

Orientation

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I. Natural Allies? OK, what is it? [Handout of abstract and logic model]

A. Project Goals

- Enhance the preparation of college students to work with infants, toddlers and young children (0-5) of diverse abilities and their families in inclusive community settings
- Foster respectful and meaningful collaboration between early childhood personnel, organizations and initiatives and early intervention personnel, organizations and initiatives

B. Systems change model

C. Values

- Building on existing state and community initiatives, resources and expertise
- Supporting the participation of diverse partners (family, faculty, community partner, agency)
- Reflecting cultural, linguistic and ability diversity in project participants, methods and materials

D. Supports

- U.S. Department of Education, Office of Special Education Programs, Project of National Significance Grant # H325N010027

II. How were you selected to participate?

State leadership teams in each state convened and identified top priorities for change and improvement in the preparation of personnel to work with young children (0-5) and families, with emphasis on those children with special needs [handout on state priorities]. The state leaders identified the members of each state's "travel" team (family members, faculty members, community partners and agency representatives) based on who could help their state make progress in these important areas.

III. Who are you? [Handout]

IV. What are your priorities for the faculty institute? [Handout]

- A. Content areas
- B. Systemic issues
- C. Instructional approaches
- D. Resources that would help you

V. How does the organization of the Natural Allies institute respond to your priorities?

- A. Research-based
 - Preservice Personnel Preparation Quality Indicators [Handout]
- B. Needs-based
 - Instructional sessions organized around content areas of interest to you
 - Instructional strategies of interest to you illustrated and demonstrated in sessions
 - Library of exemplary early childhood and early intervention resources provided
 - Human resources for you to draw on
 - Individual planning time
- C. Context-sensitive
 - Team planning time
 - Emphasis on ongoing self-assessment and your responsibilities as an active adult learner
 - Tips for “Making a Difference” [Handout]

VI. A trip to the “petting zoo”

VII. Resources

- Winton, P. (1996). A model for supporting higher education faculty in their early intervention personnel preparation roles. *Infants and Young Children, 8*(3), 56-67.
- Winton, P., Catlett, C., & Houck, A. (1996). A systems approach to early intervention personnel preparation: A model for moving toward collaboration and effective training practices. In A. Widerstrom & D. Bricker (Eds.), *Preparing personnel to work with infants and young children and their families: A team approach*. Baltimore, MD: Paul Brookes.
- Winton, P.J., McCollum, J.A., & Catlett, C. (Eds.) (1997). *Reforming personnel preparation in early intervention: Issues, models, and practical strategies*. Baltimore, MD: Paul Brookes. Available online at http://www.fpg.unc.edu/whatsnew/pub_summary.cfm?apubsid=423

ABSTRACT

Projects of National Significance CFDA#: 84.325N

Natural Allies: Working with Community Colleges to Prepare Personnel to Provide Quality Services for All Young Children in Natural Environments

An enormous challenge to realizing the vision of quality services for young children (0-5) in inclusive community settings (natural environments) is how to meet increasing demands for well-trained personnel to provide those services. To address this challenge, we must meet two related needs.

- Large numbers of early childhood teachers need preparation on how to serve young children with diverse abilities in inclusive community settings.
- Early childhood teacher preparation programs, faculty and administrators at community colleges need training and support on infusing exceptionality into their coursework and practica to address the needs of young children with disabilities.

National survey data support the fact that community colleges are the place where early childhood teachers are most likely to pursue early childhood degrees or credentials.

What will Natural Allies do? The project will address these needs by developing, implementing, evaluating and disseminating a model that will yield change and improvement in community college coursework and practical experiences related to serving young children with disabilities in inclusive natural environments. This project is based on a proven systems change model that has produced ***documented, long lasting and meaningful changes***. The project is committed to building on existing resources and expertise, supporting campus-community collaboration, and utilizing team-based, ecological approaches that include the participation of family, campus, community and state agency partners in personnel development efforts.

Features of the Natural Allies implementation plan include:

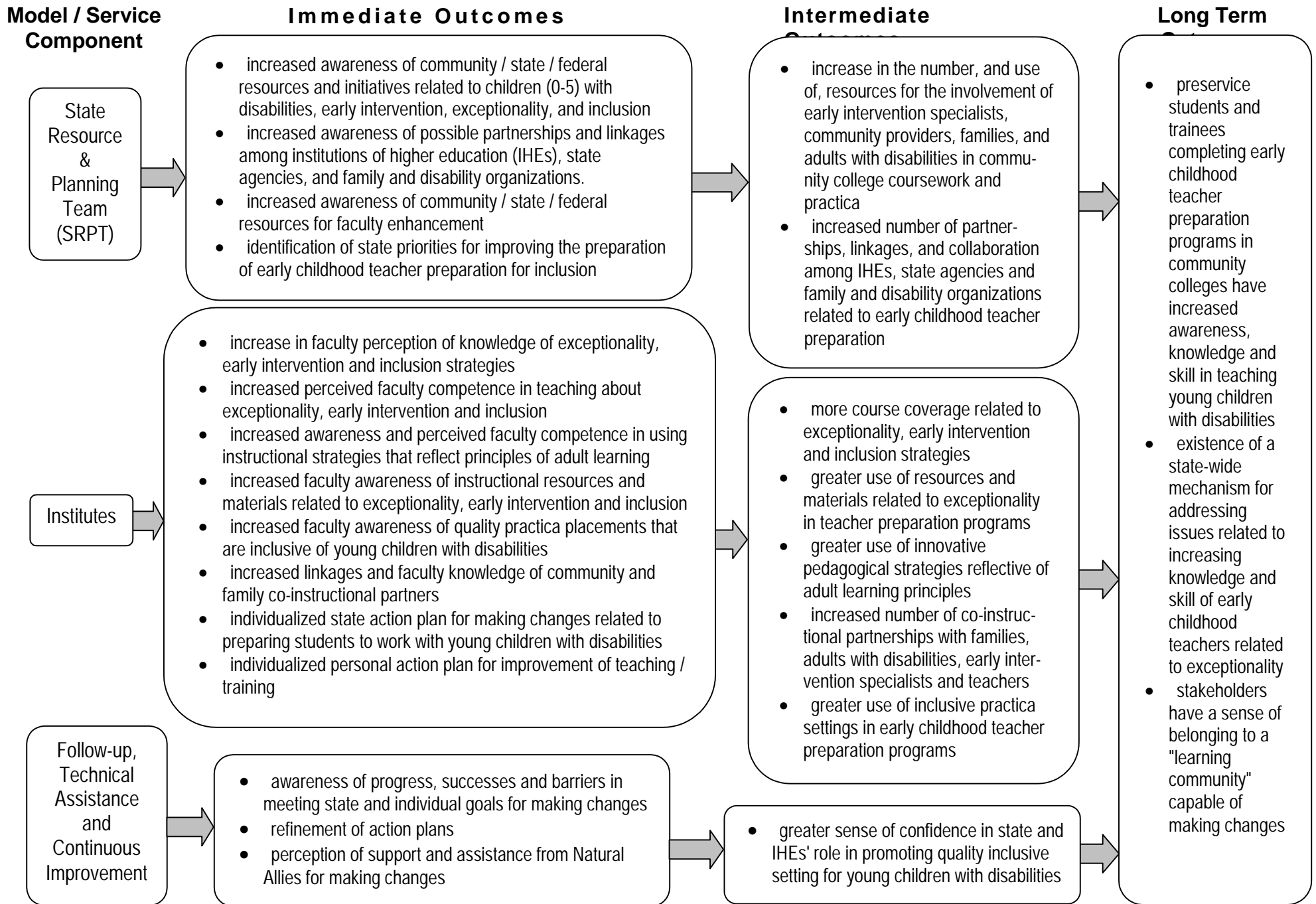
- working with family members, adults with disabilities, early childhood faculty, early childhood teachers, early interventionists and state agencies in eight states to identify priorities for change in early childhood teacher preparation
- providing instructional resources and educational experiences, including a four-day intensive institute, to teams of faculty, community, family, and state agency representatives
- facilitating the development of state and individual action plans for improving the quality of community college preparation
- providing technical assistance over an 18-month period in support of the action plans.

The anticipated outcomes that will result from this project include:

- Increased knowledge and skills of community college faculty related to using innovative instructional approaches for infusing exceptionality and early intervention content in their instructional programs;
- Enlarged capacity of community colleges to prepare students for instructional and supervisory roles in natural environments serving all young children and families; and
- Strengthened linkages among state agencies, community colleges, early intervention programs, early childhood teachers, families and consumers.

For additional information, contact Camille Catlett (919/966-6635; camille@unc.edu)

Appendix C - Natural Allies Logic Model



NATURAL ALLIES COHORT 1

STATE PRIORITIES

IOWA PRIORITIES

- Enhance quality and increase standardization of community college training programs
- Shape public perception about the importance of early childhood issues
- Develop an array of integrated articulation options
- Explore options for sharing and collaboration around training resources and materials (e.g., disseminate information on existing resources; provide materials and training; create and support an Early Childhood Resource Center)

OKLAHOMA PRIORITIES

- Support changes in post-secondary coursework and practica that increase the emphasis on exceptionality. Infusing new content throughout the curriculum and creating new, specific courses are two possible ways to accomplish this. Areas of emphasis should include:
 - The Individuals with Disabilities Education Act (IDEA) and related legislation;
 - Natural environments and least restrictive environments (LRE) for infants, toddlers and young children; and
 - Moving early childhood personnel beyond attitudes and fears to competence and comfort in serving young children with special needs.
- Use a range of strategies to infuse the real life experiences of families into the instructional process (e.g., family practica, family-faculty co-instruction)
- Increase collaboration across all professional development entities (e.g., Head Start, SoonerStart, child care, Pre-K and other community programs) to achieve integrated registries, resources, consultant databases, training and other opportunities.

