

Colorado Early Childhood Councils Quarterly Report: SFY2010—Third Quarter



SFY2010, Third Quarter (January 1-March 31, 2010)

June 2010

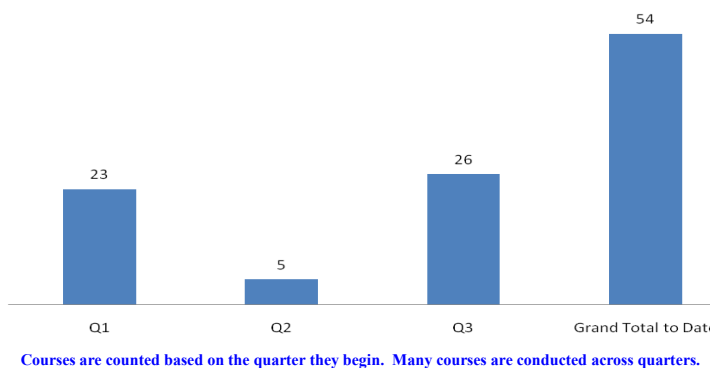
Expanding Quality in Infant and Toddler Care: An Update

Since 1999, Colorado has been improving the quality of care for infants and toddlers through its Expanding Quality for Infants and Toddlers Initiative. The primary component of this training is a 48-hour course on infant & toddler development and responsive care (EQIT) that also has a coaching element available for participants.

Focused on Early Childhood professionals working with infants and toddlers, the EQIT course is intended to increase the quality of care available for Colorado's youngest children. Through a series of 16 specific, research-based modules, participants learn new skills for working with infants and toddlers and gain confidence as early childhood professionals.

This fiscal year (July 1, 2009-June 30, 2010), 28 Early Childhood Councils have been funded to conduct 53 EQIT

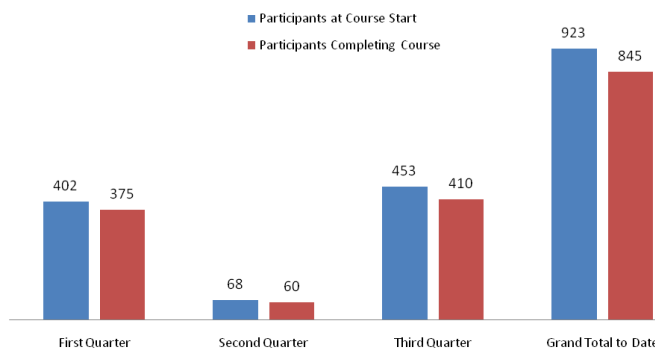
EQIT Courses Conducted
Third Quarter, SFY2010



courses across the state. In addition, one community without an Early Childhood Council has an EQIT team conducting one course. As of the end of the third quarter (January 1-March 31, 2010), 54 EQIT courses were either in progress or had already been conducted. These courses provided pro-

fessional development to over 900 early childhood professionals, nearly all of whom (91.5%) successfully completed the course. This is a remarkable achievement in itself, but is even more so considering that many EQIT participants have never participated in educational opportunities beyond high school.

EQIT Participants Completing Full 48-Hour Course
Third Quarter, SFY2010



Completion rates for EQIT participants were over 91% as of the third quarter.

One of the unique aspects of the EQIT course is that it is frequently not conducted in a college campus setting, but rather in the community — often at child care centers or other community-based locations. Because of this, the EQIT course

Special points of interest:

As of the third quarter:

- FORTY-THREE PERCENT OF COUNCIL COORDINATORS REQUESTED TECHNICAL ASSISTANCE WITH RESOURCE DEVELOPMENT (THE TOP REQUEST FOR THE QUARTER).
- NEARLY 100 COUNCIL MEMBERS AND COORDINATORS FROM 25 EARLY CHILDHOOD COUNCILS ATTENDED THE FOUR REGIONAL TECHNICAL ASSISTANCE DAYS ON RESOURCE DEVELOPMENT (HELD FEBRUARY 17-23, 2010).

