



“In his State of the Union address, President Obama called on Congress to expand access to high-quality preschool to every child in America.”

(whitehouse.gov)

Seeking approval: BA Early Childhood Education

Rationale

- COE received numerous requests for a BA in ECE from former students (AQA graduates), ECE Center directors, school principals and superintendents noting the desirability for such a program.
- ECE has been identified as a high needs area for the state of New Mexico. No other such offering is available in the region- closes being Santa Fe (Highlands) which creates access complications for interested candidates.
- Needs Assessment (conducted Fall 2014): Administrators, state officials, COE Faculty, students, and community stakeholders have repeatedly confirmed their overwhelming support in favor of the a BA in Early Childhood Education.
 - Potential candidates and alumni from local ECE Centers were surveyed to determine the need to offer the program.
 - Surveys were collected and analyzed and revealed quantitative data supporting the program.

Alignment

- History: For over 10 years, the AA program has been successfully providing skilled personnel and instructional assistance for local early childhood centers in the areas of Birth through Grade 3.
- Approval: The NNMC committees and administrators have granted initial approval for the BA ECE degree program and courses via the approval process.
- Stackable Degree: The BA ECE degree program would be a natural extension in transition from the current AA degree program.
- Accreditation: The proposed BA ECE degree program is aligned with the *New Mexico's Universal Catalogue* of Courses for Early Care, Education, and Family. Support (guidelines set forth by the New Mexico Early Childhood Higher Education Task Force).
 - Availability of certified educators in ECE is a high needs area regionally and statewide.
 - A standards-based lesson plan with, proficiency alignment, scope and sequence, dispositions form, and assessment tool will be created to meet state and national accreditation requirements.

Support



- The COE was awarded funding from the American Indian Education Training Program (AIETP) to support candidates via scholarship, resources, testing fees, and training. The award is intended to recruit, prepare, and graduate qualified Native American teachers and administrators from the 22 tribes and pueblos in the state. This is part of the effort to address the small representation of Native American among the state's teachers and administration (e.g., less than 7 percent among teachers).

Implementation

- The COE is ready to move ahead with program implementation upon approval. Syllabi have been developed, revised and aligned with state and national standards. A number of required courses have been previously offered as part of the AA program. Program completers as well as candidates recently completing the program can proceed to apply for admission, along with newly admitted students.
- A program relevant course was offered during spring 2016 to 12 interested candidates. These were mostly AA graduates, most were employed by Early Childhood centers in the area, all needing to obtain certification in order to continue employment and comply with state requirements.
- The COE has strong, long-standing relationships with neighboring school districts and pueblos which will ensure availability to supervised field and clinical experiences to enrich candidate mastery of required competencies.
- Efforts have been initiated to provide support for training and mentoring (developed through P'oe support) directed at strengthening the likelihood for candidates to complete mandated state testing. This has been a major obstacle for candidates seeking teaching credentials. The planned training sessions are intended to be available during fall 2015.
- COE continues to receive numerous inquiries about program availability, indicating heightened program interest and allowing for positive outcomes in terms of enrollments in this previously unavailable program.
- First graduating class expected by May 2017.