

Vision Statement: *By 2015, Region 7 will have a clearly defined, highly developed, and well financed, professional development system that effectively garners respect and support for early education and school-age professions, reconnects early childhood and school-age professionals to their work, and increases advocacy efforts for the early childhood and school-age fields, resulting in better prepared and educated early childhood and school-age professionals and, through this, higher quality services for children and families.*

Five-Year Action Plan

Please Note:

- All strategies are inclusive of all early educators (including child care centers, family child care homes, public pre-k programs, children with exceptionalities, and Head Start programs) unless otherwise specified.
- Dates presented under the heading “Timeline” indicate the end of the Fiscal Year presented (June 30th), unless otherwise specified.
- The term “early educators” used throughout this plan is inclusive of all individuals (administrators, owners, teachers, etc.) who work with children ages 0-12. The Region 7 ECPD team felt it was important to include the term “school-age” along with early educators to emphasize the range of ages represented in this plan. Therefore the following term “early (and school-age) educators” is used throughout this plan.

Key Area	Goal	Strategy	Partners (Leads are indicated as first listing for each strategy)	Timeline	Estimated Cost Level (choose one per strategy)
Access	1) Early (and school-age) educators and students are well-informed about opportunities for higher education.	State: 1) Create an orientation packet that includes information regarding state-level financial supports, scholarships, and professional requirements.	Lead(s): NC Division of Child Development	2015	Low Cost
		Local: 2) Create local (regional and/or county) orientation packet (to supplement state packet when completed) including information regarding courses, workshops, financial supports, scholarships, professional requirements, and incentives for higher education.	Local: Local Child Care Resource and Referral Agencies Local Smart Start Partnerships	2013	Low Cost

	<p>2) Higher and continuing education will be affordable for early (and school-age) educators.</p>	<p>State:</p> <p>1) Create an ongoing mechanism (such as a state level information packet) for the distribution of information about financial aid resources to "support staff" (TA providers, Community College and University faculty, etc).</p> <p>2) Increase compensation and salary supplements.</p> <p>Local:</p> <p>3) Increase funding to ensure/secure the availability of low-cost continuing education coursework.</p>	<p>Lead(s):</p> <p>NC Division of Child Development NC Community College System University of North Carolina System</p> <p>NC Division of Child Development NC Child Care Resource and Referral Council NC Partnership for Children Child Care Facility Owners and Directors</p> <p>Local Child Care Resource and Referral Agencies Local Smart Start Partnerships</p>	<p>2015</p> <p>2015</p> <p>2015</p>	<p>Low Cost</p> <p>High Cost</p> <p>High Cost</p>
	<p>3) Increased access to and proficiency of the use of information technology by early (and school-age) educators.</p>	<p>State and Local:</p> <p>1) Increase funding opportunities for early (and school-age) educators to learn about information technology.</p> <p>Local:</p> <p>2) Inform early (and school-age) educators about access to current learning supports for information technology.</p> <p>3) Train early childhood and school-age professionals on the importance and use of information technology.</p>	<p>Lead(s):</p> <p>NC Division of Child Development NC Partnership for Children NC Child Care Resource and Referral Council NC Community College System</p> <p>Local Child Care Resource and Referral Agencies Local Smart Start Partnerships Local community colleges</p> <p>Local Child Care Resource and Referral Agencies Local Smart Start Partnerships Local community colleges</p>	<p>2014</p> <p>2014</p> <p>Currently happening/ Ongoing</p>	<p>High Cost</p> <p>Low Cost</p> <p>No Cost/Low Cost</p>

