P

The Center to Inform
Personnel Preparation Policy and Practice
In Early Intervention & Preschool Education

UNIVERSITY OF CONNECTICUT HEALTH CENTER

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Data Report

Study X Data Report: Case Studies Report: Training And Technical Assistance Systems

The Center to Inform Personnel Preparation Policy and Practice in Early Intervention and Early Childhood Special Education (referred to hereafter as the Center) was established in January, 2003 as a five-year project funded by the Office of Special Education Programs. The purpose of this Center is to collect, synthesize and analyze information related to: (a) certification and licensure requirements for personnel working with infants, toddlers, and preschoolers who have special needs and their families, (b) the quality of training programs that prepare these professionals, and (c) the supply and demand of professionals representing all disciplines who provide both ECSE and EI services. Information gathered will be utilized to identify critical gaps in current knowledge and design and conduct a program of research at the national, state, institutional and direct provider level to address these gaps. This program of research and policy formulation will yield information vital to developing policies and practices at all levels of government, including institutions of higher education.

Purpose of the Report

One of the initiatives of the Center is to conduct research on the training and technical assistance systems for personnel working with infants and toddlers with special needs and their families. Information presented in this report is based on findings of an investigation of Part C and Section 619 training and technical assistance systems. The study team developed definitions for what constitutes a training and technical assistance system (see methods section for detailed protocol for selection of states) and states were selected for this study based on these definitions. Part C and 619 coordinators in addition to other informants that were knowledgeable about the training and TA systems were interviewed, such as parents, higher education faculty and ICC chairs. Informants were contacted between February 2008 until December 2008 and asked questions relative to their training and technical assistance programs.

Eight states were selected for inclusion in this study based on their training and technical assistance systems for Part C and/or Section 619 meeting an established definition. Various people in each state involved in the training and technical assistance system participated in an interview focusing on seven topics (contextual information, content, delivery, collaboration, staffing, data

collection, and funding) related to the training and technical assistance system. Interviews were analyzed in order to create a comprehensive summary of each state's system and to identify themes within and across states. Results indicated a number of themes across states related to each of the seven topics.

Prior to this study, the status of state level training and technical assistance systems for early intervention providers had not been systematically examined. The purpose of this study is to identify the current personnel preparation systems for early intervention/preschool education professionals in the selected states. Systems that provide and maintain effective and comprehensive personnel preparation and development may serve as models for national standards and recommendations.

METHODOLOGY

Procedure

Data gathered during Study VI served as the foundation for the research team's choice of states for in-depth case studies. Part C and 619 state training and technical assistance systems were examined based on interview data collected to determine if they met the established definitions for a training and technical assistance system. Six of the proposed states for case studies met the following definitions of training and technical assistance for both Part C and 619 systems, four met the definition for only Part C, and four met the definition for only 619.

State training systems were defined as state systems that contained each of ten components that demonstrated a systematic, sustainable approach to professional development. Defining components included: (a) dedicated resources such as an agency budget line-item; (b) staffing; (c) a dedicated agency responsible for the provision of the training; (d) policies or procedures for determining professional development expectations; (e) training content; (f) quality assurance systems; (g) process for identifying and measuring outcomes; (h) on-going, needs based professional development that is provided over-time; (i) a structure for the delivery of content (training modules, etc.), and (j) work-place applicability.

Information gleaned from interviews with state coordinators pertaining to their technical assistance systems was used against the following definition: (a) dedicated resources such as an agency budget line-item; (b) staffing; (c) a dedicated agency responsible for the provision of the training; (d) policies or procedures for determining professional development expectations; (e) training content; (f) quality assurance systems; (g) process for identifying and measuring outcomes; (h) work-place applicability; (i) provides ongoing TA; (j) individualized professional development; (k) problem solving services, and (l) assists individuals, programs and agencies in improving their services, management, policies, or outcomes. The six states that met the definition for Part C and 619 training and technical assistance systems are California, Kansas, Minnesota, Nebraska, Pennsylvania, and Wisconsin. Additionally, eight states met the definition for either a Part C or 619 training and technical assistance system. Those with a qualifying Part C training and technical assistance system are Texas, Ohio, North Carolina, and New Hampshire. Those with a qualifying 619 training and technical assistance system are Alabama, Arizona, Illinois, and Iowa. Additional variables regarding Part C and 619 systems were chosen to differentiate between the aforementioned eight states. These variables included: multidisciplinary

trainings; trainings inclusive of families; trainings related to direct practice; an annual training plan; a comprehensive training system, and training outcome measures. Additionally, data were examined for specific training opportunities related to: interventions; teaming; family-centered practices; natural learning environments; service coordination; disability-specific information; child development; IEP/IFSP; transition; assessment, and inclusion.

Participants

Participants for the study were selected first by contacting the Part C and/or 619 state coordinators using the NECTAC contact list. The Principal Investigator made initial contacts with the state coordinators asking them to participate in the study. All six states with both Part C and 619 training and technical assistance systems agreed to participate. Only one state with a Part C training and technical assistance system and one state with a 619 training and technical assistance system agreed to participate. These states were Ohio and Illinois, respectively. Interviewers contacted the state coordinators to set up an interview. For the six states with both a Part C and 619 training and technical assistance systems, coordinators were asked if there were any other informants that would be helpful in interviewing. This snowball sampling was used to sample six to nine participants per state. Only one interview was conducted for both Illinois and Ohio due to time constraints, though Ohio had three people participate in the interview. Table 1 indicates the different types of respondents by job title for each of the eight states.

Table 1. *Type of Respondents by State*

State	Respondents
Wisconsin	Part C Coordinator Director of Waisman Center Early Childhood Consultant Professor of Higher Education Parent Early Childhood Professional Development Outreach Specialist
Pennsylvania	Director of Early Intervention Technical Assistance (EITA) Parent and Chair of Interagency Coordinating Council (ICC) Professor of Higher Education and ICC Representative Professor of Higher Education Program Manager of EITA Special Assistant the to Deputy Secretary of Office of Child Development and Learning
Nebraska	619 Coordinator Part C Manager Training Coordinator at Early Childhood Training Center (ECTC) Director of ECTC Professor of Higher Education Health Information Specialist at Parent Training and Information Center (PTIC) Parent Support Coordinator at PTIC Part C Coordinator
California	2 Part C Staff Coordinator of WestED 619 Consultant Coordinator of Special Education Early Childhood Administrators Project (SEECAP) Director of Desired Results Access Project Professor of Higher Education Interagency Coordinating Council Representative Director of a SELPA (Special Education Local Plan Area)
Minnesota	Part C Coordinator 619 Coordinator Professor of Higher Education Administrator of a Local Education Agency and ICC Chair Early Childhood Coordinator with PACER (Parent Advocacy Coalition for Educational Rights) Director of Early Childhood Training at the University of Michigan UCEDD Director of the Center for Inclusive Childcare
Kansas	Part C Coordinator Part C Technical Assistance Coordinator for KITS Project Coordinator for Kansas Inservice Training System (KITS) Parent-to-Parent Coordinator ICC President Director of KITS and the University of Kansas Center on Disabilities KITS Technical Assistance Specialist and former 619 Coordinator
Illinois	619 Coordinator

State	Respondents
Ohio	Part C Coordinator Training Director Technical Assistance Director

Web-based Searches

Websites of Part C and 619 programs, Comprehensive Systems of Professional Development (CSPD), the National Early Childhood Technical Assistance Center (NECTAC), and the states' education websites were examined to obtain information pertaining to training and technical assistance. Data gathered via web-based searches provided the researchers with background information. Web-based data was also used to clarify survey responses.

Telephone surveys. Part C and 619 coordinators were contacted by telephone, provided with information about the purpose of the study, and asked if they were the most appropriate person to complete the survey. Other informants noted in Table 1 above were contacted and also asked to participate.

Respondents were asked to consent to having their responses taped for later transcription by a transcription service. Duration of the survey ranged from 60 to 255 minutes, with an average of 124 minutes. For surveys, approximately four call attempts or emails were made to contact a participant and complete an interview, with a range of 1 to 22 attempts.

Following the telephone interview, the transcript of their responses was sent to each respondent for verification. Modifications to the transcript were made by respondents and returned to project staff via email. Qualitative information was then coded by question by research staff members.

Telephone Survey Instrument

The Training and Technical Assistance in EI/ECSE survey consisted of 65 open ended questions asking for descriptions of programs pertaining to training needs and/or evaluations. The survey was administered as a semi-structured interview to allow respondents to engage in a dialogue with project staff and to clarify information and answer participants' questions. A copy of the survey can be found in Appendix A.

Fidelity Procedures

Web-based. To ensure reliability and consistency among project staff gathering the web-based information, a written protocol was designed to detail the procedures for collecting web-based information and recording supporting documents.

Telephone survey. Research staff members were trained on data collection procedures using a written protocol for obtaining consent and administering the survey. A copy of the interviewer protocol can be found in Appendix B. Interviewers piloted the survey with professionals in the

field of EI/ECSE who were not part of the sample. The pilot group and project staff observing the administration of the telephone survey gave feedback.

Weekly meetings were held to discuss issues and address questions raised during the survey administration. Project staff reviewed each transcription and provided feedback to the interviewers.

Data Analysis

Research staff analyzed the qualitative responses to summarize each state's training and technical assistance system, to identify salient themes, and to categorize data related to topics that emerged from the responses. Three research staff participated in analyzing the interviews. Research staff read each interview and highlighted information that was relevant to the questions and topics outlined in the Training and Technical Assistance in EI/ECSE survey. Researchers then created a separate summary document for each interview with the eight topic areas as headings. Information from the interviews was inserted into the document under the appropriate headings. Once all interviews were summarized in this way, researchers created a whole state summary that combined all of the individual interviews from the state into one document. This document was used to create a comprehensive, written summary of each state that details the training and technical assistance system.

Reliability was conducted on 20% of the interviews. Each of the seven interviews for reliability was read by another researcher and that researcher created their own summary document for that interview. One researcher was designated to analyze the percentage of agreement for each of the sets of interviews. In order to determine the percentage of agreement, the researcher determined the total number of matching statements and then divided that number by the total number of statements across both summary documents. Rules used for determining matches are shown in Appendix C. The overall agreement between all researchers is 92% and the range is 89%-97%. When less than 100% agreement was reached, the two researchers met to discuss their differences and come to 100% agreement. State summaries were also sent to the person who conducted all of the interviews for a given state for approval. Changes were made if there was disagreement from the interviewer. Each summary was then sent to at least one person from the state for review and changes were made based on their feedback. The final version of each state summary can be found in Appendix D.

The final step in data analysis was to come up with themes from an examination within and across states. For each state one researcher reviewed the bulleted and written state summaries to come up with themes or ideas for each of the interview topics. All three researchers and the project coordinator met to discuss the themes and a chart was created to show the themes that were agreed upon for each state. The themes were then condensed to be more concise and a new chart was created to show the themes and each of the states in which that theme was present. The interviewers met again to discuss all of the states and to agree on the themes that were present for each state. The results of the theme analysis are presented below.

RESULTS

A number of themes emerged across states for each of the seven topic areas (Contextual Information, Content, Delivery, Collaboration, Staffing, Data Collection, and Funding) and are presented below. The topic area of Collaboration was eliminated since each of the themes could be fit into one of the other topic areas. A list of the themes that emerged and the states in which they occurred can be found in Table 2.

Table 2. *Topical Themes Across States*

Contextual Information	CA	IL	KS	MN	NE	OH	PA	WI
Goal: to provide quality services for children and families	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X
Goal: to comply with state and federal regulations	X	X	X	X		X		X
System has been in existence for at least 10 years	X	X	X	X	X		X	X
Part C and 619 collaborate together	X		X		X		X	X
Content								
Influence: state and federal requirements/priorities	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X
Influence: evaluations from past trainings	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X
Influence: evidence-based practice or research	X	X	X		X	X		X
Multiple agencies collaborate to determine content	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X
Delivery								
TA is given on-site or through phone consultation	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X
Primary method of training delivery is large group events	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X
Increased use of electronic or online formats for TTA	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X
Influence: adult learning principles	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X
Some trainings delivered through collaboration	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X
Staffing								
Qualifications: advanced degrees/experience	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X
Has some staff dedicated to TTA	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X
On-going skill development for providers of TTA	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X
Has low turnover of staff		X	X				X	X
Data Collection								
Collects evaluation data from all training events	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X
Data is used to improve future TTA	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X
Maintains a database containing training event info.	X		X		X	X	X	
Funding								
Has consistent funding	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X
Uses informal collaboration of funds for TTA events	X	X	X		X		X	X

Contextual Information

For contextual information, themes emerged across states about the goals of the training and technical assistance system and the collaboration between the different Part C and 619 lead agencies. Across all eight states, the overarching goal of the training and technical assistance system is to support professionals in order to provide quality services for children and families. Six of the states also stated that one of their main goals is to comply with state and federal regulations.

In more than half of the states, there is some form of collaboration between Part C and 619 for training and/or technical assistance. In Wisconsin, a small group of leaders across Part C and 619 has been created to build a collaborative birth to six training system especially related to child outcomes, transition, and environments. Pennsylvania has created an office at the state level to house all agencies related to early childhood and has one training and technical assistance system for Part C and 619. Nebraska has a strong history of collaboration between Part C and 619 and the two lead agencies (Department of Health and Human Services and Department of Education) plan and provide most of the state's training collaboratively across Part C and 619. In Kansas, most of the training and technical assistance is provided through KITS (Kansas In-service Training System) which has a yearly meeting with representatives from both the lead agency for Part C (Department of Health and Environment) and the lead agency for 619 (Department of Education) in order to determine the yearly training priorities. In California, there is often overlap between the training and technical assistance systems for Part C and 619 and there is a very specific collaboration between the two to provide training and technical assistance on transition. Many of these states mentioned that the reason for such strong collaboration is that many of the leaders in the state have been there for many years and have been able to build collaborative relationships.

Content

The themes that emerged about content focused on the various influences and the collaborations between agencies that occur. All eight states said that state and federal requirements and evaluations from past trainings had the greatest influence on content for training and technical assistance. For example, Ohio currently has an agreement with OSEP in order to meet federal requirements, so their technical assistance is specifically focused on working with counties that are out of compliance. All of the states reported having an evaluation form for trainings that included a question about future topics or information needs that is used to gauge the needs of the field and plan future training and technical assistance content. Most of the states (six out of eight) also reported that their content was influenced by evidence-based practice and/or research.

All eight states reported that multiple entities collaborate in determining some of the content of training and technical assistance. In a number of states (Pennsylvania, Nebraska, Minnesota, and Illinois), content for local or regional training and technical assistance is often determined through collaborative planning by various representatives involved in early childhood, including families, child care programs, community programs, Head Start, and early intervention. In Wisconsin, California, and Ohio, large collaborative networks exist with representatives from various agencies related to early childhood and institutes of higher education that meet regularly to discuss, plan, and influence training content. In Kansas, collaboration in determining training content often occurs between entities related to a specific topic or identified need.

Delivery

Themes emerged about the types of delivery, changes and influences in delivery, and collaboration for delivery. For all states, training was delivered through large group events held either regionally or statewide and technical assistance was most often delivered on-site or over the phone. Across all states there has been an increased use of electronic or online formats over the last few years to deliver training and technical assistance. This includes videoconferencing, webinars, online courses or training modules, information and material accessible through websites, and DVDs of trainings and/or training materials. Many of these states also recognized the various pros and cons related to the increased use of technology. All eight states reported an effort to align the delivery of training and technical assistance with adult learning principles. This has resulted in a number of states moving away from "one-shot trainings" towards trainings that include follow-up or other methods to ensure the transfer of knowledge to practice. Finally, for all eight states some training events are delivered through the collaboration of multiple entities. Many of the states (Wisconsin, Ohio, Minnesota, Kansas, Illinois, and California) have events that are delivered in collaboration with a number of entities such as mental health agencies, various training entities, specialized service entities (for low incidence disabilities), Head Starts, various state agencies (education, health and human services), institutes of higher education, and parent organizations. In Pennsylvania, the early childhood special education training and technical assistance system (EITA) provides trainings in collaboration with the school-age special education training and technical assistance system (PaTTAN) on topics that affect both early childhood and school-age special education. In Nebraska, the various planning regions collaborate to deliver trainings.

Staffing

Themes emerged related to the type and qualifications of staff, the opportunities for staff development, and staff turnover. All of the states have staff dedicated to one or more of the following aspects of training and technical assistance; development, design, delivery, and evaluation. For example, in Pennsylvania there is an entire staff (at EITA) dedicated to the development, design, delivery, and evaluation of training and technical assistance in the state. On the other hand, in Nebraska there is staff (at ECTC) dedicated to the development, design, and evaluation of training and technical assistance, but they mainly contract out for the actual delivery. All of the states also reported having staff whose qualifications include advanced degrees (Master's degree or above) and years of experience and who have access to on-going activities to improve their skills. These activities include attending national conferences, participating in other workshops or meetings with national experts, participating in an evaluation and continuous improvement process, and keeping up with research in the field. Finally, half of the states reported that they had staff that stayed in their positions for a long time. These states reported that this low staff turnover contributed to the success and effectiveness of training and technical assistance in the state.

Data Collection

Themes emerged related to the kinds of data collected and how the data is used. All of the states reported that evaluation forms are collected from training events that occur in the state. These evaluation forms typically include items about the quality of the information and trainer, the

usefulness of the information, and future needs. Many of the states also reported maintaining a database with demographic information related to training events such as the length of training, number and type of attendees, and the topics of training. Finally, all of the states reported that the data influences future training and technical assistance. This includes improving the delivery of training, determining future topics, identifying areas for technical assistance, and improving the skills of trainers.

Funding

The two themes that emerged for funding were the consistency of funding and the informal collaboration of funding that occurs for training and technical assistance. All of the states reported that they have received consistent funding for many years for their training and technical assistance system. This does not mean that the funding has not fluctuated, but that every year there is some money set aside for training and technical assistance. For many states, the funding is only federal money that is designated for training and technical assistance. Other states such as Pennsylvania, Ohio, Kansas, and Minnesota also use other sources of funding from various state agencies, general state funds, or state and/or federal grants. For almost all of the states, there is some informal collaboration and sharing of funding for various training and technical assistance events or initiatives. In Wisconsin, braided funding from child care, Head Start, and others is used to support the regional collaboration coaches. Many of the states including Nebraska, Pennsylvania, Kansas, Illinois, and California reported sharing of funding between multiple entities to host collaborative training events.

CONCLUSION

Through this study, eight states' training and technical assistance systems were closely examined. Through careful analysis a comprehensive picture of each state's system was established as well as an understanding of themes that occurred across the various states. The information presented in this report will be useful for other states to understand how effective training and technical assistance systems are organized and provide them with guidelines and suggestions for improving their own systems. This information will also be useful in planning for future studies on training and technical assistance systems.

Survey

State: _____   Interviewer: _____

Participant (first name): _____   Title: _____

Circle one: Part C/619

STUDY X: CASE STUDIES

Hello, this is _____ from the Center to Inform Personnel Preparation Policy and Practice in Early Intervention and Preschool Education at the University of Connecticut, we are calling to ask you a few questions about your training and technical assistance (T/TA) in your state for personnel serving infants and toddlers under Part C of IDEA (or preschoolers under Part B, Section 619 of IDEA). We are performing in-depth case studies as we look at what works in regard to inservice professional development. Your state was selected because of the comprehensiveness of training and technical assistance reported in prior interviews.

We would like to spend about 60 - 90 minutes with you while we ask you some questions about the training and TA system in your state (across disciplines). We have examined information regarding your state system that we collected in previous studies and looked at your website in order to make this interview as short as possible. Is this a good time for you?

[IF YES, CONTINUE. IF NO, SCHEDULE A CONVENIENT TIME TO CALL BACK.]

Your participation is voluntary and if you wish not to answer any of the questions, I will respect your decision. I wish to remind you that state data will be identified in future papers and reports. You will not be paid for completing this survey.

Questions about this study may be directed to the Principal Investigator, Dr. Mary Beth Bruder, at 860-679-1500. Questions regarding the rights of research subjects should be directed to an IRB Representative at 860-679-8729 or 860-679-3054.

Do you agree to participate in this survey?

_____ Yes   _____No

I would like to record our conversation to verify that the notes I take are accurate, do you agree to this? You will receive a copy of our interview for your review.

_____ Yes   _____No

A. Contextual Information: Historical perspective of services/model

Definition: General overview and historical background of the state's training and technical assistance system.

For the purposes of this interview, I am defining training as: formalized inservice learning opportunities designed to enhance professional performance of experienced practitioners and administrators.

Examples: sponsored summer workshops; conferences

Technical assistance:

Individualized information or activity at a personal or program/district level to build capacity to address local issues/problems [policies, outcomes], and/or implement research based practices.

Example: on-site support to address a specific program topic (e.g., inter-agency agreements); telephone/email support to district administrators

Prior review of documents:

- Any written information that provides a general description of the state's training and TA system, past and present

- Recent (e.g., 3 years) and present written plans or descriptions of the state's training and TA system

- Recent and present evaluations of the state's training and TA system

Training System

1. Would you begin by providing a general overview of your state's training system?

2. What are the goals and desired outcomes for your current training system?

3. Would you give me a brief history of your state's training system?

   [If the person doesn't have the historical perspective, ask who could provide a historical perspective].

