

POLICY RESERVATIONS:  
EARLY CHILDHOOD WORKFORCE REGISTRIES AND ALTERNATIVE PEDAGOGY  
TEACHER PREPARATION

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## ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

Tree people, those who lose themselves in the earthly smells, vibrant hues, and energizing presence of immaculate plants soaring over them; from childhood, I have been captivated by trees. Tree people can silently identify another and convey understanding that is difficult to articulate; it's in the ways they understand life. A longtime favorite tree, for me, has been the old and wise Sequoia, whose name means "forever living." The similar Redwood tree reaches heights over 300 feet toward the sky, can live to be 2,000 years old, and never truly dies. When the main tree dies, sprouts grow out of the tree forming "fairy rings" (trees that form a ring around the original tree). This magnificent entity has the capacity to live on even after its own death. It became a remarkable metaphor for this professional experience; in this moment, doing this work as only the sprout of professional Redwood lineage. If I accomplish only one thing in this work, it is to call upon the wisdom generously and patiently laid before me by my own family, mentors, guides, friends, and pioneering giants on whose shoulders I am uplifted.

First, I want to deeply thank my dissertation and advisory committees. The individuals who served in these capacities did so impeccably and with keen insight. Dr. David Flinders has been my compass and my map since the day I arrived at Indiana University, without his grounded enthusiasm this moment would not exist. Dr. Mary McMullen is a gift to not only me as a graduate student but the university and field of early childhood research. I have observed, first hand and through peers, her incredible ability to transform a student's desire and intent from a good idea to a profound awareness. Dr. Gary Crow who's talent for guiding leaders and command of educational policy fuels my imagination and Dr. Mellissa Keller who I am indebted to for readily accepting me, unbeknownst our shared foundation.

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If I can be so bold as to dedicate this work, I dedicate it first to my two children. No one sacrificed more, looked on more, loved more and waited more; for you, I hope this work positively energizes the field to decolonize early childhood and recognize the spirit in all “humans-being,” particularly the young and powerful among us. To my husband, for whom there are no words, only profound, loving gratitude and to the beautiful Ginger Kaopuiki and Denise Acklin who turned the first pages of this story and hooked me for life.

Kimberlee Ann Belcher

Policy Reservations:

Early Childhood Workforce Registries and Alternative Pedagogy Teacher Preparation

Due to narrowly defined quality measures, teacher preparation in Montessori, Waldorf, Reggio and LifeWays pedagogies is not recognized in many state ECE professional development systems. The problem is compounded by Quality Rating and Improvement System's child care program ratings, which rely on teacher qualifications as a component of program ratings.

Limitations, due to philosophical dissimilarities pertaining to the spirit of the child, ill-fitting measurements of quality, and policy exclusion make it difficult for alternative pedagogy communities to meet qualifications or to obtain scores that count. This is exacerbated by narrow definitions regarding national versus regional accreditation in teacher preparation programs.

Using a transformative, mixed-methods approach, this study asks, "What is the role and relevance of alternative pedagogy teacher preparation to the professional development system, and where does it fit in the current policy landscape nationwide?" As a follow up question, the study seeks to answer, "What is the process for change?" Through the use of surveys, interviews, and a cultural context model, a way forward is mapped.

Registry policy makers in 28 states and 46 teacher preparation directors, across three types of alternative-pedagogy teacher preparation programs, assisted in data collection, resulting in a recognition baseline. Public sources were used to triangulate a composite snapshot of this national policy situation, demonstrating appropriate policy inclusion in six out of 17 states' career pathways and/or data collection in ECE workforce registries. Cumulative data revealed alternative pedagogy teacher recognition levels across the country and revealed how relevant policies evolved to become system inclusive. The study concludes by inviting community

representatives to respond and to share their experiences and thoughts. Actionable study outcomes, community-developed recommendations, and an advocacy map were circulated in three of four alternative pedagogy communities.

Using a cultural equity paradigm, the study elucidates power relationships between alternative pedagogy teacher preparation and national/state efforts towards ECE professional development and quality improvement policy systems, illuminating where federal and state policy/initiatives are shaping, responding to, and limiting the alternative-pedagogy teacher preparation pipeline in the United States. Recommended courses of action encourage policy collaboration and a cultural shift from policy power over, to power with policy.

*Keywords: early childhood, workforce registry, alternative pedagogy, policy, transformative, Steiner, Waldorf, LifeWays, Montessori, Reggio Emilia, career pathway, cultural equity, spirit of the child*

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Curriculum Vitae

## **Chapter One**

### **Introduction**

#### **Background**

The U.S. Federal Government has provided resources and services to support children from disadvantaged experiences since 1935. Its focus over time has grown to include children impacted negatively by physical, mental, social, economic or family hardship (Welch-Ross, Wolf, Moorehouse, & Rathgeb, 2006). Substantial resources, \$18 billion annually, are invested in assisting these populations; in return, the Federal Government is becoming increasingly aware of and interested in quality and accountability measures regarding this investment (The White House, 2012). In the spring of 2001, President George W. Bush implemented an additional element to the No Child Left Behind Act, called the Good Start/Grow Smart Early Childhood Initiative (GSGS). According to The White House (2012), the GSGS Initiative was designed to address several key concerns for the Federal Government:

1. Federal and State Governments provide billions of dollars in aid to working families with low-incomes each year, much of which is specifically related to child care; concerns have indicated a need to address quality of and access to these programs by eligible families.
2. Most states have “limited alignment” between expectations of preschool children’s skills and abilities necessary to succeed in kindergarten.
3. There has been little evaluation of ECE programs and their efficacy in skill development, presumably needed to succeed in school.

4. Universally, there is insufficient access to or information being provided for Early Care Providers (including Parents, Relatives, Family Child Care, Head Starts, etc.) to help them adequately prepare children for school.

The Good Start/Grow Smart (GSGS) Initiative was implemented by the Federal Government in the form of objectives, with a series of benchmarks that states needed to meet to continue to qualify for federal financial support (Martinez-Beck & Zaslow, 2006; U.S. Department of Health and Human Services, 2006). Virtually all policy related to this initiative falls into three major categories: strengthening Head Start, partnering with states to improve early childhood education (ECE), and providing information to teachers, caregivers, and parents.

The policy section of interest to this study related to “partnering with states” has advanced into two policy systems: they are Quality Rating and Improvement Systems (QRIS), which is the overarching system, and, within that, an ECE professional development system (PDS). Depending on the state, a PDS is sometimes embedded within the QRIS system as a component of the statewide streamlined strategy, folded under another agency, or independently functioning. Both of these systematized efforts to identify, recognize, and reward professionalism have become synonymous with realizing high quality child care (National Center on Child Care Quality Improvement, 2015; Barnett, 1995, 2002).

According to the National Center on Child Care Quality Improvement’s (NCCCQI) QRIS Resource Guide, Professional Development Systems are comprised of components designed to support ECE practitioners by “organizing training opportunities, recognizing achievements, [and] ensuring quality of training... all of which helps make progress toward higher QRIS ratings” (NCCCQI, 2011, p. 3). States have exercised freedom, provided in federal

guidelines, to develop QRIS and PDS systems (and their accompanying policies) to best reflect their communities' needs; consequently, every state's system operates slightly differently while serving the same overarching objective (U.S. Department of Health and Human Services, 2010). The QRIS Network's Resource Guide (2011/2014, pp. 2-3) identifies five components of a QRIS as:

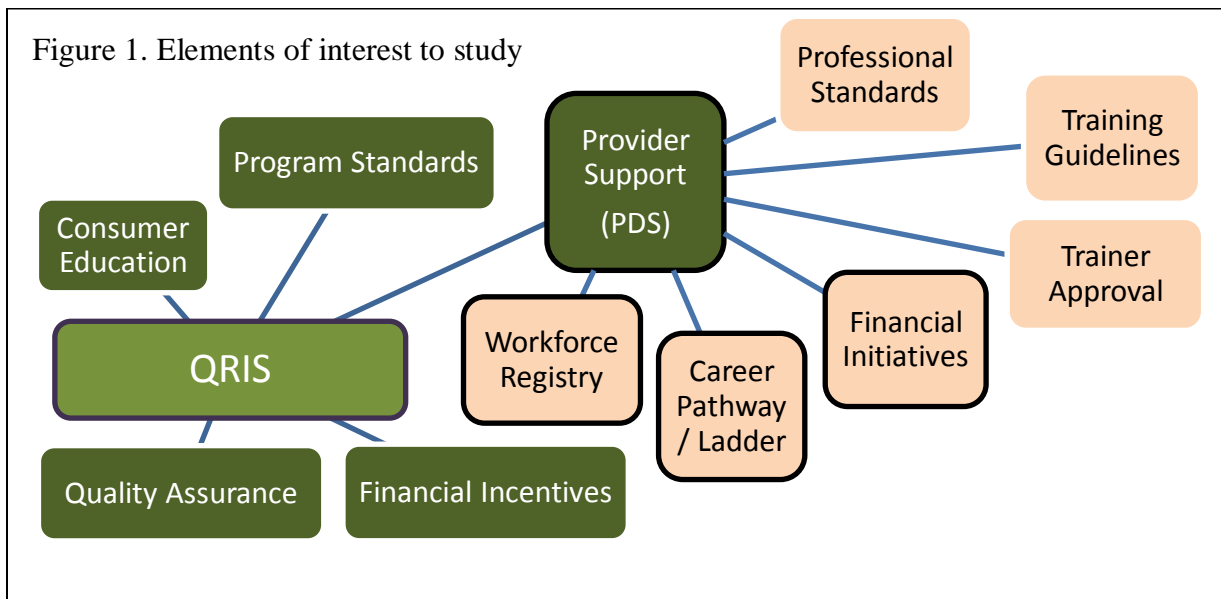
- Standards, grounded in research, by which to assign ratings to programs; often aligned with child care licensing. Usually the system will exceed licensing by at least two levels, with incremental progress towards the highest quality level.
- Accountability, based on benchmarks measuring improvement and assessed through self-studies, on-site visits, document reviews, etc.
- Provider support, in the form of training, mentoring, technical assistance, and participation through a Professional Development System (PDS).
- All statewide QRIS provide financial incentives including increasing Child Care Development Fund subsidy rates, bonuses, grants, awards, tax credits, loans, wage initiatives, scholarships, etc., which are designed to support "Recruit, Reward, Retain" initiatives.
- Framework for consumer education regarding the importance of quality and access to information on quality.

The area of primary interest to this study is provider support, in the form of the Professional Development System. The connection, however, from the professional development system back to QRIS, in the form of child care program ratings, is critical to understand. It essentially means that definitions of recognition for professional investments directly translate in formulas used to rate child care programs; teacher recognition levels

influence school ratings. The Professional Development System is an expanded support network addressing one of five keys to QRIS, as previously described. Informed by the National Association for the Education of Young Children (2010), the six common elements of an ECE Professional Development System include:

- Professional Standards (core knowledge areas for professionals)
- Training Guidelines, Competencies, and Opportunities (access/outreach)
- Trainer Approval (quality assurance)
- ECE Workforce Registries (data collections)
- Career Pathway or Ladders (qualifications)
- Teacher Recognition, Compensation, and Retention Incentives (funding)

The three elements of the Professional Development System of principal interest to this study are: ECE Workforce Registries, accompanying career pathways/ladders, and recognition, compensation, and retention incentives (see Figure 1).