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EXPANDING QUALITY IN INFANT AND TODDLER CARE **1**

PROMISING PRACTICES FOR COUNCIL STAFFING **3**

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Colorado Early Childhood Councils

“EDUCATION
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COUNCIL REPORTING ON
EQIT IMPLEMENTATION

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COUNCIL REPORTING ON
SUCCESSFUL EQIT PRACTICES

Expanding Quality (continued)

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attracts early childhood professionals who might not otherwise take similar coursework through a community college. The community-based approach to the training — which is also very interactive — makes it widely accessible to a range of learners and learning styles.

At the same time, most Early Childhood Councils have worked closely with their local Community College to arrange the option of college credit for EQIT participants who want it. As a result, currently at least eighteen different colleges are offering course credit for EQIT participants who want to earn it. During this fiscal year to date, 21% of EQIT partici-

pants have taken advantage of this opportunity for college credit, fulfilling additional requirements for the course established by the granting college institution.

All of this is good news for the 5,702 infants and toddlers being cared for by the early childhood professionals who have participated in these classes just this year to date



(July 1, 2009-March 31, 2010). And it is good news for the centers and family child care homes that participants staff. As of the third quarter, 79% of EQIT participants worked in child care centers, while 16% worked in family child care homes. Another 5% worked in settings other than child care (e.g., mental health). Families accessing these facilities

now have staff who are highly trained specifically to meet the unique needs of infants and toddlers.

The EQIT classes are becoming increasingly important for Colorado's early childhood professionals since new requirements for early childhood teachers went into effect May 1, 2010. To meet these strengthened qualifications, early childhood teachers can take EQIT to fulfill certain course requirements. This option has already led to an increased demand locally for EQIT classes. Because it is expected that this demand will continue — and probably increase — next fiscal year, the State will be shifting funds from other sponsored trainings (specifically, Ounce Scale and Touchpoints) to offer more EQIT classes in FY2010-2011.

Colleges Offering EQIT Course Credit

Aims Community College
Arapahoe Community College
Colorado Mountain College
Colorado Northwestern Community College
Community College of Aurora
Community College of Denver
Delta Montrose Technical College
Front Range Community College
Lamar Community College
Morgan Community College
Northeastern Junior College
Otero Junior College
Pikes Peak Community College
Pueblo Community College
Red Rocks Community College
Southwest Community College
Trinidad State Junior College
Western State College Extended Studies

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Promising Practices in Council Staffing

What kind of staffing does it take to coordinate an Early Childhood Council? Currently, Colorado funds all of its Councils at a level to hire at least a half-time FTE Coordinator position. However, ideally staffing would be more robust than this.

What we know is that Council staffing varies considerably across the state, based in part on:

- how long the Council has been operating,
- state grant funding levels,
- leveraging of other fund-

- ing sources,
- availability of qualified candidates within a geographic region, and
- the number and types of programs or initiatives the Council is implementing.

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Staffing Factors	Promising Practices	Current Capacity (aggregated across Councils)
Coordinator	1.0 FTE*	Average: 0.90 FTE Range: 0.50-2.0
Coordinator Employment Status	Employee	Employees: 87% Contractors: 13%
Coordinator Office Space	Independent Council office space	Fiscal Agent's Office: 43% Stand-alone Council Office: 33% Home Office: 13% Third Party Office (not fiscal agent): 10%
Coordinator Education	Masters Degree	Associate: 23% Bachelor: 30% Masters: 47%
Coordinator Experience, in Years	The more the better	Less than 3 years: 79% More than 3 years: 21%
Coordinator Background Experience	Non-profit, government, and/or program management; community organizing	Direct Early Childhood Service Experience: 33% Program Implementation: 23% Non-profit Management: 21% Business Sector: 6% Community Organizing: 4% Government Management: 4% Secondary Teaching: 2% Unidentified: 6%
Total Council Staff	3.0+	Average: 2.93 FTE Range: 0.50-13.50 FTE
Other Staff Positions	Administrative Support Professional Development Quality Coordinator School Readiness Coordinator Health Integration Coordinator Data/Evaluation Coordinator	Administrative Support: 26% Professional Development Coordinator: 22% Coaches: 14% Quality Coordinator: 11% Other¹: 27% ¹ Includes positions such as School Readiness, Health Integration, and Data Coordinators.

