

Supporting the Early Childhood Workforce to Implement High Quality Inclusion Practices

Pam Winton: Four webinars hosted by the U.S. Departments of Ed and HHS, in conjunction with the National Center on Early Childhood Development, Teaching, and Learning, also known as DTL, and the Early Childhood TA Assistance Center, ECTA. These webinars are focused on issues that frequently arise when local early childhood programs collaborate to build high-quality inclusion. And before we get started on the webinar, let's review a couple of tips about technology that will help you get the most from the presentation. First of all, our format today is PAT presentation and Q&A with the panelists. We have some starter questions and responses that we've thought about in advance, but we have plenty of time for you to ask questions. And I'm hoping that everybody can see the Q&A box at the bottom of your screen if you're on the Adobe Connect site. At any time at all during the presentation you have a question, please put it right there because we have a team here who will be monitoring that box. And some of the questions posted will be addressed as time allows, either online or with the panelists, and we also will be constantly capturing your ideas and questions to be answered later if we don't get to answer them on this webinar.

You'll also see that there's a "supporting documents" box for this webinar. If you look at the bottom-right area of your screen, you'll see that there, and that's where we have downloaded the PowerPoints from the webinar, and there's also an audio tip sheet there. And just before we get started, a note about volume -- I know that sometimes people have a hard time hearing, and everybody is working from different machines, and phones and computers everywhere are different, and we're here at FPG Child Development Institute in Chapel Hill, and our panelists are in Washington D.C., so we have different phones, different places, but please check the volume on your computer first, as the first step if you have problems. And then if you do think you're having a problem with Adobe Connect, please contact Christine Wagner. You'll find her e-mail in the supporting information box at the right side of your screen. If for any reason you get disconnected, though, from the webinar, use the same link used previously and just rejoin us. Finally, we want to let you know that the session will be recorded and posted in the near future on the ECLKC and ECTA websites. So you'll get a notification when that's available. And just so you know how important your questions are, we've been working on this constantly evolving frequently-asked-question document from all of the webinars, the three that we've already had, and then we'll bring in the questions from this one today.

And we're putting together that document so we can have a complete summary of the questions that you've had over the course of the four webinars and the answers. Once those are vetted and completed, we'll post those, and we'll let you know when that's available. We're also going to be monitoring the chat box if you do have things you want to chat with each other about, but if you have a question for a panelist, please do put those in the "question and answer" box. That's where we'll be looking for those. So it is now, after that bit of logistical formality, it's my pleasure to introduce our panel. We have, on our panel, Sangeeta Parikshak and Jamie Sheehan from the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services, Administration for Children and Families, and, from the U.S. Department of Ed, Office of Special Ed Programs, also known as OSEP, we have Christy Kavulic and Julia Martin Eile. So welcome, panelists. I think these panelists are folks who are leading federal work around inclusion. They keep very close ties to local programs, and so we're so fortunate that you all are here with us to share your expertise on federal policy and your experiences and understanding of the issues facing practitioners. We will -- The format, I think I mentioned, is sort of a moderated interview kind of style, with times during the presentation for you all to ask your questions.

There will be two points in time that we'll stop specifically for questions, but please post those at any time you want to. I'm Pam Winton for the National Center on Early Childhood Development, Teaching, and Learning, known as DTL, and in the room here with me at Frank Porter Graham Child Development Institute are Chih-Ing Lim, also from the DTL Center, and Megan Vinh, from the ECTA Center. They've

helped with the content. They will be monitoring questions, answering some of them online, and sending others to the panelists to answer. So that's our team for the webinar. And then, just before we started, a little bit about a note on context for this webinar series. As I said, it's the fourth of four, and each webinar has been organized around three essential features of high-quality inclusion as defined in the NAEYC/DEC joint position statement on inclusion, and those three are access, defined as the access provided to children for a wide range of activities and environments by removing physical barriers and offering multiple ways to promote learning and development.

The second is participation, meaning the individual has accommodations and modifications that ensure that children not only get through the door and have access to the general curriculum but to ensure that they can fully participate in home, community, and educational environments with peers and adults to reach their highest potential. And the third essential feature is this one called supports. So when we talk about supports, those are those infrastructure components that are so important, such as professional development, which is our focus today, incentives for inclusion, and opportunities for communication and collaboration, which was the focus of our last webinar. So that gives you that overarching context for the series. This particular webinar today is focused on the professional development component of support. Our learning outcomes -- there are four of them -- is, first of all, we want to sort of share information about when we think about the workforce and professional development for the workforce, who do we mean, and what are the facets of the workforce that are critical for promoting inclusion? We want to also help us all think together about professional development as part of a broader systems framework. We're going to share a little bit about what research tells us is effective professional development in the context of inclusion practices.