Even though early childhood workforce registries are part of all-encompassing federal mandates to raise quality in early learning across the country, every state has the freedom to make the definitions and system their own. The overarching objective of which is to create a structure whereby states can report on quality indicators for the workforce guiding policy development, research, and future investments. Variables such as education, training, wages, turnover, employment, competencies, and career ladder placement are tracked in this system (National Registry Workforce Alliance, 2013; Early Childhood Professional Development and Education Collaborative, 2011).

While registries are implemented differently in every state, they share many of the same qualities and serve the same ultimate purpose: report on quality, track change over time, and identify which incentives are effective or need modifying. In most states, compensation initiatives and incentives (another QRIS key) aiming to increase quality are tied to Registry Recognition through the federally mandated Career Pathway/Ladder/Lattice (Career Lattice Paper, 2014; Center for the Study of Child Care Employment, 2009; National Child Care Information and Technical Assistance Center, 2008b; Mitchell, 2002).

This career pathway, identifying the evolution of the early childhood professional from a novice to an expert, is used to recognize and guide professional development; it is also used to recruit, reward, and retain quality individuals in the field of early childhood education (Center for the Study of Child Care Employment, 2009; NCCIC, 2008a, 2008b). In sum, we can forecast in the very near future that every state in the nation will have a child care workforce registry (with varied implementation), and each state will have a career pathway recognizing where ECE teacher preparation ranks/places (National Workforce Registry Alliance, 2013). Currently, the



trend is to tie available professional development incentives to registry recognition/career levels. Incentives include professional recognition, scholarships, wage increases, stipends, student loan forgiveness, grants, insurance, refundable tax credits, free training, etc. (Center for the Study of Child Care Employment, 2009; NCCIC, 2008b; Mitchell, 2002; Career Lattice Paper, 2014). The impact on the alternative pedagogy teacher, on the basis of professional recognition, is the focal point of this study.

Currently, there is no available nationwide tracking system providing data on how many alternative-pedagogy teachers there are. Definitions of professional development for early childhood registries look different in every state (National Association for the Education of Young Children & National Association for Child Care Resources and Referral Agencies, 2011). Preliminary research revealed career ladders ranging from 5 to 20 levels. At the time the study was undertaken, some states valued freestanding Montessori teacher preparation, without college credit (obtained outside of institutions of higher education), and recognized it at higher preparation equivalency levels (as high as the Associate in Early Childhood Degree in one state); other states treated it like an Early Childhood Technical Certificate. Many states did not recognize it at all, but why? Further research was deemed necessary to identify where additional alternative-pedagogy teachers, such as Rudolf Steiner-inspired educators and Reggio Emilia-inspired teachers, fit in to state career pathways across the country.

**Statement of problem.** In terms of educational leadership and policy, alternative-pedagogy teachers and schools are a marginalized community, seldom involved in policy dialogue yet impacted in critical ways. In many states, alternative-pedagogy teacher preparation is not recognized at all. Segregation means alternative-pedagogy teachers are not entitled to

training and education scholarships relevant to their pedagogy, recruitment incentives, retention bonuses, wage supplements, student loan forgiveness, or public acknowledgement of quality services. Their placement, or lack of placement, may disqualify them from state and federal counts for quality, increased Child Care Development Fund Percentages, and other incentives previously described (Career Lattice Paper, 2014; Center for the Study of Child Care Employment, 2009; National Child Care Information and Technical Assistance Center, 2008a, 2008b; Mitchell, 2008).

Preliminary inquiry on this topic showed that while some state policy makers and systems value these alternative forms of teacher preparation, others did not. No source or guide to nationwide alternative pedagogy recognition exists. While capturing a national snapshot of alternative pedagogy teacher recognition, this study was designed to create a virtual dialogue between communities who are not regularly in conversation with one another: policy makers, alternative-pedagogy teacher preparation programs, and representational community leaders.

This ambiguity around recognition and policy knowledge makes it difficult for the alternative pedagogy community to rally or to coordinate their efforts. Many small groups and individuals are doing policy advocacy work within states, but it does not correlate to a national plan of action or any organizational affiliation. In some states, this has proven to complicate the policy situation because these well-intentioned individuals are successfully impacting policy, but in a way that is not encompassing of the whole community (e.g., advocating recognition of specific affiliations rather than all accredited teacher preparation programs within the community).

**Role of the researcher.** In transformative research and policy analysis, one of the recommendations for increasing research validity is to begin the work by answering four categorical questions, having to do with philosophical and theoretical treatment of study components (Mertens, 2007, 2009). They are:

- Axiological - asking what is of value, why, and what are the ethical considerations
- Ontological - having to do with what is real/reality, how is reality constructed
- Epistemological - having to do with knowing, the role of the researcher in knowledge creation
- Methodological - regarding goodness of fit, issues of power; objectives and outcomes

In transformative research there are several important questions one must answer before embarking on inquiry. What is the perceived problem; of what value is the problem, and to whom? The background and purpose of the study, as well as the literature review, provide answers to these questions, but it suffices to say that this study is of value to layers of populations (teachers, schools, children, families, policy makers, the field of early learning, teacher preparation programs, and social reconstruction theory). Ontology wants to know, is this problem actually real and for whom? How is the problem structured so it can be discussed and studied more openly? The study relies on public policy analysis to help define the reality, and it draws on community-based and transformative research to situate the problem in the hands of the community members who use self-reporting and their own words to describe the problem, help define it, and identify obstacles. Details in this area are discussed in the conceptual framework and Chapters 4-5.

Epistemological questions are concerned with knowledge. What and how we know; what and how can we know more; what do we want to know? Who knows and whose knowledge counts? This is influenced by multiple perspectives: one important point of view is the researcher's, the one who captures the story. What and how does the researcher know, and how does s/he influence what is known or the knowledge that will be constructed as a result of the research? The "role of the researcher" is a section intended to provide transparency and description of the researcher's qualifications for knowing, as well as defining which populations have knowledge and knowing in this regard. The "Audience and Objectives" section also contains details regarding the construction of knowledge.

What method is the best fit and why; how do the objectives and outcomes match the perceived problem? This information is provided in Chapter 1 under the conceptual framework and in Chapter 3's methods. Essentially, the perceived problem rests on theory from fields such as social-justice, cultural equity, transformational empowerment, and critical theory in public policy, which were used to construct ways to talk about the perceived problem. Because there are defined areas of power, influence of power, and analysis of power, the methods selected for this study deal with creating awareness of power, collaboration in power (power sharing), and empowerment. The methods are intentionally mixed, transformative, and prioritize action-based outcomes.

**My story.** I am a member of at least three dissimilar educational communities. As a Ph.D. Candidate, I represent research and academia. I also represent the alternative pedagogy community and am a former ECE policy maker. Those three communities do not spend much time in conversation with one another. More often than not, they have different vocabularies,

definitions, and practically speak different dialects; even within those communities exist sub-dialects. Putting them all together, in a space to dialogue, is nothing short of complicated. There is a great deal of translating required, both internally and externally, as individuals and groups attempt to discuss their very strong pedagogical similarities (sometimes even within their own cohorts).

As a student-teacher in the 1990s, I observed classrooms in a variety of environments, including Waldorf and Reggio Emilia-inspired classrooms. I am Montessori credentialed in the 3-6 year-old classroom and taught in an American Montessori Society (AMS) accredited classroom between 1996-2002. I was also a preschool assistant director in an Association Montessori Internationale (AMI) recognized school from 2002-2004. After finishing a Masters degree in education, I shifted from working with children and families to working with teacher preparation. I accepted a position as Program Coordinator for a Child Care Apprenticeship Program and later as Program Director for a statewide Teacher Education And Compensation Helps (TEACH) Early Childhood (R) Scholarship Program. This experience gave me unique membership to two distinctly different teacher preparation communities; the traditional institution of higher education path and the child care apprentice/journeyman route. Serving in this capacity, I learned a great deal about the importance of the apprenticeship model to the field of Early Childhood Education and the value of holistic teacher preparation.

My interest pertaining to the inclusion of alternative-pedagogy teachers began in 2002 as I was transferring from a lead teacher position to assistant director in a small, private Montessori preschool. At the time, I was also finishing my thesis for a Masters degree. I was leaving one Montessori preschool for a vertical position in another. The preschool I was joining was going

through state re-licensing at the same time a new ECE “Workforce Registry” was being implemented by the state (administered by the state’s child care licensing office). For the most part, the process was no more difficult than collecting verification of each staff member’s diplomas, Cardio-Pulmonary Resuscitation/First Aid credentials, and hours of attendance at training/conferences. However, under new workforce registry definitions, our current director no longer “qualified” as the school’s director.

Although our director had held the position for several years, her internationally recognized AMI Montessori teacher preparation was from a free-standing institute that did not culminate with an institution of higher education (IHE) diploma or college credits. Her teacher preparation was not completed for college credit; she only had an accredited Montessori credential. She was also a highly regarded Montessorian in the community. I left the school two years later to take another vertical position in a different state; she resigned shortly thereafter.

In 2004, I moved into a Program Coordinator position for an Early Childhood Apprenticeship Program (a U.S. Department of Labor workforce program of training and education, administered by the Bureau of Apprenticeship and Training, resulting in an ECE Technical Certificate). I arrived to work in a state that was just beginning to unfold their ECE Workforce Registry. Upon inquiry, I was told the program was too young to address issues related to Montessori teacher preparation at that time. The following year, I was hired as Program Director for a Statewide Early Childhood Scholarship Program; at that time, I was invited to serve on the Advisory Committee for the Workforce Registry.

I requested the topic of Montessori teacher preparation, without an IHE diploma, be placed on the agenda for an upcoming advisory committee meeting. The topic set off an

energetic discussion, with some committee members questioning the validity of Montessori preparation programs, quality of the teacher, and equivalency of the curriculum. Concerns captured in the minutes in the final meeting represent some of the tension and uncertainty regarding inclusiveness, as evidenced in the following comments, “If the committee decides that this is acceptable, then anyone who presents a case will have to be considered, and we could ruin the credibility of the program.” Related to questions of teacher “quality,” another member said, “One thing Montessori directors of Nevada will need to consider, if they receive any kind of Title I dollars, is that anyone who’s an assistant has to be ‘highly qualified’ (which means that they have 48 college credits).” Regarding the mentored practicum, as related to ECE preparation equivalency, another member said, “If the Registry accepts hours of practicum as equivalent to college credit, couldn’t someone on the Registry make the connection, ‘Hey, I’ve been working in the field for 20 years. Isn’t that the same as practicum?’”

The Advisory Committee was comprised of roughly 20 individuals, five of whom represented different IHEs (20%). At that time, a portion of the committee initially agreed that Montessori education was a theory or an approach to childhood, but training was not “based on research” and not “Quality” measurable. Due to the nature of the professional development outreach I was doing for the scholarship program, I simultaneously organized and held meetings in different parts of the state to generate a grassroots movement, grow interest, and impart ownership within the Montessori community. After facilitating meetings for months, I represented the Montessori Directors, as a cultural broker, in an appeal to the Registry committee’s Montessori recognition. The topic was placed on the Committee’s agenda.

In May of 2006, after providing teacher preparation albums, teacher preparation curricula, trainer descriptions, state comparisons, training hour comparisons, and research-backed corroborating testimony, the Registry Advisory Committee voted to assign Montessori-credentialed teachers with MACTE accredited certification (received outside of an IHE), to a level just below an Associate Degree (the same preparation level as 30 credits of ECE). Montessori teachers were to be recognized at the same level as the Child Care Apprenticeship Program's graduates, for which I had previously been a Program Coordinator. Shortly thereafter, I left the state to pursue a Ph.D. Nine years later, the statute reads, "Montessori training evaluated on an individual basis." (Disclosure: not all members of the Registries' Advisory Committee will recollect the unfolding of this event in the same way. The expression of this narrative is to share my perspective of what occurred and is based off of meeting minutes.)