3a. When was it developed?

3b. How was the training system started?

3c. Who were the key players/agencies in the process?

3d.   What did they hope to accomplish?

3e.   Have there been significant changes to training system in the past three years?

3f.   How long have you been in your current position?

4.   What major influences have shaped your state's training system?

4a.   State initiatives?

4b.   State or federal legislation?

4c.   Politics?

Technical Assistance System

5.   Would you begin by providing a general overview of your state's TA system?

6.   What are the goals and desired outcomes for your current TA system?

7.   Would you give me a brief history of your state's TA system?

        [If the person doesn't have the historical perspective, ask who could provide a historical perspective].

7a.   When was it developed?

7b.   How was the TA system started?

7c.   Who were the key players/agencies in the process?

7d.   What did they hope to accomplish?

7e.   Have there been significant changes to TA system in the past three years?

8.   What major influences have shaped your state's TA system?

8a.   State initiatives?

8b.   State or federal legislation?

8c.   Politics?

9.   Is there any other contextual information that you would like to add?

B. Training Content

Definition: Recent (e.g., 3 years) and current subject matter of training and technical assistance, including the factors and methods by which they were determined.

Prior review of documents:

- Any written information that describes the content of recent and current training and TA

- Recent and present training and TA plans

- Recent and present training/TA brochures

- Recent and present training calendars

Opening statements:

From our initial survey, it was reported that your state's training system provides ongoing: 1) training content, and 2) needs-based professional development. I would like to ask you some questions about the content or focus of your training system. After those questions, I would like to ask you some questions about the content of your state technical assistance system.

Training System

1.   Would you begin by sharing your state's training priorities?

1a.   From the information I reviewed (state sources), I have found that (summarize)

1b.   Current training priorities?

2.   What are the major influences that shape your state's training content?

2a.   To what extent do research and evidence-based practices influence your state's training content?

2b.   State and federal monitoring/compliance?

2c.   Standards and competencies?

2d.   Professional development needs/Needs surveys?

2e.   Families?

2f.   Past evaluations and feedback forms?

3.   What is your assessment of how well your state determines training content?

3a.   What are the strengths?

3b.   What are the challenges your state faces in determining training content?

3c.   How have you overcome those challenges?

Technical Assistance System

4.   Would you begin by sharing your state's TA priorities?

4a.   From the information I reviewed (state sources), I have found that (summarize)

4b.   Current TA priorities?

5.   What are the major influences that shape your state's TA content?

5a.   To what extent do research and evidence-based practices influence your state's TA content?

5b.   State and federal monitoring/compliance?

5c.   Standards and competencies?

5d.   Professional development needs/Needs surveys?

5e.   Families?

5f.   Past evaluations and feedback forms?

6.   What is your assessment of how well your state determines TA content?

6a.   What are the strengths?

6b.   What are the challenges your state faces in determining TA content?

6c.   How have you overcome those challenges?

7.   What else you would like to share about how your state training and TA content and how it is determined?

C. Training Delivery

Definition: The models, approaches, and methods used for delivering the training content.

Prior review of documents:

- Any written information that describes the delivery of past and current training and TA

- Recent (e.g., 3 years) and present written plans or descriptions of the state's training and TA system

- Training brochures and a sample of training agenda/syllabi

- Recent and present evaluations of the state's training and TA system

Opening statements:

From our initial survey, it was reported that your state's training system: 1) provides ongoing professional development over time and 2) that it is delivered through some structure such as training modules. I would like to ask you some questions about how your state delivers its training content. After those questions, I would like to ask you some questions about how your state delivers technical assistance.

Training System

1. Would you begin by describing your state's primary methods for delivering training?

1a. From the information I reviewed (state sources), I have found that (summarize)

2. How has your training delivery system changed or developed over time?

3. What is your assessment of how well your state delivers training?

3a. What are the strengths?

3b. What are the challenges your state faces in delivering training?

3c. How have you overcome those challenges?

Technical Assistance System

4.   Would you begin by describing your state's primary methods for delivering technical assistance?

4a.   From the information I reviewed (state sources), I have found that (summarize)

5.   How has your TA delivery system changed or developed over time?

6.   What is your assessment of how well your state delivers TA?

6a.   What are the strengths?

6b.   What are the challenges your state faces in delivering TA?

6c.   How have you overcome those challenges?

7.   Is there anything else that you would like to add about training/TA delivery?

D. Interagency Collaboration

Definition: Network of other agencies/organizations that contribute (e.g., funding, services, assistance, etc.) to the training and technical system.

Prior review of documents:

- Recent (e.g., 3 years) and present written plans or descriptions of the state's training and TA system

- Interagency agreements or memoranda of understanding

- Evaluation reports/annual summaries (e.g., ICC's annual report to the Governor)

Opening statements:

From our initial survey, it was reported that your state's training system uses a network of other agencies/ organizations to deliver training. I would like to ask you some questions about the interagency collaborations that support your state's training system. After those questions, I would like to ask you some questions about the interagency collaborations that support your state technical assistance system.

Training System

1.   Would you begin by describing the collaborative network your state uses to deliver training?

1a.   From the information I reviewed (state sources), I have found that (summarize)

1b.   What are the major agencies/organizations with whom you collaborate (e.g, IHEs, parents, department of health/human services, child care, pre-k, Head Start)?

1c.   What does each stakeholder contribute to the training system (e.g., share funding; contribution of training resources; access to information dissemination, etc.?

2.   How does the network function/collaborate?

2a.   What is the process?

2b.   How is it facilitated?

3.   What is your assessment of how well your state collaborates and networks to deliver training?

3a.   In your state, what supports collaboration among stakeholders?

3b.   What have been challenges to interagency collaboration?

3c.   How do you overcome those?

Technical Assistance System

4.   Would you begin by describing the collaborative network your state uses to deliver technical assistance?

4a.   From the information I reviewed (state sources), I have found that (summarize)

4b.   What are the major agencies/organizations with whom you collaborate (e.g, IHEs, parents, department of health/human services, child care, pre-k, Head Start)?

4c.   What does each stakeholder contribute to the TA system (e.g., share funding; contribution of TA resources; access to information dissemination, etc.?

5.   How does the network function/collaborate?

5a.   What is the process?

5b.   How is it facilitated?

6.   What is your assessment of how well your state collaborates and networks to deliver TA?

6a.   In your state, what supports collaboration among stakeholders?

6b.   What have been challenges to interagency collaboration?

6c.   How do you overcome those?

7.   Is there anything else that you would like to add about interagency collaborations that contribute to the T/
        TA system in your state?

E. Staffing

Definition: The personnel who are involved in developing, designing, delivering, and evaluating training and technical assistance. We are not referring to individuals who are contracted to deliver single training sessions in the state.

Prior review of documents:

- Recent (e.g., 3 years) and present written plans or descriptions of the state's training and TA system

- Contracts with state training entities

- Organizational charts

- Job descriptions

Opening statements:

From our initial survey, it was reported that your state's training system does have a dedicated agency and staffing. I would like to ask you some questions about the staffing of your state's training system. After those questions, I would like to ask you some questions about the staffing of your state technical assistance system.

Training System

1.   Would you begin by describing the key staff that are a part of your state's training system?

1a.   From the information I reviewed (state sources), I have found that (summarize)

1b.   What key staff contribute to the development, design, delivery, and evaluation of your state's training system?

1c.   What are the major job functions of each staff person?

1d.   How many FTE are dedicated to your state's training system?

2.   What are the essential qualifications/characteristics of the key staff? (e.g., degree, prior professional development experience, prior experience as a practitioner).

3.   For the staff who provide training, what does your state do to improve their training abilities?

3a.   How does your state insure the use of effective training strategies?

4.   What is your assessment of the quality of your state's training staff?

4a.   What are their strengths?

4b.   What challenges do you currently face, or have in the past faced, in staffing a training system? How have you overcome those challenges?

Technical Assistance System

5.   Would you begin by describing the key staff that are a part of your state's TA system?

5a.   From the information I reviewed (state sources), I have found that (summarize)

5b.   What key staff contribute to the development, design, delivery, and evaluation of your state's TA system?

5c.   What are the major job functions of each staff person?

5d.   How many FTE are dedicated to your state's TA system?

6.   What are the essential qualifications/characteristics of the key staff? (e.g., degree, prior professional development experience, prior experience as a practitioner).

7.   For the staff who provide TA, what does your state do to improve their TA abilities?

7a.   How does your state insure the use of effective TA strategies?

8.   What is your assessment of the quality of your state's TA staff?

8a.   What are their strengths?

8b.   What challenges do you currently face, or have in the past faced, in staffing a TA system? How have you overcome those challenges?

F. Data Collection

Definition: The type of information gathered about process and outcomes of training and technical assistance in the state and the methods used to gather this information.

Prior review of documents:

- Recent (e.g., 3 years) and present evaluations of the state's training and TA system

- Ask prior to the interview for the state to share their evaluation/data collection materials for individual events and overall system

Opening statements:

From our initial survey, it was reported that your state's training system has procedures in place to: 1) maintain quality assurance, and 2) identify and measure outcomes. I would like to ask you some questions about the data collection and evaluation of your training system. I will first ask you to share how your state evaluates individual training events; and then I will ask you to share how your state evaluates its overall training system. After those questions, I would like to ask you some questions about how your state evaluates its technical assistance system.

Training System

1. Would you begin by sharing how individual training events are evaluated, touching on what data are collected and how?

1a. From the information I reviewed (state sources), I have found that (summarize)

1b. To what extent are data collected for assessing knowledge and skill outcomes?

1c. To what extent are data collected on certain process or output measures, such as the number and type of participants attending, hours of training, location, etc.?

1d. To what extent are the various methods for collecting data used: questionnaires immediately following the training? Follow-up surveys? Interviews? Observations?

1e. Who collects the data?

2. What happens with the data from individual trainings after they are collected?

2a.   Who analyzes/summarizes the data?

2b.   Who reviews the information?

2c.   How is this information used?

2d.   To what extent are data used to monitor and improve the quality of training?

2e.   To what extent are data used to measure and report the impact of the training on outcomes?

2f.   To what extent are the data used for ensuring ongoing licensing, certification, and/or endorsement requirements?

3.   Shifting focus, would you describe how the state's overall training system is evaluated? **(We are shifting focus to evaluating the overall state system. For example, if your state goal was to increase natural learning environments, how do you evaluate that? Maybe you pull IFSPs and analyze them? For example, if you have a goal of certification of 80% of workforce, how are you measuring your progress to this goal?)**

3a.   From the information I reviewed (state sources), I have found that (summarize)

3b.   What data are collected? **(Do you have any data on how your state is doing to meet the overall objectives/outcomes/process of your training system? We are asking for any process and outcome data at the system level. What is the process of how you evaluate your evaluation of your training?)**

3c.   What methods are used to collect the data?

3d.   When, how often are such data collected?

3e.   Who collects this information?

4.   What happens with the state's evaluation data and results?

4a.   Who reviews the evaluation results?

4b.   How are the results used?

4c.   To what extent are the results used to monitor and improve the quality of training system?

4d.   To what extent are the results used to measure and report the impact of the training system on outcomes?

4e.   To what extent are the results used for addressing state and federal monitoring/compliance concerns?

4f.   To what extent are the results used to inform decision-making about needed changes in the training system?

5.   What is your assessment of how well your state evaluates its training system?

5a.   What are the strengths?

5b.   What are the challenges your state faces in evaluating individual training events and the overall system?

5c.   How has the state overcome those challenges?

Technical Assistance System

6.   Would you begin by sharing how individual TA are evaluated, touching on what data is collected and how?

6a.   From the information I reviewed (state sources), I have found that (summarize)

6b.   To what extent are data collected for assessing knowledge and skill outcomes?

6c.   To what extent are data collected on certain process or output measures, such as the number and type of participants, hours of TA, location, etc.?

6d.   To what extent are the various methods for collecting data used: questionnaires immediately following the TA? Follow-up surveys? Interviews? Observations?

6e.   Who collects the data?

7.   What happens with the individual data after they collected?

7a.   Who analyzes/summarizes the data?

7b.   Who reviews the information?

7c.   How is this information used?

7d.   To what extent are data used to monitor and improve the quality of TA?

7e.   To what extent are data used to measure and report the impact of the TA on outcomes?

8.   Shifting focus, would you describe how the state's overall TA system is evaluated? **(We are shifting focus to evaluating the overall state system. For example, if your state goal was to increase natural learning environments, how do you evaluate that? Maybe you pull IFSPs and analyze them? For example, if you have a goal of certification of 80% of workforce, how are you measuring your progress to this goal?)**

8a.   From the information I reviewed (state sources), I have found that (summarize)

8b.   What data are collected? **(Do you have any data on how your state is doing to meet the overall objectives/outcomes/process of your TA system? We are asking for any process and outcome data at the system level. What is the process of how you evaluate your evaluation of your TA?)**

8c.   What methods are used to collect the data?

8d.   When, how often are these data collected?

8e.   Who collects this information?

9.   What happens with the state's evaluation data and results?

9a.   Who reviews the evaluation results?

9b.   How are the results used?

9c.   To what extent are the results used to monitor and improve the quality of TA system?

9d.   To what extent are the results used to measure and report the impact of the TA system on outcomes?

9e.   To what extent are the results used for addressing state and federal monitoring/compliance concerns?

9f.   To what extent are the results used to inform decision-making about needed changes in the TA system?

10.   What is your assessment of how well your state evaluates its TA system?

10a.   What are the strengths?

10b.   What are the challenges your state faces in evaluating individual TA and the overall system?

10c.   How has the state overcome those challenges?

11.   Is there anything else you would like to add about developing and implementing an effective data collection system for evaluating training/TA?

G. Funding

Definition: All financial resources that support the state's training and technical assistance systems.

Prior review of documents:

- Any written information that describes the financial resources that support the state's training and TA system

- Annual budgets/expenditures for the state's training and TA system

Opening statements:

From our initial survey, it was reported that your state's training system has a dedicated agency and financial resources/budget line item. I would like to ask you some questions about the funding of your state's training system. After those questions, I would like to ask you some questions about the funding of your state's technical assistance system.

Training System

1.   Today, based on the previously collected information concerning the funding available to support training, it is reported that for (STATE):

1a.   The funding available for training for Part C/619 is _____

1b.   Could you verify the sources used or where does the funding come from?

2.   What additional funding is committed by other agencies and/or organizations for training (i.e., Head Start, parent advocacy group, individual district, DEC)?

2a.   Are districts/units required to provide any of their own funding? Do they provide any?

3.   How has the state's Part C/619 funding changed over time?

3a.   How has this impacted the training system?

4.   How are these training funds distributed? (based on size, first come first served, # of students, requests received, # of persons to get training, equal distribution to each district, funding a separate source, statewide training, etc?)

5.   What is your assessment of how well your state funds its training system?

5a.   What are the strengths?

5b.   What are the challenges your state faces in evaluating individual training events and the overall system?

5c.   How has the state overcome those challenges?

5d.   What affects the stability of funding (e.g., legislation requiring funding?)?

Technical Assistance System

6.   Today, based on the previously collected information concerning the funding available to support TA, it is reported that for (STATE):

6a.   The funding available for TA for Part C/619 is _____

6b.   Can you verify the sources used or where does the funding come from?

7.   What additional funding is committed by other agencies and/or organizations for TA (i.e., Head Start, parent advocacy group, individual district, DEC)?

7a.   Are districts/units required to provide any of their own funding? Do they provide any?

8.   How has the state's Part C/619 funding changed over time?

8a.   How has this impacted the TA system?

9.   How are these TA funds distributed? (based on size, first come first served, # of students, requests received, # of persons to get training, equal distribution to each district, funding a separate source, statewide TA, etc?)

10.   What is your assessment of how well your state funds its TA system?

10a.   What are the strengths?

10b.   What are the challenges your state faces in evaluating individual TA events and the overall system?

10c.   How has the state overcome those challenges?

10d.   What affects the stability of your funding (e.g., is there legislation requiring funding?)?

H. Reflections and Recommendations

1.   I've asked a lot of questions and you've given me a lot of information. At this time I'd like to have you think about what is really important for persons in other states to know.

2.   What is the best thing about the training and technical assistance system?

3.   Is there anything about (STATE) that poses a unique challenge to maintaining a training/TA system?

4.   What ís the most valuable lesson that you've learned in your job as state coordinator that you're willing to share? DELETE THIS QUESTION DO NOT ASK

5.   If you could look into the future, what does the next three years look like for your state ís training and technical assistance system?

6.   Is there anything else that you'd like to share as a part of this report?

Contact Information

We are interested in collecting information from various EI/ECSE professionals employed in your state. Now that we have concluded the interview, could you provide us with the contact information for colleagues that you think could provide us with relevant information about your state system?

Interviewer Notes

Please record a brief synopsis of the interview, highlighting your initial impressions and noting any emerging themes.

Interviewer Protocol

STUDY X: Case Studies

Interviewer Protocol

Please note: text in italics indicates a document name that matches the electronic file, the document in your binder, and the Contents of Binder document name.

Pre-Conditions

- The Part C and/or 619 Coordinator have been contacted by Dr. Bruder and have agreed to the interview.

- You will receive a binder with information regarding the state from UCHC based on information from Study VI and helpful links for that state.

- It is recommended that there be at least one practice session using the instrument prior to the first interview. We are in the process of setting this up.

Gather Background Information

- Look in Binder under tab "State Websites" or in your electronic files for:

   o *[State Name] Websites*: This is a list of helpful websites for background information on your state. In addition please do some of your own searching on the web for background information.

- Look in Binder under tab "Study VI" or in your electronic files for:

   o *[State Name] Study 6 Part C and /or 619* interviews, this is a copy of the interview conducted for our Study 6 on training and TA. There may be one for 619 and one for Part C or it may be a combined interview.

   o *Study VI Collaborations for 6 states*: This is a chart based on data we collected in Study 6 that details who they reported as collaborators for each state.

Call/Email to Establish Interview

- Look in Binder under tab "Contacts" or in electronic files for *[State Name] Contact Information*: This has the Part C and 619 coordinator's contact information (name, email and phone number) that we used for Study 6.

- **Call Log:** Open your *Call Log in your electronic files.* You will document who you called, the date, and outcome of the call (if you left a message, or emailed someone, or talked to someone and need to call back or scheduled the interview). If the person refers you to someone else to contact you will note the referrals made and contact information. It will be easier for you to have a separate call log for each person you are trying to set up an interview with. You will notice different tabs on the excel file for different people you interview. There is an example in your binder, however, we prefer this be filled out electronically. *Please email your electronic call logs to Madeleine every Thursday.*

- **Unable to make contact:** If you are not able to reach the individual on the first call, leave a detailed

message including your name, phone number, and reason for the call. If the person does not call you back within one day, call again. If you reach their voicemail again, leave a message with the same information, adding that you know that their schedule is very busy but could they please call as soon as is convenient.

- **Scheduling an Interview:** Have prepared if you reach a person the *Initial Email to State* (In Binder under tab "Protocol" or in your electronic files). This is a sample text for your initial contact with the interviewee (can be through email or phone contact). Follow this text when you make contact to set up an interview. This text outlines who you are, the content areas you will be covering in the interview, it asks them for any additional support materials that may be helpful and sets 2 time slots for an interview. Schedule two times for the interview to avoid interview fatigue or running out of time before the interview is finished.

- ADDED 3/7/08: Due to the length of the interview it will now become the protocol to divide the interview into 2 parts. A choice will not be given to the participants if the interview will be longer than 60 minutes. At the one hour mark, finish the section and then confirm the time to continue the second half. We are doing this for both participant and interviewer fatigue and quality of answers. Especially since the last section on reflections and recommendations might be the most important! When asked most participants would choose to continue but their responses will be affected, therefore no choice will be given.

- **Confirming an Interview:** Send an email confirming the appointment time and date and attaching to the email the *Short Survey for Interviewee* (in binder under "Survey- Short" or in your electronic files) which is the shortened version of the survey to send via email to the interviewee prior to the scheduled interview.

The Interview

Prior to Scheduled Interview:

- A copy of the phone interview with prompts.   Use the survey *STUDY X FINAL SURVEY 2.15.08* located in your binder under tab "Survey-Full" and in your electronic files. The binder contains numerous copies of the front cover page of the survey with the IRB stamp. *Once you complete an interview you must mail to UCHC the IRB stamped cover page showing interviewee consent.* There is also a copy of the full survey in the binder and electronic files.

- Recording equipment and materials.

- ADDED 3/13/08: Please make sure your volume on the audacity software is turned all the way up. We are having some problems hearing the people getting interviewed.

- Clock to note the start and end times for interview.

Conducting the Telephone Interview:

- Please note start and completion times of each interview.

- Interviewers should follow the interviewing protocol.

- ADDED 3/7/08: Read the entire introduction to the study on the first page of the survey and the agreements on the first page to secure permission to record. If the person agrees to have the interview recorded, continue. If the person declines, do not record the interview.

- State the title of the interviewee and state name at the start of recording.

- Ask overall general questions noted on survey with prompts as needed.

- ADDED 3/13/08: In Section D: Interagency Collaboration of the survey please note that if the respondent says that they use higher education or families in their collaboration network that the consultant will probe and ask WHO it is in their state to get an informant for a possible interview.

