



# Field Experiences: Preparing the Next Generation of Teachers

Brenda Blackburn, Blue Ridge Community College, Sharon Little, South  
Piedmont Community College, Tracey West, SCRIPT-NC, UNC

October 2, 2014

# Welcome and Introductions

# Agenda

- NAEYC guidance on field experiences
- Finding quality sites for field experiences
- Identifying and supporting mentor teachers
- Supporting student teachers
- Criteria and guidance for student teaching or practica
- Evaluating Field Experiences
- Discussions/Activities:
  - Locating quality field experience sites: Challenges and strategies
  - Mentor teachers and student teaching feedback
  - Student teaching/practica experiences



**Field  
Experiences**

**Internship**

**Practicum**

**Lab**

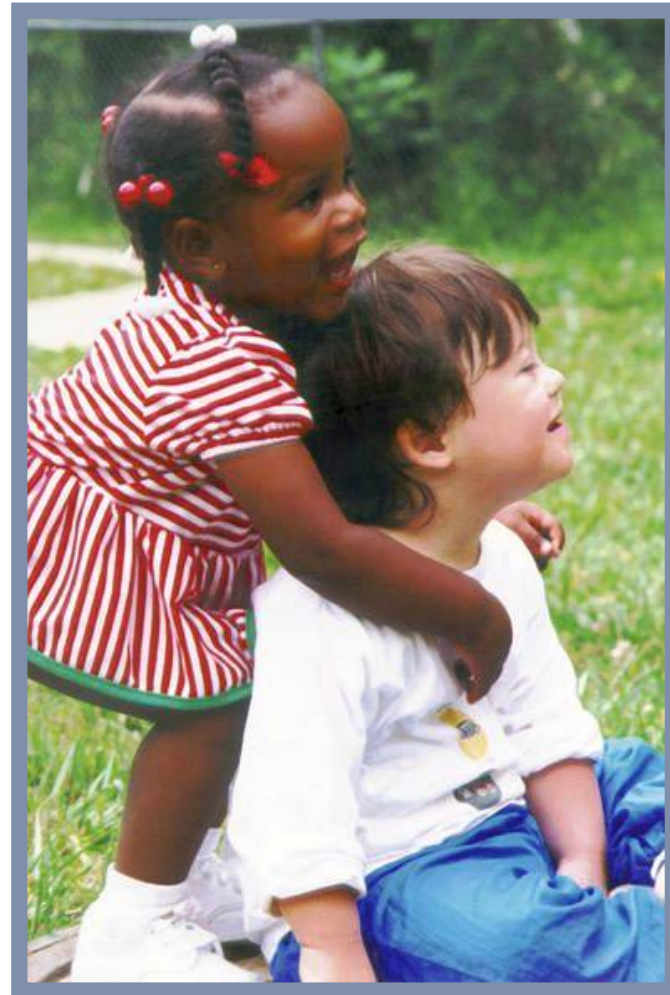
**Observation**

**Clinical Experiences**

**Student Teaching**

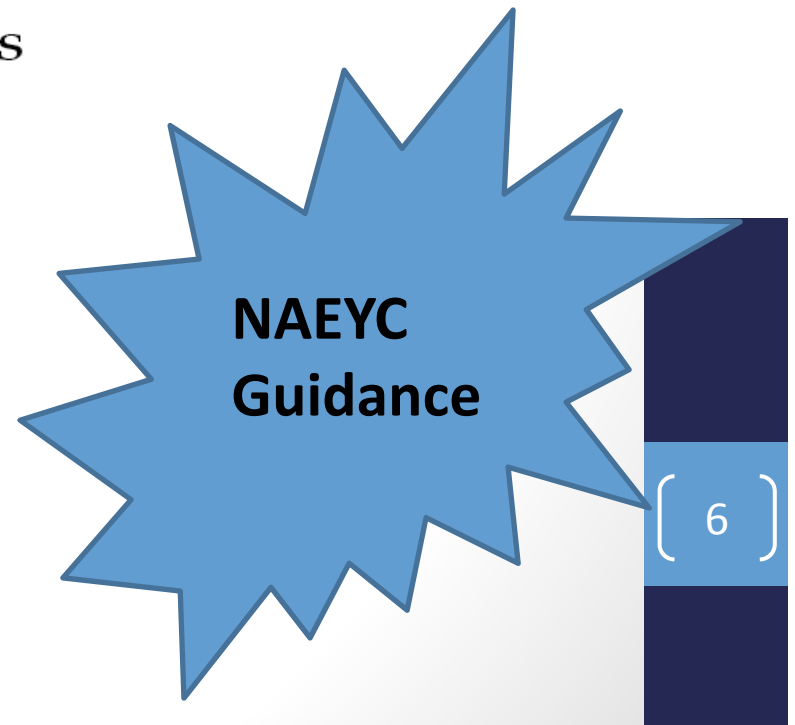
# Familiar Challenges

- Finding quality placement sites
- Finding qualified cooperating/mentor teachers
- Meeting the needs of working students
- Finding sites that reflect cultural, linguistic, and/or ability diversity
- Addressing the disconnect between the “real” and “ideal” in early childhood classrooms; what students learn and what they see



# 2010 NAEYC Standards for Initial & Advanced Early Childhood Professional Preparation Programs

For use by Associate, Baccalaureate and Graduate  
Degree Programs



What is NAEYC  
Standard 7?



## ***STANDARD 7. EARLY CHILDHOOD FIELD EXPERIENCES = Assoc. Criterion 5***

---

Field experiences and clinical practice are planned and sequenced so that candidates develop the knowledge, skills and professional dispositions necessary to promote the development and learning of young children across the entire developmental period of early childhood – in at least two of the three early childhood age groups (birth – age 3, 3 through 5, 5 through 8 years) *and* in the variety of settings that offer early education (early school grades, child care centers and homes, Head Start programs).

### **Key elements of Standard 7**

7a. Opportunities to observe and practice in at least two of the three early childhood age groups (birth – age 3, 3-5, 5-8)

7b. Opportunities to observe and practice in at least two of the three main types of early education settings (early school grades, child care centers and homes, Head Start programs)