As a former state policy maker, alternative pedagogy representative, and current Ph.D. Candidate, I have spent the last eight years closely observing this recognition inequality replicate across the country. In many states, I found that little-to-no recognition was given to alternative-pedagogy trained teachers, who graduated from freestanding institutions without college credit. There are also states in which the exact opposite position exists; for example, states where teachers without college credit but with accredited Montessori credentials are recognized on higher levels. In one state, recognition levels were equivalent to an Associate Degree.

Several concerns come to mind: What causes this disparity in professional definitions? How many people are being impacted? Who gets to benefit and who decides that? How are policy makers coming to these definitions and conclusions? What is informing these decisions and how are they applying that knowledge? What other commonly recognized but non-



traditional Early Childhood teacher preparation program models are being marginalized? How will this activity impact the future of alternative-pedagogy choice in the U.S.? What are the ramifications for this population? What can be done about it?

As a member on the fringe of these communities, I represent them by the fact that I came out of them, but I am no longer an active member in them. I am neither employed by the state nor by the university, and I was not sponsored to conduct this study. I am, however, fluent in the dialects of these communities, the realities in which they exist, and the processes through which they interact. I have strong relationships in many states as a result of being a military spouse and moving frequently; I have lived in 13 states. Cross-community collaboration is important to me; I value finding ways to bridge gaps in understanding and strengthening relationships. As such, I sought a transformative research framework in which to embed a mixed-methods study; it is an effort to use this platform for more than just examining issues. I also wanted the study to act as a catalyst for cultural equity (Almeida, 2013).

From the perspectives of theory, research, and literature, the role I assumed as the researcher is one of cultural broker (Jezewski, 1990; Jezewski, 1993; Jezewski & Sotnik, 2001). Cultural broker is a term originating in anthropology but gained traction in the medical field, and it refers to an intermediary or person acting to facilitate activity between individuals or groups with vastly different cultural compositions. Cultural brokers are often identified by their capacity to ascertain and articulate where diverse communities are alike and different; acting in this role, the cultural broker can be a powerful facilitator of understanding and exchange. My unique qualifications based on experience, education, training and knowledge, make me a good fit as a cultural broker for the intended data collection and anticipated outcomes of this research.

**Audience and objectives.** The study's audience is primarily state and federal policy makers, alternative-pedagogy teacher preparation communities, their representative leadership, and researchers. The objectives of the study are to identify data, trends, barriers to progress, allies, and to recommend a course going forward. This study was designed using key language intended to probe awareness and critical thinking, to facilitate allied relationships, and to encourage community-based problem solving among policy makers, teacher preparation programs, and key community leaders. Study outcomes include kindling critical thinking and talking openly about this policy situation in terms that prioritize it as an issue, validate it as a reality, and encourage examination in terms of cultural and social equity. The direct aim was to collect information needed to create a baseline for defining the policy problem and to devise a nationwide strategy for overcoming the policy situation.

### **Purpose of Study**

This study is an examination of policy systems, power, advocacy and social justice; its objective is to contribute to overcoming a complex institutional inequity. The indirect purpose of this research is to use a transformative research framework to initiate virtual discourse between policy makers and alternative-pedagogy teacher preparation programs with the intention of introducing, delineating, and laying the foundation for future policy change. The direct purpose and results of the study will strengthen the definitions, scope, and boundaries of this issue.

As a nation, a people, we come from different places/different spaces and diverse cultures with unique histories; it is only natural, going forward, for us to want different things. The freedom to answer this question, "Who do we want young children to grow up to be," and to

allow families to answer this question as they best see fit, is the soul of democracy. That question is further rooted in philosophy, theory, and practice in curriculum discourse (Evans, 1975; Flinders & Thornton, 2009; Noddings, 2007; Pinar, 2004). It also brings forward the more pertinent question, “What do we gain and what do we lose in total standardization of early care and education teacher preparation, methods, delivery and curriculum models?” Without variation in our schooling, in our education, curriculum or methods, in our teacher-preparation, what do we have?

**Research questions.** The proposed research questions are: “What is the role and relevance of alternative-pedagogy teacher preparation to the early childhood professional development system, and does it count? Where does alternative-pedagogy teacher preparation fit in the current policy landscape? What is the process for changing it?”

The questions are a reflection of the macro-question regarding the relevance and role of alternative pedagogy to the field of ECE itself; historically, these “alternative” pedagogies are at the foundation of this field. Montessori’s and Steiner’s pedagogies unfolded just over 100 years ago, in the footsteps of the Father of the Kinder-Garden, Froebel; even Piaget, as the President of the Swiss Montessori Society was deeply influenced by Montessori’s legacy (Goffin & Wilson, 2001; Kramer, 1976). Dewey and Vygotsky were exceptional theorists, but the pedagogies in this study, while similar in philosophy, move into theory and practice as teacher preparation defined by observable competencies in the classroom. After a century of practice, are they still significant today? What do they offer the ECE field-at-large? Have they been fully examined, understood, implemented, or reached their maximum potential?

To bring the inquiry full circle, what do we have if we do not recognize alternative-pedagogy prepared teachers? What is the impact of their exclusion? What will be lost without their contributions? We do not yet know the answers to these questions; we must begin with a baseline for the discourse. Understanding how current ECE policy makers relate to alternative-pedagogy teacher preparation programs opens up dialogue for other relevant lines of reasoning.

**Need for research.** The necessity of this study is layered in theoretical application, policy evaluation, and social justice advocacy. The work proposed in this study is required to move speculation about how alternative-pedagogy teachers are being recognized into data that can define conversations related to policy definition, enforcement, evaluation and evolution. Without the data, interviews, and shared experiences, the conversation continues to appear insignificant and without substance (a few “isolated” cases versus a trend). Teachers with alternative-pedagogy certification risk not being recognized as having ECE teacher preparation and asked to start over in the community college system with coursework that does not reflect their pedagogical values, existing knowledge, experience, classroom/school, and professional orientation. While that situation is idiosyncratic, it requires more than a “compelling story” to change history. Almeida (2013) described this strategy thus:

...regardless of the presenting problem or the site of service delivery, the institutional legacies and policies of power, privilege, and oppression are more effective when undertaken at a systemic level rather than at the level of client service, where the pressing needs of clients are less likely to become excuses for not examining these issues (p. 3).

This study aims to capture the policy landscape as we know it at this time, serving as a snapshot and a catalyst to minimize “othering” in favor of respectful community building.

To adequately inform policy makers, recommend policy changes, and advance advocacy agendas, three distinct communities (state registries, alternative pedagogies, and researchers) needed more information. Beyond the realities of policy evaluation and change, this study is a contribution to the field of policy research because it utilizes foundation in theory and application provided by Almeida (2013), Dunn (2004), Forester (1989, 1993), Mertens (2009), McLaren (2009), and Warren (2009). It is a testament to the social justice lens utilized in a policy context to transform institutional oppression into community empowerment and recognition.

It would be remiss to imply this study can be done without objection to interpretation, definition, or translation; it is not an easy task taking languages from many different cultures and translating them back and forth in an attempt to advance an advocacy dialogue. It is rare for an individual to possess membership in so many disjointed communities. I do not claim membership in every community, but what I do understand helps convey meaning between multiple languages and cultures. While admittedly lacking full knowledge, an attempt was made to represent multiple perspectives at the policy table, even in their absence. This skill—the ability to understand many languages, cultures, and customs and to link their concepts, values and priorities to those in another community—is something unique I bring to the study. Even at the risk of failing, I felt a sense of obligation to attempt to use this capacity, to bring to light the magnitude of this issue; it seemed almost necessary, as something much larger than individual stories were presumably at work, possibly related to “structural machineries of power and privilege” (Almeida, 2013, p. 2).

Conducted successfully, this study stands to influence significant policy changes across the country that will change the lives of potentially tens of thousands of teachers, their families, and their schools. This impact would, in-turn, change the lives of innumerable children. Long-range implications of this study could contribute to a radical change in the acceptance of “alternative-pedagogies” as allies in the professional development and education movement. If the study acts only as a catalyst in helping the traditional and alternative educational communities, as a whole, see themselves and one another as family, support, and resources for collaboration, it could be worthwhile.

A long-term possibility, as a result of this study, is the inclusion of Montessori, Steiner-inspired, and Reggio-Emilia inspired teachers in state systems, allowing them access to an equivalent percentage of scholarship dollars and other monetary incentives to support training and education in their chosen pedagogical preparation. A paradigm shift of this magnitude has not yet occurred in this country in terms of policy and system building. If that movement should take place (the inclusion of the alternative-pedagogue), it could provide increased contact to “alternative pedagogy education” for families who value this form of education but cannot afford access to it, as opposed to remaining an elite option for affluent families.

**Significance of the research.** Anticipated outcomes of this study include the illumination of power relationships and an identifiable course of action to correct a structural oppression/policy-based injustice, the basis for which are the foundations of critical pedagogy, critical theory in public policy, cultural equity, participatory and community-based action research, and transformative paradigm research (Almeida, 2013; Chevalier and Buckles, 2013; Forester, 1989, 1993; Joseph, Braymann, Windschitl, Mikel, & Green, 2000; Mertens, 2007,

2009). The objective is to identify common issues, possibly patterns, and promote dialogue that can be further addressed in future advocacy work.

As an example, in *Reforming Schools*, Goodman (2006), referred to a coalition of progressive educators who focus too narrowly on their differences rather than on their commonalities. Similarly, I refer here to ECE Progressives who want to see quality and accountability advancements but have different ways of saying, doing, or envisioning the same objective. In this case, alternative pedagogies have much to gain in recognition by the ECE professionalism movement, assuming they are not exiled. So, too, does the ECE professionalism movement stand to gain validity in alternative pedagogy's extensive, time-tested applications of quality care and teacher preparation (Paris, 2012; Roopnarine & Johnson, 2009).

This study contributes to the fields of transformative research and evaluation by utilizing what are substantial societal constructs alienating people and adapting them to represent a distinctly different marginalized community. It supports the field of community-based participatory research methods by contributing to the discussions and adding to examples of theory into application (Mutua & Swadener, 2004; Tuhiwai Smith, 2000). In discussion related to limitations and methods are references to what worked well and where there was tension. For the field of Critical Pedagogy, this study is another demonstration of why it is simply not enough to examine an issue. This study was founded on the premise that it would not be sufficient to only ask questions, gather data, and submit for publication. The effort of going beyond the examination to connect the findings to actual communities who will use the information for real advocacy efforts cannot be sufficiently underscored.

For early childhood policy makers who need more information to be informed but do not have time to access material; for alternative pedagogy preparation programs wanting to know more and understand better the implications of this policy situation; for the leadership who cannot get the momentum gathered to move from dialogue into actionable items, this study provides the required groundwork. Potentially, the study goes beyond this measure of application to contribute to academic knowledge, policy evaluation, or advocacy work as an example that could be translated to similarly marginalized communities in adaptive contexts.

A summary of the findings and recommendations of this study were provided to and discussed with the Registry Office in each state; the WECAN and AWSNA Boards of Directors; the Founder and Director of LifeWays North America and its Board of Directors; the Dean of the School of Education for Webster University and the North American Reggio Emilia Alliance; the Executive Directors of AMI/USA and AMS; the Executive Director, President, and Board of MACTE; the National Child Care Workforce Registry Alliance; and the National Office of Early Care & Education.