And then, as with every webinar, we're going to be sharing some federal strategies and resources to support the workforce in implementing those high-quality inclusion practices. So to start off, and we've talked about the fact that there are many sectors to this early childhood workforce, we'd like to find out a bit about who's on the webinar today. So you see on your screen a poll. I'd like to ask you to fill out that poll, and as you fill it out -- See the data is coming in. That's great. Please check all the sectors that apply to your primary role because some of you probably have several roles that you would consider primary. And while we're waiting for your responses, I'll mention that this conversation about the facets of the workforce is a really hot one right now and one that's taking place nationally through an initiative called Power to the Profession. And that's an initiative that's really designed to help us, as a field, consider whether we are a unified professional field of practice called something like early childhood.

So a number of national professional organizations are coming together to try to define the early childhood workforce, to discuss competencies required to be an early childhood educator, and then to discuss the implications this means for preparation and professional development requirements. So it's a really important conversation. As the numbers come in, I see they're still coming, but it looks like a good number of you identify most strongly with the Head Start and Early Head Start community. Some with child care, early intervention is in there, and some 619 Part B folks are there, as well, with pre-K and other. If you're other, please let us know in the chat exactly what other means. So it looks like we have what we hope is a good representation across most sectors. Missing some parents, which is always an important audience for us. We need to do a better job of really marketing it through the Parent Training and Information Centers. Also missing infant/toddler home visitors, but happy to see all you guys who are here across these sectors. So, going forward then, we're going to move on to talk about the early childhood sectors and what we know from some demographic information about the major sectors of early intervention, early childhood special ed, and the Head Start, Early Head Start childcare, pre-K community. And, Julia, if you'll start us off here.

Julia Martin Eile: Yes. Yes?

Pam: Yeah, good. Hi, Julia.

Julia: Hi, Pam. And welcome to the webinar. I'll let you go ahead.

Pam: Thanks. I'm just now trying to move the slide forward to get to your information about what you can tell us about the early intervention, early childhood special ed workforce, in terms of some demographic information.

Julia: Great. Yes, I can. So early interventionists and early childhood special education teachers and related service providers may be working as inclusive or specialized public school classroom teachers or with families and children in home or community-based settings, sometimes in collaboration with other teachers and with parents to support inclusion of children with disabilities in natural environments. And these individuals are likely to have, at a minimum, a bachelor's degree. And if you continue on to the next slide, you'll see this is some IDEA data that's reported yearly to us. This is our 2014-2015 fiscal year data on Part C, infants and toddlers, birth through 2 years of age. The personnel representing multiple disciplines, including special instructors serving over 350,000 infants and toddlers and their families receiving Part C services, must also be appropriately and adequately prepared and trained, meaning they have qualifications consistent with state-approved or recognized certification, licensing, registration, or other comparable requirements that apply to the area in which the personnel provide these services. In addition, under Part B Section 619, the children that are served, 3 through 5, data collected from, again, 2014, '15 indicated that 94.5 percent of the 40,000-plus special ed teachers that serve 3 to 5 are highly qualified, and that's defined as, one, having a bachelor's degree, two, having a state certificate or licensure, and, three, demonstrating subject matter knowledge for the subjects they teach. So the data looks, you know, pretty good for what we're seeing. However, what we do know about certification and licensing is that there's no national body that sets certification and licensing criteria to be a special educator or an early interventionist. So we know that there is a wide variation across states on what is required to work in the profession. So, for example, in one state, an early childhood special educator may be required to have a bachelor's degree in special education and be licensed to serve children age 3 through 12th grade. And then in another state, you may need a bachelor's degree in early childhood special ed and be licensed to serve children birth to age 8. So it can be very different.

And with our related service providers, they can also have different certification and licensing requirements across states. And so, if you'll move to the next slide, we can show you that our Early Childhood Personnel Center has a database in which you can actually go to this site and click on a state and be able to see what the state licensure requirements are. And this is the first slide. The next slide you'll see is an example of Texas. We just chose this sort of as a random one. It's a big state, you can see on this map, and then we picked out... Once you pick the Texas, you also pick, below it, the selected disciplines, and then, if you continue, you'll find what Texas requires. And so you'll see here, for example, there is requirements for an early childhood through sixth grade, for regular early childhood education, and then through special education, you are looking at an EC through 12th grade, as I mentioned earlier, so a big variation in that certification.

Pam: Yeah. Thanks, Julia. In terms of that state-by-state variation, I mean, is there any kind of national guidance for states to draw upon when they develop their certification and licensure requirements?

