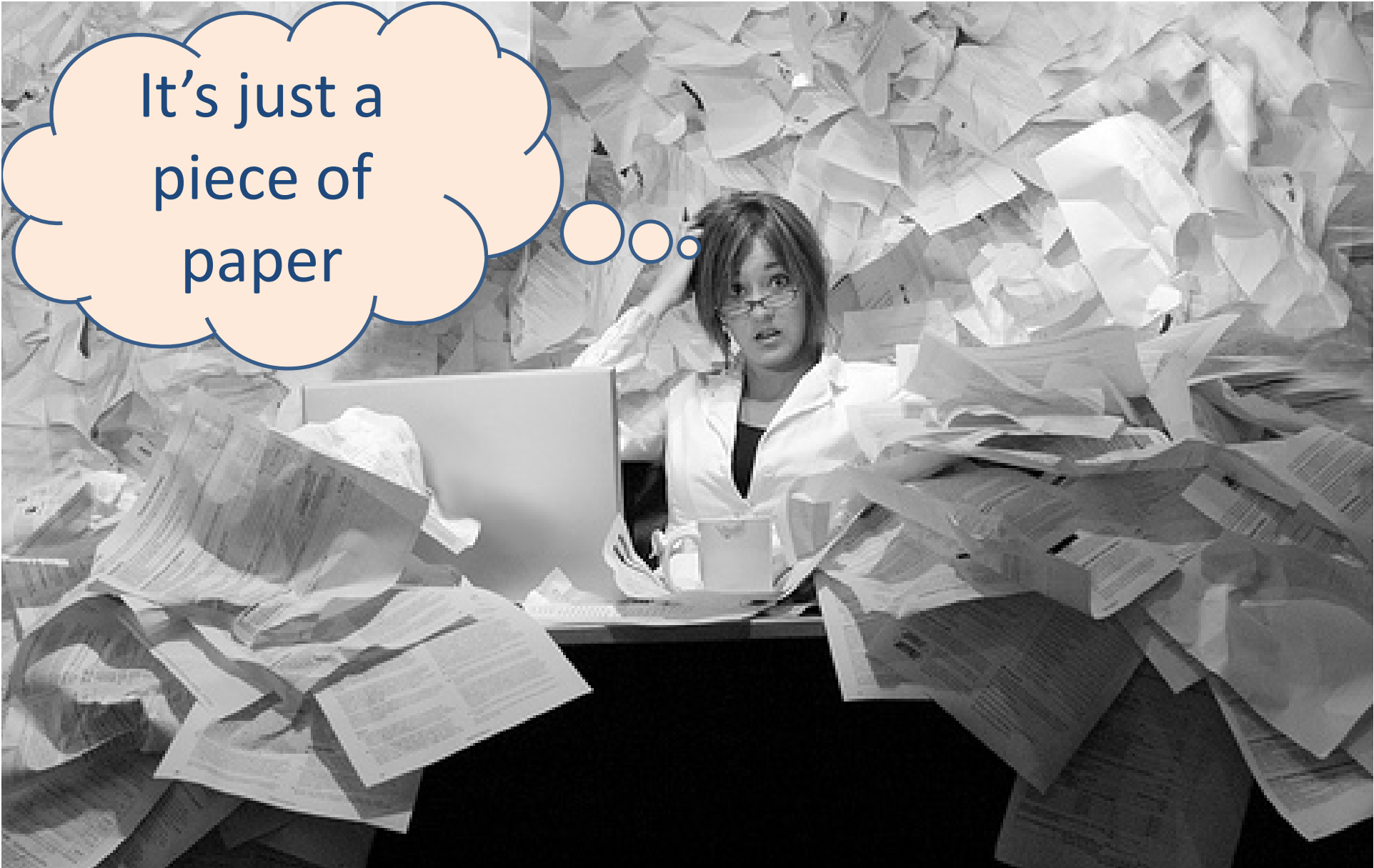- What are strategies that have been successful or could be feasible at getting you to the early childhood systems-building "table"?

More tools...for practice & policy applications

Early Childhood Inclusion:
A Joint Position Statement of DEC and NAEYC

Focus on Practices

Handout:
Research Synthesis Points on Quality Inclusive Practices

NPDCI

Teaching tools…..