### **Conceptual Framework**

All of the work undertaken in this study is viewed through the liberation lens provided in Freire's *Pedagogy of the Oppressed* (1970), in which Freire discussed the relationship between the "colonizer and the colonized." In this case, the marginalized voice are the Alternative Early Childhood Pedagogies (Montessori, Reggio Emilia, Rudolf Steiner-Inspired Education), and, based on my experience, the platform of privilege for the ECE Policy Maker. At its core, this study examines the reality of "othering" in an ECE policy context, as it relates to non-traditional teachers and their preparation programs. The conceptualization of this study is supported by



Almeida's 2013 article "Cultural equity and displacement of othering," an online publication for the Encyclopedia of Social Work. In this article, Almeida expertly unravels the theoretical implications of core issues related to this study by first describing it in this way:

'Cultural equity' encompasses the multiplicity of personal, social and institutional locations that frame identities in therapeutic practice as well as the classroom by locating these complexities within societal matrix that shapes relationship of power, privilege, and oppression. Forgoing cultural competency for a cultural equity framework requires analysis and interruption of the 'otherizing' process inherited through multicultural discourses and the legacies of colonization. (p. 1)

Almeida continued to expound on the following components used to "reveal transformative potential" (p. 1) using specific techniques. This study draws from all of these practices:

- Education for critical consciousness
- Accountability through transparency
- Community-learning circles
- Progressive coalition building
- Usage of action strategies

The study is conceptually driven by a desire to include a multitude of perspectives. In an effort to prioritize a marginalized voice/community's perceptions, I utilize the "transformative paradigm" described in Mertens' *Transformative Research and Evaluation* (2009). Mertens (2009) described the transformative paradigm as "...a metaphysical umbrella with which to explore similarities in the basic beliefs that underlie research and evaluation approaches that have been labeled critical theory, feminist theory, critical race theory, participatory, inclusive,

human-rights-based, democratic, and culturally responsive” (p. 13). The transformative research paradigm is founded on the scholarly writings of prominent members of the previously described, culturally-complex communities.

**Transformative research paradigm.** Transformative research and evaluation operates with four basic components described consistently as axiology, ontology, epistemology, and methodology. Mertens (2007) described the beliefs as “providing the overarching framework for addressing issues of social justice and consequent methodological decisions” (p. 212). The meaning of those beliefs can be characterized with a simple question representing each variable.

Ontological deals with reality and “what is real?” In this area, one might question whose values are shaping reality; how does one know this problem is real? Epistemology has to do with knowing and the construction of knowledge; from whom does one need to hear to confirm knowledge is accurate? In methodology, there is an explicit need to insure there is an interactive link between the researcher and the researched; questions in this regard include which methods can be used to best represent the cultural complexity, historical context, and power relationships in this inquiry; how can we best “capture this reality?” Axiological representation has to do with ethics and power relationships. When addressing axiological beliefs, it is important to ask the researcher, “What is your relationship with the community(s) and how will you address ethical issues in complex community?” (Mertens, 2007, p. 215).

Transformative research is a strong framework for use in evaluating policy, particularly in terms of advocacy work because it prioritizes the marginalized perspective and voice. One of the difficulties in using transformative research as the theoretical application, in this context, is that it rests on the shoulders of giant social inequality movements. Critical social theory

(systemic oppression theory), feminist theory, critical race theory, queer theory, indigenous theory, etc., are the application of vital perspectives on equality and discrimination; the cross-reference of those vantage points, in reference to the communities under examination, may appear to overreach. Comparing the discrimination, institutional bias, and oppression of minorities, women, gays and lesbians, or indigenous communities to the communities in this study risks appearing to trivialize the magnitude of that experience or give the impression this study is exaggerating the reality for the communities involved, particularly when Montessori communities are often characterized by outsiders as self-absorbed elitists and Steiner-inspired communities as ungrounded hippies (Twine & Warren, 2000; Swisher & Tippeconnic, 1999).

**Critical pedagogy.** A natural bridge between the highly scholarly writings on critical theories and this study is the inclusion of critical pedagogy, which aims to create a reality-based, grounded application for institutional and educational awareness of institutional bias and structural oppression at every level (Torres, 1989). Critical pedagogy was founded on philosophical and theoretical foundations, as much critical theory work is, but takes the application of theory a step further (Kincheloe, 2005; Dumas & Anyon, 2006). Critical pedagogy emphasizes more than a critical examination; it calls for action in the application of knowledge and understanding. Radical Critical Pedagogy, of the sort Peter McLaren wrote, is criticized for its activist approach to change but also recognized for its praxis orientation. A particularly poignant and study-relevant description of critical pedagogy is provided in this example, "...whether or not knowledge matters is controlled by whoever has the power; in other words, knowledge is never a value-free body" (Thomas, 2014, blog post).

Similarly, as Apple, Freire, Ladson-Billings, McLaren and Palmer have written about, learners are not empty beings, awaiting the deliverance of knowledge, but rather cooperative in the learning process. I am applying a similar framework to alternative-pedagogy teacher preparation and policy making. I am referring to the inclusion of non-traditional ECE teachers' preparation programs as collaborative builders regarding policy making and the professional development process. Their unique perspectives on spirit in education, capacity to carry philosophical intention into practice, and well-defined framework for reproduction through a teacher pipeline may hold implications for conversations across diverse perspectives on how and where to lead children or prepare teachers.

As discussed more deeply in the Literature Review, accredited alternative pedagogies contain many of the exalted characteristics prominent modern critical pedagogues call for in the application of public education (Apple, 2006; Freire, 1970; Ladson-Billings, 1995; McLaren, 2009; Palmer & Zajonc, 2010). They are elements that reach beyond the academic curriculum, skill test, or achievement board and prioritize issues related to eco-social justice education (Wolk, 2007). It is a critical pedagogy framework that reflects Gardner's mind for the future (2006), Giroux's democracy (1981), and Eisner's educational engagement (1994, 1998). Alternative-pedagogy teaching demonstrates the "caring approach to education" Nel Noddings (1992) wrote about and the "culturally/responsive" teaching of Bowers and Flinders (1990). Maxine Greene (2000) wrote extensively about the interconnectedness of the individual to the rest of humanity, referring to curriculum content that addresses more than, "Who is in our community?"

Alternative pedagogies require, of both children and teachers alike, an emotional, social, and conscientious demonstration of competencies connecting to Self, the community at-large, the environment, and the world. In these pedagogies, references toward outward manifestations of power-sharing found in the most exquisite schools and classrooms are expected competencies and observable measures of quality. It is an adult/child power relationship that cannot be replicated in a system whereby teachers are not empowered or their pedagogies are invalid. It is, in fact, the power relationship that sets these pedagogies and their theoretical/conceptual framework apart.

One of the underlying beliefs that may have contributed to conflict in this dialogue between traditional and alternative teacher preparation is the core cultural-handling of power. For example, Michael Apple's (1995, 2006) work spoke in depth about central control of power through education. In this case, the alternative pedagogies described recognize a special source of power, the right to control that power, and they placed it in the hands of the child. This metamorphosis of power handling is reflected in power positioned in the hands of the teacher; the power teachers hold is shared by the school, parents, and community. It is tangible and observable in classrooms. It is not the power to impart but, rather, the power to inspire, to nurture and protect. This difference in handling power creates a framework that places these forms of education in a completely different realm from traditional early education quality efforts. Fundamentally, these pedagogies are striving to change the trajectory of humanity through different applications of power relationships and therein lies the possibility of tremendous potential for the field as a "coalition."

If we could ask Greene, Noddings, Apple, Bower, Freire, and Giroux, “What is knowledge?”, their cumulative answer (probably related to power) would most closely be found in the praxis of alternative models of education that already exist in this country. The question remains, what value do state policy makers perceive these educational models to hold in terms of professional development? Transformative Research was selected to investigate this question, as the framework to design, implement, interpret, and apply findings from this study. The rationale lies in a description borrowed from Greene and Caracelli (1997), to “...offer [an] opportunity for reconfiguring the dialogue across ideological differences and thus have the potential to restructure the evaluation context” (p. 24). Here we have multiple power differentials that are not well understood; through better appreciation and articulation, we can attempt to level that.

**Community-based research.** Based on the critical framework and scholarly lens, it was fitting that a community-based participatory research (CBPR) model be explored. CBPR research is different from other models in that it prioritizes the participation of all stakeholders, encourages transparency, and emphasizes equality in knowledge capital. The CBPR structure is also a methodology that stresses conducting research that goes beyond the submission of an academic article or publication to include or to provide a community with tools to transform their reality, particularly in terms of policy and organizational changes (Andrews, Newman, Meadows, Cox, & Bunting, 2012; Mackety, 2012; Strand, Marullo, Cutforth, Stoecker, & Donohue, 2003).

While this study is informed by community-based participatory research processes, the realistic limitations of this stage of research (being a dissertation) did not allow for a classical replication of those methods. For example, it would have been better to spend more time

allowing the communities to build up their relationships with one another, to invest in the problem definition and inquiry process. It could have been powerful to include the teachers' stories. It may have been interesting to maintain a small "state" case as a pilot and put forth a recipe for replication, but it did not reflect the overtones of the original research questions, which included garnering a policy landscape portrait. CBPR did, however, inform and influence the study to include multiple perspectives, to give equal weight to the varying perceptions, and rests heavily on outcomes intended to influence the community beyond the close of the study by providing them with contacts and tools to move their agenda forward (Miheuah, 2005; Tuhiwai Smith, 2006).

## **Definitions**

**Accredited alternative pedagogy teacher preparation** - a set course of systematic instruction and training in a specific pedagogy, to include:

- 1) adult coursework from a set curriculum that covers philosophical, theoretical, and methodological content
- 2) child or classroom observation and record keeping
- 3) practicum or classroom practice

In this study, the focus is on alternative pedagogy preparation programs not commonly found in institutions of higher education, which provide teachers with pedagogy-specific training, experience, and education; thus resulting in widely known teaching credentials qualifying them to teach in their specific educational community. For consistency, all programs referred to in this study are accredited/member-recognized teacher-preparation programs; although unaccredited programs do exist, they are not examined in this study.

**Anthroposophy** - Literally meaning “anthropos” (man) and “sophia” (wisdom), from Urmacher (1995). Also called “Study of the Spirit” and referred to as the “wisdom of the human being,” the founder for this study was Rudolf Steiner. The term, its meaning and context, are deeply tied to the educational philosophy of Steiner-inspired pedagogies. Teacher preparation, methods of normalizing, and curriculum are informed by a doctrine based on educational theory, including knowing/understanding the human spirit.

**Child Care Workforce** - Professionals who work in the field of Early Childhood Care & Education, providing full/part-time care/instruction and before/afterschool care for children between the ages of 0-8 years. They work in a variety of distinctly different



settings, including: child care centers (which may be for profit or non-profit); public preschools; Head Start Programs; family child care homes, and unregulated primary care providers. Twenty-four percent of the total field work in centers, while 76% work in licensed and unregulated home-based settings (Burton, et al., 2002).

**Child Development Associate Credential (CDA)** - A training program developed in 1971 that attempted to create a national standard for teachers of young children. Training is comprised of 120 clock hours of workshops, in a classroom or online setting, related to achievement in 13 core competencies (safety, nutrition, creativity, etc). Teacher evaluation is conducted through portfolios and teacher-trainer observations. The CDA credential is good for three years. This is the most widely recognized ECE training program available, outside institutions of higher education, and it is the most common entry level in a professional recognition system or ECE workforce registry (Council for Professional Recognition, 2012 a, b).