Julia: Yes, there is, Pam. We are excited, as always, about the work of DEC and the division for early childhood. The field-generated personnel standards are knowledge and skills that our early interventionists and our early childhood special educators should have and be able to do effectively to serve children with disabilities and their families. And so here is a link to that. You can come back to this later and look at those standards, but, as you move to the next slide, you'll see I just did a grab of the

page, and you'll see within these professional preparation standards, we have initial standards as well as advanced standards that --

Pam: Yeah. Very helpful. And, of course, I mean, the EI, ECSE facet of the workforce is extremely important when we think about children with disabilities and when we think about those inclusion partners. So thanks for sharing that, Julia. So, Sangeeta, the other hugely important component when we think about inclusion are the early childhood educators, who are the ones in those inclusive environments serving children with disabilities. What do we know about their demographics?

Sangeeta Parikshak: Hi, Pam. Thank you. So what we did is we pulled kind of one of the latest research findings around this very large workforce. You'll see here, this is a study from the Office of Planning, Research and Evaluation, which is housed within the Department of Health and Human Services. This study came out in 2013, and it is information on the biggest segment of the ECE workforce, so that includes, collectively, the two million teachers working in Head Start, public pre-K, and childcare.

So, within this study, it includes both formal and informal home-based providers, as well as center-based providers. So the study was able to collect information through questionnaires for 2,000 home-based and 8,200 center-based workers. So a fairly large study. And what they found was that 53 percent of center-based and one-third, or 30 percent, of home-based educators have a college degree of some kind. They also found that workforce characteristics understandably varied depending on, you know, the program's funding stream. So, you know, was it Head Start versus was it childcare? So depending on what that funding stream was, those characteristics of education level and compensation varied, as well as the age being served, so whether it was birth to 3, or 3 to 5. So, for example, children ages birth to 3 were less likely to have degreed teachers than were children ages 3 through 5. And because we have such a large Head Start audience, and, you know, I think it's also helpful to kind of pull out one of these sectors from this larger finding, I wanted to talk a little bit about what we have found from the most recent Head Start Program Information Report data.

So if you look specifically, you'll find that, compared to the general, kind of larger ECE population, more teachers in Head Start have a higher degree, and one reason for this finding could be because the Head Start Act specifies that 50 percent of center-based preschool teachers nationwide should have these credentials by 2013. You also see that 96 percent of teachers have an AA or higher, and this could be because the Head Start Act, again, specifies that a program must ensure that all center-based teachers have at least an associates or bachelor's degree in ECE or a related field such child development. The Head Start Act also talks about assistant teachers and how they must have, at a minimum, a CDA or state-awarded certification that meets or exceeds the requirements of a CDA. Other data of note that I pulled out because I thought it was just kind of interesting to look at what the workforce comprises in Head Start is that, of the 259,000 staff employed in Head Start, 23 percent were parents of current or former Head Start children. So, anecdotally, we're finding that parents who may not have had an opportunity to get a higher degree are then mandated to get a higher degree and are able to then support their families better as they are employed by Head Start. And then, about 127,000 staff members provided child development services, and, among child development staff, 30 percent were proficient in a language other than English. So it's a lot of information, a lot of data to throw at you, but, in general, what we know is that professional development, both pre-service and in-service, on working with children with disabilities is a huge need for the ECE sector of the workforce.

And part of this greater need for this type of professional development is really that many early childhood education staff may have limited experience working with children with disabilities and in inclusive settings. Even if, you know, they have a higher degree, they might not have had an opportunity to really focus on working with children with disabilities. They may not even know how their role can impact children with disabilities, so here we've provided a list of what early childhood education staff can do. So

they can provide screening and referral for infants, toddlers, and preschoolers. They can individualize services for young children with special needs. They can really work with those families, be supportive and strengthen those relationships and help parents become advocates for their children. They can advocate, also, on behalf of families with local community agencies and resources. They can learn about and develop and strengthen local community partnerships with a variety of different sectors. They can learn specific intervention and modification strategies, and they can visualize the possibilities for all children, of course. So there's a variety of things that I think this workforce can and is able to do with the proper professional development.

Pam: Yeah. Thanks, Sangeeta. I'm thinking, as you both were talking about the workforce, how, when we think about children with disabilities, you know, their needs fall across all the things you just listed on this slide, Sangeeta, and even sometimes more and how important it is to have collaboration across these sectors to meet the needs of the children and how the different education levels across these facets may mean that folks are prepared differently or with different levels of preparation, which I know sometimes we assume that just because you have a degree of some sort, you're going to be prepared to provide high-quality inclusive practices to children with disabilities. But I think that that's something that we can't really always assume, that just because you have a degree means you're prepared. So I think that that next slide is one, Julia, that you might talk about, that the link between the college degree and high quality is not necessarily a given, although we know we're pushing for college degrees.