## Criterion 5: Quality of Field Experiences

- The program's field experiences support candidates' learning in relation to the NAEYC standards.
- Rationale: Candidates will understand and apply the competencies reflected in the NAEYC standards when they are able to observe, implement, and receive constructive feedback in real-life settings.

*Excerpt from NAEYC Early Childhood Associate Degree Accreditation Handbook (Page 33)*

## **Indicators of strength:**

- Field experiences are consistent with outcomes emphasized in NAEYC's standards, are well planned and sequenced, and allow candidates to integrate theory, research, and practice.
- When the settings used for field experiences do not reflect standards of quality, candidates are provided with other models and/or experiences to ensure that they are learning to work with young children and families in ways consistent with the NAEYC standards.

## **Indicators of strength: *(continued)***

Faculty and other supervisors help candidates to make meaning of their experiences in early childhood settings and to evaluate those experiences against standards of quality.

- Adults who mentor and supervise candidates provide positive models of early childhood practice consistent with NAEYC's standards.
- Field experiences expose candidates to a variety of cultural, linguistic, and ethnic settings for early childhood care and education.
- Field experiences provide opportunities for candidates to observe and practice in at least two of the three early childhood groups (birth-age 3, 3-5, 5-8) and in at least two of the three main types of early education settings (early school grades, child care centers and homes, Head Start programs).

*Excerpt from NAEYC Early Childhood Associate Degree Accreditation Handbook (Page 79)*

## Field Experiences and clinical practice:

Includes field observations, field work, practica, candidate teaching and other “clinical” practice experiences such as home visiting. A planned sequence of these experiences supports candidate development of understanding, competence and dispositions in a specialized area of practice.

*Excerpt from Self-Study Report template for first-time accreditation (Page 20)*

### **Sources of evidence:**

#### 1) Report:

- a one- to two-page description of program’s approach to using field experiences.
- program chart of field experiences (see example below)
- a one-page description of plans to address challenges and build on current strengths in this area.