**Curriculum** - The “what, why and how” of educational objectives. In this study, “alternative curriculum” refers to programs that do not have traditional intentions nor utilize traditional educational methods/intent but that do have their own program-specific techniques, which require specialized preparation, relationships, environments and materials to implement accurately, as well as to teach.

**Early Care & Education (ECE)** - (also referred to as early learning and early childhood education) The full or part time care and education, including before and after school care, for children ages 0-8 years old.

**Freestanding Institution** - Teacher preparation programs not affiliated with, housed by, or operated in partnership with an institution of higher education.

**High Quality Child Care** - The definition of “high quality” is one that can be hotly contested in alternative pedagogy communities for its capacity to confuse factors contributing to quality with observable features of quality (Ramey & Ramey, 2006). In this study, the term is not used as a definition but as a formula measured with observable features (Cross, 2004, p. 164). As specific variables associated, correlated with, or aligned with increasing the quality of child care pass a threshold for layers of quality, degrees of quality are identified in four elements of the environment (practice, interaction, activities, relationships) (Ramey & Ramey, 2006). Quality variables look different from one community to the next, but common variables associated with increasing quality include (but are not limited to): levels of teacher preparation, types of curriculum, application of developmentally appropriate practices, and culturally sensitive practices, existence of literacy rich environments, safety and nutrition, teacher experience, etc.

**Humans-being** – intended way of reframing the term “human beings” to emphasize the human experience and humanity as a way of existing.

**Institution of Higher Education (IHE)** - A traditional college or university setting.

**Montessori** - Based on Dr. Montessori’s lifework; a philosophy, theory, methodology, and curriculum (complete with materials and training) that focuses on development of the whole child (physical, mental, spiritual, psychological, and academic). Overarching rationale is to cultivate a better human (a complete being) who will bring society to a higher level of functioning and ultimately contribute to comprehensive peace.

**Pedagogy** - The Greek translation of the word literally means to “lead the child.” The modern inferred United States definition is the “art and science” of education, dealing predominately with instruction. In this study, it is used additionally to mean the cumulative objective of five educational components: philosophical foundation, educational theory, curriculum, methodology, and socializing/normalizing of teachers and children.

**Preparation Equivalency** - A comparative framework for teacher preparation programs that vary in adult learner methodologies but maintain similar objectives of preparedness by identifying acquisition of skills and internalized theory and research required to qualify for or be recognized as a variable in the composition of high quality care and education.

**Professional Development System (PDS)** - A component of the Good Start/Grow Smart QRIS Initiative (administered under No Child Left Behind), which aims to support preparation of all children starting kindergarten ready to learn. This portion of the initiative focuses on child care provider support through professional standards, training guidelines, trainer approval, workforce registries, career pathways, and financial initiatives. Every state is federally mandated, under QRIS, to have PDS designed to support, measure, and report on child care workers’ professional acquisitions. This system contains a facet that also regulates what “counts” as professional development.

**Professional Recognition System (PRS)** - (also known as an “Early Childhood Workforce Registry) A generic name that refers to a nationwide effort to inventory and evaluate child care workers’ professional achievements and their demographics. As a component of the QRIS federal mandates from the Good Start/Grow Smart Initiative, many states use

the term workforce registry in their professional development systems. Based on data from the State of Registries Survey, some states mandate participation (21); while it is strictly a voluntary guide in others (14) (National Workforce Registry Alliance, 2013). In some states, recognition of teacher preparation is conducted through general licensing requirements, while others have a separate entity for administration and registration. Workforce Registries normally use a Career Pathway (Ladder/Lattice) or ranking system to identify registered child care providers, based on their “professional” accomplishments. Many states also have benefits, incentives, or monetary stipends attached to career levels (Career Lattice Paper, 2014; Mitchell, 2002; NCCIC, 2008a, 2008b).

**Policy Maker** - A person involved in policy defining, enforcing, modifying, and evaluating.

**Reggio Emilia** - Based on the work of Louis Malaguzzi; a philosophy, theory, methodology, and curriculum (play-based curriculum unfolds as the children direct it) focusing on development of the child, family, and community (emphasis on quality of life, aesthetics, respect for the potential/power/rights in children, and culture). Overarching intention is to raise confident children who co-create knowledge, are grounded in their community, and proficient in their culture, thereby increasing the probability of maximizing their innate potential.

**State Offices of Early Care & Education** - Under the U.S. Department of Health & Human Services is the Federal Office of Child Care. Each state has a liaison Office of Early Care & Education (although the titles differ by state) that administers early childhood policy developments and federal funding disbursements. Specific to Teacher Recognition

Systems/Career Registries, most states have agreements, either through contract or delegation, with another entity that is serving to implement the policies and manage funding.

**Rudolf Steiner-Inspired Education** - Based on intellectual contributions of Rudolf Steiner; a philosophy, methodology, theory, curriculum (head, heart, and hands), and socializing/normalizing process that focuses on development of the whole person (skills/labor, academic/intellectual, culture/art/music, spiritual, and communal). Overarching aim is to raise self-aware children who develop competencies internally (spiritually) and externally (in the world), which ultimately contribute to elevating humanity to a new level of being.

## **Chapter Two:**

### **Review of the Literature**

This review of literature privileges the perspective of the marginalized alternative pedagogy community (APC), as is consistent with the critical pedagogy and transformative paradigm frameworks selected for this study. It is the APC's story, their history, their account, using their language and may not necessarily correlate with traditional mischaracterizations of their communities (Miheusah, 2005; Mutua & Swadener, 2004; Tuhiwai Smith, 2006; Twine & Warren, 2000). As David Kahn (2014), Executive Director of the North American Montessori Teachers' Association conveyed:

When one changes the original language of the pedagogy, in an attempt to find more acceptable phrasing that fits the times or government description for curriculum, there is a kind of reductionism that occurs, a dilution, even loss of intrinsic meanings intended to be conveyed by the philosophy of the pedagogy. Holistic pedagogy has a fullness of expression created by the conceptual unity of its vocabulary—because its linguistic coherence and metaphors are original and avoid the banal use of jargon that one finds in all educational literature which tends to signify nothing. (personal communication)

The lens being applied here is used with the purpose of highlighting (in the words of Ira Shor [1992]) "...traditional clichés, received wisdom, and mere opinions, to understand the deep meaning, root causes, social context, ideology, and personal consequences of any action, event, object, process, organization, experience, text, subject matter, policy, mass media, or discourse" (p. 129).

To engage in conversation about alternative-pedagogy teacher preparation, there are some assumptions that must be explicitly expressed. Montessori, Reggio Emilia and Rudolf Steiner-inspired education are powerful, valid forms of teacher and student education available in both public and private institutions. They are distinctly unlike traditional teacher and student education models in the United States in many ways, and yet paradoxically alike in others. They are also unique from one another in various ways, some philosophically, others in method or curriculum. Yet, in the overarching objective, alternative pedagogies strive for the same goal; one that looks significantly different from their traditional counterparts in answering where we should lead children. It has to do with the sacred role of childhood and the spirit of the child.

All the pedagogical models in this study provide training and education that is distinctly unique and should be considered centrally tenant to their authentic implementation. They each prepare teachers in a manner consistent with their pedagogical values and expected competencies of their teachers. They all provide opportunities for training and education in their respective communities (some more widely accessed than others). This study does not claim they are the same or even so much alike they can be unequivocally pigeonholed together; rather, it focuses on the multitude of commonalities they share beyond their differences.

From the perspective of “policy and leadership” and “curriculum and instruction,” this study considers them a community. This is based on the grounds that they all offer a similarly alternative vision to traditional public education in the United States, with extremely complimentary objectives for where to lead children. It is not, however, an indication that as a cohort they are acting or working in solidarity; they are not.

It was a strategic decision to define the alternative pedagogy community using these four populations as representatives. The basis for this definition rests with language borrowed from Bushouse (2009) regarding “mature coalitions:” “...participants regard themselves as a semi-autonomous community who share a domain of expertise and there are specialized subunits within agencies at all relevant levels...to deal with the topic” (p. 15). A destination of mature coalition is the vision of the alternative pedagogy community for this study, an overarching commonality shared in their unconventional objective for knowledge and education, with unique perspectives and praxis, and uncommon teacher preparation.

### **What is Pedagogy?**

Etymology tells us the word “pedagogy” is derived from the Greek word *pedagogue*, “to lead the child;” one might think such a meaningful term, in the education of humanity, created the fundamental purpose for systematized education. In point of fact, the word “pedagogue” has a controversial history spanning the course of systematic instruction. Initially, pedagogue was a term used by the Greeks to refer to a slave who escorted children between the home and school (Jeske, 2004, p. 155; Salvatori, 1996).

A more complete history and role of pedagogy is provided on early care and education in Lascarides and Hinitz (2011), but its evolution is briefly touched on here. By the 14th century, French and English use of the term pedagogue had grown to a more respectable term for teacher. Conversely, by the 19th century, American and British use of pedagogue evolved to mean a dogmatic instructor who was excessively formal and interested in “book learning” (Jeske, 2004, p. 247). Yet today, in most of Europe, pedagogue is widely used to refer to a child’s upbringing, particularly in “a way that addresses the whole child” (Paget, Eagle & Citarella, 2007, pp. 7-8).



While the European version often includes the parent as the first of many, a pedagogue thus became a practitioner of pedagogy.

In Salvatori's (1996) historical examination of the etymology of "Pedagogy" (1819-1929), she quotes a relevant definition that underscores the seeming obliviousness of the word to the field of modern education:

Insofar as pedagogy's function is not the transmission of immutable knowledge but instead 'the interaction of three agencies – the teacher, the learner and the knowledge they together produce,' pedagogues ought to be theorists who rigorously and responsibly practice the theories they espouse. Moreover, they ought to understand that they and their theories are not the sole 'origins' or repositories of knowledge (knowledge is produced by the interaction of the three agencies), and they need to practice that belief with intellectual integrity.

This means, among other things, that pedagogues need to begin their investigations where learners are, not in condescension or as a beginning to be quickly left behind, but with a passion and an intellectual curiosity about how students think and the language they use to think, that might lead them to recognize their students' work telling examples of knowledge formation (Salvatori analyzing Lusted, in Salvatori, 1996, p. 3-4).

David Lusted (1986) wrote the essay from which that quote was borrowed to explicitly and unapologetically "identify a teaching that is other than merely transmissive" (Salvatori, 1996, p. 2). It was selected, conceptually, for this study to capture almost completely the definition as it applies to the alternative pedagogy communities' vision of education as something beyond the teacher, the instruction, or content; it is the "process through which knowledge is produced...the

interaction of three agencies—the teacher, the learner and the knowledge they together produce” (Lusted, in Salvatori, 1996, p. 3).

**Where are we now?** These nuances in the evolution of the word pedagogy (from leading the child, to respectable teacher; from dogmatic instructor, back into the interaction of three agencies) speak volumes on the diversion in intellectual thought around the development as to “where” we should guide children; the answer to which lies at the fundamental crux of philosophical debate in the field of curriculum and instruction (Flinders & Thornton, 2009; Tyler, 2013).