Continuing Education	1) Licensing credit-bearing workshops, CEUs, and community college coursework will be aligned with Infant-Toddler Foundations and Early Learning Standards for Preschoolers (Foundations).	<p>State:</p> <p>1) Require alignment of Infant-Toddler Foundations and Early Learning Standards for Preschoolers (Foundations) for approval of licensing credit-bearing workshops, CEUs, and community college coursework.</p> <p>Local:</p> <p>2) Increase availability of licensing credit-bearing workshops, CEUs and community college coursework that aligns with both the Infant-Toddler Foundations and Early Learning Standards for Preschoolers (Foundations).</p>	<p>Lead(s):</p> <p>NC Division of Child Development NC Community College System NC Institute for Child Development Professionals</p>	2015	Low Cost
			<p>Local Child Care Resource and Referral Agencies Local Smart Start Partnerships Local community colleges</p>	2015	Low Cost
	2) Consumption of continuing education will be shifted from contact hours to 10 hour CEU coursework.	<p>State:</p> <p>1) Create statewide requirements for individuals who teach CEUs.</p> <p>2) Create standardized statewide requirements for the development/content of CEUs.</p>	<p>NC Division of Child Development</p> <p>NC Division of Child Development NC Child Care Resource and Referral Council NC Partnership for Children NC Community College System</p>	2014	High Cost
				2014	High Cost
	3) The quality of workshops for licensing credit hours will be improved.	<p>State:</p> <p>1) Create statewide registry of approved trainers.</p> <p>2) Increase rigor in guidelines for approval of workshop content by DCD.</p> <p>3) Increase/require the use of standardized training modules and CEUs.</p>	<p>NC Child Care Resource and Referral Council NC Division of Child Development</p> <p>NC Division of Child Development</p> <p>NC Institute for Child Development Professionals NC Division of Child Development</p>	2015	High Cost
				2013	
				2013	

	4) The region will have a well-trained school-age workforce developed through increased availability of workshops, CEUs and coursework for school-age providers.	<p>State and Local:</p> <p>1) Promote and offer school-age certificate and associate degree at all North Carolina Community Colleges.</p> <p>Local:</p> <p>2) Develop additional professional development opportunities for the school-age workforce.</p>	<p>Lead(s):</p> <p>NC Community College System Local community colleges</p> <p>Local community colleges Local Child Care Resource and Referral Agencies</p>	<p>2015</p> <p>Ongoing</p>	<p>High Cost</p> <p>Low Cost</p>
	5) The availability and utilization of peer support networks will increase in the region.	<p>Local:</p> <p>1) Peer networks (child care director associations, family child care associations, early childhood and school-age clubs, NC-aeyc affiliates, etc) will be established in counties that do not currently support them.</p>	<p>Lead(s):</p> <p>Local Child Care Resource and Referral Agencies Local Smart Start Partnerships Local community colleges</p>	<p>2011</p>	<p>Low cost</p>
	6) Linguistic ability and the cultural competence/sensitivity of early (and school-age) educators both within the community at large in areas of differing ability, diversity, etc. will improve.	<p>State:</p> <p>1) Develop a standardized 10 hour CEU module on cultural/linguistic competence/sensitivity and require completion for all early childhood and school-age professionals as part of the orientation process.</p> <p>Local:</p> <p>2) Develop and provide training to directors/owners, teachers, and the public, including diversity and social justice training using authentic values, languages, beliefs, and practices, and how these things translate into current practice.</p>	<p>Lead(s):</p> <p>NC Child Care Resource and Referral Council NC Division of Child Development NC Community College System</p> <p>Local Child Care Resource and Referral Agencies</p>	<p>2015</p> <p>Ongoing</p>	<p>High Cost</p> <p>Low Cost</p>
Professional Standards	1) All staff at child care centers and family child care homes will have measureable and current professional development plans that are	<p>State:</p> <p>1) Require all early childhood and school-age staff to complete a professional development plan and</p>	<p>Lead(s):</p> <p>NC Division of Child Development</p>	<p>2015</p>	<p>High Cost</p>