Julia: Yes, Pam, that's correct. You'll see there is definitely a lack of training on inclusive practices with young children in personal prep programs. Surveys of early childhood teacher prep programs show that even those programs stating that they're preparing early intervention and early childhood special education as the primary part of their mission offer little content on working with children with disabilities. Additionally, related service providers may have a degree in their discipline, but it does not mean that they have a lot of training in working with young children. Some programs train providers in more of a medical model, and, therefore, the focus is on the intervention and not where it is provided, and, therefore, the therapists who are so important in working with families and early educators in inclusive settings and natural environments are in short supply. They can command a much higher salary if they take jobs working with adults or athletes, as compared to working with young children, and their training programs do not always have a strong emphasis on pediatrics. Additionally, even though states have matched to show the certification licensing and DEC has a set of personnel standards, significant issues remain, and they include those that I just shared on this slide. But, in fact, each year, we collect more information from the state's Part C and 619 coordinators through annual performance reports and professional development, it seems to have emerged and, not surprisingly, as, you know, an improvement strategy for every single state out there. So professional development is very important and a major need for practitioners working to improve inclusion and support it.

Pam: Yeah. Wow. So, Sangeeta and Julia, I think the information you shared is really important. It says a couple of things. One is, when we think about professional development as an essential feature of high-quality inclusion, we have to think pretty big-picture, that we think holistically across a number of sectors, and, in fact, the question has come through about... From Elaine Wilson, she's asked, "What about the Child Life certification and Infant Mental Health certifications," that I think maybe exist in individual states, or maybe there are other national organizations that are developing certifications that have something to do with early childhood and could impact professionals working in inclusive settings. So we have a host of different sets of standards and certifications and licensures, state-by-state variations, variations across professional organizations and disciplines that make us realize this Early Childhood Systems Framework that you're seeing on the screen now is one important piece of this. So, Julia, this is a systems framework that I believe OSEP has been working with states. It was to -- Would you like to say a little bit about it?

Julia: Absolutely. So this is the Early Childhood Systems Framework. It was developed from an OSEP-funded TA center, the Early Childhood Technical Assistance Center, who's supporting this webinar today, and this framework, it guides our work at OSEP. You'll see it's a broad look at a system of early childhood, whether it's Part C or Part B preschool or even any other broad system, early childhood system. But we're looking at building high-quality systems through the components of governance, finance, quality standards, accountability, and data systems. And you'll see, obviously, personnel and workforce are a huge part of that, as well as taking that personnel workforce and connecting it to your institutes of higher education within your state so that you can begin to make those stronger connections.

Pam: Great. And, Sangeeta, you and Jamie both probably have a similar kind of framework that maybe is guiding some of the Head Start work. Jamie

Sheehan: You're right, Pam. This is Jamie. So, on the screen, you'll see the Head Start Management System Wheel, which is an organizing wheel to organize management systems, what do you know, to help support Head Start programs. There are 12 areas. It's those little pieces of the pie that are related to program management, planning, and oversight, and, as you can see, there are pieces related to training, professional development, as well as human resources. And within that sort of technical assistance guide, they've asked some prompting questions so they can help programs plan for each of the related pieces of the pie.

Pam: Great. And, you know, if we looked at these two frameworks side by side, we could probably find some areas of similarity across them, and I think this is, again, one of those important things, as we think about coming together as a professional field of practice, how can we bring some of the frameworks and standards of practices and certification? How can we integrate some of these? But we're going to stop now and provide you guys in the audience a chance to post your questions. Write them in the question box there. We appreciate the one we got from Elaine about another kind of certification that she was aware of, this Child Life certification, and please keep those questions coming because we've covered now the first two objectives of our webinar. One is to explore the different facets of the early childhood workforce and to think about that within a systems framework. So encourage you to keep pushing those questions forward, and then we're going to just move along to our third and fourth objective for today's webinar, which is to focus on what are effective professional development strategies and what kinds of activities, resources, products are HHS and ED making available to support professional development of the workforce on the topic of inclusion? So to start this section -- again, waiting for questions to pop in -- I'm going to share a definition of professional development, because I think we have found sometimes people say, "Well, what do you mean by professional development? Do you mean pre-service? Do you mean in-service? Do you mean mentoring? Are you including coaching?" And this is an all-inclusive definition that I think captures all of those different aspects of the support to the workforce that we know is so important. The definition is here on your screen. I won't read it, but I will emphasize that it's talking about transactional. It's not a one-way street, expert to early education staff. It's a bidirectional experience designed to support both the acquisition of professional knowledge, skills, and dispositions, but particularly the application of this knowledge into practice. Without that application, it means that nothing really changes, so it's an important one.