- ADDED 3/7/08: If you are interviewing a combined Part C and 619 program please try to stress or find out more in-depth about the rationale and positives and negatives for a combined system. Probing as you look forward to a combined system …for each section.

- Interviewers should take minimal notes on the survey during the interview, unless the interviewee declines to be recorded. You may prefer to use the *Short Survey for Interviewee* as a checklist to quickly check off questions the interviewee answers out of order.

- ADDED 3/7/08:

  ☐ Extremely helpful for the respondent to see questions prior to the interview. Remember to send them the short survey version by email prior to the interview.

  ☐ Orient them to the structure of the interview: you will have different content areas and in each content area you will ask questions first about training then about TA.

  ☐ Interviewer probes are extremely helpful to clarify or elaborate the answers. Especially if you are getting one word responses like "pretty good" "ok" and "good". Some examples of good probes:

    o How do you do that…..

    o Can you tell me more about that…

    o Do you have examples of this?

    o Can you give me a more detailed description of what happens?

    o I think I understand what you mean, can you talk more about that?

    o I'm not sure I understand what you mean, can you help me…

    o I'm having trouble understanding the problem you have described, can you talk a little more about that?

  ☐ So that all questions are asked in the survey you can try using this type of approach:

    o You have already answered…..but is there anything else you want to add?

    o I heard you say…..is that correct?

  ☐ Processing what the person said and giving feedback is helpful

  ☐ Want to interview 4 different types of people 1-part c coordinator 2-619 coordinator3-parent advocate 4-higher education person. When asking people for anyone else that are key players that you could interview have them give you different names and job titles and if they do not give you a parent or higher education person then prompt for that. Allow other types of respondents to say they don't know and feel comfortable saying that for different sections of the interview. Still follow the survey and questions but you may skip sections if the person says they don't have any information on that section.

Following Completion of Interview:

- Make sure the sound file is saved to your computer. Please save file as a wav file or as a mp3 file. Label the sound file with the state name and the title of the person you interviewed. Do not use the person's name. Note in the *[State Name] Interview Log* whether or not the interview was recorded.

- Open in electronic files *[State Name] Interview Log* see binder tab "Interview Log" for sample. After interviewing a participant, you will use this to document who you interviewed, their title, if they are a Part C or 619 person (or both or neither), the number of call attempts or emails you needed to do before completing an interview (use your *Call Log* to determine this), the total length of the interview, the date you sent interview materials to UCHC (any documents collected and cover page of IW stamped with IRB), date audio file sent to UCHC, date you send the survey back to interviewee, the date you get approval from the interviewee, and the date you send final approved survey to UCHC. There is an example in your binder however we prefer this be filled out electronically. *Please send your electronically filled out file every Thursday.*

- Email Madeleine to let her know when you have completed the interview. DO NOT attach the sound file to the email (it will be too large). Log all dates in the *[State Name] Interview Log.*

- Log on to the transcription site using the document *Login for the Transcription site* and *Client Login Instructions* both are electronic files or in your binder under "Protocol" tab. Upload your wav or mp3 file to the web site.

- Mail the completed cover page to Madeleine for IRB purposes. This is the page that contains their consent and ok to tape the interview and has a stamp from IRB on it. In binder under "Survey-Full" tab. Log all dates in the *[State Name] Interview Log.*

At UCHC:

- Madeline upon receipt of the email indicating a completed IW will go to the transcription website and download the sound file and burn it onto a CD and file the CD. It will not be saved to our J drive for space capacity reasons.

- Madeline will save all IRB consent forms sent by interviewers in locked filing cabinet.

- Madeline will save all electronic files sent by consultants every Thursday and when interviews are complete to the J drive folders.

- Upon email notification of transcribed IW from the transcription service Madeline will save the transcribed interview to the J drive from the website and send an email to the Consultant letting them know they can pick up the transcribed interview online.

Once Transcribed Interview is received:

- You will receive an email notification from Madeline that the transcribed interview is complete. Please logon to the website to retrieve the transcribed interview. Log on to the transcription site using the document *Login for the Transcription site* and *Client Login Instructions* both are electronic files or in your binder under "Protocol" tab. Retrieve the transcribed word file from the web site.

- **Embed transcribed interview into Survey:** Edit the transcribed interview by embedding the transcribed interview into the survey. Do this by going through the transcription document and using the *STUDY X FINAL SURVEY 2.15.08* document. Take the transcription document and edit out any umm's and unnecessary and non relevant text. The transcription document may jump around as the person spoke from topic to topic, so, cut and paste from the transcription document into the survey so that the answers are in the correct sections on the survey and correspond to the questions being asked. This is

our first data analysis step (you are helping us clean the transcription document) this is also what you will send to the interviewee. If you notice that a question was not answered, or the answer is not clear or detailed enough type into the survey your question to the interviewee and highlight or bold it. When you email them you can ask them to clarify any issues. [See Study VI in binder for example of a transcript edited and embedded in the survey].

- **Email Embedded Survey to Bonnie for Approval**

- **Email Survey for approval to Interviewee:** Once you have embedded the transcript into the survey email the survey to the interviewee using *Initial Transcript Approval Email* (in binder under "Protocol" tab or in electronic files). This document includes the text to email interviewees when you send them a copy of their transcribed survey for approval.

- **Remind interviewee to approve survey:** Use the document *Transcript Approval Email- Reminder* (in binder under "Protocol" or in electronic files) this document includes the text to be used to remind interviewees via email to approve/modify their transcribed survey. It also indicates that if they do not respond within 2 weeks, their transcript will be considered approved.

- **Interviewee responds with changes**: Any feedback, changes made by the interviewee should be identified in a different color [if available] or a different font.

- Please fill out the *[State Name] Interview Log* as you turn in documents to help track everything.

- Please email the final approved edited survey to Madeleine when completed.

- When completed with a state, please send all materials gathered regarding that state (any documents you may have gathered) and return to Madeleine.

Communication & Documentation

- **Communication:** There will be weekly conference calls. In addition if you need to contact any study team personnel or consultants please see binder tab "Contacts" or electronic fillies for:

  - *UCHC Contacts*: Contact information for UCEDD, including mailing address and fax, contact information of consultants, and conference call dates and call in numbers.

  - *Consultant Assignments*: A list of the states we are interviewing and the consultants assigned to them.

- **Documentation:** Email to Madeline at mgregware@uchc.edu **every Thursday**:

  - *Daily Activity Schedule*: Consultants will use to track time spent on all project activities including: conference calls, background work on the state, web searches, preparation for interviewing, the interview itself, making call attempts, and so on. This will help in project management and timelines. There is an example in your binder, however, we prefer the Daily Activity Schedule to be filled out electronically.

  - *[State Name] Call Log:* You will document who you called, the date, and outcome of the call (if you left a message, or emailed someone, or talked to someone and need to call back or scheduled the interview). If the person refers you to someone else to contact you will note the referrals made and contact information. It will be easier for you to have a separate call log for each person you are trying to set up an interview with. You will notice different tabs on the excel file for different people you interview. There is an example in your binder, however, we prefer this be filled out electronically.

  - *[State Name] Interview Log:* After interviewing a participant, you will use this to document who you interviewed, their title, if they are a Part C or 619 person (or both or neither), the number

of call attempts or emails you needed to do before completing an interview (use your call log to determine this), the total length of the interview, the date you sent interview materials to UCHC (any documents collected and cover page of IW stamped with IRB), date audio file sent of call attempts or emails you needed to do before completing an interview (use your call log to determine this), the total length of the interview, the date you sent interview materials to UCHC (any documents collected and cover page of IW stamped with IRB), date audio file sent to UCHC, date you send the survey back to interviewee, the date you get approval from the interviewee, and the date you send final approved survey to UCHC. There is an example in your binder however we prefer this be filled out electronically.

Rules for Reliability

1. For people who used more than 1 level of bulleting, only count the top 2 levels (ignore top level if it is just the topic or question).

2. As long as the general statement is the same, it is counted as a match – some people may include more details than others, but if the overall idea is the same it is a match.

3. Do not include quotes at all

4. Get rid of statements that are about the person not being able to answer the question.

5. Get rid of statements that are used more than once.

6. The other person must have at least half of the pieces in the other person's statement to be considered a match. For example:

   a. Strengths: use of technology to provide TA, databases where supervisors can run their own reports and do their own TA or determine what is the problem locally and then call for help (to Amy), online activities, video conferencing. PG 11-12

   b. The other person must have at least 2 of those 4 strengths.

Individual State Summaries

Summary of the Early Intervention Training and Technical Assistance System in Pennsylvania

Interviews were conducted with various people involved in the Early Intervention training and technical assistance system in Pennsylvania in order to get an in-depth picture of what the system looks like. Six separate interviews were conducted with six different people; the state Interagency Coordinating Council (ICC) Chair, the Early Intervention Technical Assistance (EITA) director, the EITA program manager, 2 professors of higher education, and a parent who is also the Special Assistant to the Deputy Secretary of the Office of Child Development and Learning (OCDEL). The interviews were structured around 7 main topic areas, followed at the end by a section asking for overall reflections or recommendations. The 7 topic areas were historical perspective and overview, content, delivery, collaboration, staffing, data collection, and funding. Respondents were asked to talk about each of these topics in regard to both the training and the technical assistance parts of the system. The following is a summary of the information provided by all six interviewees about the training and technical assistance system in Pennsylvania.

Overview

In Pennsylvania, the lead agency for Part C and for Section 619 of Part B is the Department of Public Welfare (DPW) and the Department of Education (DE). Through a governmental order, both state departments have authority over the Office of Child Development and Early Learning, which oversees Part C and Section 619. The Office of Child Development and Early Learning (OCDEL) was created to coordinate all early learning programs (birth to five) into a single state office. OCDEL also includes child care, Head Start Collaboration Project, Pre-K, PA Keys, Keystone STARS, and family support programs. At the local level, Part C services are provided through county Early Intervention Offices that are operated by individual or joint counties. These offices employ the service coordinators and contract with other agencies for providers. The state contracts with school districts or intermediate units (regional special education programs) to provide preschool Early Intervention services.

The state has a large training and technical assistance network for school districts serving children with disabilities know as PaTTAN (Pennsylvania Training and Technical Assistance Network). Early Intervention Technical Assistance (EITA) is the part of PaTTAN that deals specifically with training and technical assistance for people working in birth to five services. EITA provides training and technical assistance in response to the needs of the Bureau of Early Intervention Services, OCDEL and county agencies. Counties create individual technical assistance plans and EITA consultants work with them to meet the goals outlined in the plans. In Pennsylvania training and technical assistance go hand-in-hand; they are two parts of one system. A number of

different goals for the training and technical assistance system were mentioned from the various interviewees. They included:

- To support the Bureau of Early Intervention Services by providing consistent statewide professional development for staff who work with children and families, birth to five, with developmental delays or disabilities,

- To include all children and promote best practices,

- To assure that there are adequate programs to include all children in regular education programs,

- To have people with the skills and tools to provide quality Early Intervention services to families and kids,

- To make sure that the entire state is receiving the same information about best practices, and

- "To enhance the capacity of individuals on cutting edge national agendas."

One interviewee also said that the overarching goal of the training and technical assistance system is to provide high quality support to teachers, therapist, etc. working with young children and their families, but each year specific goals are set by OCDEL. Technical assistance is used to meet the specific needs of a particular local agency or county in relation to the larger goals mentioned above.

<p align="center">History and Influences</p>

PaTTAN began in the 1970s, with the Early Intervention component added in the early 1990s, when Early Intervention legislation was passed. Act 212 required that between two and four percent of Early Intervention dollars go to training and professional development. Part of this money goes to EITA and part of it goes directly to local programs to do their own professional development. Prior to being called EITA, the Early Intervention training and technical assistance system was known as Family Focused Early Intervention System (FFEIS). From the perspective of most of the interviewees, the function was the same then as it is now. When the training and technical assistance system began for Early Intervention, it was much more focused on providing statewide trainings. After about two years, the technical assistance aspect was implemented, and the processes for TA plans were identified and implemented at the local level. This was modeled after NECTAC (National Early Childhood Technical Assistance Center) and designed to provide local entities with more individualized support. The training and technical assistance system began with 10 consultants and has now grown to 25.

The formation of OCDEL was the vision and result of Pennsylvania's Governor. This has led to the more integrated approach to training across Early Intervention and early childhood education as well as the more collaborative birth to five approach. Other influences on the training and technical assistance system include participating in the National Professional Development Center on Inclusion and other national grants (Special Quest, Center on Early Language and Literacy), federal initiatives, state agencies and the state ICC, and research.

Content

Training

The priorities for training are determined each year by planning with the state department staff. Specific priorities for this year are child outcome reporting, inclusion, autism, services to infants and toddlers who are deaf or hard of hearing, the new joint IFSP/IEP document, evaluation plans, transitions, Early Intervention leadership, routines-based Early Intervention, early learning standards, the new compliance monitoring tool, and challenging behavior. The major influences in determining training content are the needs of the state based on changes in regulations, national agendas, and their overall goals. Other influences include the results of compliance monitoring and other assessments, research, outside grants, the pattern of local needs, institutes of higher education, and evaluations from previous trainings. Parents may also have some influence on the training content based on their participation in the state and local ICCs, parent leadership and training programs, advisory committees, trainings, community engagement groups, and a statewide family survey. Also, a position, Special Assistant to the Deputy Secretary, was recently created within OCDEL which is filled by a parent of a child with a disability.

A number of strengths were mentioned that relate to how content is determined including that the training is tied to goals set by the state department and also takes into consideration input from local entities and families; it is responsive to state and federal initiatives; and input comes from a variety of people. Other strengths mentioned include having a combined birth through five system which helps coordinate resources and provides greater flexibility to meet the needs of the field; having family members of children with disabilities as staff members of EITA and OCDEL; and bringing in experienced people to do trainings. A number of people suggested that one of the big challenges was having the resources needed to be efficient in delivering training in such a large state as well as being responsive and prioritizing all of the things that people want or need to be trained on. Other challenges mentioned were that at the local level, the county Early Intervention program utilizes providers who are subcontractors and getting them to attend training is difficult due to their other responsibilities; and the state has large and varied needs, so delivering training in a way that is appropriate and applicable to each area's particular situation can be difficult.

Technical Assistance

Each year every local Early Intervention program develops a technical assistance plan. This plan will determine the technical assistance priorities for that year. The priorities result from a number of different influences including program monitoring, needs assessments, specific local issues, statewide priorities, and family and community input through the local ICC. Typical priorities include inclusion in regular child care, working with families in community settings, assessment, accountability, and early learning standards. Also, each statewide training initiative has a plan that not only includes how training will be done, but also follow-up and technical assistance at the local level. In this way also, statewide trainings influence technical assistance that may be done.

The most commonly mentioned strength was that the EITA consultants have longevity and thus have established very good relationships with individual programs and counties. Another mentioned strength of the system is the technical assistance plan because it is systematic (required every year with documentation and accountability) but also individualized (what is on the plan is specific to the local county). The challenges that were mentioned focused on not always being able to get everything done due to the shortage of people and accommodating people's time and schedules. Also mentioned was that technical assistance is probably needed more often than it is asked for.

Delivery

Training

Training is primarily delivered regionally through 1-day workshops and multi-day institutes. Other methods include a series of workshops (multiple days of training spread out over a few months with projects to complete in between sessions), online courses, teleconferences, videoconferences, and webinars. In-state and out-of-state experts are often used for training delivery. Changes in training delivery have come from the increased use of technology both to provide trainings and to advertise them. This has also helped training progress towards less segregated trainings – more inclusive of all early childhood providers.

A number of strengths regarding training delivery were listed by the interviewees such as being able to implement a consistent training program statewide, adult-learner appropriate trainings, consistent staff delivering training and technical assistance, and the use of a variety of formats for delivery so people can access training easily. Challenges mentioned were the problems that can come with technology (less interaction, loss of transmission, learning how to operate the equipment), the large number of people who attend the trainings in the larger cites, and occasionally the travel that people may have to do to reach trainings.

Technical Assistance

Technical assistance is delivered through observation and guided practice, individualized trainings, facilitation and problem solving, video taping and feedback, product reviews, group meetings, conference calls, e-mail, coaching, and mentoring and can be delivered to both individuals (one provider around a specific child) and entire program staff. As mentioned earlier, the local entities develop their yearly technical assistance plans. The EITA consultant is the point person and helps the local entity get the technical assistance it needs either by providing it his-/herself or finding another person to do it.

The delivery of technical assistance itself is seen as a strength as well as the strong link between training and technical assistance. One interviewee said, "I think if we didn't have that local technical assistance, we would really be missing a big piece of how we make change happen in the state." Another strength that was mentioned is the 25 consultants and their strong relationships with the local programs. Challenges mentioned by the interviewees include the consultants having to balance their time between training and technical assistance, sharing of resources both internally and externally, prioritizing the most important needs, and dealing with the size of the state and how that limits the amount of technical assistance that can be done.

Collaboration

Training

Interviewees described the collaboration as being supported in Pennsylvania due to the creation of OCDEL. As mentioned earlier, OCDEL houses all of the early childhood agencies (Part C, 619, child care, Head Start, Pre-K) in one physical location. All staff meet twice a year which encourages both formal and informal relationships to form. OCDEL also created a Cross Systems Technical Assistance Advisory board whose goal is to provide professional development across all of these entities in an effective manner without duplication of services. The challenges to collaboration interviewees specifically mentioned were communication and time. Specific examples of collaboration are seen in Table 1.

Table 1. *Examples of Training Collaboration*

Organization	Collaboration
PaTTAN	Provide trainings together that affect both early childhood and school-age special education; share basic resources like technology, support staff, and office space
PA Keys	Provide trainings that are open to both Early Intervention and regular education providers; training conducted by co-trainers (one from EITA and one from PA Keys)
Colleges and universities	Online courses for certifications and CDA degree; parent training efforts, participation in state ICC
Children and Youth Offices	Training on the joint screening process
Other states	Visit and discuss with other states who are implementing similar training initiatives
Department of Health	Joint trainings about infants/toddlers who are deaf or hard of hearing and mental health issues

Technical Assistance

Many of the same collaborations exist in technical assistance as in trainings. One additional collaborative partnership can be seen through the local ICCs. The local ICCs play a large role in determining the local technical assistance plan and the ICCs have representation from a lot of different places including community resources (medical community), Early Intervention providers, parents, and many others. In a number of regions, the ICCs also collaborate with the Community Engagement Groups (similar to ICCs but broader in scope by including all early childhood providers in the local area) and develop one technical assistance plan for all children birth to five. There is a very strong feeling that an expectation for collaboration has been set in the state. One interviewee said, "It starts at the top with one office, which has really set the model that the expectation is that all the early childhood programs will work together and will share resources to support children and families." The big challenge to collaboration that was mentioned is there is a lot of turnover within the local ICCs meaning that those collaborative relationships have to be rebuilt. Another challenge that was discussed is trying to prioritize the needs of a number of different agencies.

Staffing

Training and Technical Assistance

The main staff for the training and technical assistance system are the 25 EITA consultants (5 of which are also project managers) and the director of EITA. The Part C/619 coordinator (same individual) as well as other people at OCDEL collaborate for the development of training initiatives. There are also various support staff that are part of PaTTAN that contribute to the everyday functioning of EITA. The majority of EITA

consultants have a master's degree in social work, special education, specific therapies or a related field as well as experience in training and technical assistance. The requirement for a master's degree is waived if the consultants are family members of a child with disabilities (6 of the 25). Consultants are given a variety of opportunities to improve their training skills. They have staff meetings and professional development activities, attend in-state trainings and national conferences, have yearly evaluations with the EITA director, can attend college classes (which are reimbursed), and receive feedback from participants in their trainings. Also, veteran consultants are typically paired with a newer consultant in order to provide some mentorship and help the new consultant establish the local relationships.

The strengths of the staff listed by the interviewees are that they are outgoing and really get to know the people they are working with, that many of them have been around for a long time, that they have various areas of interest and expertise, and that they are flexible and responsive to changing needs. Finding people to hire with both expertise as a trainer and in Early Intervention is one challenge that was mentioned by the interviewees. Most interviewees also felt that it would be nice to have more staff.

Data Collection

Training

Two different kinds of data are collected on individual training events. First, every training event is entered into an online database with information about the length, audience, topic, date, etc. This information is summarized every month and reviewed to adjust trainings as needed and to provide information to the state or federal government. There is also a standard evaluation form that is used for all training events that participants are asked to fill out. It asks for satisfaction ratings and suggestions for improvement as well as content questions to see if the main points of the training were understood by participants. The evaluations are typically reviewed by the EITA director and consultants and used to determine how to improve the training as well as future training needs.

Training is also influenced by other kinds of data that are collected. The state tracks other data points (# of kids served in natural environments) in relation to what people are being trained on (inclusion) in order to determine the effectiveness of training and to guide the choice of initiatives for next year. EITA project managers may also choose to collect impact or evaluation data based on the training they are doing and what they are trying to accomplish. Data collected by the consultants is reviewed regularly and used to write reports (Annual Performance Review) or for program improvement.

Many of the interviewees saw it as a strength that they are doing a good job of getting evaluation data and also some impact data and using the data to influence future training initiatives and technical assistance.

The challenge mentioned is the time it takes to really get the impact data.

