

**Child Care Services Association**  
**North Carolina Early Childhood Higher Education Articulation Project**

**Final Narrative**

**December 2015**

Background

A diverse group of early education and higher education leaders who represented North Carolina at the 2013 T.E.A.C.H. Early Childhood® National Articulation Summit provided the impetus that ultimately advocated for a multi pronged, articulation focused strategy that would 1) raise the awareness throughout the state's higher education system about the critical need for improved articulation of the Early Childhood Education Associate Degree with four year higher education institutions; and (2) create transparency throughout the early care and education workforce communities about the location and existence of effectual articulation agreements statewide.

Prior to the launch of the North Carolina Higher Education Project, Child Care Services Association (CCSA) built upon the synergy at the national articulation summit to establish a statewide Articulation Oversight Committee (AOC) comprised of representation from various higher education institutions and early childhood focused organizations. Subsequently, CCSA culled from that larger leadership body, an Articulation Leadership Team (ALT) that would serve as a steering committee for the North Carolina Early Childhood Higher Education Articulation Project under CCSA's administration from December 1, 2014 through December 31, 2015.

The following goals were addressed through the application of a variety of strategies and the final outcomes that were achieved are described below.

Goal 1: Deliver high quality technical assistance, training and resources that support the facilitation of better articulation of ECE coursework and degrees within North Carolina's higher education system.

In an effort to verify the existence of articulation agreements statewide, 40 four-year higher education institutions, both public and private, offering early childhood education degree granting programs, were polled and asked about the substantive content of their existing agreement. Representatives from all forty higher education institutions were also polled and asked to express their level of interest in expanding or enhancing the existing articulation agreement through the provision of onsite technical assistance.

B-K Licensure Program coordinators from 10 higher education institutions responded to the survey and subsequently 8 sought technical assistance through the project for the purpose of assessing the substance and effectiveness of their existing ECE degree articulation agreement with one or more community colleges.

Goal 2: Work collaboratively with 6 – 8 selected universities and the NC Articulation Oversight Committee to deliver specialized, targeted technical assistance leading towards the development of improved articulation agreements with community colleges.

Goal 2 Outcome:

Technical assistance aimed at expanding or enhancing the existing articulation agreement with one or more community colleges was delivered to B-K Licensure Program Coordinators from each of the following eight universities: Mount Olive University, Shaw University, Winston-Salem State University, University of North Carolina Charlotte, University of North Carolina - Wilmington, North Carolina A&T University, Western Carolina University and Fayetteville State University. The B-K Licensure Program Coordinator from North Carolina Central University sought technical assistance from the project coordinator as the project was coming to an end. Follow up with the coordinator was to be continued with the support of members of the ALT.

Goal 3: Collect and serve as the repository for all ECE articulation agreements:

Goal 3 Outcome: The North Carolina Early Childhood Education Higher Education Articulation Agreement Repository has been established and copies of written agreements were obtained from 11 university program coordinators for inclusion in the repository.\*See below. Those universities include East Carolina University, Greensboro College, North Carolina A&T University, UNC-Greensboro, UNC Pembroke, UNC Wilmington, Shaw University, Western Carolina University, Winston Salem State University, the University of Mount Olive and Barton College.

In total, the existence of 21 articulation agreements were verified either through website references, or through the receipt of actual documentation. The total number includes a mixture of signed narrative agreements and credit transfer charts. The Division of Child Development and Early Education will be sent the copies of the articulation agreements that were submitted to CCSA. Most universities provide limited information about their existing articulation agreement on their website with many only referencing the North Carolina Comprehensive Articulation Agreement.

Below is the list of twenty-one Bachelor's degree programs who indicate the existence of an ECE focused articulation agreement with one or more community college:

- **Appalachian State University:** Website does have an articulation agreement for BS in Child Development: B-K Associate of Arts and ECE AAS Pathway.
- **\*Barton College:** Website lists which NC Community Colleges it has articulation agreements with. The written agreement is included in the repository.
- **Campbell University:** Website shows a listing of courses completed at a NC Community College that will count as the 44 core which will count towards the B-K degree. It also sites the NC Comprehensive Articulation Agreement.
- **Catawba College:** Website cites the NC Comprehensive Articulation Agreement but there is no specific agreement for B-K majors.
- **\*East Carolina University:** Website has an articulation agreement for Early Childhood Education B.S. Degree - Birth Through Kindergarten Teacher Education Licensure. The

site also has a list of the NC Community Colleges and its bilateral agreements for the AAS in ECE and their B.S. Birth-Kindergarten program. The site also mentions the NC Comprehensive Articulation Agreement. The written agreement is included in the repository.