And I think the next slide illustrates something that I also think is important as we think about where we're going with this. And this is an animated slide. But we need to think about a continuum of professional development delivery. On the left-hand axis of this, you see knowledge and awareness, so that would be at the very basic level of impact on learner, all the way up to the top of that axis on the left-hand side that says, "Use in practice context." That's that application part. And then you see in the lower, the bottom horizontal axis, low to medium to high, that's complexity of the professional development. So the arrow is going from low complexity of professional development and knowledge awareness to high, but you can

have activities across that full arrow and in every one of those pieces of this chart. And this is the next part of the animation. You can have reading, lecture, videos, learning decks. There are all kinds of pieces you can have in these boxes, but to give you a really concrete example that really involves what we're doing today, you can have, at the very low level, I mean, not that this wasn't hard to put together, but in terms of an investment of time and resources, a webinar is probably one of those low-resource efforts that reaches knowledge and awareness.

So you could have a webinar about the laws and the policies and the practices that support inclusion, and that would be impacting learners at that knowledge awareness level. But then what we really need to think about is a continuum building on webinars. And that next talk is at the demonstration level, where education staff will watch, for instance, video examples of a practice, and then they would think about and craft implementation of that practice in a simulation or maybe in a role play, all the way up -- more -- professional development, which would be that education staff would actually have a coach who would support their application of the practice, give them performance feedback as they did implement that practice. So I think this continuum is an important one to think about. So here's a question for our panel -- what do we know about professional development strategies that are most effective for teaching adults to learn about and implement research-based practices in their work settings at that highest level of application? Christy, I think your turn to jump in and share some information.

Christy Kavulic: Thank you, Pam. I will jump in now. There is a growing body of literature on professional development that's really focused on practices that talk about how we can do effective professional development, so I just want to talk about some that have been identified. The first is really having the professional development focus on explicitly defined and multiple exemplars of that practice, so whether that practices are environmental, instructional, interactional, making sure that people know what the practices are and what they look like when they're implemented in different types of authentic early childhood education settings. The second is making sure that the professional development provides the participants with some job-embedded opportunities to both learn and implement the practices and then provides explicit feedback about their implementation. And the third is making sure that the professional development includes information about how to link improvements or changes in a teacher's practice, how they've changed the environment, how they've interacted with a child so that you can see child progress and child learning outcomes. So to kind of tie that all together, for professional development, you need to be specific on the practice, participants need to try it out, and they need to know how to monitor it to look at if it impacts the child's development.

Pam: Thanks, Christy. We're hearing a little bit of music somewhere. So if you're -- If there's music playing in your background, maybe you can turn that off. Thank you. Jamie, how about within Head Start? What can you tell us about a continuum of professional development activities going on there?

Jamie: So within Head Start, Head Start programs understand the importance of planning for professional development for all their staff to develop and address the continuity of professional development activities. Head Start programs, according to the Head Start Performance Standards, must establish and implement a systematic approach to training staff and professional development, and so that will be designed and implemented at the local level to assist staff in acquiring and increasing their knowledge and skills to provide high-quality comprehensive services to children and families. And, of course, that includes children with disabilities and advocating for their families. The office of Head Start, through our training in tech system, with the regional TNTA, early childhood specialists, and the national centers, provide resources and materials to support these efforts designed to build knowledge, experiences, and competencies to improve child outcomes. The office of Head Start, also within the Head Start Performance Standards, focus on using a research-based training and professional development for education staff that focus on a variety of areas related to comprehensive services. For example, supporting children with

disabilities and their families, preparing children and families for transition, and using data to individualize learning experiences. Through these opportunities, we would see teachers implementing research-based practices to support inclusion.

Christy: Mrs. Sangeeta, I just wanted to jump in for a second here and give you kind of an example of what Jamie is talking about related to the Head Start Program Performance Standards. Just so you all know, you can access our standards on the ECLKC, which is the Early Childhood Learning and Knowledge Center, and within there, we do have a regulation. It's 1302.91, the section on staff qualifications and competency requirements. And so, this is an example of how we've infused inclusion and disabilities within the staff requirements beyond the Head Start Act that I talked about earlier. We have a section which is section D in 1302.91, which is child and family services management staff qualifications requirements, and within there, we say that a program must ensure staff responsible for management and oversight of family services, health services, and service to children with disabilities hired after November 7, 2016, have, at a minimum, a B.A., preferably related to one or more of the disciplines they oversee. And that is just one place where we highlight working with children with disabilities as being very important and what our staff are required to have around that professional development before they even start working in a Head Start program.

Pam: That's great. Thanks, Sangeeta, for bringing that to that inclusion focus right there. I know you guys also have a real emphasis on coaching, practice-based coaching, as part of the performance standards, and we've had a question come in about coaching, so I'm wondering, Jamie, tell us a little bit about what you all are doing there.