#### 2) Site Visit: Interviews with faculty, candidates, cooperating teachers, and other supervisors

**Blue Ridge Community College Field Experience Chart** \*Required for Early Childhood Associate Degree, \*\* Required for School-Age Degree, \*\*\* Required for both degrees, No stars = elective for A.A.S- or a require. for certificate program

Course	Field Experience Assignment	Age Range or Grade	Location/Setting	# Hours Required
*EDU 119 Intro. to Early Childhood Ed.	Observe and report findings of program type of choice	0-8	Varies depending on setting that student chooses to observe	3
***EDU 131 Child, Family & Community	Service Learning	0-12	Varies - community based settings - that student chooses	15
***EDU 144- Child Development I	Child Case Study	0-3	Observation of child from 0-2 years of age	3
***EDU 145 Child Development II	Child Case Study	3-12	Observation of child from 3-12 years of age	3
*EDU 146 Child Guidance	Guidance Observations (6)	2-8	Various settings – child care, school and/or family settings	3
**EDU 163 Classroom Management	Classroom Observations	K-5	Public School Classrooms	3
***EDU 173 Becoming a Professional	Service Learning	0-12	Varies - community based settings - Education Club chooses	15
EDU 184 Early Childhood Practicum I	Preschool Practicum Reggio Project Approach	3-5	Child Care or Family Child Care Home	3 hrs per week=48
**EDU 216 Foundations of Education	Observations	Grades K-12	Public School	5+
***EDU 221 Children with Exceptionalities	Child Case Study	0-12 (a child with special needs)	Inclusive classroom	3+
*EDU 234 Infant/Toddler and Twos	Infant/Toddler Observations and Practice	0-3	Child Care or Family Child Care Home	2 hrs per week=32
*EDU 280 Literacy Experiences	Service Learning: Literacy activities and assessments	3-5	Head Start	10
*EDU 284 EC Capstone Practicum	Lab hours - Practice	0-8	Child Care or Family Child Care Home or Public School	160
**EDU 285 Internship Experience SA	Lab hours - Practice	K-5	Public or Private elementary school	160

# In planning field experiences do you take into account . . .



- **Type of program** (e.g., child care, PreK, Head Start)?
- **Children served** (e.g., cultural, linguistic, and ability diversity)?
- **What you want students to learn** (e.g., knowledge, skill, dispositions)?
- **How the field experience will mesh with the course experience?**

**93% of programs preparing early childhood teachers do not require a student teaching experience in a setting they describe as 'diverse', 'multicultural' or in some other way that suggests the program expects the student teacher will gain experience with children of color, second language learners, children from many cultures and ethnicities, and immigrant, poor and special needs children.**

from Ray, Bowman, & Robbin

# Finding

**Offering students the opportunity to experience diverse field placements within a supportive context has been shown to expand their thinking about teaching and learning and to push them to develop their own sense of themselves as early childhood teachers.**



*from Recchia, Beck, Esposito, & Tarrant*





# Anecdotal Evidence

- **High quality field experience sites are hard to find**
- **High quality inclusive field experience sites are even harder to find**

from Camille's conversations with faculty across the country

# Practicum Placement Tips

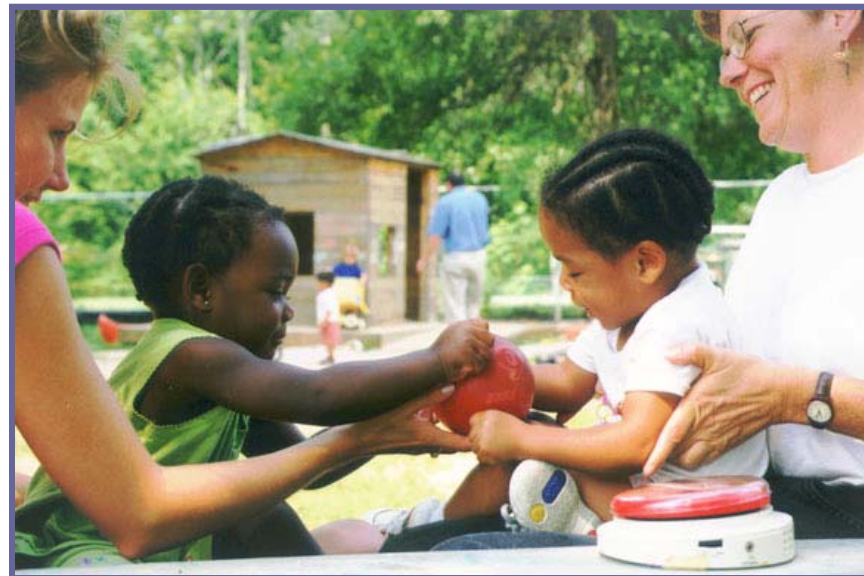
- Who are your stakeholders? Review your advisory committee for relevant practicum placements.
- Attend local child care director meetings, conferences, trainings to network with potential partners for practicum experiences.
- Engage in conversations with your local regulatory consultant for insight on quality environments.
- Contact students prior to the beginning date of class to discuss their schedules and provide workable solutions.