Technical Assistance

Technical assistance events and activities are also entered into the large, on-line database like the training events are. This information is summarized typically every month and reviewed to see what topics technical assistance has focused on and the various differences by counties, regions, etc. Local entities receiving technical assistance also have the opportunity to fill out an evaluation form on the consultant who provided the technical assistance. This information is used in annual staff evaluations to improve the effectiveness of the consultant. The consultant may also choose to collect other data to determine if the outcomes on the technical assistance plan were met

Local programs are monitored by the state in regards to initiatives or requirements and programs that are in need of improvement are targeted for additional technical assistance. Each year the previous technical assistance plan is also reviewed to see what outcomes were met, what the new needs are, and what worked and did not work. This helps to determine the new plan.

Interviewees said the strength is the system has both formal evaluations and informal feedback because of the relationships the EITA consultants have with their local regions. The challenge mentioned is having the resources to conduct the in-depth impact evaluations that they would like to.

Funding

Training and Technical Assistance

Funding for training and technical assistance is one and the same since it is the same system. Act 212 requires that between two and four percent of the state's Early Intervention funds go towards training and technical assistance. Part of this money goes directly to EITA and another part goes to the local counties. EITA also receives some federal IDEA funding through OCDEL. Other agencies may share costs for conferences and other collaborations with EITA. Pennsylvania also participates in some outside grants that may or may not contribute funding, but support training and technical assistance (providing national trainers). Local counties may use their own funds to host a training or they may contribute funds for lunch, materials, etc. when EITA is providing the training or technical assistance. This is not systematic, just based on the needs and the collaborative effort.

All of the interviewees felt that the training and technical assistance system was well funded and used that funding in an effective and efficient way to get providers what they need. Another strength that was mentioned is that they are part of the larger training infrastructure (PaTTAN) with which they share funding for

various things (facilities, print shop, receptionists, and other support staff). The challenge mentioned by the interviewees is that there is always more that can be done in such a large state, especially with the expanding audience for training, but the resources are not always there.

Conclusion

This paper has provided a summary of the Early Intervention (birth to five) training and technical assistance system in Pennsylvania using the information provided from a variety of sources within the state. Each of the interviewees provided a different perspective on the system and had some varying opinions. One difference was that some of the interviewees felt that there was not enough data being collected to really show that the trainings are making a difference in practice while others thought this was being done pretty well. Another difference was that one interviewee did not see a very good link between EITA and Pennsylvania Keys, but thought that this was very important. Most of the other interviewees thought that there was collaboration between the two entities.

One of the interviewees saw a big difference in the way training and technical assistance occurs in Philadelphia County compared to the rest of the state. Because Philadelphia is the largest city in PA, they use the training funds from the state to supplement EITA trainings. First, they track what people have completed, so they know what training people have not received. Second, they evaluate whether or not what people did in training made any difference in practice. Also, they do not deliver anything that is only one session. Most trainings are multiple sessions over time with projects and things to do in between and evaluation at the end to see if practices have changed. The people in Philadelphia County go to the state trainings that are necessary, but the county has their own goals and uses their own state training dollars to augment the EITA trainings. For instance everyone in the county must take a class on natural environments when they come into the system. Before they go to the first class meeting, they make a tape of a typical session with a family. They make a second tape after the initial meeting and send it in to be reviewed. At the second class meeting, the tape is reviewed within small groups to see if changes occurred. The difficulty is that each of the trainings must be done 12-15 times to make the size of the training manageable, since Philadelphia County is so huge. Evaluation is not done on individual training events, but different trainings have different types of data that are collected in order to assess the impact of training on practice. The interviewee saw Philadelphia County as being much more prescriptive in their delivery of training and also more accountable for training leading to changes in practice because of the local funding than what occurs across the whole state.

Even though there were differences of opinions, the overall information provided in the interviews was very similar and gave a clear picture of the training and technical assistance system in the state. One of the final things discussed in the interview was thoughts on the future of the training and technical assistance system. One

of the common themes was the need to protect the progress that has been made through changes in the political climate and who may reside in the governor's office. At the same time everyone saw the system as having a bright future because of the well established system and the strong collaborative relationships.

To conclude this summary on Pennsylvania's training and technical assistance system, here are some final thoughts from a few of the interviewees.

Flexibility, responsiveness, and accountability/data are critical. Hire the right people and keep them retooled. Utilize partnerships to leverage resources. Create clear linkages with state policy. Engage in constant evaluation and program improvement.

I think the best thing is how closely we are connected both at the state level with our Office of Child Development and Early Learning and at the local level with the local Early Intervention programs… [The state department is] our primary customer in terms of guiding what we do, the training, the initiatives, all of that. And we work hard to make sure that we are supporting what their policies and what needs to happen at a state level…I think we also have very close ties to our other customers who are the very local recipients of training and technical assistance, and those, both those relationships help us be most effective as a training and technical assistance system.

Here is the short list [of the best things about EITA]. It's a well-funded, statewide, comprehensive system. It is birth to five. It is relationship-based. It is responsive. It is multi-modal. It is connected to other early childhood systems. It is very clearly linked to state policy so that policy and training are intentionally and visibly linked. When a state policy comes out, we are aware of it and we train to that and support that. The state supports our training messages. So we're seen very much as a partner with the state policymakers and not a separate contracted entity.

Summary of the Training and Technical Assistance System in Wisconsin

Interviews were conducted with various people involved in the training and technical assistance system in Wisconsin in order to get an in-depth picture of what the system looks like. Six separate interviews were conducted with six different people; the director of the Waisman Center at the University of Wisconsin-Madison, Early Childhood Professional Development Program, the Section 619 coordinator, the RESource program coordinator, a professor of higher education, the Part C coordinator, and a parent who is also part of the state Interagency Coordinating Council (ICC). The interviews were structured around 7 main topic areas, followed at the end by a section asking for overall reflections or recommendations. The 7 topic areas were historical perspective and overview, content, delivery, collaboration, staffing, data collection, and funding. Respondents were asked to talk about each of these topics in regard to both the training and the technical assistance parts of the system. The following is a summary of the information provided by all six interviewees about the training and technical assistance system in Wisconsin.

Overview

In Wisconsin, the lead agency for Part C is the Department of Health Services and for Section 619, the Department of Public Instruction. For Part C, training and technical assistance is delivered through the Waisman Center's Wisconsin Personnel Development Project (WPDP) and RESource through the Cooperative Education Service Agency 5 (CESA 5). The RESource staff go out in the field and provide technical assistance directly to county Birth to 3 Programs and facilitate regional meetings to Part C service providers. For 619, training and technical assistance is also delivered through the Waisman Center's Early Childhood Hub and the 12 CESAs. Many of the CESAs have responsibilities around particular topics such as inclusion or child outcomes. There are also training and technical assistance entities across the state for other related early childhood programs including Head Start, childcare, mental health, and children with special health care needs. All of the training and technical assistance entities come together under the Wisconsin Early Childhood Collaborating Partners. Representatives from the various agencies meet to plan and think about professional development and collaborate based on needs. The Collaborating Partners, through the use of braided funding (contributions from a variety of sources), provide collaborating coaches to each of the five regions of the state, plus the Milwaukee area to work with all early childhood systems to provide collaborative training and technical assistance about topics such as the Wisconsin Model Early Learning Standards (WMELS) and the transition from Part C to Preschool. Other training and technical assistance opportunities come from the state's participation in national projects such as the Center on the Social and Emotional Foundations of Early Learning, the National Individualizing Preschool Inclusion Project, and the National Professional Development Center on Autism Spectrum Disorders.

The overarching goals of the training and technical assistance system that were mentioned are keeping people abreast of evidence-based practices, the use of family-centered practice, interdisciplinary perspectives, inclusion, the use of a variety of instructional methodology for delivering training, collaboration to support change in higher education systems, and to build up the support and leadership in the state for professional development. Goals specifically for Section 619 training and technical assistance relate to the state performance plan indicators such as preschool education, child and family outcomes, and transitions. Goals specifically for Part C relate to the use of data for developing and evaluating training events, providing opportunities for collaborative relationships with families, developing and disseminating materials, providing collaborative technical assistance, the use of evidence-based practices, providing technical assistance that results in program improvement, and tracking noncompliance.

History and Influences

Wisconsin's training system is an evolving entity that began to be established in the late 1980s with a contract to the Waisman Center to support personnel development for the Department of Health and Family Services (Part C). At this time, there were also program support personnel out of the school districts or CESAs that provided training and technical assistance for 619 providers. Over the years, 619 also came to have a contract with the Waisman Center and an additional contract came from Part C to support technical assistance through the RESource project with CESA 5. Historically the Part C, 619, and Head Start training and technical assistance that occurred were separate. Now all of the training and technical assistance entities come together under the Wisconsin Early Childhood Collaborating Partners to provide a more collaborative and comprehensive training and technical assistance system. Other changes in the past few years have been the move to a greater focus on technical assistance, the alignment of training and technical assistance with the state performance plan and results of data collection, and a more consistent system so that people across the state are receiving the same information.

The interviewees mentioned a number of different things that have influenced the training and technical assistance system. First, the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act (IDEA) as well as other federal acts (No Child Left Behind) have influenced very specifically the need for professional development and some of the specific content. Also, the accountability in regards to the Office of Special Education Programs (OSEP) and showing improvements in the Annual Performance Report have influenced the training and technical assistance system in recent years. Other major influences have come from the development of the Early Childhood Comprehensive System which has identified five focus areas for early childhood (family support, access to health and medical home, parent education, early care and education, and mental health and social emotional development) and the Wisconsin Model Early Learning Standards. Affiliation with the Waisman Center at the University of Wisconsin has influenced some of the focus on research and evidence-based practices. Finally,

the cultural and geographic diversity of the state has influenced planning and delivery of training and technical assistance.

<div align="center">Content</div>

Training

Numerous priorities were mentioned in the six interviews. They included meeting federal requirements for timeliness and service provision, the WMELS, inclusion and natural environments, assessment and child outcomes, social and emotional development, relationship-based intervention, early hearing detection and intervention, early identification and child find, assistive technology, and the transition from Part C to 619.

There are many influences that shape Wisconsin's training content. For instance, evidence-based research and practice was a major theme that emerged from the six interviews. This includes using information gathered from national conferences, participation in national projects, the influence of research conducted locally through the University of Wisconsin, and use of national experts for trainings. Other influences that were reported included state and federal legislation and monitoring, parents and families, and feedback from TA personnel. The monitoring of performance indicators and local needs around meeting federal requirements often dictates the content of training. State initiatives such as WMELS and the relation to child outcomes are also important influences. Parent groups such as Parents as Leaders (PALS) or parent participation in the ICCs help to identify parent concerns that may lead to training. Content is also influenced by feedback from staff and providers through evaluations, needs surveys, and regional meetings in which regional needs are discussed.

Technical Assistance

Many of the priorities for the content of Wisconsin's technical assistance system are the same as those for the training system, but are much more driven by the local needs. Some of the specific needs that were mentioned include transitions, effective writing and implementation of IEPs/IFSPs, student/teacher ratios, and interventions specific to a child. There is also quite a bit of technical assistance on teaching organizations to do their own assessments and reviews for quality improvement. The content of Wisconsin's technical assistance was found to be influenced by many of the same things as the training system such as research and evidence-based practice and state and federal monitoring and requirements, but with more emphasis on local needs and feedback, as well as individual child needs.

Many interviewees said that a major strength of their state's training and technical assistance content is that it is influenced by a variety of sources; a number of different opinions, interests, and needs from the local to the state level are taken into consideration. The biggest challenge that was mentioned was trying to prioritize all of the different needs and priorities for training each year.

Delivery

Training

Training is delivered both through in-person events and various technologies. There are a number of workshops, seminars (series of lectures over three months), and other large group trainings. For instance, every year for Part C there are two workshops on best practices and a large leadership event. Various technologies are also used to deliver trainings such as webcasts, online courses, videoconferencing, online materials, and conference calls. One of the big pushes in Wisconsin is trying to get away from the large group "one-shot trainings" by making sure there is follow-up to get the desired results. One of the interviewees mentioned paying particular attention to the professional development literature and research and how that influences the way they deliver training. The most frequently mentioned changes in the delivery of training were the increased use of technology and that they do more than just the "one-shot" trainings across both Part C and 619.

The use of technology is seen as both a strength and a challenge by a number of the interviewees. It makes training more available and allows more people to get information in a timely fashion, but is less personable and possibly less effective. Other strengths of the training delivery mentioned by the interviewees is that Wisconsin is up to date on current information and really knows what the training needs are and how to deliver training in a way that is useful to participants and accessible. Other challenges that were mentioned include the time and cost to deliver training in such a large state and keeping up with the demands for alternate training formats. One interviewee specifically mentioned the difficulty of getting everyone on board with the idea that "one-shot trainings" are not the best method for delivering training.

Technical Assistance

Technical assistance is most frequently delivered by one of the three TA networks; RESource (birth to three), program support for teachers (three to five), and the regional collaborating coaches. Technical assistance is often delivered on-site, but can also be done through phone, email, and other web-based technologies. Again, the biggest change over time has been the increased use of technology, which has led to the general increase in the delivery of technical assistance.

Many of the interviewees said that the strength of the delivery of technical assistance is that it is relationship-based. This refers to the fact that the various consultants delivering the technical assistance have good relationships with the regions and counties they work with as well as with each other. The challenge that goes along with this is having enough staff to deliver the technical assistance that is needed and that the staff have a lot of counties, school districts and regions to cover.

Collaboration

Training

Wisconsin has a formal collaborating framework known as Wisconsin Early Childhood Collaborating Partners. This is a non-funded entity with representatives from various agencies related to early childhood (Department of Public Instructions, Health Services, Workforce Development, Childcare Resource and Referral, Head Start Collaboration, Parents Plus, and many others) that come together to conceptualize and plan collaborative professional development and work towards other early childhood priorities related to policy and system building. The partners collaborate for trainings based on needs and different collaborations will include different partners. For instance, the Department of Health Services, Public Instruction, and the Waisman Center collaborate with the Wisconsin Alliance of Infant Mental Health to sponsor a conference called "Early Relationships Matter: Building Networks." Another example of collaboration in the state is the use of braided funding (funding from multiple different agencies) to support the Community Collaboration Coaches. These are individuals in each of the six regions of the state who provide coaching and mentoring to communities on various topics related to all early childhood. Another smaller collaborative group has been developed with leaders across Part C and 619 to work towards a more cohesive birth-five system. They are specifically focused on training and technical assistance for child outcomes, early transitions, environments, and shared data and decision making. Another push for collaboration has occurred recently in the creation of the Department of Children and Family Services which will bring together many of the collaborating early childhood agencies under one roof.

There is also a partnership between Part C and the Great Lakes Inter-Tribal Council (GLITC) for training and technical assistance to the tribal areas. The emphasis of collaboration is on increasing relationships with the tribes and their early intervention and early childhood special education programs as well as other early childhood programs in their communities such as Head Start and child care. Also, the GLITC members participate with Part C and 619 leaders in statewide planning for training and technical assistance.

The interviewees mentioned the strength of the state's collaboration as the commitment of people in the system and the longevity of Collaborating Partners. One of the interviewees saw collaboration as occurring because of the shared philosophy in the state as well as the fact that many of the leaders in the state wear "multiple hats" and are thus sharing information, working across various initiatives, and know what is going on. The challenge to collaboration that was most frequently mentioned was funding and being able to blend funding so that it can be used across systems and agencies in the most beneficial way. Two other challenges to collaboration that were mentioned are the difficulty of making sure that everyone's needs are met and finding the time to collaborate.

Technical Assistance

Collaboration is not seen as much in the technical assistance network. Many of the interviewees feel that because of the individual nature of technical assistance, the various agencies focus specifically on the needs of their staff and there is not a lot of collaboration between agencies. Still some informal collaboration occurs between the various agencies that provide technical assistance, because people know each other and will collaborate to solve problems as needed. Also, the Department of Health Services and the Department of Public Instruction have recently begun to work together to provide collaborative technical assistance related to the transition from Part C to 619 services. Currently collaboration is mostly informal, but the opportunity exists to create a more formalized collaborative network for technical assistance through the existing Collaborating Partners.

The strength of the collaboration for technical assistance is seen as the relationship that the various technical assistance providers have with each other across agencies and how they will work together to solve problems. The challenge to collaboration that was mentioned is that there is little cohesion; each agency has its own technical assistance team or system.

Staffing

Training

The training system staff is made up of people from the Waisman Center, Part C and 619 agencies (Department of Health and Family Services and Department of Public Instruction), RESource, and the CESAs. Five of the staff at the Waisman Center are dedicated primarily to the training system for Part C, 619, and the collaborative coaches but many of the other staff from these agencies are not necessarily dedicated training staff (training is only part of their job). Overall the training staff is highly qualified with all staff having at least a Master's degree and a number of years of experience in both professional development and service provision. Trainers often attend national conferences and continually increase their knowledge through access to research.

All of the interviewees feel that the training staff is excellent. One of the challenges that was mentioned is that not all of the trainers are completely on board with making training more than just a one time thing. Wisconsin is still moving everyone towards a more evidence-based model of professional development.

Technical Assistance

Technical assistance is similar to training in that there are some staff that are dedicated to technical assistance and others who have technical assistance as one part of their job. RESource has 6 staff members who are dedicated to the technical assistance system, but they are only part time. Program support teachers,

Alliance of Infant Mental Health staff, Department of Public Instruction, Department of Health Services, and Waisman Center all have staff who provide technical assistance as part of their job. The qualifications are similar to those for the training system staff; all staff have advanced degrees and experience. Technical assistance staff improve their abilities by attending conferences and trainings, and they have staff retreats and meetings focused on improving their skills.

Again, the interviewees saw the staff as excellent; especially the ability of the technical assistance staff to develop relationships with the programs they provide technical assistance for. The challenge that was mentioned was that the staff is fragmented across agencies and that it is probably important to figure out how to help staff better network between systems to provide more cohesive and coordinated technical assistance.

Data Collection

Training

Collecting data from the various training events that occur may differ across each event due to the different entities that provide training. For most individual events a standard evaluation is given out by the entity who conducts the training with items related to if the training was informative, if it was relevant, if the instructor was knowledgeable and responsive, if the training was engaging, and other comments. This information is used to improve and plan future trainings. A few of the interviewees also mentioned that informal feedback is often used to plan and improve trainings. Information is also recorded about the demographics of the training session such as the number of people in attendance, their backgrounds and geographic location, the length of training, and the location. This information is used for reporting purposes, but also to analyze who has received the trainings and what regions of the state or specific personnel may still need certain trainings. Occasionally, outcome data may be collected after trainings through e-mail, phone calls, or small group discussions.

At the state level, the Department of Public Instruction and the Department of Health Services collect data from the local education and Birth to 3 agencies on the OSEP indicators, child count information, etc. This information is reviewed and submitted by the departments and publicly reported. The interviewees suggested that the state is really just beginning to use this sort of information to influence training and technical assistance. One of the challenges mentioned for the future is to begin looking at these various kinds of data in a systematic way to guide decision making for training and technical assistance.

Technical Assistance

Overall, data collection for technical assistance is less developed than for training. There is not a statewide requirement for evaluation of technical assistance. Each technical assistance person (or program) collects their own data to be used in reports to the state. Individual technical assistance providers log the number

of hours they provide technical assistance into a website. This information is reviewed by the state and used for reports to the federal government. An example of how a specific agency collects technical assistance data is below.

REsource, which provides the technical assistance for birth to three programs collects a few different kinds of data. First, each program develops a Program and Partnership Plan with their needs and goals for the year. These plans are monitored to see what kind of progress is being made. The plans are reviewed each year and are used to plan for the following year and may also contribute to decisions for statewide trainings if a number of programs are needing help with the same things. REsource also keeps a database of the technical assistance that is provided to every county and the priorities that were worked on. This is used to demonstrate to OSEP that technical assistance is being targeted towards problem areas. On-site reviews are also conducted to look at what is going on related to OSEP indicators. An example of this would be reviews of a program's IFSPs. This information is then used to plan for the provision of technical assistance in the areas that a particular program is struggling. The state also sends out a survey to the county programs each year to ask for their satisfaction with the technical assistance they have received. All of this data is summarized by the state and used for the annual report, to plan for improvement, and to determine future priorities.

The strengths of data collection for technical assistance that were mentioned include the usefulness of the web-based reporting system and that there is open communication and feedback that provides extra information regarding technical assistance than what is collected formally. The challenges that were mentioned were the need to be more data-based with decision making and to be collecting data more consistently.

Funding

Training and Technical Assistance

Funding for training and technical assistance comes from federal Part C and 619 money. The Part C money is used for the contracts with the Waisman Center, CESA 5 (REsource) and Great Lakes Inter-Tribal Council. Most of the 619 money goes to the 12 CESAs. Money is designated as training or technical assistance money and used accordingly.

For training, extra funds may come through grants from other agencies such as the Early Hearing Detection and Intervention funds from the Maternal and Child Health Bureau or from the state or federal government. The General Supervision Enhancement Grant (GSEG) and the State Improvement Grant (followed by the State Personnel Development Grant) have been developed and implemented collaboratively across DPI, DHS and the Waisman Center. These grants have contributed training dollars across state agencies. The GSEG has specifically supported training around child outcomes, ongoing assessment, and transitions from Part C to

619. The State Improvement and Personnel Development Grants provide funds to address effective professional development in areas such as the Wisconsin Model Early Learning Standards, early transitions, least restrictive environments and natural environments. Also, informal sharing of funding may occur when collaborative trainings occur between multiple agencies.