In 1905, an article written by Stanley Hall, founder of the Child Study Movement in U.S. Psychology and Education, mentioned that pedagogy is a term that (only 20 years prior) was considered “vulgar” and reserved for Normal Schools. Hall underscored that respect for and application of the word pedagogy (at the close of the 19th century) were growing to mean something beyond education for content, moving from “the process by which information is given” to “...education or development from within outward” (p. 1). Hall further defined the relevance of pedagogy by saying, “Education is more humanistic and evolutionary, and aims to unfold all the powers of the individual to their maximum maturity and strength and is essentially cultural; while teaching, learning and didactics generally consist of the transmitting of knowledge...” (p. 1). Montessori and Rudolf Steiner-inspired education movements were developed and expanded during this era (Lascarides & Hinitz, 2011).

In modern educational research, pedagogy is commonly referred to as Who we teach, What is taught, and How we teach it (Lawson & Keegan, 2013; Mortimore, 1999; National Academies Press, 2000; Salvatori, 1996). This does not resonate with Hall’s mention in his

application of pedagogy as creators of knowledge. In an educational research setting in the U.S., the term pedagogy has received 100 years of refinement; perhaps it now stands as the compromise between standards and relevance in learning? But is Hall's pedagogical reference still relevant? Do teachers, in our pedagogical notions of leading children, aim to release all the powers of the individual to their maximum maturity and strength? For the alternative-pedagogy community, this is their calling.

In the field of ECE, is pedagogy still essentially cultural or have we, in fact, succumbed to "teaching and learning as the transmission of knowledge?" Undeniably, our public educational system seeks to lead children somewhere specific; where is debatable. Watkins and Mortimore (1999) extend this hazy definition to include the assumption that pedagogy means something quite different to practicing teachers, educational policy makers, academics and researchers (p. 3).

**Leading young children.** At its historical foundation, the field of early childhood education is essentially spiritual. All the "giants" in early learning advocated nurturing the child's spirit. Some advanced this theory through relationships with caregivers, others with nature, by utilizing the arts, or through religious education, but there was consistently an unequivocal emphasis on spirit at the core of early childhood learning (Lascarides & Hinitz, 2011).

Certainly, with careful reading, it is not a stretch to say that the pioneers in the field—Locke, Rousseau, Pestalozzi, Froebel, Steiner, the McMillan sisters, Dewey, Piaget, Montessori, Erikson (Lascarides & Hinitz, 2011)—would agree on one thing: this one variable (the spirit of

the child) was to be revered above all. Perhaps this is just a Humanist's interpretation.

However, one could argue, should not early childhood be approached with a humanistic posture?

For the past 100 years, there has been tension in two opposing directions (National Academy Press, 2001). Spodek and Saracho wrote about one group "...pressing for a narrow academic curriculum for young children" and the other "...to offer child-centered, whole-child oriented programs" (in Parker-Rees & Willan, 2006, pp. 22-23). During the 1970s, Kohlberg and Mayer pointed to three ideologies in the field of education: a) romantic-child centered, b) cultural transmission-generational knowledge, c) progressive-social relevance (in Parker-Rees & Willan, 2006; 1972). Mortimore's *Understanding Pedagogy* (1999) also discussed this "polarized" and "ill-defined dichotomy" (p. 4) as existing to varying degrees in theory and application/practice. It is the tension and rhythmic tug between curricular and academic preparation at odds with a humanistic, nurturing desire to protect the child from excessive exposure to artificial cerebral experiences.

**Of what matter is it?** Looking back through time, we can also see the evolution of other fields as they related to early childhood. During the Industrial Revolution from 1700 to 1850, social work and medical interest in the children of factory workers was driven by a response in child care that sought to protect children from hard labor, injury, neglect, disease, malnutrition and poverty. The works of Frobel, Steiner, the McMillan sisters, and Montessori, for example, were developed in response to these communities, this context.

In the early 1900s, the field of Psychology was imposing its thoughts and beliefs on how best to deal with childhood. A break occurred at this time, to follow the child's fancy to prevent repression and inhibitions or to raise children with discipline and challenge. The works of

Dewey, Piaget, Erikson, Skinner, and Gestalt insert their perspectives in the field at this time (Kamerman, 2006; Parker-Rees & Willan, 2006).

During World War II, Steiner and Montessori pedagogies suffered tremendously owing to the war. In their own countries, their schools were shut down as a result of their unwillingness to support war efforts and due to their philosophical orientations in opposition of war. Both scholars' pedagogical penchants included teaching concepts that continue to be philosophically opposed to dictating regimes (peace education, social/communal constructs, independent thinking, etc.). This pedagogical exile left the field of ECE with Froebel's early Kinder-garden impressions, which were "re-vamped" by Patty Hill and later through the work of the McMillan sisters who assumed the reins on early care and education and propelled the early learning movement forward in the U.S. using a social work orientation on early childhood (Lascarides and Hinitz, 2011; Parker-Rees & Willan, 2006).

Today, early childhood has been prioritized in ways never experienced in either the field of education or policy. The fight to establish a right way to educate young children, to prepare them for future success in both schooling and career, and to prepare them as empathetic socio-economically oriented citizens has never been more tangible than now. To look at ECE policy, a clear path is being paved, and the determination of where to lead children is at serious risk of minimization without significant activity to advocate for diversity. Many names exist to describe the variation in pedagogical orientations, the focus of this study as described next in this chapter, as an "alternative pedagogy community." In Europe the term for this orientation is social pedagogy (Paget, Eagle, and Citarella, 2007). In the U.S., it is also referred to as the Alternative Education Movement and sometimes unschooling.

## Alternative Pedagogies

The three pedagogies in reference (Montessori, Reggio Emilia and Rudolf Steiner-Inspired Education) have striking similarities; although unrelated, they have similar ambitions. The philosophical underpinning for all three rests on a foundation of oppression and freedom for the child, childhood, and humans-being. All three begin with a truth, that children possess a special kind of power and rights; ultimately, they all strive for social reconstruction. This is an orientation toward the child's spirit and development of the human-being (Bravmann, 2011). Those committed to these pedagogies are bound in philosophy, theory, curriculum, method and focus on normalizing to recognize, protect, nourish, and respect the child's freedom and innate potential. For all of them, it is essentially peace education (Joseph, 2011). Alternative pedagogy is not about peace that implicates an absence of war; it is, rather, the kind of comprehensive peace that promotes "an awareness and opposition to injustice" (Joseph, 2011, p. 247). It is, Joseph wrote, a demand for social and eco-justice by means of affirmation of human and environmental rights.

In a 2002 article, Carolyn Pope Edwards wrote a comparison of what she calls *Three Approaches from Europe*. It is a well-conceptualized, accurate comparison of similarities between the methods and philosophies of Reggio, Waldorf, and Montessori, with one exception. Edwards consistently used the term "approach" to describe these pedagogies throughout her document. This conventional conception of "an approach" has contributed to a growing, misinformed population in regard to the depth, commitment, and intricate detail required to understand the philosophy, theory, method, curriculum and socializing/normalizing required of

teachers, schools, and communities adhering to these "...holistic, fluid approaches to learning" (Bravmann, 2011, p. 120).

An approach, by definition, indicates a way of dealing with something; in this case, childhood. In that fashion, all three pedagogies do have a way of approaching childhood. That approach is situated in a worldview and mindset that requires knowing childhood in a way that prioritizes the child's power before other learning variables. "Whole-Child Approach" would be a more appropriate application for the term "approach" in this context, meaning all of these specialized orientations (pedagogies) provide examples on how to "intertwine cognitive skills with physical, social and emotional systems" based on similar approaches to childhood (Bishop-Josef & Zigler, 2011, p. 87).

Ultimately, application of the word "approach" should be used with caution. Each of these communities of learners will eagerly tell you their pedagogical orientation is significantly more than an approach. It is a complete and comprehensive system thoughtfully and prescriptively designed to nurture, nourish, and protect the most valuable resource impacting the future, "humans-being." They are complete, value-laden commitments through well-articulated philosophical lenses, theoretical frameworks, conceptualizing of curriculums, unique teacher preparation, and heavy integration with the environment. There is a focus on metamorphosis of the individual, teacher and humanity, which can be inspiring but is significantly more than that.

In all of these models, learning is seen as taking place according to an organic unfolding, directed first by the child and in collaboration with the community. The teacher, environment, culture, family and community are working in solidarity. Special emphasis is placed on cultural equity. Family is not a connection to learning but a partner in nurturing and nourishing the

child's and communities' development. The classroom and home are considered an extension of one another. Multi-age groups of children stay with their cohort and teacher for years, creating a microcosm of their own caring and mentoring community. Exceptional value is placed on simply designed, aesthetically pleasing, highly ordered environments, with a preference for natural materials and an appreciation for aesthetics and arts.

In all three program models, children are creators of knowledge through long-term projects and through their own discovery, choices, and exertion. Children have rights to build up their freedom, confidence, and self-knowledge. There is also an expectation of responsibility to one's neighbor and one's neighborhood. Through the use of the senses, emphasis on peaceful living, and relationships with nature, the child's spirit and intellect are fed.

This holistic view of curriculum aims to make children not only proficient at synthesizing information and problem solving, but also at negotiating feelings, developing leadership strategies, and deepening relationships. Furthermore, from the field of divergent thinking, the curriculum does not aim to deliver or assess knowledge but rather aims to create knowledge and contribute to knowing, through active "research," "work," and "creation." Steven Wolk, professor of teacher education at Northeastern Illinois University in Chicago, wrote an article in 2007 in which he discussed "what does school not teach" (p. 652). Paradoxically, the list is a harmonizing inventory of what alternative pedagogy schools directly aim for, as pedagogy:

- A love of learning
- Caring and empathy
- Environmental literacy
- Multicultural community



- Social responsibly
- Peace and nonviolence
- Global awareness
- Creativity and imagination
- Money, family, food, and happiness (critical and moral perspectives)

These distinct variables are the lessons, the curriculum, the educational objectives and competencies alternative pedagogy schools set out to reach. Focus really should not be on alternative pedagogy communities for teaching outside the box; it ought to trouble society that these standards for learning, identified by an alternative pedagogy “outsider,” are not taught in public education. In this regard, Dr. Fyfe, in *Innovations of Early Education* (2004), said:

I am concerned that some of our documents on best practice in the U.S. still have the tendency to narrow and limit our image of the child, boxing them into predetermined expectations about learning. The heavy emphasis on goal driven instruction and assessment is not balanced with an openness to going into uncharted territory with children. (in Gandini & Kaminsky, p. 6)

This sentiment was echoed by Mardell and Carbonara ten years later, in a 2013 issue of *Innovations in Early Education*:

The practices in Reggio Emilia are an existent proof that there is a way to create an outstanding early childhood program, one that relies heavily on assessment of children’s thinking and learning, without the use of standardized child outcome measures. (p.18)

In alternative pedagogy communities, teachers are not testers in any of the three orientations.

They are instead compelled to protect the child and the special role of childhood in the making of

(hu)man-beings. Teachers do not adhere to customary roles. They utilize methodic observation, detailed note taking, photography, portfolios, anecdotal record keeping and the arts to document intimately a child's growth and development. Professional investments are built into each program (as a matter of course) through daily, weekly, and annual training refreshers.

Most importantly, the training of teachers in all three pedagogies requires a teacher to do an exceedingly difficult practice of internalizing the philosophical basis by transforming themselves as both individuals and teachers. This metamorphosis, while not explicitly measured, is most definitively evidenced by the way the teacher has synthesized the philosophical orientation into their own interactions and applications of children and childhood. Simple examples may be identifiable in: teachers who regularly reference the child's rights, for whom the rationale for education rests on liberating the vast potential children already possess, and who embody and emanate a model for peace in their own examination and treatment of power relationships, particularly those with children. It is in how they practice and articulate the rationale for their methods.