Jamie: Sure. So as it relates to coaching, which we have in the Head Start Performance Standards, as well, is that Head Start programs must implement a research-based coaching strategy, and that coaching strategy needs to include a time for observation, feedback, and modeling to support education staff in effective teaching practices. We know that not all of the education staff can receive intensive coaching, so those staff who aren't being coached need to receive other forms of professional development as Julia -- or as Christy -- described when she was talking about the continuum. While programs can use any type of research-based coaching strategies they choose, the Office of Head Start has invested in the last seven to eight years in practice-based coaching and has free available resources on the ECLKC. We know that professional development geared toward effective teaching practices and inclusive practices demonstrate individualized teaching and opportunities for all children to learn, access, participate, and thrive in early learning settings. Coaching can be used to support individualizing for children who need more support to help ensure effective teaching practices for children with disabilities or suspected of disabilities or having other special needs across all domains. Coaching can also be worked into supporting a teacher and their practices with using a child's ISSP, or their IEP goals, as part of effective teaching, individualizing or creating an inclusive environment that will support all children's positive outcome.

Pam: Thanks, Jamie. One of the questions that's come in to our chat box is about sometimes teachers are in isolated settings and there might not be a coach available, and I know coaching is just one approach in the continuum, but do you feel like, with Head Start's emphasis on coaching now, that they're going to be more opportunities for programs to have access to coaches? Is that your hope and dream here?

Jamie: Well, yeah. Well, you know, that's my personal hope and dream, but I think as it relates to the Head Start Performance Standards, in the past, I think in early childhood, we've talked about the importance of coaching, but the Office of Head Start has actually made this a part of our requirements so that it's no longer an option and that programs need to figure out how to do coaching, and who and how the staff will be coached is up to them to design. We don't say the number of hours or duration or the number of staff that need to be coached, but we do -- Programs do have to assess the highest need and to figure out who will benefit most from coaching, and I would say that the isolation is certainly something

for programs to think about and how they'll reach their staff. Not everything has to be done in your traditional coaching model, so we do also provide a lot of flexibility in how that model can be implemented. It doesn't necessarily have to be a coach coming on-site. It could be coaching via something distant. It could be another form of professional development using a teachers and learning collaborating model. It could be, you know, more resources that we'll talk about as this webinar goes on, but sort of a learning community on the MyPeers, so there's lots of ways that we can help to break down sort of the isolation until programs can really implement a coaching design well.

Pam: Yeah. That's great. And I'm thinking about, with both you and Julia and Christy and Sangeeta all on the phone together, the possibilities at the local level for reaching across to the LEAs, the local education agencies, who have maybe preschool disability services and some coaching available through those LEAs or reaching across to part C, early intervention folks, who may have some coaching approaches and models available at that community level. But, Jamie, you brought up resources. Let's jump to those resources because I think there's some really exciting ones. They are on ECLKC and also in the ECTA website that OSEP support. So, Jamie, tell us a little bit about what we might find on ECLKC.

Jamie: So here's just a quick screen shot of sort of the welcome to PBC, which is what we refer to as Practice-Based Coaching, on the ECLKC. So it's just a screen shot of sort of what the home page looks like, and there's a variety of resources there for coaches, program leaders, all related to coaching and professional development. We also have what we refer to as the Coaching Companion, and the Coaching Companion is designed to support coaching. It's a video-sharing and coaching feedback application, so teachers, coaches, trainers can use this application to share videos, ask questions, exchange feedback, and develop individualized coaching plans that support quality teaching practices and positive outcomes for young children. It helps coaches and teachers or peer coaching teams work together between coaching visits, or it can be used to support a distance model for coaching. Teachers and coaches can use the Coaching Companion to view a video library of examples of teaching practices. They can also share with their own classroom video and track their own progress. The Coaching Companion follows the Intentional Teaching Framework from Joseph & Brennan, which is the "know, see, do, reflect, and improve," if anyone is familiar with that. While the Coaching Companion is designed to support PBC coaching model, it's also -- We did a little bit of side-by-side comparison, and the Coaching Companion can support or align well with other models of coaching. And the Coaching Companion also works -- -

Pam: Jamie? -

Jamie: Oh. Yes, Pam?

Pam: Yeah. We had an important question come in, I think, about the Coaching Companion, and I'm going to try to read the whole question here. "Is it only for Head Start, or is it open to others to look at or use?"

Jamie: Right. So the Coaching Companion is a free and available resource to anyone in the early childhood field who has a coach, and you can send a message on the ECLKC and tell them that you would like to set up an account, and they will vet your -- not vet your information -- but they'll take in your information and then supply you with a user ID, and then you can have access to that. -

Pam: That's great to know. -

Jamie: Yeah.

Pam: I sense a lot of interest and excitement on the webinar for that, for that resource.