Extra funding for technical assistance may come from the braided funding that is used for the regional collaboration coaches. This braided funding comes from childcare, Head Start, Maternal Child Health Bureau, and others. Also through the State Improvement Grant some funding has been given to the RESource staff to provide some extra days of collaborative technical assistance for birth to six.

Almost every interviewee mentioned the same thing about funding for the training and technical assistance systems and that is that the funding has been fairly stable over the years, but there is not enough of it. Another strength that was mentioned was that the state is doing a lot with what they have. "We get an incredible bang for the buck – I think that the training that is going on out there is really excellent and that we do a lot with the limited dollars that we have." Another challenge that was mentioned was how to figure out the priorities and deliver the best training for the amount of funding you have.

Conclusion

This paper has provided a summary of the training and technical assistance system in Wisconsin using the information provided from a variety of sources within the state. Each of the interviewees provided a different perspective on the system and had some varying opinions. The biggest difference in opinion between interviewees came in regard to the use of online formats and other technologies to deliver training and technical assistance. Some of the interviewees really saw the need to increase the use of technology as a means to ensure consistency by being able to deliver training to everyone across the state is a timely and more cost effective manner. Other interviewees were more hesitant to increase the use of technology because they felt that it decreased the relationship building that occurs through face-to-face kinds of training and technical assistance and that it may not have as much of an impact.

Even though there were differences of opinions, overall the information provided in the interviews was very similar and gave a clear picture of the training and technical assistance system in the state. There were a few ideas or themes that came up over and over in the interviews. For example, everyone really saw the training and technical assistance system as being very relationship-based. This includes the relationships of the technical assistance providers to the local programs, the relationship between the various agencies (all of the Collaborating Partners), and the relationship between the state agencies, the CESAs, the Waisman Center, and the local programs. Also, all of the interviewees felt that Wisconsin was really doing a good job of moving towards a training and technical assistance system that focuses a lot on technical assistance and doing things besides

large group trainings that will really bring about changes in practice.

One of the final things discussed in the interview was thoughts on the future of the training and technical assistance system. A number of different things were mentioned in relation to the future. One interviewee thought that the effective use of technology would continue to evolve and allow for more efficient training to occur. A couple of interviewees mentioned that there would be an increased use of data as well as better collection and use of the data. One interviewee mentioned that there would be continued movement towards technical assistance and away from mass trainings. Overall, the interviewees saw the training and technical assistance system as continuing to improve.

To conclude this summary on Wisconsin's training and technical assistance system, here are some final thoughts from a few of the interviewees.

I think all of us are very humble in this kind of world of constantly evolving information and maintaining that openness to look at new approaches or understand when better ways...so just continuing that humbleness and never thinking that you finally have reached the point of utter wisdom.

I think what I am most proud of is that we do have a training and technical assistance system and that we are gradually making that shift and focus to technical assistance and to recognizing that we can't do mass trainings and expect any changes.

I think that having Collaborating Partners in our state has been an amazing foundation for the work that's happening here. So helping states to know that while you may have $5 and somebody else has $3 and somebody else had 50¢, that if you put it together with a common goal based on guiding principles, you really can begin to develop a system... [In Wisconsin] there is a base of leadership that really helps to empower people at every level and that collaborative spirit that says together we can get this job done.

Summary of the Training and Technical Assistance System in Minnesota

Interviews were conducted with various people involved in the training and technical assistance system in Minnesota in order to get an in-depth picture of what the system looks like. Six separate interviews were conducted with a total of seven people; the Part C coordinator, the 619 coordinator, the director of the Center for Inclusive Child Care, a professor of higher education, the early childhood coordinator of a local education agency, the early childhood coordinator at the PACER (Parent Advocacy Coalition for Educational Rights) Center, and the director of professional development for the Center for Early Education and Development (CEED) at the Minnesota UCEDD (University Center for Excellence in Developmental Disabilities). The interviews were structured around seven main topic areas, followed at the end by a section asking for overall reflections or recommendations. The seven topic areas were historical perspective and overview, content, delivery, collaboration, staffing, data collection, and funding. Respondents were asked to talk about each of these topics in regard to both the training and the technical assistance parts of the system. The following is a summary of the information provided by all seven interviewees about the training and technical assistance system in Minnesota.

Overview

In Minnesota, the Department of Education is the lead agency for both Part C and Section 619. Most services in the state are brokered through the school system for infants, toddlers, and preschoolers, so many of the trainings for providers are inclusive of birth-five. The state also has 96 Interagency Early Intervention Committees (IEIC). Representatives from the IEICs participate in trainings as well as look at local data and develop improvement plans.

The Department of Education is the main entity for the design and delivery of training and technical assistance in the state. The three main staff provide various large trainings that occur each year, some of which are delivered in partnership with the Minnesota Division for Early Childhood (MNDEC) or the Higher Education Consortium. The major trainings are the Summer Institute, the fall leadership conference, the spring conference for practitioners, and the conference on hearing. The Department of Education also provides funding to the Center for Inclusive Child Care (CICC) to support training across the early childhood community. CICC provides training mainly through the Child Care Resource and Referral system and have hosted an Inclusion Institute for the last four years. Technical assistance is also provided by the Department of Education staff. Technical assistance is provided by request, based on needs as determined through monitoring or data collection, and as part of the local improvement plans developed by the IEICs and local early childhood special education coordinators. The staff also provides regional spring trainings to deliver content at a more local level based on needs.

Other agencies in the state provide opportunities for early intervention and early childhood special education providers to attend trainings that are not necessarily a part of the Department of Education's training and technical assistance. The Department of Health, the Department of Human Services, the PACER Center and the Minnesota Association for the Education of Young Children offer various training opportunities. For example, there is a new initiative for training from the Department of Human Services around mental health.

A number of goals for the training and technical assistance system were mentioned. One goal is to make sure that everyone is up to date and in compliance with the state and federal requirements. Another goal is to improve outcomes for young children and their families by having providers that are knowledgeable and competent in current issues and practices and who understand the importance of working towards these outcomes. One of the goals that is specific to the technical assistance system is staying connected to the staff in the field, what their needs are, and making sure that those needs are met in a timely manner.

History and Influences

The Department of Education has always been the lead agency for both Part C and Section 619 and they have also been involved with the training and technical assistance for those providers since the beginning. A number of the large trainings have been occurring for 10-20 years. The Summer Institute began in the 1980s when due to new legislation a whole bunch of providers needed to be trained on a new set of skills and knowledge in early intervention. It has always been in collaboration with the Higher Education Consortium, who is in charge of determining topics, planning, and carrying out the training. The current institute is now more focused on current topics in the field. The leadership conference began as a state sponsored event in the late 90s, but was stopped for a few years due to financial constraints. MNDEC stepped in to help with the conference and now it is a collaborative conference with the Department of Education and MNDEC. One of the interviewees mentioned that this conference used to be much more inclusive of parents, but is no longer that way due to less availability of funds for parents to attend. The Center for Inclusive Child Care (CICC) was started about 14 years ago through funding from both the Department of Education and the Department of Human Services (DHS) based on Project Exceptional, which is an inclusive training model from California. The CICC provides training to child care providers for the successful inclusion of children with disabilities in child care settings.

A number of changes have taken place since the beginning of the training and technical assistance system. The main mechanism for training and technical assistance in the beginning was face-to-face. There has been a significant increase in the use of technology to supplement the face-to-face training and technical assistance. For instance, the use of phone and e-mail are very prevalent for technical assistance and follow-up. Also, there are various materials posted online that can be accessed. Another change that was mentioned was that there is now less collaboration, specifically for the regional trainings with DHS than there was historically.

There has also been a shift in the content of training and technical assistance. It is currently very focused on meeting the state and federal requirements. A final change has been the hiring of additional staff at the Department of Education and the close relationship that they have developed with the early childhood special education coordinators, as well as their willingness to do on-site consultation.

There are a number of things that have influenced the training and technical assistance system in Minnesota. The most commonly mentioned influence is the need to meet state and federal requirements. Other influences that were mentioned were current issues and topics in the field, changing interests and funding, the state's revision of Part C criteria, early childhood outcomes, the increasing use of data, diversity, research, best practices, and participation in national projects.

Content

Training

Current training content focuses on a number of priorities from current issues to state and federal legislation. Specific priorities include the state's revision to Part C criteria, transition from Part C to Part B, criterion referenced assessments, diversity, data collection and monitoring, autism, mental health, routines-based interventions, assistive technology, functional goals, Part C service delivery (primary service provider model, transdisciplinary service delivery, what happens on home visits), social-emotional development, evidence-based and recommended practices, and challenging behaviors. The Center for Inclusive Child Care has some specific priorities because their training is focused on inclusive child care environments. Their priorities include autism, inclusion, sensory processing, mental health, and reaching out to the Somali community.

The content of training is influenced by a number of different things. One of the most commonly mentioned influences is the need to meet the state and federal requirements. Other influences include participation in national projects such as NIPIP (National Individualizing Preschool Inclusion Project) and NPDCI (National Professional Development Center on Inclusion), research, evaluations from trainings, and feedback from early childhood special education coordinators. There may be some influence from families through the family survey that parents complete when they leave Part C services or from information provided to the state staff from a PACER representative. Finally, training content may be influenced by the questions for technical assistance that come to the state staff.

The biggest strength of the training content that was mentioned was that the state staff listens to the field when determining content. The biggest challenge that was mentioned was being able to provide training on all of the different topics that is needed due to time and funding constraints.

Technical Assistance

Much of the content of technical assistance is the same as training since it is often requested based on a training that has just occurred. Other technical assistance content is based on data regarding federal requirements. Each of the local school districts are participating in monitoring for the OSEP indicators and develop improvement plans for areas in which they are struggling. Technical assistance is provided to these programs and the topics are often Part C transitions, child find, the 45-day timeline for evaluation, and child outcomes data. One topic that is unique for technical assistance is working with special education directors on understanding the funding system and maximizing fiscal resources.

The overall influences are the same as trainings; state and federal requirements, research, evidence-based practice, etc. The other influences for technical assistance are more informal. Most technical assistance stems from informal feedback, individual requests and the aggregation of all those requests, or informal needs surveys. The strengths of the technical assistance content that were mentioned are the many informal methods of understanding what the needs are, the state staff's awareness of what is going on out in the field, and the ability of the local coordinators to come to the state staff with their needs.

Delivery

Training

The delivery of training is done through the large events that are held annually. These events include the fall leadership conference which is a 3-day conference geared towards developing local district practices through leadership at the local level; the summer institute which is 3 days focused on current topics and geared towards practitioners; the spring conference which is one and a half days also geared towards practitioners and put on collaboratively with MNDEC; and the conference on hearing for consultant teams, teachers, audiologists, and others which also includes K-12. Most of the trainings are delivered in one location, but sometimes regional trainings are offered. Some trainings have also been done through Interactive TV (broadcasted to different sites) and webinars as a means for reducing cost and the need to travel and providing information in a timely manner. There have been some newer kinds of training delivery that are being developed or have just started. For instance, they are creating online training modules. They are also beginning to use a train the trainers method more often. For instance, training is held for the early childhood special education coordinators and they take the information back to their staff. This was recently done with training on autism and transition.

Almost all of the interviewees said that the strength of the training delivery was the high quality trainers. The biggest challenge that was mentioned was getting people to attend the trainings. This is a challenge for a couple of reasons. First, it is a large state so travel can be an issue as well as having the funding to get to

trainings. Also, only so many people can be gone from their jobs at a time, so everyone is not able to attend the big annual trainings that occur. Some of the interviewees also mentioned the lack of training opportunities that provide for the transfer of learning to practice to occur. A number of interviewees mentioned the importance of beginning to use more technology to reach more people for trainings.

Technical Assistance

Technical assistance is delivered through targeted trainings to districts or regions based on their local needs, improvement plans, or needs identified through data monitoring. Technical assistance is also delivered through telephone and e-mail responses to individualized questions or requests. There is also information that can be accessed through the Department of Education's website and the staff is really trying to increase these resources and their user-friendliness in order to move away from the reliance on phone and e-mail. Most of the technical assistance is delivered directly by the three Department of Education staff members; some may be delivered through contracts.

The strength that was mentioned frequently was the very committed and high quality staff that delivers technical assistance. The challenge mentioned is that there is only three state staff so the amount of time they have to provide technical assistance is limited.

Collaboration

Training

Minnesota has a small collaborative network and the main collaborations are with the Higher Education Consortium for the Summer Institute and the MNDEC for one of the yearly conferences. There are trainings that are held by other agencies that are geared towards Part C and 619 providers or to which they are invited. The Department of Health provides training to service coordinators on screening instruments and finding funding for services. The Department of Human Services provides training on mental health issues that anyone can attend. There are also trainings that occur through other agencies that may benefit the Part C or 619 systems indirectly. For instance, The Department of Health provides training and technical assistance to local health agency staff (especially nurses) to help with Child Find. The Department of Education also funds the Center for Inclusive Child Care to provide training for child care providers specifically to meet the needs of children with disabilities in child care. The Department of Education has always been the lead for the training for Part C and 619 and many interviewees saw that as one of the reasons for the lack of collaboration.

There is some formal collaboration that occurs through the interagency coordinating councils. At the state level, the representatives from the various agencies collaborate to look at needs for training. At the local level there are the Interagency Early Intervention Committees. These committees are in place to bring about

collaboration between the various agencies that work with children and families.

There is beginning to be more of an effort for collaboration in the state as they are part of the National Professional Development Center on Inclusion Project. This project will work with the state to move toward more formal collaboration across early childhood special education, child care, and head start. There are also some pushes from other entities in the state for different kinds of collaboration such as through the new interdisciplinary infant and early childhood mental health certificate program and the Department of Human Services working with other entities to have screenings for little kids around social-emotional development and mental health.

Technical Assistance

There is also very little collaboration that occurs for technical assistance especially due to the individualized nature of technical assistance. The interviewees said that all of the technical assistance comes from the Department of Education and there is no collaboration involved.

Staffing

Training and Technical Assistance

The main staff for training and technical assistance are the three people at the Department of Education. There is also a person from the monitoring department that contributes to the training and technical assistance system. They all have advanced degrees and lots of experience in the field. The staff works to improve their skills and knowledge by keeping up with what is going on in the field and attending national trainings (although this is often difficult due to funding and time constraints).

In contrast the Center for Inclusive Child Care has over 200 trainers available who participate in online training modules, attend conferences, and have access to newsletters, website information, and a library to check out books and videos. As part of a desire to have highly qualified trainers, in the future these trainers will be expected to be certified to train on certain topics and this information will be in a database.

The strengths mentioned of the state staff are that they have good communication since there are so few of them and that they are very good at training and technical assistance. The challenge is that they have a lot of responsibilities.

Data Collection

Training

There is an evaluation form that is used at the big statewide trainings that asks about how valuable the training was, what could be improved, etc. This information is collected and reviewed by the state staff. It is

also shared with collaborators such as DEC and the Higher Education Consortium and used to determine what other topics people are interested in and to make improvements for future trainings. For example, the format of the Summer Institute has changed significantly over the last few years, because of the feedback that has come in through the evaluation forms each year. Implementation data is often collected through various large scale projects that they are participating in such as NIPIP and the state autism project. The Summer Institute also requires that participants submit documentation of their learning. The Department of Education also receives information each year from CICC on the number of people they have trained.

Monitoring data is also collected and used to inform training decisions. The state staff reviews the State Performance Plan indicators at the local level as well as district compliance reports in order to determine local and statewide needs for training. They also review all of the improvement plans developed by the districts as an informal way of identifying needs in order to develop training and technical assistance. Monitoring data and improvement plan data is also used to look at whether or not state trainings are making any difference in practice.

Technical Assistance

The only reported data collection that occurs for technical assistance is that an evaluation form may be used for the local trainings that occur.

Funding

Training and Technical Assistance

Funding for training and technical assistance comes from federal Part C and 619 money. The state is required to provide money to districts for professional development based on the number of FTE professional staff they have. There is also money that comes from the federal government that goes directly to the districts for professional development based on their child count. Because of this the districts absorb the cost of sending people to trainings. The trainings are typically at no cost or very cheap though. The Department of Education also provides grants to support other organizations to provide training and technical assistance such as PACER, CICC, and the Higher Education Consortium. There is also some informal shared funding for various trainings between the Department of Education and other agencies such as MNDEC, the Department of Health, and the Department of Human Services.

The state has some separate money set aside for technical assistance. This money basically funds the salary and mileage for the three state staff. It also funds some Part C positions in other agencies that provide technical assistance.

Many of the interviewees said the same thing about funding and that was that it has been fairly

consistent over time, but that there is never enough. The biggest challenge that goes along with this is having the funding to be able to release staff for trainings.

Conclusion

This paper has provided a summary of the training and technical assistance system in Minnesota using the information provided from a variety of sources within the state. Each of the interviewees provided a different perspective on the system and had some varying opinions. One of the biggest differences in opinion was around the idea of collaboration. Some of the interviewees saw a sufficient amount of collaboration occurring, but most of the interviewees thought that there could be a lot more collaboration occurring. One interviewee said, "...it would be great to think more broadly in terms of across disciplinary, more across programmatic funding; by that I mean including child care and Head Start and other programs that have...that serve kids with disabilities and trainings so that there is more shared responsibility."

Even though there were differences of opinions, the overall information provided in the interviews was very similar and gave a clear picture of the training and technical assistance system in the state. One of the final things discussed in the interview was thoughts on the future of the training and technical assistance system. All of the interviewees saw the training and technical assistance system as moving forward and improving to better meet the professional development needs of the state. Many of the interviewees mentioned the increasing use of technology and moving towards a more comprehensive and multi-modal system so that training is more accessible and fits with various learning styles and work environments. Others mentioned the increased use of data in a way that identifies where effective practices are being used so they can be learned from as well as identifying what is working and not working across the training and technical assistance system so as to use the funding in the most effective way possible. Finally, a few of the interviewees hoped that the future would bring more collaboration between agencies.

To conclude this summary on Minnesota's training and technical assistance system, here are some final thoughts from a few of the interviewees.

I think the most critical thing is that strong link between [the Department of Education] and the field. That there is a real strong positive relationship that – they hear a need, they respond to it, they get feedback from the coordinators or special ed directors on what technical assistance is needed and what training is needed, that they are really listening to the field.

They're very responsive and they've made a commitment I feel like to making sure inclusion is successful in Minnesota from again this sort of foundational point throughout and so I would say that's a real strength, is that commitment.

...I get a little worried sitting on the IEIC, that we are not getting any more money from the feds... If we want more money out in the districts, then we have to cut the amount of money that the state spends, which means we could be cutting technical assistance and training. If we want more technical assistance and training, we may have to cut what the local districts get, because there is no more money. So, I think it is to our advantage to work real closely with MDE looking at what are people saying about technical assistance and training. Are we providing them what they want or do we need to look at if we are wasting money anywhere?

Summary of the Training and Technical Assistance System in Nebraska

Interviews were conducted with various people involved in the training and technical assistance system in Nebraska in order to get an in-depth picture of what the system looks like. Four separate interviews were conducted with a total of eight people; a University of Nebraska faculty member, 2 staff members from the Parent Training and Information Center, the Part C Coordinator with the Department of Health and Human Services, the Part C Manager with the Department of Education, the 619 coordinator, and the director and the training coordinator from the Early Childhood Training Center. The interviews were structured around seven main topic areas, followed at the end by a section asking for overall reflections or recommendations. The seven topic areas were historical perspective and overview, content, delivery, collaboration, staffing, data collection, and funding. Respondents were asked to talk about each of these topics in regard to both the training and the technical assistance parts of the system. The following is a summary of the information provided by all eight interviewees about the training and technical assistance system in Nebraska.

Overview

In Nebraska, Part C has two lead agencies, the Department of Health and Human Services (DHHS) and the Department of Education (DE), which is also the lead agency for 619. The main responsibility for DHHS as the co-lead agency for Part C is hiring and training service coordinators. Nebraska is also a birth mandate state for special education and thus has a history of a very coordinated and collaborative system between Part C and 619. Much of the training in the state is done collaboratively with the Department of Education and the Department of Health and Human Services through the Early Childhood Training Center.

The Early Childhood Training Center (ECTC) is housed under the Department of Education and works with the state agencies to organize training events. The ECTC has 10 regional training coalitions across the state in which the regional training coordinators broker to provide the needed training and technical assistance for that region. This use of the various resources across the state is an important aspect in the state's ability to provide training and technical assistance. The ECTC is not just for special education training; it is available for all early childhood issues. The state has a strong partnership between early childhood education and early childhood special education and so all of their training and technical assistance is for all practitioners who work in early care and education. The state has also created 29 planning region teams and each year the teams write a grant that identifies the gaps and barriers to providing quality services and how they are going to work towards solving those issues, including through the use of training and technical assistance. Nebraska also has a Parent Training and Information Center which provides training and technical assistance specifically to families of children with disabilities. These trainings are open to and often attended by practitioners working with families of children with disabilities.

The overall goals of the system focus on providing support and training to staff working with children birth through age eight and their families, continuing to improve the processes for learning best practices in early childhood intervention, building leadership and collaboration within communities, recognizing and supporting early childhood as the foundation for later learning and making sure that families are getting what they need to help their children develop to their potential.