What makes these three educational philosophies so desirable is also what makes them unusual. They are founded on a different aim for "who children should grow up to be." This does not make them less relevant; it makes them distinct models. Their teacher preparation programs are different because their institutions rest on an indoctrination that can be undermined in traditional settings. The use of extensive practice, mentored relationships, commitment to memory and self-development required of these teachers is exceptionally intense and supported by research on effectiveness in the classroom (Pianta, 2006). Ultimately, these pedagogies have not yet been fully examined, understood, or implemented by traditional education planners or

policy makers. For if they were, the conundrum of whether or not they support ideals of quality education or teacher preparation could not exist.

**The spirit of the child.** Bravmann devotes an entire chapter to developing the Self and Spirit (2011). In it she carefully deconstructed notions of spirit as lofty or other worldly and grounds them in what is real for the child and the community. She writes:

...this curricular orientation stems from a philosophy that presumes students' natural curiosity as opposed to believing in reward and punishments for learning; it affirms the innate, genuine goodness of humankind to one that sees a need to somehow "make" people good in the face of evil. It may not be so much that the methods of "Developing Self and Spirit" are in such dispute, but rather, that current societal beliefs about the nature of children and humankind are so overwhelmingly out of step with the premises upon which this [dominate] culture of curriculum rests. (p. 122)

During an interview with Cynthia Aldinger, the LifeWays Program Founder and Executive Director, a trend developed that continued to reemerge in each interview that followed (2013). It was not an aspect designed to be measured or to be included in the study. It does, however, lend itself to the essence of alternative pedagogy, their teachers' training and education, and the communal treatment of power. The whole-child movement is built on the insight of the strongest child-advocates in modern history. What that means is described differently in each alternative-pedagogy community but, at its core, requires inclusivity of the child's spirit. The spirit of the child (which simply exists and which has no bearing on religious education in the public domain) is the single most powerful commonality and misconstrued variable these communities share.

When Aldinger (2013) was asked how she talks about the spirit of the child without a religious context, she responded:

Well, we use Steiner's vocabulary: body, soul, spirit. Until people separate these ideas from religion...well, look, religion itself means to re-connect. Re-connect to what? This goes beyond doctrine; this is what it means to be human. You can call it whatever term you want. Call it "emotional," if it fits; but, fundamentally, spirit is what it is to be human. This is part of what we do in our training, "resiliency training." Whatever it is you offer, it is first a gift from a human. First, you must meet my humanity. Yes, of course, we want the academic best for the little people for whom we care, but first, you must see them and they must see you, in your truest form.

Regarding the pedagogical embrace of the 'wholeness' of the child, which includes soul and spirit, it would behoove the policy makers and creators of curricula to pay closer attention to leading edge physics and social sciences. There is a growing body of research noting how bonding and child care based on continuity of relationships has a direct effect on brain development as well as the general health and well-being of children.

This leads me to one of the points I should have made during our conversation. Meeting the child's social/emotional or 'spirit/soul' needs is not a product-driven curriculum! A Young Star evaluator does not come in with a list of 'measurables' for the holistic health and well-being of the child. Rather excellent caregiving may be put at risk by taking away points because a number of things, that are likely over-stimulating in the first place, are not in the environment. (personal communication)

Aldinger uncovers an important component of pedagogy that is rarely discussed—the need to meet children where they are in the socially constructed power paradigm. Here, children’s needs are not universally the same. Using technology as an example, a child coming from an affluent family may have, in their home life, excessive access to technology and screen-time but lack in imaginative opportunity or social activities. Conversely, a child coming from a family for whom meeting basic needs is difficult, may, in fact, have no similar opportunity for technological access outside the classroom. In this regard, policy makers are conditioned to come from a deficit mind-set; policy reflects monetary investments designed to equalize access and opportunity. However, not all communities have the same needs; identifying needs and balancing a response to meet them seems like a far better objective.

This concept, acknowledging a child’s humanity and allowing the child to see the adult’s, is a central tenant of whole-child education (Raver, 2002; Shonkoff & Phillips, 2000). This feeling is echoed in the early childhood literature as it relates to the Whole Child Approach (Davidson, 1998; Newman, 1990; Singer, Singer, Plaskon, & Schweder, 2003; Zigler, & Bishop-Josef, 2006). Bishop-Josef and Zigler discuss that issue by writing, “There is a renewed focus on children’s cognitive and academic development...accompanied by a denigration of play and a lack of attention to other developmental domains, including health and socio-emotional development” (in Zigler, Gilliam, & Barnett, 2011). That it cannot be readily measured should not be justification for its exclusion in preschool standards (Scott-Little, Lesco, Martella, Milburn, 2007); neither should the concept of spirit in education, while abstract in policy realms, make it acceptable to overlook.

Language around what is unique to childhood varies by culture. Brett, in Reed and Walker (2014), referred to child's play as part of "...a meaningful journey they themselves are capable of directing, a journey towards something felt or intuited, just as creative artists have described" (Section 2, Chapter 9). Brett wrote, "The (classic) developmental narrative can be restrictive...one layer of the story.... In looking for these discrete developments, we can miss the child's own developing narrative, which involves the whole self" (Section 2, Chapter 9). This is also what is being referred to in pedagogy directed toward the Spirit of the Child.

Montessori marked the essence of early childhood as the "spiritual embryo" of the human-being (Lillard, 1972; Montessori, 1966). Cunningham discussed spirituality in these terms, "Spirituality is like an inner mirror, marked by wholeness and connection. It connects the whole person with the whole of creation" (p. 23). Spirituality, she indicated, is a critical component of social analysis and culturally responsive pedagogy (2001). Without exception, when the mechanisms by which we measure quality come to view the child as having a spirit, entitled to nurturing and development just like the physical, psychological and emotional aspects of childhood, then will we have obtained a true measure of quality in the classroom. Initially, it may stretch the imagination of the average U.S. ECE policy maker; however, conceptually, the child as a human-being entitled to basic human rights is increasingly acknowledged the world over.

Over a century ago, Montessori and Waldorf initiated discussions about the child's spirit in education. Montessori has entire books devoted to the subject (*The Secret of Childhood*, 1966; *To Educate the Human Potential*, 1989; *Education and Peace*, 1972). Yet Montessori has a unique way of positioning the child as a being with rights in a marginalized existence, dominated

by oppressive adults. It is in this regard that she reaches deeply to the child's spirit. In *The Secret of Childhood* (1966), she wrote:

No one has portrayed a child's unknown sufferings, the turmoil to which his delicate soul is subjected, his failure to attain the goal intended by nature, and the growth within his subconscious self of an inferior man... A new field of scientific exploration has thus come into being about the child. Similar to, but distinct from, psychoanalysis, it is concerned with what is normal rather than what is abnormal and strives to assist the psychic life of children. It aims at furthering our knowledge of this life and awakening the consciences of adults whose erroneous attitudes towards children are the product of their own subconscious selves. (p. 12)

**Modern rights of the child.** While described briefly here, one can learn more about the worldwide effort for children's rights by visiting the UNICEF (United Nations International Children's Emergency Fund) Website where the full set of rights is outlined, including fact sheets and how the process of worldwide evaluation works. Rights recognized for children include: best interest of the child; protection of rights; parental guidance; preservation of identity; respect for the views of the child; freedom of expression; freedom of thought, conscience and religion; freedom of association; access to information; parental responsibility; protection from all forms of violence; right to education and goals for education (UNICEF, Rights Overview, 2014).

According to UNICEF, who is leading a worldwide campaign for children's rights, "More countries have ratified the Convention of the Rights of the Child than any other human rights treaty in history – 192 countries have become State Parties to the Convention as of 2014"

(UNICEF, May 2014). The only country yet to ratify this celebrated agreement is the United States. UNICEF confirmed that the US has signaled an intention to ratify but has yet to do so.

The rights of the child; what are they? According to the UNICEF Website, it is a universal set of standards that reflect a new vision of the child as neither property of their parents nor an object of charity. Put simply, they are human beings and are the subject of their own rights. In the Convention, it stated, “Children are an individual first and then a member of a family and a community with rights and responsibilities appropriate to his or her age and stage of development.” Once considered “negotiable,” children’s needs have become legally binding rights; the child is no longer a passive recipient of benefits.

Of spectacular relevance to this work are the Goals for Education (Article 29), which include, among other variables, “develop each child’s personality, talents and abilities to the fullest;” “encourage children to respect others human rights, their own and others cultures;” and “help them learn to live peacefully, protect the environment and respect other people.” This is emphasized by Article 42, “Adults should help children learn about their rights.” These are the same qualities we see advocated for in century-old, non-traditional pedagogies.

All three pedagogical leaders, Malaguzzi, Montessori, Steiner, and their respective movements, provide children with rights. It is, as Malaguzzi challenged, “by developing new eyes to really see the intelligence in children” that the teacher transforms their power relationship with the child (Rankin, 2004, p. 81). Once the child is seen as competent, with rights and deserving respect, the educational relationship experiences a paradigm shift of epic proportions. Three examples follow.



## **Alternative Pedagogy Teacher Preparation**

Teacher preparation is a controversial subject in the U.S. Researchers, teacher preparation programs, and policy makers involved in shaping future teachers do not define what constitutes a high quality teacher the same way; science has not provided any causal winners. While all communities in this study have made commitments to emphasizing the importance of higher education—skilled training in observation, mentors, practice, and ongoing professional development all matter—but the exact formula or threshold for efficacy continue to elude us. Teacher preparation takes place both in IHEs (universities and colleges) and in freestanding institutions. Alternative-pedagogy teacher preparation is primarily available outside institutions of higher education through the use of the freestanding institutions.

The required academic component is 220 hours in LifeWays, 200 of 600 hours in Montessori, and 400 hours in Waldorf. The average cost is well over several thousand dollars. These programs also have a mentor-style practicum whereby students are supervised in student teaching for an extended period of time, six months to one year. In some cases, first year teacher graduates are partnered with master teachers for an expanded co-teaching experience in a mentor-rich relationship. This journeyman/apprenticeship relationship is supported by current research and best practices in both the field of early childhood and the field of labor and workforce development practices. For example, Neuman and Cunningham reported on a study regarding practitioner coaching versus reliance on higher education as an indicator of quality (2009). They reported “professional development alone had negligible effects on improvements in quality practices;” “coursework and coaching,” they offer, “may represent a promising quality investment in early childhood” (p. 532).

There are other arguments related to the teacher preparation and mentorship pathway that conclude that if all ECE professionals possess degrees in higher education, we will have initiated a cost-ratio requirement the field cannot sustain (Zigler, Gilliam, & Barnett, 2011). Results from a 2007 meta-analysis of research on the relationship between teacher quality and higher education provided mixed reviews as to whether or not higher education alone could be isolated as an indicator of quality (Barnett, 2011). Moreover, there have been several studies that indicated no relationship improvement between teacher qualification and student learning (Barnett, 2011). None of these implications are being referred to as disregard for place value in higher education and teacher qualifications, only to illustrate that they are not the deciding factor in a much bigger formula for quality.

The alternative pedagogy community is not predominately associated with issuing degrees in higher education. Alternative pedagogy teacher preparation was designed to use a specialized formula, in a specified context, with the intentional objective of assisting the teacher in a transformational professional experience. It is designed to be, and is an expected competency, that the preparation will not only prepare teachers but evolve them both personally and professionally; with new ears to hear, new eyes to see, new ways to know and, most of all, new ways to facilitate and document the creation of knowledge (Rankin, 2004).