# Practicum Placement Tips

- Think out of the box! Is there Saturday care, second shift care, or family child care homes that would offer the flexibility to meet the needs of the students?
- Does your local school system have Pre-K classrooms? Connect with your exceptional children's program for ability diverse learning experiences for your students!
- Splitting practicum hours is doable—again, think of creative ways to work with students!

# Discussion

## Finding Quality Field Experience Sites: Challenges and Strategies



# Finding

**Institutions lack clear, rigorous criteria for the selection of cooperating teachers – either on paper or in practice.**

from *Student Teaching in the US*

# Expectations for Mentoring or Cooperating Teachers

- Site expectations/criteria
- Mentoring/Cooperating Teacher degree expectations
- Site/Mentoring/Cooperating Teacher Responsibilities
- Provide handbook to Mentoring/Cooperating Teacher
- Provide a checklist for the Mentoring/Cooperating Teacher
- See handouts



# Finding

**Institutions do not take advantage of important opportunities to provide guidance and feedback to student teachers.**

*from Student Teaching in the US*



# Key Ingredients for a Strong Student Experience

- **Set a vision for strong and positive outcomes**
- **Institute high standards for student participation and placement**
- **Provide guidance and evaluation to students**
- **Gather feedback on student placements**

from Student Teaching in the US

# Guidance for field experiences

- Provide clear expectations to our students
- Provide observation etiquette guidelines
- Provide interview guidelines
- Provide permission forms for parents, if needed
- Provide forms for feedback on placement sites and experiences

(see handouts)

# Criteria and guidance for student teaching or practica

- New guidelines for EDU 284/285
- 160 Hours
- Coded as Student Teaching

# Discussion Questions:

1. How do you identify, support, and provide guidance to mentor or supervising teachers?
2. How do you provide feedback to your student teachers?

# Recommendation

**Require prospective teachers to be assessed using valid and reliable tools, provide those teachers with access to assessment results and videos of their practice, and provide research-based strategies for improvement using those assessments (p. 18)**

*from Watching Teachers Work: Using Observation Tools to Promote Effective Teaching in the Early Years and Early Grades*

# Using Observation Tools to Promote Effective Teaching



# Evaluation: Blue Ridge Community College

- Classroom Assessment Scoring System<sup>®</sup> (CLASS).
- Professional Behavior Checklist
- Lesson plan rubric/feedback