History and Influences

The history of the training and technical assistance system begins around the mid 1970s, when the Department of Education started receiving preschool incentive grants to support special education. They contracted with two people at the University of Nebraska Medical Center (Munroe-Meyer) to provide statewide trainings. The state's birth mandate occurred in 1978, so the Department of Education and the school districts became responsible for children birth-five with disabilities. They continued to build the training system through Munroe-Meyer and then in the early 1990s, the ECTC was established. In the last three years the Early Childhood Training Center has come under the management of the Department of Education.

The major influences to the training and technical assistance system include federal agencies and accountability requirements, as well as policies. Monitoring is done to check compliance and then training and technical assistance is used to make the needed improvements. Also, training and technical assistance must be conducted around new policies, procedures, and regulations to make sure that everyone in the state is following the current regulations.

Content

Training

Current training content focuses on a number of things from laws and regulations to areas of best- or evidence-based practice. Current priorities in Nebraska include positive behavior support, Results Matter (outcomes measurement), teaching pyramids, inclusive practices, curriculum-based assessments, writing functional outcomes, and Early Learning Guidelines (developed by the state). The current topics for PTIC include No Child Left Behind, IFSPs, grief processes, and access to healthcare.

The training content is influenced in a variety of ways starting with the monitoring that goes on in the various regions. The state and the regions are able to look at what is not going well and will focus training on those issues. Second, content is influenced by staff and feedback from previous trainings. Parents also have an influence on training through participation in planning region teams or the state Interagency Coordinating Council (ICC). A final influence in content is research and evidence-based practice. The state is committed to having that

information and using it to influence their larger vision and then working to get that information to practitioners through training and technical assistance.

The interviewees identified a number of strengths and challenges regarding the content of the training system. Strengths include strong collaboration and knowledge of what is going on in all the different areas, the state is proactive and offers training right away when they mandate a new regulation or change, shared effort between early childhood special education and early childhood education, and that training needs are being identified well. Challenges include prioritizing the most important needs and having a more systematic and formalized training plan each year.

Technical Assistance

Training and technical assistance are part of the same system, so many of the priorities and influences are the same. As one interviewee put it:

> *The training and technical assistance are hand and glove. What they need training on, they need technical assistance for. What they need technical assistance for, they also need training. So we don't see that as any separation*.

Other than those mentioned already in training, technical assistance priorities currently include the 3 major Office of Special Education Requirements (timely service, 45-day timeframe, and transition planning) and the new CMS (Centers for Medicare and Medicaid) regulations.

Technical assistance in the state can be thought of in 2 different ways. First, there is the more formal kind of technical assistance that is either built into ongoing training efforts or offered regularly through ECTC. One example is that technical assistance was built into the training plan for the Results Matter trainings. Another example is that ECTC offers technical assistance to local planning regions on grant and report writing. Second, there is the technical assistance that comes in response to specific requests from local agencies or planning teams based on compliance monitoring, other needs assessments, or about implementation of information that was received in a recent training.

Many of the interviewees reported the same strength regarding the content of technical assistance and that was the use of data; both having the ability to look at it from a state perspective and pinpoint where technical assistance should be directed and also the local agencies having the ability to monitor themselves and determine where their needs are. One of the interviewees saw this as somewhat of a detriment in that by relying on monitoring or staff requests, all of the technical assistance needs were probably not being addressed. She said, "I think that knowing what technical assistance is and what you can request of the Training Center certainly

always can be beefed up." Another challenge that was mentioned was the molding of the requirements and needs of the two lead agencies.

<div align="center">Delivery</div>

Training

There are a number of methods the state uses to deliver training including 1-day trainings, conferences, and topical workshops. They also offer an online tutorial on the IFSP and independent study modules for child care certification. Currently the state is trying to use more web resources (online IFSP tutorial has been successful) and also trying to find ways to use technology, such as videoconferencing, more frequently. Another big push in the state is to move away from one-shot trainings by making sure that there is always built in follow-up or doing more systematic trainings over time. This is to ensure that the training is useful.

The biggest challenge mentioned in the delivery of training is that the state of Nebraska is large and rural. It is difficult to make sure that everyone gets the same information at the same time. This includes finding the time needed for people to attend trainings due to the number of kids that they see and possibly the distance they would need to travel. Other challenges that were mentioned include money and personnel resources and access to technology. Interviewees mentioned the strengths in training delivery as having the Early Childhood Training Center, collaboration, and sensitivity to geography by planning trainings in various parts of the state.

Technical Assistance

The most common methods of technical assistance are through phone and e-mail. This is often provided by the two Part C coordinators and the 619 coordinator or other staff members in the Department of Education or the Department of Health and Human Services. Another method is the ECTC will identify people across the state that are skilled and knowledgeable about a topic and broker with them to provide technical assistance. Some on-site consultation is also done when monitoring is conducted or if there is a particularly difficult situation.

Interviewees said the strength of the technical assistance delivery is the use of good people to deliver the technical assistance and the collaboration that occurs. The challenge is being able to find those good people who also have the flexibility in their jobs to be able to deliver technical assistance.

<div align="center">Collaboration</div>

Training

Collaboration, both formal and informal, occurs in a variety of ways throughout the state in regards to

training. Collaborators include the Department of Education, Department of Health and Human Services, Head Start, Newborn Hearing Program, Together for Kids and Families, Early Childhood Training Center, Parent Training and Information Center, state Board of Education, NAEYC, University of Nebraska Lincoln (UNL), University of Nebraska Medical Center (UNMC), and other colleges and universities in the state. The following are examples of specific previous or ongoing collaborations around training in Nebraska.

Collaboration between the state and the institutes of higher education occur in a number of ways. The UNL Center on Children, Families, and Youth in Schools collaborated with the state for the development of the online training information on the IFSP. People at both UNL and UNMC have conducted trainings, assisted in the development of surveys and other evaluation tools, or have conducted evaluation studies for various training projects such as Results Matter. The state has paid the tuition for students in the university pre-service programs as a way to advance those programs in the colleges and universities and attract people to those programs. The colleges and universities have also responded to the needs of the state by developing courses in response to the growing need for people who are knowledgeable about autism.

Collaboration is also very strong between the various early childhood agencies (Part C, 619, Head Start, Child Care Association). These agencies are all a part of the Early Childhood Interagency Coordinating Council and work together to provide trainings for all providers. When changes in federal regulations occur for one agency, they look at how it will affect all agencies serving young children and what they can do together to help the providers. This collaboration occurs at the state level, but is also seen at the local level with representation of all of these entities on the planning region teams.

Another collaboration that occurs is between the various planning regions. Different regions will collaborate with each other to host trainings, by pooling funds or just inviting nearby regions to participate in the trainings.

Collaboration in the state is widespread and occurs at all different levels. One of the most commonly mentioned things that facilitate this collaboration is the fact that many of the key players in the system have been around for a long time, so people really know each other, have been on the same committees and have worked together for a long time. There is also a shared philosophy. With people always coming together and having that dialogue in meetings, it really fosters a shared philosophy that encourages collaboration. The challenges to collaboration most interviewees mentioned were conflicting ideas and priorities for different entities and having the time it takes to collaborate.

Technical Assistance

Collaboration for technical assistance occurs between many of the same entities because training and

technical assistance in the state are linked. Some specific collaboration for technical assistance occurs between the Part C and 619 agencies and PTIC. They work with each other to make sure that individual families and practitioners are getting the information they need. The planning around local technical assistance needs is also strongly supported by collaboration. The needs are determined by the local planning teams that include community members, church representatives, parents, and early intervention staff. The part C coordinators may also attend these planning meetings to help facilitate discussion or just to listen to what the needs in that particular community are. Collaboration is supported at all levels through the culture and philosophy that starts at the state, but trickles down to the local level.

Staffing

Training

The training staff is made up of people at the Early Childhood Training Center, Department of Education, Department of Health and Human Services, and the Parent Training and Information Center. The staff at ECTC is made up specifically of a director, training coordinators, and various support staff. All of the coordinators have at least a master's degree and prior experience in professional development and early intervention. For the most part they do not provide the training, but broker with qualified people in the state to provide the training that is requested. The strength of these trainers is that many times they are practitioners and thus really understand what is going on in the field. The ECTC also offers training sessions to help develop the training skills of people who are doing trainings. The coordinators for Part C and 619 conduct some of their own trainings as well as work with ECTC to provide some. PTIC has nine full time staff who do training and technical assistance. All of them are parents of a child with special needs. To improve their skills, they attend the trainings that the ECTC provides.

As mentioned before, training is mostly provided by individuals that the ECTC brokers with. This is seen by the interviewees as both a strength and a challenge for the system. The people who provide the training tend to be very knowledgeable and have a lot of expertise on a particular topic and they also have a good deal of understanding about the challenges in the field since they are typically working in it. This also gives them quite a bit of credibility. The challenge is that these people must be able to take time off from their jobs to provide training. The other challenge that was mentioned is that sometimes the trainers must travel large distances in order to do trainings.

Technical Assistance

The technical assistance staff is much the same as the staff for training. Within the Department of Education, there are a number of people who are assigned to provide technical assistance and within the

Department of Health and Human Services a number of people are available to help with technical assistance. They are not employed specifically to do technical assistance, but it is just one of the things they do. The ECTC also brokers with people across the state to provide technical assistance based on requests. The staff at PTIC is also available for technical assistance. Many of the same strengths and challenges were mentioned. One of the challenges specifically mentioned for the technical assistance system is that they do not have the ability to do as much on-site consultation as they would like. It is too difficult based on the staffing and the other responsibilities that those people have to be able to go out to local agencies for on-site consultation.

Data Collection

Training

The Early Childhood Training Center collects information about the individual training events that are held and also has an evaluation form that is given out at the trainings. Basic information about the training such as who is doing the presentation, the date, the location, the description and objective, and other information is entered in a database for all trainings. Participants in the trainings are asked to fill out an evaluation form that includes questions about the effectiveness of the training, the trainer, if the information was useful, suggestions for improvement, etc. The evaluation data is summarized by the ECTC and usually given to the trainer and the person or agency requesting the training. The summaries are used to determine how the training went, what the next steps may be, and what could be changed before presenting the training again. The evaluation data is also presented to the state on a regular basis and may influence decisions that the state makes in regards to training. The state also monitors who has been trained and in what areas of the state for the various training initiatives that they have determined.

Monitoring data or compliance checks are also used to influence training. If there are a number of communities struggling with something, the state will see that and decide that there should be statewide training in that area. There is also informal evaluation that goes on and helps determine training efforts. State or local entities may reflect on what they have done in the past and whether or not it has worked may influence future trainings. Specific projects that are being implemented in the state may collect more in-depth data, but that is difficult to do all the time because of resources. Currently, with the CSEFEL grant, evaluation of implementation is part of that. Implementation data has also been collected with Results Matter.

PTIC does data collection and evaluation specific to their trainings. They have an evaluation form similar to the one ECTC uses that is given out at the PTIC trainings. Similarly, they use the information to plan for future trainings and change the way the training is presented.

The ECTC is really seen by the interviewees as a strength in collecting data since they keep a

comprehensive database and consistently implement the evaluation forms. The other strength is that the evaluations and data are used to impact the training that is delivered. The most commonly mentioned challenge to collecting data is the availability of financial and personnel resources.

Technical Assistance

There is not a formalized system for collecting data on technical assistance. Informal feedback and satisfaction is used to change what happens during technical assistance.

PTIC does their own evaluation of the technical assistance that they provide. When they send information to families by mail, they include a brief survey about whether the information met their needs, if they received it in a timely fashion, etc. This information is used to influence the technical assistance they do, but is also reported back to the federal government. They also randomly contact 50 people each year who have contacted PTIC to find out their satisfaction with the training or technical assistance they received. This information is reported to the Office of Special Education Programs.

Funding

Training and Technical Assistance

Funding for the training and technical assistance system is provided to ECTC by federal Part C and 619 funds. Money is also filtered to the 29 planning regions for training purposes. Funding for the 10 regional training coalitions come from Child Care and Development Fund, 619, Part C, Head Start, and General Supervision Enhancement Grant (GSEG). The state provides some funding for school districts for three- and four-year olds. It used to be competitive grant money, but if the district has three years of approval, then the funding becomes stable. PTIC is funded from several sources including the federal PTIC grant, state Department of Education, and the Health Resources and Services Administration.

The interviewees saw the strength of the funding for this system is that there is consistent funding for ECTC and that the funding is used well. The challenges that were mentioned include the need for increased funding and that the state is not helping to provide funds for training and technical assistance.

Conclusion

This paper has provided a summary of the training and technical assistance system in Nebraska using the information provided from a variety of sources within the state. Each of the interviewees provided a different perspective on the system and had some varying opinions. One of the interesting differences in opinion was if it was beneficial to have training and technical assistance combined for regular early childhood and early childhood special education. The majority of the interviewees thought that it was very beneficial and worked well, but one

interviewee was concerned that the people who are trained in special education may not be receiving the level of support they need to adequately support children with disabilities and their families. This concern was also mentioned when talking about having the right people in the audience for trainings. When trainings are open to everyone, there may be people in the audience who lack the background knowledge to be able to fully participate in the training. The difficulty is that those with the background knowledge may not get as in-depth of information as they need, because others in the audience are starting from scratch.

Another difference of perspective came when discussing the provision of technical assistance. Many interviewees viewed it as a strength that technical assistance was provided based on a request or a failure to meet some sort of monitoring requirement. Another interviewee saw this as not being proactive enough with technical assistance. If people are only getting technical assistance based on need, there are probably a lot of technical assistance needs that are not being met because people are not asking for it.

Even though there were differences of opinions, the overall information provided in the interviews was very similar and gave a clear picture of the training and technical assistance system in the state. Something that should be highlighted is the way that Nebraska has been able to provide training and technical assistance on a budget that includes no state dollars by brokering with resources across the state. One of the final things discussed in the interview was thoughts on the future of the training and technical assistance system. Most of the interviewees saw the system as very healthy and stable. A few mentioned some thing they would like to see changed such as more use of technology to provide training and technical assistance and also working to build the capacity of local regions and agencies so they are able to provide technical assistance more locally in order to decrease the amount of traveling that people must do.

To conclude this summary on Nebraska's training and technical assistance system, here are some final thoughts from a few of the interviewees.

Having it all consolidated, having the history and the institutionalization of all early childhood training under one roof that is supported across agencies and provide the uniform, standardized, consistent, highly professional capability to develop, design, and deliver training for all early childhood providers across the state and having the regional network now more in place to help support and carry out the work, I just feel like the longevity and the sustainability of that is a huge factor and strength for us.

I just think collaboration is key when you're providing TA and training systems across the state. You've just got to collaborate. You've got to build relationships and partnerships with people within your system, but…and I, even especially outside your system because there's so much that the early intervention

systems depend on the outside systems to make it work.

So, I think the partnership and the nurturing of partnerships at all levels and all directions is important, but I think it also reflects the philosophy of what we are doing all our training about. Everything in ECSE gets down to relationships and partnerships. If we are going to preach that, we should be practicing it in everything we do…

Summary of the Training and Technical Assistance System in California

Interviews were conducted with various people involved in the training and technical assistance system in California in order to get an in-depth picture of what the system looks like. Six separate interviews were conducted and a group of three people chose to write out their answers to the interview questions for a total of nine people's perspectives; two staff from the Department of Developmental Services, the coordinator of WestEd, the coordinator of SEECAP (Special Education Early Childhood Administrators Project), a professor of higher education, a 619 consultant who oversees the training contracts, a member of the state ICC (Interagency Coordinating Council), the director of the southwest SELPA (Special Education Local Plan Area), and the director of the Desired Results Access Project. The interviews were structured around seven main topic areas, followed at the end by a section asking for overall reflections or recommendations. The seven topic areas were historical perspective and overview, content, delivery, collaboration, staffing, data collection, and funding. Respondents were asked to talk about each of these topics in regard to both the training and the technical assistance parts of the system. The following is a summary of the information provided by all nine interviewees about the training and technical assistance system in California.

Overview

In California, the lead agency for Part C is the Department of Developmental Services (DDS) and the lead agency for Section 619 is the Department of Education (DE). Part C and 619 have separate training and technical assistance systems with some occasional overlap and collaboration. Part C's Comprehensive System of Professional Development (CSPD) is organized and delivered through a contract with WestEd. The Department of Developmental Services has also sponsored the development of the Consultant Network to assist regional centers with technical assistance.

The Department of Education contracts with a number of entities that provide training and technical assistance. SEEDS (Supporting Early Education Delivery System) provides technical assistance to individual programs and statewide trainings. SEECAP has an emphasis on providing training to administrators and leaders of child development programs. The Desired Results Access Project is focused on training on assessments. SEECAP and the Desired Results Access Project also have small technical assistance components. The Department of Education also co-funds the California Preschool Inclusion Network (CPIN) which provides regional training and technical assistance through the county education offices on best practices in language, literacy, and mathematics. The state has 118 SELPAs (Special Education Local Plan Areas) that receive funding to be used to meet their local training and technical assistance needs. They can access any of the above mentioned projects, any other training that is going on in the state, or use their funding to hire an outside trainer.

The overall goals of the training and technical assistance system are to provide quality information

to providers in order to deliver quality services to children and families, to comply with state and federal requirements, to provide quality inclusive preschool options, and to work towards interagency collaboration.

History and Influences

The California Department of Education has a long history of providing training and technical assistance for 619 providers. A number of programs were in existence prior to the 1990s that paved the way for the current system which has much of the training determined on a regional basis and accessed through a variety of programs. Training and technical assistance through SEECAP, SEEDS, and Desired Results Access has been in place for over ten years. CPIN has been in place for about five years. Since the creation of these programs in the early 1990s, the training and technical assistance system has grown exponentially. Now there are at least 26 programs that offer training and technical assistance for early childhood education and early childhood special education providers.

The Department of Developmental Services did not have a comprehensive system of training and technical assistance until after 1993. Prior to that, training took place in regional centers and they ensured the qualification of personnel. In 1994, personnel and program standards were developed for early intervention and these competencies became the basis for the curriculum for the initial training institutes. At this time, a series of three, three-day institutes were developed for early intervention providers. Then three, three-day institutes were developed for service coordinators. In 2004, the curriculum for these institutes was updated to include information on natural environments, infant-family mental health, and relationship-based services. In 2005, the institutes were shortened to two days, but a fourth institute was added to each strand. In 2007, the institutes were revised in order to train service providers and service coordinators together. Technical assistance was added through the Consultant Network when local programs began requesting local technical assistance to improve local practices.

The major influence on the training and technical assistance system has been the requirements of the State Performance Plan indicators. This has become the major focus of training and it has also helped to ensure a more consistent message across the trainings that occur across the state. Another influence that was mentioned were the mandates for inclusion and natural environments which has lead to much more interagency collaboration, including collaboration around training and technical assistance.

Content

Training

For Part C providers and coordinators, the main training priorities are focused on the foundations of providing early intervention services, skill development and knowledge related to childhood development and the

requirements of state and federal law. Other priorities include CAPTA (Child Abuse Prevention and Treatment Act), the transition from Part C to Part B, health and wellness, and other topics that are specific to the needs of early intervention providers. The training content is influenced by institutes of higher education, parental input, Interagency Coordinating Councils, evidence-based research and practice, monitoring, planning teams, needs assessments, and feedback from participants' evaluation of trainings.

For 619 providers, much of the content is focused on meeting the State Performance Plan indicators, accountability, and child outcomes. Other training priorities include behavior management, autism, transition from Part C to Part B, inclusion, and collaboration. Many trainings are determined on a regional basis and can be focused on anything that the region feels they need training on. Besides the regional influence on training, there is a strong influence from the need for compliance with state and federal standards. This influence is seen through the compliance review that takes place every four years. For regions out of compliance, a corrective action plan is developed and training and technical assistance is provided to reach compliance. Other influences include evidence-based research and practice and national projects or agendas. *Technical Assistance*

The major priorities for technical assistance in Part C are to ensure compliance with state and federal requirements, to reinforce the content from the major training institutes, and to meet the local needs. The same things that influence training also influence the content of technical assistance.

For 619 providers, much of the technical assistance priorities are the same as for training. The main priority is responding to local requests around monitoring and meeting the state and federal requirements. Some of the training and technical assistance entities have very specific technical assistance priorities. For example, Desired Results Access Project provides technical assistance on the Desired Results Developmental Profile which is the accountability system used to measure the progress of preschool children with IEPs. On the other hand, SEECAP provides technical assistance very specifically to directors and coordinators of early childhood programs on leadership, organizational design, recommended practices, management skills, facilitation skills, and communication. The overall influences are similar to those of training, including state and federal requirements. The other major influence for technical assistance is the needs of the local programs.

Delivery

Training

For Part C providers and coordinators, the main method of delivering training is through the year-long institute series that includes six statewide two-day institutes. Additional special topic trainings are also held throughout the year, as well as a one-day symposium for regional center managers. Some local and regional trainings are also conducted on topics specific to the needs of individual early intervention communities.