Tots-n-Tech Research Institute

CONNECT Modules

Professional Development focused on Inclusion Practices

Evidence-Based Inclusion Practices

See for Yourself / Find it Online

Module 1: Embedded Interventions

Module 2: Transition

Module 3: Communication for Collaboration

Module 4: Family-Professional Partnerships

Module 5: Assistive Technology Interventions

Module 6: Dialogic Reading

Module 7: Tiered Instruction (Social emotional development & Academic learning)

Innovation:
An Approach for Incorporating EBP into PD

| Step 1 Dilemma | Step 2 Question | Step 3 Evidence | Step 4 Decision | Step 5 Evaluation |

5 Step Learning Cycle - Process for Making Evidence-Based Practice Decisions
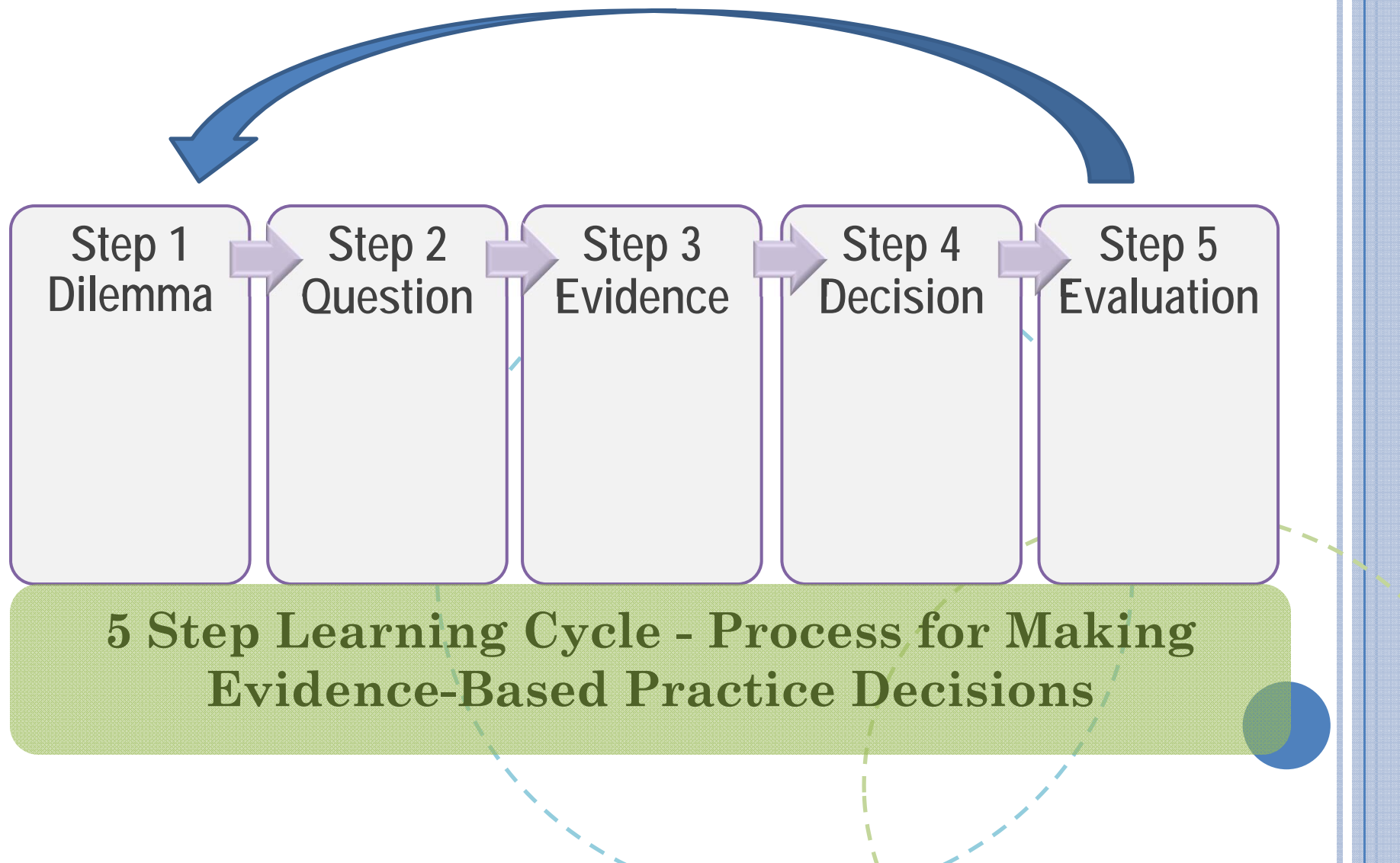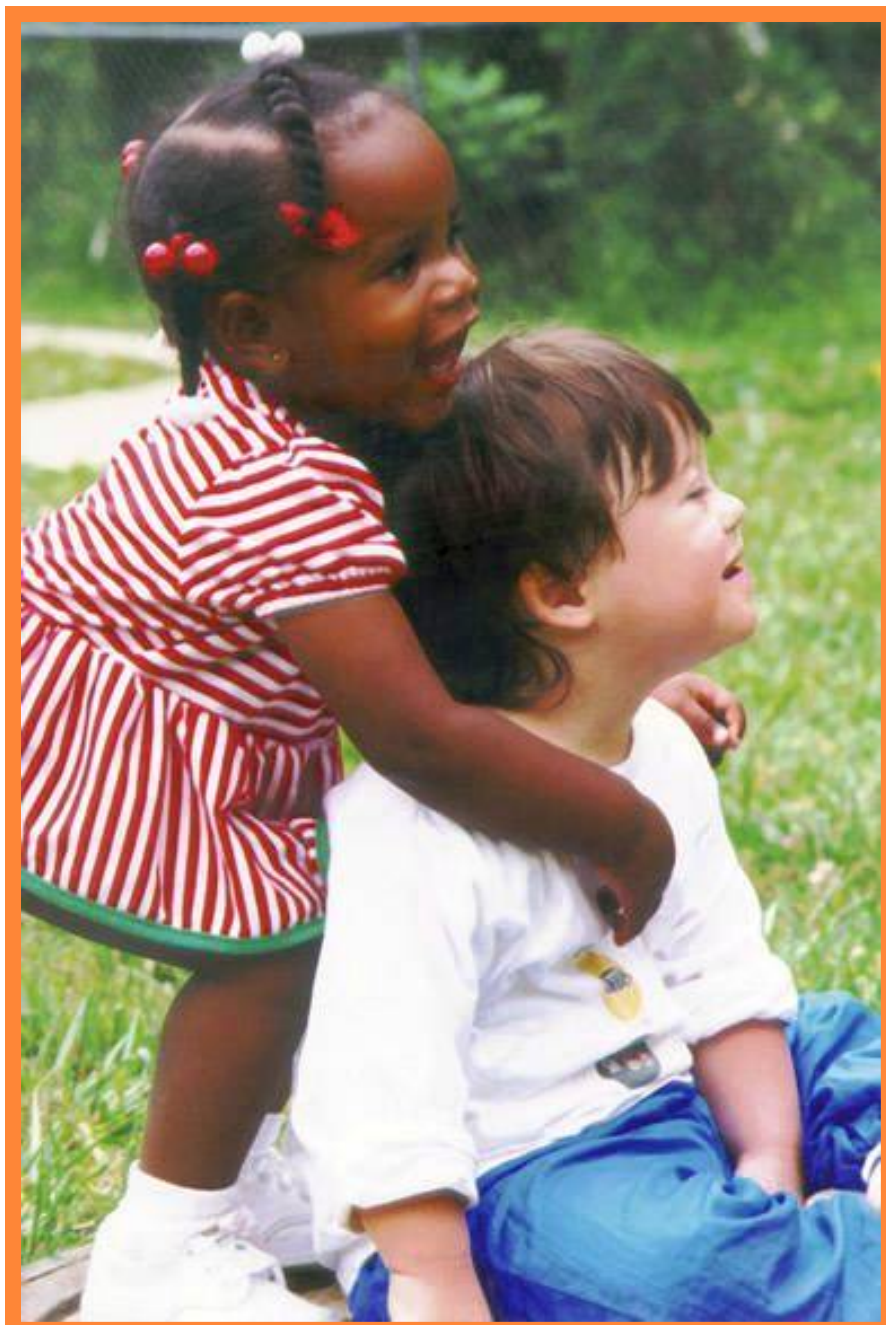
Policy Dilemma:

Young children with disabilities can experience low quality in classes that are otherwise rated as being of high quality

—*Wolery, et al., 2000*

Not everything that counts can be counted … not everything that can be counted, counts.
—*Albert Einstein*

Einstein ≠ prevailing wisdom among policymakers

Moving Beyond Global Quality
The Inclusive Classroom Profile (ICP)

- Designed to complement existing classroom quality measures & standards

- Focus on evidence-based inclusive practices that support the individual needs of children with disabilities

The Inclusive Classroom Profile (ICP)

- Structured observation

- 1-7 point Likert-type scale

- 12 items

- Focus → Classroom level practices

3. Adults' guidance of children's play (O)

1	2	3	4	5	6	7
Inadequate		Minimal		Good		Excellent

1.1 **No free time** set aside in the daily schedule for children to play. **(O)**

1.2 Children are **not allowed to choose** play topic, activities, playmates, or explore toys of their choice during free-play and center time. **(O)**

1.3 Adults make **no attempts to become involved** in children's play and activities (e.g., adults are too preoccupied with classroom management and preparing for upcoming routines and ignore children's play). **(O)**

3.1 Children have some opportunities to **decide on play topic, activities, playmates, and explore toys** that they like during free-play and center time. **(O)**

3.2 **The classroom environment is set up to promote social play and activities** (e.g., classroom set up includes pretend play corner; adults provide social toys and props). **(O)**

3.3 Adults **monitor children's involvement** in play and, when needed, **help them become involved** (e.g., adult helps child wondering around to join a play area; adult suggests activities to a child; adult redirects child from self-stimulatory behaviors to more purposeful play). **(O)**

5.1 Adults **show enjoyment when engaging with children** in free-play and various activities of their choice. **(O)**

5.2 Adults actively **encourage social play and activities** using strategies such as initiating social games and activities (e.g., adult initiates dancing game during free-play time); suggesting to children various social activities in which they can engage (e.g., at the beginning of center time, adults remind children of various social games they can engage in); or inviting children to join social activities. **(O)**

5.3 Adults **scaffold children's individual or social play and activities** using strategies such as: **a) prompting/asking questions** about their play; **b) modeling** (e.g., adult models for child how to use materials symbolically); **c) involving peers** to help children engage in play and; **d) using visual supports** (e.g., adult works with child in block area using a visual model of a block tower and provides the necessary physical assistance to help child build his tower). **(O)**

7.1 Adults' availability, enjoyment and involvement **enable most children to sustain their play and activities of their choice** (individual and/or social). **(O)**

7.2 Adults **consistently scaffold** children's play and activities (individual and/or social) relative to each child's developmental level. (Consider recommended scaffolding practices listed in 5.4). **(O)**
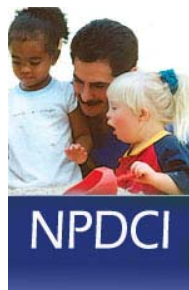
ICP Items

1. Adaptation of space and materials
2. Adult involvement in peer interactions
3. Adult guidance of children's play
4. Conflict resolution
5. Membership
6. Relationships between adults and children
7. Support for social communication
8. Adaptation of group activities
9. Transitions between activities
10. Feedback
11. Family-professional partnerships
12. Monitoring children's learning

Pilot Studies on the ICP

- 1st pilot study in the UK showed promising results on reliability & validity (Soukakou, 2012)

- 1st pilot study in USA just concluded, in collaboration with:

NPDCI

North Carolina Rated License Assessment Project

NORTH CAROLINA DCDEE
Division of Child Development and Early Education

NC Department of Instruction, Exceptional Children

Results

- ICP has acceptable inter-rater agreement, is internally consistent, and shows a good factor structure

- Correlations with the most widely used measure of global classroom quality (ECERS-R) provide evidence for construct validity

- Assessors report the ICP to be feasible and easy to use

(See Soukakou, Winton & West, 2012
for more information on procedures and findings)

WRAP UP: Susan Fowler

Return to Agenda

- Highlights of current early childhood context

- Tools & strategies for being intentional & strategic partners in early childhood systems building

- State and national applications & perspectives

Small Group Discussion

What strategies and resources can you use to create to support system's change? How might you use them and with whom?

Make a Plan

CONTINUE THE CONVERSATION

July 23, 4-5:30 pm - Small Group Session

RESOURCES AND REFERENCES

Resources

- Online discussion: Measuring the Quality of Inclusion http://npdci.fpg.unc.edu/discussions/blog-speaking-of-inclusion/measuring-the-quality-of-inclusion

- ICP and the preliminary results: http://npdci.fpg.unc.edu/measuring-quality-inclusion-inclusive-classroom-profile

- DEC/NAEYC. (2009). *Definition of Inclusion.* http://npdci.fpg.unc.edu/sites/npdci.fpg.unc.edu/files/resources/Inclusion-Position-Statement-Summary-4-2009.pdf

- NPDCI. (2009). *Research synthesis points on quality inclusive practices* http://npdci.fpg.unc.edu/sites/npdci.fpg.unc.edu/files/resources/NPDCI-ResearchSynthesisPointsInclusivePractices-2011_0.pdf

- NPDCI. (2011). *Research synthesis points on practices that support inclusion.* http://npdci.fpg.unc.edu

- CONNECT modules: http://fpg.unc.edu/projects/connect-center-mobilize-early-childhood-knowledge

References

Schulman, Matthews, Blank, & Ewen, (2012). *A Count for Quality: Child Care Center Directors on Rating and Improvement Systems.* A report from the National Women's Law Center and CLASP.

Soukakou E. P. (2012). Measuring quality in inclusive preschool classrooms: Development and validation of the Inclusive Classroom Profile (ICP). *Early Childhood Research Quarterly.*

Stoney, L., (2012). *Unlocking the Potential of QRIS: Trends and Opportunities in the Race to the Top –Early Learning Challenge Application,* a brief from BUILD & the QRIS National Learning Network.