- **Elizabeth City State University:** Website lists four community colleges that they have articulation agreements with and when you click on the community college it takes you to the course equivalency for B-K.
- **Fayetteville State University:** Website cites that the NC Comprehensive Articulation Agreement takes precedence over bilateral articulation agreements. Could not locate a specific articulation agreement for Birth –Kindergarten.
- **\*Greensboro College:** The written articulation agreement is included in the repository.
- **Lees-McRae College:** Website refers to the NC Comprehensive Articulation Agreement. They have an extended campus at Surry Community College for completing a Birth-Kindergarten degree. They accept an Associate of Arts or Science for the first two years of the degree.
- **Meredith College:** Website states that they are a signatory school on an articulation agreement with the North Carolina Community College System. There is not a specific agreement for Child Development /Birth-Kindergarten Licensure however students who complete the Associate of Arts or Associate of Science degree at a North Carolina Community College and have at least 60 transferrable credits enter Meredith College as juniors
- **\*University of Mount Olive:** Website states that they are signatory school on an articulation agreement with the NC Community College system. The written agreement is included in the repository.
- **\*North Carolina A&T University:** Website cites the NC Comprehensive Articulation Agreement. It doesn't show a specific agreement for Child Development/Birth-Kindergarten. It shows a list of all of the courses that will transfer into the university. The written agreement is included in the repository.
- **North Carolina Central University:** Website cites the NC Comprehensive Articulation Agreement. They also have a template for Comprehensive Articulation Agreement students earning an AA degree who are interested in Family & Consumer Science-Child Development & Family Relations.
- **\*Shaw University:** A written copy of the existing agreement was submitted for inclusion in the NC ECE Articulation Agreement Repository.
- **UNC Chapel Hill:** Website cites the NC Comprehensive Articulation Agreement. There is not a specific agreement for Birth-Kindergarten.
- **UNC Charlotte:** Website states that Students with AA, AS, AFA degrees from a NC Community College and students with AAS degrees in an approved 2 + 2 program and students who have met the academic core of the NC Comprehensive Articulation

Agreement will have met the University's lower division, general education requirements.

- **\*UNC Greensboro:** Website states that based on initial transfer to UNCG, students who earn the AA or AS degree from a NC community college and earned grades of C or better will be eligible for 60 semester hours of credit, junior standing, and will have met General Education Core requirements. Students who complete the General Education transfer core (44 semester hours), but do not complete the AA or AS degree also will have met General Education Core requirements. The written agreement is included in the repository.
- **\*UNC Pembroke:** Website cites the NC Comprehensive Articulation Agreement. The website shows an articulation agreement with Bladen Community College for Early Childhood Education however when you click on it you can only see the first page of the agreement. The written agreement is included in the repository.
- **\*UNC Wilmington:** Website cites the NC Comprehensive Articulation Agreement. They do list 40 community colleges that are Early Childhood Education agreement members. The written agreement is included in the repository.
- **\*Western Carolina University:** Website cites the NC Comprehensive Articulation Agreement. The written agreement is included in the repository.
- **\*Winston Salem State University:** Website cites the NC Comprehensive Articulation Agreement. The written agreement is included in the repository.

### Successes

- The formation of CCSA's Articulation Leadership Team and the Articulation Oversight Committee provided some governance to an articulation agreement enhancement effort. A list of all articulation oversight and leadership committee members has been included with this report. The Leadership team included representatives from local community colleges, a university, the state community college system office, staff from UNC-General Administration, DCDEE and CCSA.
- The NC Higher Education Articulation Project dove-tailed nicely with the Growing Greatness Project, the latter of which was administered through Blue Ridge Community College under the leadership of Kathy Allen. The Growing Greatness project had among its list of goals a similar goal of improving articulation by focusing on standard alignment of coursework. This collaboration was further reinforced through other subcommittee workgroups such as North Carolina Making It Official-Standard Alignment (MOSA), whose primary focus was to promote standard alignment between NAEYC accredited associate degree programs and four year level birth to kindergarten licensure programs. In the last phase of Growing Greatness, North Carolina will partner with NAEYC to pilot an accreditation expansion project for ECADA that will involve universities in NC.

- During the course of the NC Higher Education Articulation Project, the Ed2Career Summit emerged as a strategy to help with the development of career pathways and aligning articulation opportunities between systems.
- CCSA's Articulation Leadership Team worked in tandem with the Project Director to develop a tool known as the Articulation Course Transfer Guide. The guide was designed to show the targeted specific courses and number of credits that should be accepted by a university that would in essence create an effectual transfer process and agreement. The articulation transfer guide has been included as an attachment to this report and will continue to be used in technical assistance work with interested universities. For example, work is currently in process with NC Central University and Wake Tech CC and this tool has helped guide the conversation.

### Challenges:

- The universities and colleges are not under one governing umbrella. North Carolina Community College AAS Early Childhood Education programs are for the most part, uniform. Yet each university and its program functions as a independent entity.
- B-K Licensure Program Coordinators were able to use their own discretion for seeking and applying technical assistance to help strengthen their existing articulation agreement. But none had the final, decision-making authority needed to adopt a revised articulation agreement on behalf of the university. At the time of the submission of the project's final report, revised articulation agreements from Shaw University, UNC Charlotte, North Carolina A&T University and Winston-Salem State University were still undergoing review and approval by the respective leadership within each institution and no clear timetable had been established for finalizing the review and approval process.
- CCSA had difficulty enticing universities to participate in the project. The North Carolina Higher Education Articulation Project did not provide incentives other than technical assistance to help leverage a university's engagement in the work to improve articulation.
- B-K Licensure Program Coordinators were resistant towards the use of NAEYC ECADA status within community college programs as the platform for which to develop more effectual articulation agreements.

### Recommendations:

- Articulation-focused activities should be coordinated by a highly visible, governing body whose membership composition includes representation from the higher education system, early care and education leadership and other early care and education focused organizations including direct service practitioners.
- Efforts should be undertaken to mobilize a constituent of advocates to work with a lobbyist to identify a political champion who could influence the creation of legislation that would mandate the clear articulation and uniform transfer of the ECE degree statewide.
- A targeted public awareness campaign should be developed and funded to expose the detriment associated with not having meaningful ECE focused statewide articulation agreements between two and four year higher education institutions.