For 619 providers, most training is delivered through large group conferences or workshops (single or multi-day) and regional group trainings. SEECAP delivers a three-day symposium and a two-day workshop each year. The symposium provides 14-26 concurrent sessions over the three days, while the workshop focuses on legislative updates and one specific topic related to the current priorities; the focus this year is transition. These rotate each year between northern and southern California in order to provide greater accessibility. Other trainings are delivered across the state in different areas in order to provide everyone with the same information. There are also a few online trainings that are available. CPIN has training modules on their website and currently one of the SELPAs is trying out an online training on autism. There has also been some online training on the Desired Results Developmental Profile. Other trainings may be delivered by organizations that are not part of the contracted providers of training, such as trainings offered by the Association of California School Administrators or the Family Focus Center. The interviewees saw the strength of the training delivery as the high quality of the trainings. The challenge that was mentioned was getting people to the locations for training due to the size of the state and the difficulty funding substitutes.

Technical Assistance

The main methods for delivering technical assistance are on-site and phone consultations. Other methods include e-mail or written consultation, local training activities, and demonstration sites. SEEDS is the primary provider of technical assistance for 619 providers. They often provide on-site technical assistance and are responsible for the demonstration sites that are available for other programs to visit and learn from. Desired Results Access Project has a help line available for assistance on the data system for IEPs. WestEd is the primary provider of technical assistance for Part C programs and their technical assistance can include facilitation of group planning, program assessment and recommendations, referrals, coordination of visits to demonstration sites, or identification of experts or materials for use.

The interviewees find that the challenge the state faces in delivering technical assistance is the budget cuts that are occurring across the state. This is impeding the amount of on-site technical assistance that can be delivered, yet people are requesting it more due to the lack of funding within programs to send their staff to trainings. There has been some increased use of technology in the past few years and the interviewees feel that this will continue as a way to overcome these challenges.

Collaboration

Training and Technical Assistance

California has some formal collaborations that occur as well as collaborations that occur around a specific need or training event. WestEd runs a group called TTAC (Training and Technical Assistance

Coordinators) that is made up of representatives from the various training and technical assistance agencies that meet regularly to discuss what they are doing. Also, California has an on-line calendar where all agencies log their training events. This leads to less duplication and the ability to coordinate and attend trainings by various agencies. There is also an interagency agreement between the SELPAs and the regional centers for developmental disabilities to collaborate to remove barriers between the two agencies including their training and technical assistance activities. There is also a partnership between the Department of Education and the Department of Developmental Services which is currently focused on training around transition. They also work together sometimes to provide joint phone and on-site consultation to local agencies. The Department of Education also works with Head Start and the Child Development Division.

A recent collaboration around a specific need has occurred around CAPTA. A summit was held with people from key agencies (Mental Health, Child Welfare, Part C) at both the state and county level to inform them about CAPTA. Then these same people participated in work sessions to come up with local plans for implementing CAPTA across the systems. This involved collaborative planning and sharing of resources in order to deliver the needed information.

The interviewees felt that collaboration has improved over the years, but there is still some room for improvement. One interviewee felt that successful collaboration hinges on the people in the system. The interviewee said, "CA's collaboration success depends on the people. If good relationships are established, it is much easier to collaborate, but if relationships are weak or strained in any ways, collaboration breaks down." The challenges that were mentioned were time and the way that the training and technical assistance system is organized.

Staffing

Training and Technical Assistance

The main staff for the training and technical assistance system for Part C are those at the Department of Developmental Services and WestEd. The staff at the Department of Developmental Services includes the CSPD (Comprehensive System of Professional Development) supervisor and the CSPD coordinator who are responsible for all CSPD activities and monitor the contract with WestEd; two staff who are available to provide presentations and technical assistance as needed related to their specific areas of expertise; and five liaisons and a Local Support Supervisor who are available for technical assistance to the regional centers. The staff at WestEd includes a director, coordinator, and 13 additional people who implement training and technical assistance activities. The staff at WestEd and DDS has a wide range of qualifications. There are people with degrees ranging from Bachelor's to Ph.D.; people with multiple years of experience in the field of early intervention or personnel development; and parents of children with disabilities.

The main staff for the training and technical assistance system for 619 are personnel at the Department of Education, SEEDS, SEECAP, and Desired Results Access Project. The Department of Education has two main people who are responsible for coordinating the training and technical assistance system and overseeing the contracts. SEECAP has three full-time staff and some other staff available for training and technical assistance. SEEDS has six full-time staff and a pool of consultants. Desired Results Access Project has six full-time staff and several part-time people. Most of the staff available for the training and technical assistance system have at least a Master's degree and are viewed by the interviewees as being very highly qualified and professional.

Data Collection

Training and Technical Assistance

All individual training events for the Part C training and technical assistance system are entered into a database with basic demographic information about the training. Participants also fill out an evaluation form that includes items on the quality of the presenter, if the learning objectives were met, the overall training format, future training needs, and content that was particularly useful or irrelevant. Participants who received scholarship funds to participate are required to report on key points that they will share with their colleagues. All of the data is summarized and the reports are shared between DDS, WestEd, and the presenters. This information is used to influence content, improve the way training is delivered, and influence the priorities for next year.

Each of the programs contracted by the Department of Education for providing training and technical assistance (SEEDS, SEECAP, Desired Results Access Project, and CPIN) collects evaluations for each training event and reports the information back to the Department of Education and to the local sponsor if applicable. For each training event, participants fill out an evaluation form that includes items on the quality of the presenter, the quality of the information, how well the information was delivered, if the information was useful and timely, and future topics or needs. This information is used internally to evaluate progress and improve trainings and by the state for writing annual reports and working with programs on needed improvements. Some of the programs also occasionally do some follow-up to assess outcomes or impact. SEECAP sometimes gives participants an outcomes survey with questions such as, "What was your level of expertise before the training and now after the training" and "What information are you using everyday and what are you not." Also, CPIN does an assessment to evaluate how well people picked up the information that was presented. Desired Results Access Project has done some follow-up phone interviews to assess training impact. All of these projects also provide monthly reports to the Department of Education on the technical assistance that they have provided. They each have different systems, but it typically involves recording what technical assistance is done and information on whether the issue or concern was resolved. The biggest challenge to data collection that was mentioned was time and

budget constraints.

Funding

Training and Technical Assistance

Funding for training and technical assistance comes from federal Part C and 619 money. The interviewees agree that the funding has remained fairly consistent over time. The funding is distributed through contracts by the Department of Developmental Services and the Department of Education to WestEd, SEECAP, SEEDS, CPIN, and Desired Results Access Project. The Department of Developmental Services also provides funding to support local training and technical assistance through the Early Start Personnel Development Fund. The interviewees saw the strength of the system as being able to do a lot with the amount of funding they have and that the funding has been fairly stable. The challenge that was mentioned was that there is never enough money to do all of the training and technical assistance that is needed.

Conclusion

This paper has provided a summary of the training and technical assistance system in California using the information provided from a variety of sources within the state. Each of the interviewees provided a different perspective on the system, but the overall information provided gave a clear picture of the training and technical assistance system in the state. Something that should be highlighted is the way that California has found to deal with the challenges of being a very large state with areas of diverse needs. First, the SELPAs and the Part C regional centers have access to funding to meet their own training and technical assistance needs. Also, the Department of Education and the Department of Developmental Services have contracted with a number of different programs so that there are a variety of ways to access the needed training and technical assistance. One of the final things discussed in the interview was thoughts on the future of the training and technical assistance system. The interviewees saw a number of things occurring in the next three years. A few interviewees mentioned the need to pay close attention to how training and technical assistance money is being used with the budget cuts that are occurring across the state. Other interviewees saw in the future a more aggressive attempt at collaboration through working together to provide trainings and more shared funding. Finally, an interviewee mentioned the increased use of technology to deliver training and technical assistance.

To conclude this summary on California's training and technical assistance system, here are some final thoughts from a few of the interviewees.

> *I think the best thing is a shared commitment to positively impact the field…be creative with changes and to be willing to build on past successes and lessons learned.*

I think the strength of our system is that we have funding, in particular, three different projects but that these projects collaborate with each other and they have the same methods in terms of carrying out the work of the division...and I think it helps that they do training and technical assistance both...because they have the opportunity to be in big groups doing training and then also to have those relationships skills and willing to do individual TA. So I think that has built really fine relationships across the state...And I think that's important especially when you're very large...

Summary of the Training and Technical Assistance System in Kansas

Interviews were conducted with various people involved in the training and technical assistance system in Kansas in order to get an in-depth picture of what the system looks like. Six separate interviews were conducted with a total of seven people; the Part C Coordinator, the Infant-Toddler Technical Assistance Coordinator with Kansas In-Service Training System (KITS), the KITS Project Coordinator, a parent of a child with disabilities who is also holds a position with the Parent-to-Parent Network, the president of the Interagency Coordinating Council (ICC), the director of KITS and the Kansas UCEDD (University Center for Excellence in Developmental Disabilities), and a Technical Assistance Specialist from KITS who is also the former 619 Coordinator. The interviews were structured around seven main topic areas, followed at the end by a section asking for overall reflections or recommendations. The seven topic areas were historical perspective and overview, content, delivery, collaboration, staffing, data collection, and funding. Respondents were asked to talk about each of these topics in regard to both the training and the technical assistance parts of the system. The following is a summary of the information provided by all seven interviewees about the training and technical assistance system in Kansas.

Overview

In Kansas, the Department of Health and Environment (KDHE) is the lead agency for Part C and the Department of Education (KSDE) is the lead agency for Section 619. Most of the training and technical assistance is provided through the Kansas In-service Training System (KITS). Planning for trainings each year is collaboratively done with KITS, KDHE, and KSDE, thus many of the trainings are inclusive of birth-five providers. This emphasis on birth-five has been around since the beginning of the system because the people in Kansas decided it was important for serving children especially during the transition period and maximizing the use of personnel in the field. KDHE also has contracts with a few other agencies who provide training and technical assistance for Part C providers; they are the Assistive Technology Project, the KU Medical Center (specifically around infant/toddler occupational therapy), and Families Together. Other entities that provide training and technical assistance are the Kansas Instructional Resource Center for the Visually Impaired (KIRC), the Kansas Instructional Support Network (KISN), and the Inclusive Network of Kansas: Field-Based Technical Assistance and Professional Development. Families Together also hosts two conferences each year in which professionals are invited to attend.

A number of goals were mentioned for the training and technical assistance system, but the overarching goal that was mentioned was building the capacity of individuals and organizations to meet the needs of children and families. Other goals that were mentioned are to support evidence-based practice, inclusion, and family-centeredness; sustain collaboration between state agencies, institutes of higher education, and other

organizations in early childhood; include families; develop and disseminate materials; and provide learning opportunities in multiple formats and using adult learning principles. The focus of KITS was described as having four main components; establishing collaboration and linkages, providing information services to stakeholders, evidence-based trainings, and specific technical assistance.

<div align="center">History and Influences</div>

In the 1970s most of the programs for children with disabilities were provided through Developmental Disability (DD) Centers. At this time, the people providing services did not have any training or background in special education, so the state began focusing some funds to bring expertise to these programs. The state began providing professional development opportunities with collaboration from various local and state agencies, because the state recognized that children and their families have a variety of needs including education, health, safety, social, and many others. The recognition of the importance of collaboration across agencies has continued today. One interviewee said, "We really value the fact that professional development is a continuing process; it's not a discrete activity and is everybody's job basically."

In 1991, Kansas received a federal grant through the University of Kansas that provided money for training. They partnered with 619 to provide birth-five trainings across the state. After that initial grant ended in 1994, the Kansas State Department of Education (KSDE) took over the project and the Kansas In-service Training System (KITS) was created to run training and technical assistance for early childhood. Many of the trainings were jointly done for Section 619 and Part C personnel working with children ages birth-five. KSDE wanted to keep both Part C and Section 619 linked in the system even though they had two separate lead agencies and Part C was not contributing any funds. After about five years, KDHE began contributing funds to KITS, which gave KITS the ability to provide Part C technical assistance and to do some training more specific to Part C providers. KDHE also has contracts with other agencies as mentioned above. Those began in 1993 with the contract to Families Together. The contract with the Assistive Technology Project began in 1994, followed by the contract with the KU Medical Center in 2001.

In the beginning, the major emphasis was on getting school districts ready to serve young children with disabilities and provide developmentally appropriate and inclusive services as well as provide for ongoing certification and licensure. Now training and technical assistance is very focused on meeting the OSEP (Office of Special Education Programs) requirements.

One of the major influences that was mentioned is the long history of people in the state who have worked together for many years and recognized the need for a cohesive training and technical assistance system. Other influences are the changes in federal legislation, the monitoring and compliance efforts, and the

growth of other systems and early childhood programs which provide new opportunities for training and technical assistance.

Content

Training

Many of the training priorities are related to early childhood outcomes and the indicators on the State Performance Plan. These include least restrictive environments, writing appropriate IEPs and IFSPs, and measuring and reporting early childhood outcomes. Other priorities are autism, evidence-based practices, the Kansas Early Learning Guidelines, and assessment tools. The Department of Education has also developed some broad overarching priorities for training and technical assistance; literacy and numeracy, universally designed instruction, response to intervention, instructional resources and professional development for early childhood and low-incidence populations, positive behavioral interventions and supports, recruitment and retention of special education teachers and related service providers, peer to peer assistance networks, data management, student information systems and assessment and progress monitoring systems.

Many of the priorities are based on state and federal monitoring and compliance. Data on the OSEP indicators is used to determine areas of need for training. It was also stressed by the interviewees that training was always influenced by research and evidence-based practice. Priorities are also determined through feedback from state agencies, local agencies or providers, and responses to previous trainings. Other state documents have some influence on training as well such as the State Board of Education's goals, the Kansas Multiple System of Tiered Supports, and the State Improvement Grant.   There is also a state-wide needs assessment in progress to determine the differences in content in rural areas of Kansas as opposed to in more metropolitan areas of Kansas. Other influences including that of families may come through the state or local Interagency Coordinating Councils (ICC).

The biggest strength that was mentioned was the close relationship with the state agencies and how this relates to being able to address the needs of the state regarding training very quickly. The challenge that was mentioned is the difficulty in keeping on top of everyone's needs as well as knowing when to revisit particular topics.

Technical Assistance

Technical assistance content is similar to training content but individualized and based on the local needs of a program. The content is often driven by the larger state trainings that have occurred or the need for assistance in meeting the state or federal requirements; some typical priorities are least restrictive environment, early childhood outcomes, and transitions. Technical assistance requests typically occur because the district has

self-identified their need for improvement on performance indicators or the Department of Education has told them they need to get technical assistance. For Part C, each of the 36 infant/toddler networks provide an annual report to the state which includes an improvement plan that identifies their training and technical assistance needs based on monitoring data.

The strength of the training content that was mentioned is that it is often self-selected by the district or program which leads to a higher commitment level. The challenges that were mentioned include that the state is beginning to be more influential in determining who needs technical assistance which may lessen the commitment level and that there is a need to be more preventative instead of waiting until the data says that there is a problem.

Delivery

Training

Kansas has a variety of methods for delivering training, but the primary method is large training events such as workshops and conferences. KITS is the main provider of the large trainings, but there are various other agencies such as Early Childhood Mental Health, Head Start, and Families Together who provide training either in collaboration or separately from KITS. Training opportunities can also be offered locally, regionally, and statewide. For example, there is a four-day Summer Institute each year that brings in national experts as well as having smaller group break-out sessions. Also, the Department of Education sponsors a leadership conference and a law conference each year.

The use of technology for trainings has increased in the recent years and Kansas has used a variety of these methods. There are trainings available online as well as information in the form of activities, manuals, and videos. They have used Interactive Television (ITV), podcasts, and webinars. Kansas has also used the train-the-trainer method to deliver various trainings in a way that maximizes the limited resources that are available. This was done specifically for training on the AEPS (Assessment, Evaluation, and Programming System). They also encourage individuals to provide trainings to their own staff by posting all of the information from face-to-face trainings (PowerPoint, research, readings, etc.) on the web.

The strengths of training delivery that were mentioned were that the trainings are provided in multiple formats using adult learning principles, that training is based on evidence-based practices, and that they often use identified experts on given topics for the trainings. The interviewees said that getting training to the more rural areas of the state and using technology effectively were some of the challenges.

Technical Assistance

The main methods for delivering technical assistance are through phone, e-mail, and on-site consultation. KITS provides the majority of technical assistance around the state through what they call long- or short-term consultation (by phone or e-mail contact) or through technical assistance plans. The technical assistance plans are developed collaboratively on-site with individual programs or districts and include goals, timelines, methods for meeting the goals, and methods for evaluation. Implementation and follow-up is mostly done on-site, but occasionally through phone or e-mail. There are other entities that provide very specific technical assistance often around one specific child. For example, the Kansas Field-Based Technical Assistance and Professional Development Network focuses on training personnel to work with populations of children with severe, low-incidence disabilities throughout Kansas. An individual or group can make a request for technical assistance for a child with a low-incidence disability and they will send a field-based consultant out who will work with everyone involved with that child, including the family for often extended periods of time.

Recently, there have been cross visitation opportunities in which programs who are doing things well can request to have other programs directed to them for information. Also, KITS provides a variety of documents and information on its website that anyone can access.

A number of strengths about technical assistance delivery were mentioned. First, the use of the technical assistance plans was seen as a big strength because of the involvement and commitment from the programs and the flexibility of the plans to be specific to the identified needs of the program. Also, interviewees said that the technical assistance system is strong and available and people know where to go to get the help that they need. The challenge that was mentioned is not always having the staff or funding to do all of the technical assistance that may be needed.

Collaboration

Training

Collaboration occurs at many different levels, across many different entities involved in early childhood and is both formal and informal. KITS, as the major entity for training and technical assistance, takes the lead on a number of collaborations For example, KITS works very closely with KSDE and KDHE to determine the needs for training and technical assistance. There is also some informal collaboration between KITS and various entities such as Head Start Collaboration Council, Families Together, Parents as Teachers Program, 4-year-old At-Risk program, Kansas Childcare Training Opportunities, and the Childcare Resource and Referral program. These collaborations are typically around specific events. The entire early childhood field worked very closely to develop the Kansas Early Learning Document. Then, KITS developed the core training that would be used for

the entire early childhood field and used collaborative partners to present the information. KITS also has regular meetings with KDHE staff and the Part C networks throughout the year. Finally, KITS has really brought all of the training that occurs in the state together, by creating a training calendar that lists any training event across all agencies that relates to early childhood.

There are also a number of formal committees, councils, and initiatives that are collaborative across a number of agencies. For example, The Early Childhood Comprehensive System brings in representatives from many of the early childhood agencies to plan how they want things to be for kids in Kansas. There is also the Early Childhood Higher-Education Options and the Higher Education Coordinating Council which both bring in representatives from universities, as well as representatives from other state and local agencies to advise and assist on issues related to children birth to five. There is also the Expanding Opportunities Initiative with brings in representation from all the major training groups to work on inclusion.

Other collaborations may occur for specific trainings such as those that occur with KDHE and other entities. For example, they collaborate with hospital NICUs (Neonatal Intensive Care Units) for training on babies born early and medically fragile children. They have also collaborated with the Newborn Hearing Screening Program and the Kansas School for the Blind for training specifically related to those topics. These types of collaborations often include sharing of staff, money, and other resources. Finally, there are some collaborations that occur more at the local level. One example is the Coordinator Community of Practice that brings together the 36 Part C network coordinators for meetings to network and support each other.

Challenges to collaboration that were mentioned include the different systems with different goals and ideas on how to approach training and the time and resources it often takes to collaborate. Even so, many of the interviewees saw collaboration as very important in the state, especially in helping the training dollars go further. One interviewee said, "...part of it is that we're geographically a big state, population wise not so big. But it's just been advantageous for, at the state level, at the local level, programs to talk to and work together. It just helps us think in broader terms. It helps us make our dollars go further."

Technical Assistance

Many of the same entities collaborate for technical assistance, but it is not to the same extent as for trainings. Technical assistance is much more individualized and the different entities that deliver technical assistance may do so differently, so collaboration is more difficult. There are still many collaborations that occur at a more local level for technical assistance and most of these collaborations are informal in nature. For example, leads from the early childhood programs meet frequently to discuss what the needs are in their programs to get the technical assistance that is needed. Also, KDHE and KITS have a collaborative effort to provide technical assistance to Occupational therapists, parents, networks, and other non-OT personnel through

the contract through KU Medical Center Occupational Therapy Department. There is also a very informal network of collaboration that occurs by the relationships that people in the various agencies have with each other. They are comfortable calling each other for help and they know what each other provides, so they use that information to help parents and professionals to get the information that they need. The interviewees said that Kansas is moving towards more collaborative technical assistance, but this can be challenging due to the different goals and methods for delivering technical assistance as well as the time collaboration can take.

Staffing

Training & Technical Assistance

The main staff for training and technical assistance are from KITS as it is the dedicated agency for training and technical assistance. KITS employs seven full-time people who have varying degrees of responsibility between training and technical assistance. All the staff have advanced degrees and experience; and improve their skills and knowledge by attending conferences and accessing books and other resources. The strength that was mentioned was that all of the staff have a variety of backgrounds, but similar beliefs so they work well together as a team. The biggest challenge that was mentioned was that these people have a lot of responsibilities.

There are other people that contribute to the training and technical assistance system through the various other agencies that may provide some training and technical assistance and the staff at the state who are very much part of the decision-making process. At a state level, there are key staff who participate in the design and delivery of training and technical assistance as part of their job. These people have worked together in the system for a long time, have advanced degrees, and have varied backgrounds.

