



A Mentor Manifesto DRAFT for Mentor Review & Comment

REQUEST TO MENTORS: PLEASE REVIEW AND DISCUSS PART 1. WOULD YOU BE WILLING TO RATIFY THIS? IF NOT, WHAT SHOULD BE CHANGED? PLEASE EMAIL ELLEN AT emorriso@ccsf.edu WITH YOUR SEMINAR'S RESPONSE NO LATER THAN JANUARY 1, 2011.

Part 1. Guiding Principles for the Field

Together, the principles described here should be used to guide policies developed to educate and assess professionals in the field of Early Care and Education.

High Quality Early Care and Education . . .

. . . is based first and foremost on **Relationships**. Teachers need to be responsive, respectful, and reciprocal with children and families; to develop positive communication patterns with children, families, and their peers; to embrace linguistic and cultural diversity in their classrooms as expanded opportunities for communication. The foundation of relationships extends to administrators as well as the content of training and college instruction. People of any age learn more and more quickly from someone we know and trust. A high quality teacher is someone with the temperament and skills to develop and maintain caring relationships.

. . . is **Holistic**. Teaching “the whole child” means taking a multi-disciplinary approach to teaching. Teachers tap knowledge of psychology when they support a child’s sense of self-esteem, encourage children to articulate their feelings, and create routines that make children feel safe. Social services knowledge is needed to provide families with community resources. Subject area knowledge of math, science, and literature are needed to integrate stories from circle time into recipes for children to create and structures for them to build with blocks. Lessons from world history, cultural anthropology, and language courses develop teachers’ insights into family cultures.

. . . is **Intentional**. In their interactions with children through play, child-directed and teacher-directed activities, teachers act with intention to support the socio-emotional, cognitive, and physical development of children. Every interaction with a child communicates important information, for better or worse. High quality teachers have

learned through education, experience, observation, and reflection how to act with intention to support positive development.

. . . is **Discovery-based**. Discovery leads to a hunger for knowledge. High quality teachers facilitate play, provide experiential opportunities, foster curiosity, and encourage creativity. Rather than imparting information, a high quality teacher understands that children are born ready to learn. Teachers and parents can best facilitate children's learning by providing them with opportunities to discover how the world works.

. . . promotes **Individualized** observation and assessment. High quality teachers have mastered developmentally appropriate practice based on the age and stage of the individual child and have the knowledge of development and of each child in their classroom to be able to identify any challenges in development.

. . . is the **Practical implementation of theory**. Understanding how to implement theory in the real world is the critical outcome of ECE teacher preparation. ECE teachers do not learn math equations to teach math equations. Rather, they learn how to help children discover math and science concepts in the world around them. They do not tell children about the significance of relationships in supporting brain development, they build relationships and thereby support brain development.

In other words, ECE is RHIDIP!



Part 2. ECE Teacher Education and Training

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High quality teachers possess a set of skills that are deeper and broader than education and training alone can provide. In addition to acceptance of the Guiding Principles, the following four components, in flexible combinations, are needed to prepare a high quality professional for working with children.

- **ECE college coursework:** Theory-based ECE coursework that requires in-depth reading, reflection, discussion, and integration of real-world knowledge. These courses range in focus from child development specifics, to working with families, to teaching methods. **EXAMPLES:** Courses specific to ECE have been carefully reviewed and recommended by distinguished groups of ECE educators in California, including the Curriculum Alignment Project (CAP), Baccalaureate Pathways in Early Care and Education (BPECE), and the 2010 Higher Education Colloquium.
- **Non-ECE college coursework:** Theory-based coursework in science, mathematics, social sciences and the humanities that requires in-depth reading, reflection, discussion, and integration of real-world knowledge. These courses provide an important context for the ECE coursework and skill-specific training. **EXAMPLES:** Biology, Physics, Sociology, Psychology, Political Science, World History, Art, Music, Literature, Philosophy.
- **Non-unit-bearing training:** Skill or insight-based trainings that do not need to be long in duration but may require refresher courses throughout an individual's career. **EXAMPLES:** Health and Safety, Diversity, Individual Education Plans, Conflict Resolution Skills and Process, Parent Communications, Stress Management.
- **On-the-job Training/Mentoring/apprenticeships:** Training through observation and experimentation, preferably under the guidance of a Master Teacher or Mentor. **EXAMPLES:** Extended Mentor placements, apprenticeship, student teaching, internships, experiences in multiple settings with different age groups and resources available.

Part 3. Assessing Teacher Competence

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When developing teacher assessment policy, it is important to focus on the desired outcome—high quality teachers—and consider that there could be different routes or combinations of experiences to reach the same outcome. Observation and documentation, rather than proof of degrees or certificates, should be the key assessment tools.

Observation of Prospective Teacher (live or video):

- Self
- Other Teachers
- Master/Mentor Teacher
- Parents

Documentation to be Reviewed by a Panel of Master Teachers:

- Portfolios
- Curriculum proposed by prospective teacher
- Journals
- Photographs

Part 4. High quality teachers alone aren't enough

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Raising the bar of education for teachers could result in more vibrant, passionate workplaces and higher quality care and education for children. However, high quality teachers alone aren't enough to repair the current system.

In order for high quality teachers to thrive, they need high quality programs. We call for **directors** who develop a sense of community in their programs, **programs** with adequate resources to provide information and support to teachers and families as well as the children they serve, and **policies** that support children, families, and teachers.

- **Link** higher salaries to demonstration of competence.
- **Support** families in understanding, accessing, and affording high quality care.
- **Restructure** K-12 using developmentally appropriate practice: “We don't need to get kids ready for school, we need to get schools ready for children.”
- **Educate** parents and the public on the importance of play and Developmentally Appropriate Practice.
- **Require** child development classes in high school.
- **Offer** government support for alternative developmentally appropriate models such as Reggio, High Scope, and Waldorf.