	updated annually.	<p>update it annually.</p> <p>2) Develop a template and standards for professional development plans early (and school-age) educators and a training tool to help child care facility directors and owners implement them.</p> <p>Local:</p> <p>3) In absence of statewide requirement for professional development planning, fund additional positions or implement within existing programs to provide personnel to help staff create professional development plans.</p>	<p>NC Division of Child Development</p> <p>Local Smart Start Partnerships Local Child Care Resource and Referral Agencies</p>	<p>2012</p> <p>2015</p>	<p>Low Cost</p> <p>High Cost</p>
	2) Professional standards for early (and school-age) educators will increase.	<p>State:</p> <p>1) Require Early Educator Certification (EEC) or School-Age Certification (SAC) at a minimum of Level 3 to work in the early childhood and school-age field.</p> <p>2) Require Lead Teachers to have at least an Associates Degree in early childhood or school-age education.</p> <p>3) Increase course availability in early childhood and school-age department(s) at community colleges.</p> <p>4) Develop 10 hour CEU module and require training on professionalism in the early childhood and school-age workforce.</p>	<p>NC Division of Child Development</p> <p>NC Division of Child Development</p> <p>NC Community College System</p> <p>NC Child Care Resource and Referral Council NC Division of Child Development NC Community College System</p>	<p>2015</p> <p>2015</p> <p>2015</p> <p>2013</p>	<p>High Cost</p> <p>High Cost</p> <p>High Cost</p> <p>Low Cost</p>

	3) The number of early (and school-age) educators who enter a community college degree track will increase.	1) Increase access to community college placement tests and supports for students who have previously been unsuccessful with them.	Local community colleges Local Child Care Resource and Referral Agencies Local Smart Start Partnerships	2012	Low Cost
Compensation	1) Compensation will be linked directly to Early Educator or School-Age Certification.	State: 1) Provide increased funding to support increased compensation commensurate with Early Educator or School-Age Certification.	NC Division of Child Development	2015	High Cost
		Local: 2) Educate owners and directors about the importance of professionalizing the workforce, about Early Educator and School-Age Certification, their future uses and their benefits for employers.	Local Child Care Resource and Referral Agencies	2012	Low Cost
	2) Participation in the TEACH and WAGE\$ programs in Region 7 will increase.	1) Review TEACH and WAGE\$ participation requirements to address low participation in the region.	Local Child Care Resource and Referral Agencies Local Smart Start Partnerships	2014	Low Cost
	3) All early (and school-age) educators have access to a comprehensive health benefit plan.	State: 1) Increase funding for TEACH health insurance.	NC Division of Child Development	2015	High Cost
		Local: 2) Monitor local (county level) strategies for creating community health insurance plans to educate the feasibility of this goal at the regional level.	Region 7 Professional Development Stakeholder Committee	2015	High Cost
	4) Comprehensive benefits will be provided for all early (and school-age) educators.	1) Promote the provision of comprehensive benefits for staff as a part of facility budgeting in Administrative coursework, Pre-Licensing workshops, and Child Care Business Basics.	NC Division of Child Development	2014	Low Cost

		2) Provide training to directors/owners on budgeting to help them understand how to budget and access resources to be able to afford comprehensive health benefits for all staff.	Local Child Care Resource and Referral Agencies Local Smart Start Partnerships	2013	Low Cost
Planning & Coordination	1) The Region 7 Professional Development Stakeholder Committee will meet quarterly and focus on the planning and coordination of professional development opportunities for early (and school-age) educators.	State & Local: 1) Share and receive information about planning efforts with and from the Region 7 Professional Development Stakeholder Committee and the Division of Child Development, the North Carolina Institute Child Development Professionals, North Carolina Association for the Education of Young Children, etc.	Lead(s): NC Division of Child Development NC Institute for Child Development Professionals NC Resource and Referral Council NC Community College System Child Care Resources Inc. Region 7 Professional Development Stakeholder Committee	2011	Low Cost
		2) Develop workgroups focused on the implementation of the Region 7 Early Childhood and School-Age Professional Development Action Plan.	Region 7 Professional Development Stakeholder Committee	2011	Low Cost
		3) Use uniform language for the differentiation of early childhood from school-age needs and strategies by identifying each group individually as: "birth to five" and "school-age" respectively.	Region 7 Professional Development Stakeholder Committee	2011	Low Cost
		4) Address the unique needs of the school-age workforce in all relevant professional development planning.	Region 7 Professional Development Stakeholder Committee	2013	Low Cost
		5) Incorporate the specific needs of inclusion within professional development planning.	Region 7 Professional Development Stakeholder Committee	2011	Low Cost