* FTE=Full-Time Equivalent, where 1.0 FTE = 40 hours/week and 0.50 FTE=20 hours/week.

Council Staffing (continued)

**“THE
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RESPONSE TO QUESTION
ABOUT COUNCIL
CHALLENGES

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As of the end of the third quarter, 29 of 30 Councils had at least a half-time Council Coordinator (the one remaining Council had a Coordinator vacancy during the third quarter). Sixty-seven percent of Coordinator positions were full-time. The rest (33%) were less than one full-time equivalent (FTE) position and almost all of those staffed Councils that received the lowest level of state grant funding (\$45,000-\$100,000, including EQ and School Readiness funds).

Most Councils (79%) currently employ Coordinators that have been on the job for less than three years. While most Coordinators are hired as employees of either the Council itself or the Council's fiscal agent, a few (4) are contractors. Similarly, four Council Coordinators work from home and another three work out of third party stakeholder offices (e.g., child care facilities or schools). Both of these Coordinator and employment work arrangements reflect an earlier organiza-

tional development stage for those Councils. Typically, Councils that have more developed organizational structures have moved to full-time employment for their Coordinators in designated work spaces.

State funding and the Council's ability to leverage additional grant sources play an important role in its ability to attract and keep highly qualified Coordinators. Councils with diverse funding also have a greater ability to add additional staff to support the Council work.

Of the five Councils that have reported staffing of over 5 FTE during the third quarter, all of them have at least three distinct funding sources and two have at least nine distinct funding sources.

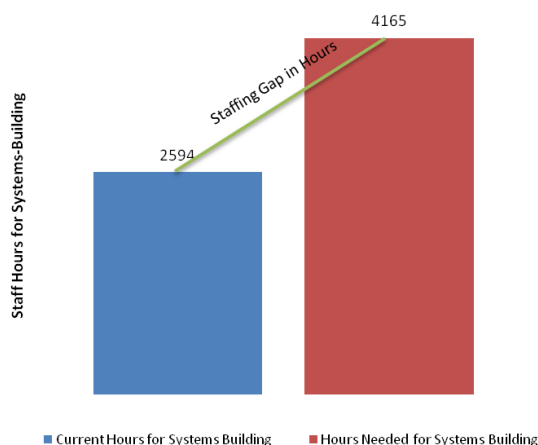
Whatever the existing Council staffing

structure looks like, all Councils report a need for more systems building staff. Ironically, the greatest need is reported by those who currently have the largest staffs. This is reflected in the percentage of systems staffing hours Councils believe is being met by current funding, which is broken down below by current staffing levels:

Staffing Levels	Staffing Capacity Filled
Under 1 FTE	72%
1 FTE	77%
1+ to Under 2 FTE	65%
2 to 5 FTE	63%
Over 5 FTE	57%

Overall, this translates into a 38% systems staffing gap that is not currently being met.

Systems-Building Staffing Gap



**Learn more about Colorado's Early
Childhood Councils at:
www.cde.state.co.us/early/ECC.htm**

Colorado's Early Childhood Councils integrate services delivered through a comprehensive early childhood system that includes quality care and education, family support, health and mental health programs. Authorizing legislation calls on the Councils "To develop and ultimately implement a comprehensive system of early childhood services to ensure the school readiness of children five years of age or younger." (HB 07-1062)

The Early Childhood Councils program is funded by Child Care Development Block Grant/Child Care Development Funds and is administered at the state level by a partnership between the Colorado Department of Human Services and the Colorado Department of Education.