Data Collection

Training

Data collection for individual training events is typically done by the entity responsible for the event, which most often is KITS. An evaluation form is collected from participants that includes if they felt the objectives for the training were met, their satisfaction with the training, how they can use the information in their jobs, areas for improvement, and future needs or interests. Demographic information from the trainings such as the number of participants and the hours of training is also recorded in a database. This information is used to improve the current trainings and plan for future trainings. This information is also summarized and reported to the state and federal governments.

There is also the state monitoring data related to the state and federal indicators that is available to inform training and technical assistance. This data provides a picture of where there are problems in the state, which may lead to various trainings. The data can also be useful in looking at whether or not trainings on a particular topic had any influence on practice. It can also lead to targeted technical assistance for a particular district or program who may not be meeting particular requirements.

The state has also used an independent evaluator for the University of Kansas to take a look at all of the information that various organizations submit on the training and technical assistance that they have provided. The evaluator looks at the effectiveness of the strategies and activities that are being used.

The strength that was mentioned is that the data is used to influence trainings. The interviewees saw the challenge as making sure that the data being collected is useful and that it takes time to see the changes in practice reflected in the data.

Technical Assistance

The technical assistance plans that are used to deliver technical assistance include individualized evaluations and data collection in order to look at whether the goals on the plan were met. These plans are given to the state to illustrate the kinds of technical assistance that have been done. Data on the number of participants, hours of technical assistance, and topics is also collected. This information can be used to identify statewide areas of need that may influence training topics. It can also be compared to the monitoring data to see if areas where technical assistance was provided were the same areas in which the monitoring data showed improvements.

The interviewees said that the strength was that there is data being collected and that it is being used to inform state reports and future training and technical assistance. The challenge that was mentioned is that there is not always enough time, staff or resources to collect all of the data that could be useful.

Funding

Training & Technical Assistance

Funding for training and technical assistance comes from both state and federal Part C and 619 money. The money is distributed to KITS and a few other programs that provide training and technical assistance through contracts from the Department of Education and the Department of Health and Environment. Other funding is available from the State Improvement Grant, which often provides funding to KITS around a very specific event or initiative. Other agencies (Ex. Head Start) may share costs for a particular collaborative training.

The interviewees agreed that the strength of funding is that it has been stable over time, but the challenge is that there is never enough to do everything that is needed.

Conclusion

This paper has provided a summary of the training and technical assistance system in Kansas using the information provided from a variety of sources within the state. Each of the interviewees provided a different perspective on the system and had some varying opinions. Many of the interviewees thought that their system of collaboration was very strong. A few of the interviewees said that they could work towards more collaboration. These interviewees thought that there was a lot of coordination going on right now with different entities doing their own things, but allowing other entities to be a part of it. One interviewee said, "We work at it. We do a lot of coordination. I think we are getting closer to real collaboration." Another of the interviewees thought that the key to better collaboration in the state was really prioritizing and focusing on the activities that can best be accomplished through collaboration.

Even though there were differences of opinions, the overall information provided in the interviews was very similar and gave a clear picture of the training and technical assistance system in the state. One of the final things discussed in the interview was thoughts on the future of the training and technical assistance system. All of the interviewees said that the system would continue on its current path and continue to improve. One of the things that many of the interviewees saw for the future was a more comprehensive training and technical assistance system that includes both early childhood special education and early childhood education. Other things that were mentioned were the increased use of data to influence the system and better use of technology to overcome the issues of distance and funding.

To conclude this summary on Kansas's training and technical assistance system, here are some final thoughts from a few of the interviewees.

> *By including them and continuing to include the administration from the Part C programs in our conversations, it finally became clear to KDHE that they could utilize us [KITS] in the same manner as KSDE. Having that fore thought from the very beginning and always keeping it the 0 to 5 framework made it very easy for us to include the Part C part of that program. Since the beginning our training and technical assistance has helped us really promote training as a 0 to 5 linked program.*

> *I think our technical assistance is probably one of our shining stars in all this. While we have training that we have to do – where we see our biggest change is around technical assistance and that takes a lot of time and staff.*

The investment is there, from a state level and I think the commitment is there from a state level.   We just know it's one of the best methods for change and the kind of system we put together is really flexible and so as the context changes, as needs change, they can change very quickly with it.

Summary of the Training and Technical Assistance System in Illinois

An interview was conducted with the state 619 coordinator to get an in-depth picture of the training and technical assistance system for 619 providers in the state of Illinois. The interview was structured around seven main topic areas, followed at the end by a section asking for overall reflections or recommendations. The seven topic areas were historical perspective and overview, content, delivery, collaboration, staffing, data collection, and funding. The interviewee was asked to talk about each of these topics in regard to both the training and the technical assistance parts of the system. The following is a summary of the information provided by the 619 coordinator about the training and technical assistance system in Illinois.

Overview

The training and technical assistance entity for 619 in Illinois is called STARNET (Support and Technical Assistance Regionally). The state is divided into six regions of similar population size and training and technical assistance is provided within the regions. There are five different entities that receive the funding to implement training and technical assistance in the six regions; one entity (Western Illinois University) is responsible for two regions. Each region has a resource library, resource specialists, and parent resource specialists. STARNET's priority is to serve school districts, but also provides training and technical assistance to Head Start, child care, and community programs. Trainings are often open to any early childhood professional and technical assistance can be provided to any program around a specific child with disabilities in that program.

The overarching goal of STARNET is to provide opportunities for personal and professional growth for parents and professionals working with young children with disabilities. The STARNET mission statement includes the following statements.

> The STARNET system serves young children, families, and communities in Illinois working to develop more effective partnerships and linkages among families, professionals, and systems. STARNET provides training and technical assistance to early childhood special education preschool staff and families of young children. The mission of STARNET is to promote and support a comprehensive, family-centered, consumer driven technical assistance system for all young children, families, and communities. STARNET promotes excellence, provides leadership, and offers rich opportunities for personal and professional growth and systems development in collaboration with families, schools, and other community stakeholders.

History and Influences

STARNET began in 1989 and is much the same now as it was then. The major changes that have occurred over the years have been the different focuses of training and technical assistance. There is currently

a big focus on meeting the indicators of the State Performance Plan (transition, least restrictive environment, and child outcomes). Also there has been increased focus on current research and evidence-based practices. Another change in the system has been the movement towards more technical assistance, mentoring, and coaching as opposed to just training events. The biggest influence on the system has been the federal requirements.

<div align="center">Content</div>

Training and Technical Assistance

The priorities for training and technical assistance are currently related to the State Performance Plan and meeting those federal requirements; specifically child outcomes, transition, and least restrictive environments. Other priorities include behavior support, inclusion, learning environments, and evidence-based practices.

The training and technical assistance priorities are determined both regionally and at the state level. Each region has an advisory committee with representatives from all early childhood sectors (school districts, Head Start, child care, higher education, etc) that meets regularly to discuss what is happening in their programs and their training and technical assistance needs. Each regional committee submits a grant to the state each year with the goals and training topics for their region. State level needs based on meeting requirements and changes in regulations are also influential in determining content. Another influence on training content comes from feedback that participants provide through their evaluations of trainings.

The interviewee said that the strength of the content was that it is responsive to what is going on in the districts. The challenge that was mentioned was that there is not enough money to cover all of the needed training topics.

<div align="center">Delivery</div>

Training

The primary method of training delivery is workshops that are delivered either statewide or regionally. For example, every other year there is an Early Childhood Conference that is for all early childhood personnel. They have also done a large, statewide event on outcomes. Regions can do their own trainings based on their needs or interests. For instance, one region has done a training on learning environments. Training has changed over the last few years in that there has been more follow-up to work towards implementation. It is often a second workshop after some time has passed where people can come back together and discuss how implementation has been going since the first workshop.

The challenge that was mentioned is making sure that all of the districts are getting what they need. All of the districts do not always participate in the statewide trainings and so it is not always easy to keep up with what is going on in each district. The data from the State Performance Plan indicators is becoming the tool for identifying districts that are having problems and making sure they are getting what they need.

Technical Assistance

Technical assistance is primarily delivered through phone or e-mail on a requested basis. The resource specialists may also go out and work individually with districts, teachers, or other service personnel if requested. The interviewee saw the strength of the technical assistance delivery as having staff that are consistent and well-known to the districts. The challenge that was mentioned was that there is not enough staff or resources to provide the technical assistance that is needed.

Collaboration

Training and Technical Assistance

Collaboration occurs for both regional and statewide events. At the state level there is the Early Childhood Conference that happens every other year. This event is hosted by STARNET with involvement from Head Start, child care, early intervention, the Department of Child and Family Service, and others. This event is for anyone involved with early childhood. Also, each region consistently works with other entities for events in their region. They may collaborate for the same event every year or collaboration may occur based on needs and can include sharing of funding, resources, and staff. For example, the regions work with the Preschool for All training and technical assistance system to provide one or two collaborative trainings each year. They typically divide up the funding, tasks, resources, and present the training using people from both systems. Another collaboration that was already mentioned is the regional advisory committee that each region uses to talk about training and the needs of the various programs in the region. Collaboration for technical assistance is similar to that of training, but does not occur nearly as often.

The interviewee thought that collaboration was fairly successful in the state due to people knowing each other, being very willing to collaborate, and the positive reputation that STARNET has in the state. The challenge that was mentioned was building relationships with entities that have high staff turnover.

Staffing

Training and Technical Assistance

The main staff for the training and technical assistance system are the people with STARNET and the 619 coordinator in the state. Each of the six regions has about four full-time people on staff. There are two or

three resource specialists, one of whom is the project leader, and a parent resource specialist. The project leader is responsible for running the grant at the regional level. The resource specialists provide technical assistance through calls, e-mail and on-site consultation and both organize and deliver trainings. The parent resource specialists organize and deliver trainings for parents and work with the regional parent network. Each region also has some support staff and some part-time staff. There are about 25 total people across the state working in the training and technical assistance system, including the 619 coordinator.

The main qualification for the resource specialists is that they have a degree in early childhood special education. For the parent resource specialists, it is that they are a parent of a child with disabilities. All of the regions come together twice each year to improve their skills and knowledge as trainers. There is a one-day meeting in the fall where everyone comes together to talk about what is going on in their regions and to learn from each other. This meeting also includes updates and information from the state. In the spring, there is a two and a half day meeting with trainers brought in to provide information on various topics related to training and technical assistance such as coaching, facilitation, and working with adult learners.

The interviewee saw the strength of the staff as having good backgrounds and that most have been in their positions for a while. The challenge that was mentioned was having enough funding to be able to meet all of the needs. For example, the interviewee said it would be very helpful to have one more staff person in each region.

Data Collection

Training and Technical Assistance

Each training event includes an evaluation form that participants are asked to fill out. This is an approved evaluation form that is part of the requirement for STARNET being a provider of continuing professional development units. The regions collect the evaluations from their own events and the forms are aggregated and analyzed by two evaluators. They provide reports to the state and regional offices at least yearly based on these forms. The regions or the state may look at individual training events to see if something needs changed. They may use the yearly report to see what other trainings people are asking for to help plan for next year.

Regions have done some follow-up mailings to see if the training information is being used in practice. The regions will contact ten percent of the participants in the training after three months and ask them if they've used the information, how they have used it, and if it changed their practice. This is not done for every training and the interviewee mentioned that they were looking towards doing more follow-up in the future to look at outcomes of training on behavior change and the experience that children are receiving.

For technical assistance, programs may be asked to fill out an evaluation form when consultants make visits. They may also do follow-up with the program after three months to see if the technical assistance has made any difference in practice. The data is collected by the regions and analyzed by the same evaluators as for training.

Funding

Training and Technical Assistance

The funding for STARNET comes from the federal 619 money. The money is given to each of the regions and each region receives the same amount of money. Other funding may come from other entities when collaborating to provide a specific training event. The entire special education system in the state also has a federal grant called the Scaling Up Grant which provides funding to move towards a more coaching and mentoring model for training and technical assistance.

The interviewee reported that there has been consistent funding for many years, but that it has not increased for many years. The challenge is that there is not enough funding to cover much more than the staff salaries, thus they are cutting down on the number of trainings they are doing and looking towards more local presenters, rather than big names. They are also looking at using more coaching and mentoring with districts and groups of districts so that less money would be spent on big training events.

Conclusion

This paper has provided a summary of the training and technical assistance system in Illinois. Something that should be highlighted is the regionalized system that is used. The interviewee saw this as a big strength in training and technical assistance being accessible to everyone in the state. The interviewee also mentioned the importance of having parents of children with disabilities on staff as this really helps them to focus on families and how the training and technical assistance can impact the services that children and families receive. One of the final things discussed in the interview was thoughts on the future of the training and technical assistance system. The interviewee saw the training and technical assistance system as continuing in much the same way as it is now with continued emphasis on family involvement and increased emphasis on coaching and mentoring as ways of providing professional development.

To conclude this summary on the training and technical assistance system in Illinois, here is a final thought from the interviewee.

I think it is really important to know who in your state is right on the cutting edge of everything, willing to work with you, willing to take a statewide perspective instead of always looking at their own district...I

mean I know a lot of people in Illinois that I can call and just say hey, I'm starting up an Outcomes committee because we've got to do this thing for the federal government...I think it is always good to sort of try to identify those people and establish relationships so that if you need that input, that they are there.

Summary of the Early Intervention Training and Technical Assistance System in Ohio

An interview was conducted with the state Part C coordinator, along with the supervisor for the Help Me Grow Project, and another Ohio State Part C associate to get an in-depth picture of the training and technical assistance system for Early Intervention providers in the state of Ohio. The interview was structured around seven main topic areas, followed at the end by a section asking for overall reflections or recommendations. The seven topic areas were historical perspective and overview, content, delivery, collaboration, staffing, data collection, and funding. The interviewees were asked to talk about each of these topics in regards to both the training and the technical assistance parts of the system. The following is a summary of the information provided by the three Ohio Part C affiliates about the training and technical assistance system in Ohio.

Overview

The Ohio Department of Health, Bureau of Early Intervention Services (BEIS) is the lead agency for Part C. They administer the Help Me Grow program, Ohio's early intervention system. The majority of early intervention providers in the state come from the Department of Health or from the Ohio Department of Mental Retardation and Developmental Disabilities (ODMRDD). Help Me Grow also provides training and technical assistance across the state. Training in the state is closely coordinated with the credentialing system. Early intervention service coordinators and their clinical supervisors take part in this credentialing system. When one of these people is hired (after meeting educational criteria), they must complete certain training within the first year in order to be credentialed. Then every two years after that, the professional must satisfy the continuing education requirements to renew their credential. Technical assistance in Ohio is primarily focused on getting all of the 88 counties into compliance with state and federal monitoring. This is part of their compliance agreement with OSEP. Consultants are also available to provide technical assistance not necessarily related to compliance.

Training has been going on in Ohio for quite some time, but there have been a number of changes in the last few years. The current credentialing system was just added in the last two years as well as the big push to provide more web-based training. For technical assistance, the monitoring process has changed in the last two years. It used to be that every county was monitored over a two year cycle. Now monitoring and technical assistance is more focused on the counties with the greatest need based on the compliance data.

The overall goal of training in Ohio is to provide early intervention personnel with the necessary knowledge, resources and support to provide appropriate services to children and families. The training system also has some current specific goals to provide more trainings that are web-based and to create an entirely paperless system for training registration and credentialing. For technical assistance, the overall goal is to get all 88 counties in compliance with the state and federal requirements.

The major influence on the training and technical assistance system in the last few years has been the need to meet state and federal requirements. Also, the changing funding has influenced the focus on increasing the use of technology to deliver training. Other influences have come from the Personnel Development Committee.

Content

Training

Ohio has a number of state training priorities for Part C including autism, birth defects, identifying and responding to domestic violence, evaluation and assessment, IFSP development, and transition. One of the primary influences on content is the needs of the county personnel which are identified through requests and feedback on training evaluation forms. Other influences include current research, policy changes, and state and national initiatives. Another big influence on training is the Ohio Professional Development Network, which is an interagency group with representatives from state agencies, institutes of higher education, and other agencies involved with children and families that meets monthly to shape the training for professionals working with children birth to eight. The biggest challenge to training content that was mentioned was the need to prioritize the training content, because there is not enough resources to do all of the trainings that are needed or wanted.

Technical Assistance

Technical assistance right now is focused on compliance with federal indicators. It is individually based for each county depending on where they are out of compliance based on the monitoring data. The biggest challenge that was stated was that technical assistance content is solely focused on compliance even though there are other technical assistance needs.

Delivery

Training

Ohio's primary method for delivering training is through regional workshops that include lecture and small group activities. At the beginning of the fiscal year, a calendar of workshops is created to conduct the trainings in each region of the state. There are also two or three video conferences held each year. DVDs have also been created of trainings for individuals to use on their own if they cannot attend the trainings.

Trainings are also available through some other entities and there is a strong effort by the Ohio Professional Development Network to create a Registry where all the early childhood trainings can be found. Over the last few years there has been a small shift in how training is being delivered. First, more trainings are being offered online and the state is continuing to look at ways to increase the use of technology for training. Also, the state is doing more of their trainings using their own staff as opposed to paying for experts to come in and do the trainings. This is all in response to the challenge that the interviewees mentioned; there is not enough funding.

Technical Assistance

Technical assistance is primarily provided through on-site consultation and the creation of a corrective action plan. This often involves a team of people from the state including representatives from ODMRDD, Help Me Grow, and Family Information Network. Technical assistance is also provided largely over the phone and via email to individuals through the technical assistance consultants. Conference calls have been utilized to be able to bring more people together as well as to reduce the need to travel for on-site consultation. The main challenge with delivery that was mentioned is being able to reach all of the counties with the resources available. This has influenced the increased use of phone, e-mail, and conference calls.

Collaboration

Training

There are a number of collaborations that exist through a large network or for individual trainings. One of the large networks that was already mentioned is the Ohio Professional Development Network that includes representatives from various entities related to serving children birth to eight and their families. This network meets monthly to shape the training that is going on across the state. Collaboration also occurs at a more local level through a yearly meeting with the project directors from each of the 88 counties along with representatives from the Family and Children First Council and other early childhood state partners. There is also currently a collaboration with the North Central Regional Resource Center to develop an online training on transition. There are also joint trainings with the School Study Counsel, the Educational Service Center, and the Ohio Center for Deafblind Education on topics related to low incidence disabilities such as visual impairments, hearing impairments, and dual diagnoses. The strength of collaboration that was mentioned was that they know who their partners are and these people are regularly "at the table." The challenge that was mentioned was that there are often different points of view and managing the time needed for collaboration.

Technical Assistance

The main collaboration is through the team that provides the technical assistance. It includes representatives from ODMRDD, the Family and Children First Council, the Help Me Grow Project, and the Family Information Network.

Staffing

Training & Technical Assistance

At the Bureau of Early Intervention Services, there is a director of training and a team of five staff that deliver and evaluate training. The technical assistance staff at the Bureau includes a director and five consultants who are each assigned to a group of counties. These individuals have a variety of backgrounds and degrees and include social workers, nurses, and educators. They participate in a continuous improvement process in which they review evaluations in order to improve their training skills. They also attend classes on being a good trainer through the universities and have staff meetings that include efforts to improve their skills. As mentioned earlier, technical assistance is often delivered with the collaboration of state partners from the Family and Children First Council, Ohio Department of Mental Retardation and Developmental Disabilities (ODMRDD), and the Family Information Network. The interviewees saw the strength of the training and technical assistance staff as their diverse backgrounds. The challenged that was mentioned was that the staff is small.

Data Collection

Training

Each state run or state funded training includes an evaluation form which includes whether the learning objectives were met, suggestions for improvement, and the effectiveness of the trainer. Data is also collected on demographics, such as the topic of training and who was in attendance. The data is compiled and used to improve trainings and is also submitted to the continuing education committees.

Technical Assistance

Ohio does not currently have a formal way to evaluate their technical assistance. They often receive informal feedback from people who receive technical assistance and there is some collection of data on the number of corrective action plans that are done or the number of conference calls that occur.

Funding

Training & Technical Assistance

Most of the funding for training and technical assistance in Ohio comes from the federal Part C money. Other funding comes from other state agencies or state funding that includes money from Job and Family Services, Child Care Block grant, mental health, and the Children's Trust Fund. The amount of funding for both training and technical assistance in Ohio has dramatically decreased in the past 3-5 years, which the interviewees see as the biggest challenge.

Conclusion

This paper has provided a summary of the Ohio training and technical assistance system for Early Intervention providers. One thing that should be highlighted is that Ohio has continued to provide training and technical assistance even with the significant decrease in funding. This is due to the commitment by leaders in the state to find ways to supplement the loss of funding and also to be creative with the way that training and technical assistance can be delivered. One of the final things discussed in the interview was thoughts on the future of the training and technical assistance system. The interviewees agreed that there was going to be a move towards regionalization of training and technical assistance, as well as becoming more streamlined and efficient in offering a broader variety of trainings for professional development.

To conclude this summary from the state of Ohio, here is a final thought from one of the interviewees.

> *…we come from various disciplines so thereby we cover a lot of points of view that you won't find naturally in the Early Intervention system. We work a lot with social workers and nurses and people trained in the Early Childhood arena. So I think that is our biggest strength and that is why we rarely make a decision in isolation.*