Jamie: Yeah, we've been doing a lot of webinars for states, as well, so that child care and Head Start and Pre-K have been coming on.

Pam: Great. And so, you're moving on to another resource that I know has been highly used and is open for everybody to take a look at and use, right?

Jamie: Yeah. So these are another free and available resource on our website, on the ECLKC. These are what we refer to lovingly as the 15-minute in-services, and we have -- They are resources to support professional development, and so we'll mention a few of them. There's multiple 15-minute in-service suites which cover a variety of topics, but the two that I'll mention here are related to curriculum modifications and embedded learning. The curriculum modification in-service suite gives an overview of eight types of curriculum modifications that teachers could use with simple changes to classroom activities to increase child engagement and learning. And then the second is the embedded learning suite, which shows methods of how teachers can break down learning goals into smaller steps, breaking down each goal into easier objectives for the child to make progress and master the skill.

Pam: Great. And then, you have one more resource you were going to share that's more focused on professional development, right?

Jamie: Yeah, so we also have this series called the Front Porch Series, and that's on the ECLKC. And what that is is a variety of researchers coming on, sharing their research as it relates to a variety of topics, and one that we wanted to highlight here is a Front Porch Series with Pam Snyder from the University of Florida, which includes the definition that Pam talked about earlier about the definition of professional development and sort of the transactual movement, as well as the -- There's a visual within this presentation of aligning the levels of desired learning impact with the approach to professional development delivery. So again, there's a variety of topics, many of which are related to inclusion, as well, on the Front Porch Series by a variety of different researchers, so that could be of interest to folks on the call.

Pam: Right. This is great, Jamie. And we are working hard on trying to create a landing page right now on ECLKC to organize some of these resources around the inclusion practices so that people can get to them as easily as possible. So these are, just as you said, Jamie, just a few of the resources on ECLKC. So let's see. Christy, you're going to share some of the professional development resources on inclusion available from the ECTA OSEP side of things.

Christy: Yes. Thanks, Pam. I did want to talk about some additional resources in addition to what Jamie has just talked about. You'll see we have a number listed on this slide, and I'll get into detail on some of them on the next two slides. But in terms of the vision of early childhood-recommended practices and the CONNECT modules, those were two resources that were shared in our previous webinars, so I encourage participants to take a look at those to get more information on those. But just remembering that Julia shared the DEC personnel standards at the beginning of the presentation, that's a good way to think about looking at what knowledge and skills you'd like practitioners to have and then to go and look at resources that can help target those personnel skills, personnel standards. So going to the next slide, the one that I wanted to bring up is a resource from the Early Childhood Technical Assistance Center, ECTA, and it is a practice-based coaching series. It's a number of webinars that go through this practice, and you'll notice it's the same graphic that Jamie just shared. So what's really nice is that our two fields are working together in the same frameworks, sharing the same language, and really talking about how we can support practice-based coaching across -- with our technical assistance centers, and this is really important because it helps support collaboration among professionals when you're using similar frameworks and similar evidence-based practices. And I was just thinking about our last webinar, where we talked about the importance of collaboration and collaborative partnerships, allowing practitioners to support inclusion and how important that is. I hope people will look at that resource in either light. Next, I wanted to just highlight was some literature synthesis and literature reviews that the Early Childhood Personnel Center has done. And these documents can really give you some information on evidence-based

professional practices, as well as some of the information we talked about in relation to personnel standards across states. It's not on this slide, but I also wanted to bring up some work that the Early Childhood Personnel Center is doing. I had seen a question being asked about, are there states that have personnel standards that are across all professions? And I'm personally not familiar if there are states that have standards across professions within that state, but something that the Early Childhood Personnel Center has been doing is working with national professional organizations such as DEC, NAEYC, the related service professional organizations. ASHA was the speaking/hearing one, the physical therapy, the occupational therapy, and they're in the process of coming together and identifying competencies that all providers should have regardless of your discipline to be able to support and work with young children with disabilities and their families. So that's a resource that should be out shortly, that though they're not state-wide personnel standards, it does talk about competencies across disciplines, which will be useful.

And then the last resource I wanted to share is a little different, actually. But the Office of Special Education Programs, we annually have a competitive competition where we provide funds to universities to have personnel development programs, and those personnel development programs are to prepare early childhood personnel either at the practitioner level, so either in related services or other interventionist or special education, and the grants a university receives, a large part of it is to go support scholars in getting their degrees. So once a scholar receives the degree, they then owe some years of service to the field to pay off that scholarship. So if you're interested, there are master's-level degrees, as well as doctoral-level degrees. If you're interested in continuing your education and are looking for funding to support that, there's a link at the bottom of the slide that lists the universities that have the funds to support you in working towards your master's or your doctorate.