PENNSYLVANIA PRIORITIES

- Identify and develop quality, inclusive practicum sites (early childhood and early intervention)
- Develop an integrated continuum of training options; increase opportunities for articulation
- Increase communication and collaboration about personnel development opportunities
- Develop formal and informal campus-community-family-agency partnerships to improve the quality of care for all children

TEXAS PRIORITIES

- Increase emphasis [in early childhood coursework and field experiences] on content and issues related to working with young children with special needs or disabilities and their families
- Increase emphasis [in early childhood coursework and field experiences] on preparing students to work with all young children and their families
- Link community college course work and practical experiences to increased compensation for early childhood personnel

Participant Data

I. Who Are Institute Participants? (n=64)

A. Faculty Disciplines

Administration	6.3%
Child Development	14.1%
Early Childhood	26.6%
Early Childhood with Special Education	20.3%
Education	4.7%
Family Studies/Home Econ/Human Devel	4.7%
Nursing	1.6%
Occupational Therapy	1.6%
Other	4.7%
Parent	6.3%
Social Work	6.3%
Special Education	3.1%

B. Parents of Children with Disabilities 23.4%

C. Individuals with Disabilities 3.1%

D. Cultural & Linguistic Diversity 15.6%

E. Primary Job Settings

Child Care Resource & Referral	1.6%
Community Agency or Program	7.8%
Community College	28.1%
Head Start/Early Head Start	7.8%
Home/Family	6.3%
Other	17.2%
State Agency	25.0%
University	6.3%

II. Summary of Needs Assessment Data (Response Rate = 96%; n=64)

A. Content Areas

Highest Priority to Learn about at Institute (Top 3 expressed in rank order)

- Inclusion/Natural Environments
- Laws & Regulations
- Interagency Collaboration
- Cultural Diversity

B. Early Childhood/Early Intervention Systemic Issues

Highest Priority to Learn about at Institute (Top 3 expressed in rank order)

- Personnel Preparation Plans & Structures
- Program Evaluation and Monitoring Strategies
- Articulation Between Associate and Baccalaureate Programs

C. Instructional Resources

Assistance you viewed as most helpful (Top 3 expressed in rank order)

- Packaged Curricula
- Interactive Activities
- Case Studies

D. Personal Resources

Resources you viewed as most helpful (Top 3 expressed in rank order)

- Access to Instructional Resources (curricula, videotapes, syllabi)
- A Show of Interest from Early Childhood/Early Intervention Agencies & Systems
- Access to Other Early Childhood Faculty Members and Programs

E. Instructional Approaches

Highest Priority to Learn about at Institute (Top 3 expressed in rank order)

- Distance Education/ Web and Internet
- Case Method of Instruction
- Consultative Approaches
- Families as Co-Teachers

Making A Difference

Questions to Consider When Considering Changes

Does it “Fit”? (Sensitivity to Existing Ecology)

- How closely does this idea match existing practices and program philosophy?
- Has this been tried before? If so, what was the outcome?
- How will the administration react to this idea?
- What are the barriers and facilitators to this idea being implemented?
- Who needs to be included in discussions about this idea?

Who Will Help? (Finding and Building Support)

- Who are our allies (those that might be supportive and interested in this idea)?
- How can we share information with them about this idea?
- How can we build support for the idea among others?
- What are the resources available that will support this idea?

How Will it Work? (Making an Action Plan)

- Can idea be broken down into concrete objectives and tasks?
- Are the tasks manageable and doable with existing resources (Think BIG, Act Small)?
- Can idea be tried soon (within the next few weeks)?
- Can results be immediate?

How Can We Keep the “Ball Rolling”? (Ongoing Support)

- How can we get feedback in an ongoing fashion?
- How can we modify my ideas based on feedback?
- Where can we get ongoing support for trying to change?
- How will we deal with setbacks?

How Will We Know if it Worked? (Developing an Evaluation Plan)

- Can success be observed and measured?
- Can impact questions be identified?
- Can data sources be identified?
- Can data be collected and shared with others?