See handouts



# Evaluation: South Piedmont Community College

- Observation Checklist
- Observation Record





# Wrap-up



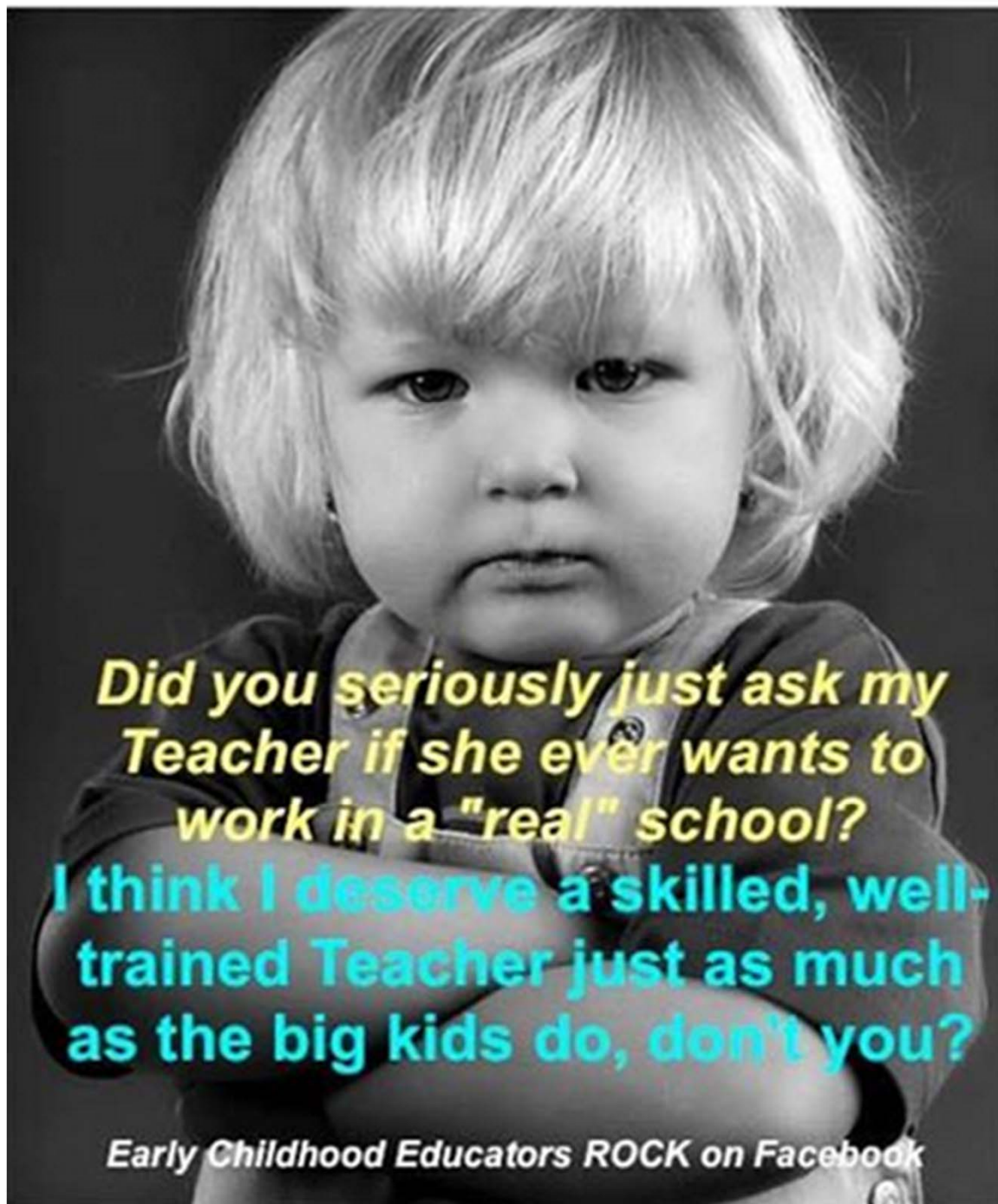


謝謝

Source: <http://www.flickr.com/photos/wwworks/4759535970/>

# References

- Ray, A., Bowman, B., & Robbins, J. (2006). *Educating early childhood teachers about diversity: The contribution of four-year undergraduate teacher preparation programs*. Available on Erikson Institute web site at <http://www.erikson.edu/PageContent/en-us/Documents/pubs/Teacherred.pdf>
- [Recchia, S. L.](#), [Beck, L.](#), [Esposito, A.](#), & Tarrant, K. (2009). Diverse field experiences as a catalyst for preparing high quality early childhood teachers. *Journal of Early Childhood Teacher Education*, 30 (2), 105-122. <http://www.tandfonline.com/doi/abs/10.1080/10901020902885604>
- Guernsey, L., & Ochshorn, S. (2011). *Watching teachers work: Using observation tools to promote effective teaching in the early years and early grades*. Washington, DC: New America



***Did you seriously just ask my  
Teacher if she ever wants to  
work in a "real" school?***

***I think I deserve a skilled, well-  
trained Teacher just as much  
as the big kids do, don't you?***

***Early Childhood Educators ROCK on Facebook***