Pam: Wow. That's really helpful, Christy. I hope everybody on the phone feels inspired to check out these resources. And I'm looking in our little room here. I think all of us sitting here probably got our advanced degrees through the OSEP funding opportunities, and I'm pretty old, so that means it's been going on for a long, long time. Really helpful. Thank you all. And this is just the tip of the iceberg on the resources I think you'll find at these websites. Just for those of you who want to know the links and were trying to share them on our online responses to you, but some of the links of resources that were just shared by folks are on this last slide, and, as mentioned, the PowerPoint is available in the resource document on this webinar. So this will help you find some of the information you're eager to find. So we're at the last slide, which is our thank you slide that we have five or six or seven minutes, it looks like, to go back to some of the questions that came in and to get more of your questions. Megan, Chih-Ing, questions that have come in that you think we might ask our panelists. Or, panelists, thoughts you've had as you've been looking at the question box, or the chat box, and listening to each other. Megan

Vinh: So there was a question about how states -- if we have data on how states' QRIS systems have incorporated inclusion into their standards and if we have any thoughts on additional support for that? And I didn't know if one of the panelists wanted to jump in, and then I'd also be willing to add some information.

Christy: This is Christy. I can jump in a little on that. And, Megan, would happily have you jump in, as well. The Race to the Top Early Learning Challenge Grant, one of their -- part of their work was to look at their Quality Rating and Improvement Systems, and some states have approached how they've incorporated supporting children with disabilities differently within that work, so there are some examples of states that you could find on the -- There's a website, the Early Learning TA Consortium, provides information on how states have done in relation to the Race to the Top Grant, but some examples of states that have been really thinking about how to embed inclusion is Idaho, for example. They've looked at how they can embed standards around inclusion at every level of the QRIS system in their state. And then there are other states, such as Illinois, who have thought about how to provide specialty designations to programs

that have worked to ensure certain standards within their programs. They tend to be at the top tiers of their Quality Rating and Improvement Systems and get special recognition in terms of medals within their system. Megan, I know you've been working with a lot of states around inclusive practices. Do you have information you would want to add?

Megan: Yeah, and I think you shared a great deal, Christy, I thought, but I will say, within that, we're seeing states are doing that in very different ways. So like you said, Christy, some have it integrated throughout, and some have it as an additional, you know, once you've gotten, like, let's say your level four or five or whatever it is in your state, certification, but then it's something additional on top of that, so we're seeing it in very different ways. But I will say the ECTA Center also has some resources on their website, but if folks do need further follow-up on that, you can put my e-mail in the chat, and folks can e-mail me, and we'd be happy to follow up on what some other great state examples are. But I think Christy gave a great opener about some states we know that have done that throughout. And similarly, if you're interested and you're on the webinar and want to share that you've done it, please feel free to put it in the chat, that maybe you have some great resources on your state websites, as well.

Pam: Mm-hmm. I know, also, that the CELA Center, another national TA center, did a short report I think Jim Squires was one of the authors. And we could post that. It was about -- I think he highlighted four states that were doing something related to inclusion in their QRIS. So we can pull that resource up for you guys somehow. Other questions, panelists, that you have seen there that you want to address or that we -- that pop into your minds as you've heard each other talk and share? Anybody want to add anything? We have about one minute to go. Megan: I just want to remind people that if you're looking for the PowerPoint, you can find it in the file pod, which is on the left side -- it's the third box down. So you can download. You already have access to the PowerPoint. And feel free to download that so you can follow up on those resources provided.

Pam: Okay.

Julia: And, Pam, this is Julia. I just want to make a quick comment before we hang up that we've really enjoyed. This has been four webinars together, and it's been a -- You know, we've worked really hard to collaborate with our colleague at HHS, and so, it's been a very successful experience, and we look forward to many more of them in the future and appreciate your feedback on any of it as we move forward, because we will be working on all sorts of things around inclusion and family engagement in the next five years of our funding of our early childhood centers. So we look forward to more opportunities together.

Pam: And, Julia, thank you. The thanks is really to the panelists who really exemplify -- We said the series is called "Partnerships in Inclusion," and you guys exemplify that partnership so beautifully, so thank you for stepping into this place and spending so much time and work on preparing the webinars and participating. And I think that this has been a great opportunity for us to learn so much from each other, so thanks, everybody, who came on. And speaking of evaluation and feedback, we want to hear from you. We're going to be sending out an evaluation from ECTA when the webinar ends. Please fill it out. Let us know if this has been helpful. Let us know what issues you want addressed in any future webinars that might bubble up out of this collaboration. So, thanks, all. I'll talk to y'all soon online in some way, shape, or form. But really enjoyed it. Signing off.

All: Thank you.