A detailed description of each community follows. Each community section begins with a brief description of the history of the pedagogy, its foundation, and structural components. Then the population of the community is described. After that, teacher preparation is described with details to the content, quality, and cost. Access and availability of training is provided to the extent it was available at the time of the writing.

## **Rudolf Steiner-Inspired Education**

It is important to begin this portion of the discussion on Steiner's work by clearly articulating that while both the Waldorf Teacher Preparation Program and the LifeWays Teacher Preparation Program are founded on Steiner's work, the LifeWays program is a distinctly separate entity. LifeWays should not be considered a representative training program of the Waldorf Early Childhood Association of North America (WECAN) or Association of Waldorf Schools of North America (AWSNA), Waldorf-recognized teacher preparation membership networks. These two "applications" of Steiner's legacy, while complementary, are (within their own community) acknowledged as distinctly different. LifeWays graduates are prepared to work primarily in homes, child-care centers, and preschools. The LifeWays curriculum meets the training requirements laid out by the International Association of Steiner/Waldorf Early Childhood Education for child care providers.

Rudolf Steiner-inspired education originated in Stuttgart, Germany (1919) but is now established worldwide as a Humanistic/Critical Consciousness Orientation in Education. The Study of the Spirit, Anthroposophy, developed by Rudolf Steiner, is the foundation of this pedagogy. Anthroposophy is "a path of knowledge, to guide the spiritual in the human being to the spiritual in the universe..." (Steiner, 2007/1973, Anthroposophical leading thoughts, p.13). Urmacher concisely broke Anthroposophy down to "Anthropos" (man) and "sophia" (wisdom), with a caveat, in order to completely understand it requires a dissertation, which exists in Ahern, 1984 (Urmacher, 1995, p387). In Anthroposophical Society's (2015) own words:

The word 'anthroposophy' means 'wisdom of the human being,' or, for us today, 'awareness of one's humanity.' Knowledge of spirit can only be found by spiritual

means. Anthroposophy offers an inner path of schooling to attain such knowledge. It takes its starting point from modern critical consciousness and our contemporary orientation toward technology and science. It is a kind of study and schooling that leads to concrete experience of the spiritual dimensions of the human being and the world.

(Anthroposophy, para 1)

Anthroposophy includes a series of spiritual exercises, moral development, and inner practices that lead one to a stronger sense of external responsibility.

In Anthroposophy, the arts are considered a tool to bring together the spiritual world with the human's external reality. Spiritual qualities that are valued and developed include: being positive, remaining composed, detached and in control of one's thoughts, feelings and will. Therefore, participation in the arts and union with nature are important qualities incorporated into the teacher's training and education system. They are regarded as non-religious and universally spiritual (complementing all religions).

Anthroposophy founder and Waldorf creator, Steiner was an academic with spiritual drive and insight. For examples of his work, see a collection of essays in *The Education of the Child and Early Lectures on Education: Foundations of Waldorf Education* (Steiner, 1996). He spent time with Friedrich Nietzsche before Nietzsche died and assisted the organization of Nietzsche's library (Steiner, 1996). The development of Steiner's educational pedagogy came from a strong desire to correlate life and learning with the spiritual components found both in nature and within the human being. His philosophical basis (influenced heavily by Nietzsche, Emerson, Guyau, Goethe, Kant, and others) rested on the assumption that morality could be given a sure foundation without being "imposed as rules of conduct" (Steiner, 1996; Steiner &

Wilson, 2000). His first published work is called *Truth and Knowledge: Prelude to Philosophy of Freedom* (Steiner & Wilson, 2000). Steiner is the forefather of the “science of the spirit,” also known as Anthroposophy. Steiner’s science was ahead of his era and considered by some to be illegitimate at the time. Today, his work *Philosophy of Freedom* is an indication to a “whole new way of life;” the wisdom of the human-“being” (Steiner College, 2012; Steiner & Wilson, 2000).

The Waldorf and LifeWays programs are essentially focused on the education of the human-being in its totality (body, mind, and soul) and its collective membership to humanity and the world. The overarching educational objective is to understand oneself and one’s place in society. Both programs are founded on a philosophy embracing learning for the “whole” child and both incorporate curriculum, methods, and social normalizing with the “body, mind, soul and spirit” (Clouder & Rawson, 1998). Both of these pedagogies are based on the activities, research, and published works of Rudolf Steiner and are supported by contemporary ECE research (Goffin & Wilson, 2001; Parker-Rees & Willan, 2006; Williams & Johnson, 2009).

Rudolf Steiner-inspired education and anthroposophy are not without critics. Some are well-educated; others are misinformed. There are many claims that exist to discredit the individual, the movement, or the orientation. Some stem from religious intolerance, some from historical traces to fascism, and others from historical writings concerning racial hierarchy. There are educational values that have political leanings towards Socio-cracy, which make some people uncomfortable. Development of the “imagination, inspiration, and intuition” as spiritual unfolding ,in an educational context, is too abstract for some.

**Waldorf teacher preparation.** In the schools and programs, Waldorf teachers accompany their students from year to year (grade to grade) in a cohort. Waldorf early childhood teacher preparation offers several different types of programs for teachers of young children. As an example, this can include full, part-time or in-service programs for practicing Waldorf ECE teachers and assistants, meeting part-time for four sessions over the course of three years. As another example, there is an in-service program (see Rudolf Steiner College) whose program costs roughly \$18,000 (2014). Rudolf Steiner College has an “Early Childhood Associate Program,” which is a two-year program that meets for five days in March and October, plus ten days in August. It is specially designed for child care assistants, family child care providers, parents and grandparents. The program provides 15.5 ECE units for licensing. Its cost was roughly \$15,500 in 2014, a substantial investment for professional development without a degree.

***The population.*** Waldorf Schools are available from early childhood through elementary and high school. There are 38 Public Waldorf Charter Schools in 12 states: AK, AZ, CA, CO, ID, HI, MA, MN, OR, PA, TX, and WI (Alliance for Public Waldorf Education, 2014). In the 2012-2013 Waldorf Early Childhood Association of North America (WECAN) Annual Report, 193 organizational members were identified, including teacher preparation institutes and school programs. Of that, 95% (183) were WECAN member kindergartens and early childhood programs. Of those, 66% (121) were full-recognized members and 33% (61) were developing members. Of the 183 early childhood programs, 71% (121) were affiliated with Association of Waldorf Schools of North America (AWSNA). WECAN membership counts also included five full-member and five developing-member teacher preparation centers (WECAN, 2014).

Individual WECAN members totaled 552. WECAN reported their 2012 annual conference had over 300 participants attend.

The first Waldorf School in North America opened in New York City in 1928, nine years after the first one in Germany (Mitchell, 2010). According to the Steiner College (2012), today there are more than 1,000 Waldorf Schools worldwide, “with a need for more teachers than they have graduating.” AWSNA reported in the 2012-2013 annual report an average 70,000 hits per month on their web link for “Find a School.” Their Facebook activity was significantly higher with 90,000-120,000 hits per week (AWSNA, 2013).

*Admission and preparation.* In 2014, there were 16 teacher preparation centers recognized by the AWSNA and WECAN, 14 of which are in the U.S. (Howard, 2014, personal communication). Waldorf school teachers are normally required to have a bachelor’s degree to take Waldorf teacher preparation for the elementary level or can acquire a bachelors in Waldorf Education through one of several Waldorf/Steiner universities. Research did not confirm this is the case for early childhood teachers.

In Waldorf teacher preparation programs, a degree is often preferred, but it is not currently required to become certified as a Waldorf early childhood teacher. In interviews, it was expressed that the people who become interested in taking Waldorf training often arrive with a degree in hand (Weber & Howard, 2014; personal communications). So, while it is not required, often the degree is there (anecdotal, based on an interview, and not documented).

WECAN Program Coordinator and Teacher Preparation Task Force Chair, Susan Howard, reported that WECAN member training locations must provide a minimum of 400 hours of academic training and include an “extensive mentored internship” (personal

communication, May 2014). By comparison, 400 academic hours is equivalent to the same number of semester hours in 13-26 credits, depending on which conversion formula is used; the addition of the practicum would, obviously, make the credit preparation equivalency much higher.

*Accreditation.* The Waldorf Community does not have a Department of Education recognized accreditation body at this time. Instead, they use a membership system whereby member schools are endorsed respectively by either the WECAN Organization founded in 1983 or the AWSNA founded in 1972. WECAN identifies their mission as “nurturing a new cultural impulse for the work with young children, based on an understanding of the healthy development of the child in body, soul and spirit, and on a commitment to protect and nurture childhood as the foundation for renewing human culture” (WECAN, 2014, Mission and Vision). Both the AWSNA and WECAN organizations are researching their options and are very interested in obtaining Department of Education recognized teacher preparation accreditation standings for their institutions. In October of 2014, the Council for Higher Education Accreditation (CHEA) released a report investigating the need for an alternative accreditation pathway that would account for teacher preparation programs like Waldorf (CHEA, 2014).

The AWSNA and WECAN full members are authorized to use the trademarks and call themselves Waldorf Programs or Teacher Preparation Centers. Without membership, no other programs may utilize the trademark and are expected to refer to themselves as “Waldorf-inspired.” WECAN and ASWSNA have site visitation teams, early childhood teacher preparation committees, and organizational boards with staff.



*Preparation principles.* Full AWSNA and WECAN member institutes exemplify the shared principles, and their graduates are recognized throughout the world as “Waldorf teachers.” Developing AWSNA and WECAN member institutes and programs use the shared principles as guidelines for developing their training activities. The membership path is intended to “foster a culture of self-study, peer review, and collaboration that strengthens and deepens our work” (WECAN, 2014, p3).

An outline of coursework/program requirements required for WECAN teacher preparation programs to meet for member recognition is listed in Appendix A. A description of some of the coursework is provided here: ECE development, foundations of human experience, philosophy of freedom, home care, storytelling, circle activities, gardening, painting/drawing, child observation, speech, life cycles, inner life of the teacher, domestic activities, and creative play.

The WECAN teacher preparation membership handbook lays out a series of “shared principles” between the North American and the International Association for Steiner/Waldorf Early Childhood Education (IASWECE) (WECAN, 2014). According to the handbook, “they are intended as recommendations and guidelines... (in) an effort to uphold the quality and integrity of Waldorf Early Childhood Teacher preparation and thus the vocation of Waldorf early childhood education” (p. 3).

Some of the organizational and shared principles are paraphrased as follows:

- The work with adult students and training programs should support the preparation, ongoing professional development, deepening and renewal work of Waldorf early childhood educators and caregivers.

- Commitment must be made to the ideals and essentials of the human individuality as a being of body, soul, and spirit; offering protection and respect for the dignity of childhood.
- Programs shall be based on the continuing research and practice of Waldorf/Steiner education and other relevant approaches to pedagogy and adult education.
- Person responsible for training program is qualified through experience in Waldorf Early Childhood Education and working with adults.
- Teaching faculty are qualified for their positions and responsibilities by education and/or experience in the field.
- Training programs employ effective practices in adult education taking into account the learning styles of adults and respect for creative and independent thinking.
- Faculty and staff are committed to ongoing self and professional development as demonstrated by participation in conferences, courses, and collaborative research, colloquia, and meetings.
- Training course content includes a balance of conceptual, self-reflective, artistic, and experiential activity.
- Mentored teacher, practicum, or internship in well-established Waldorf settings is an essential component of the training.
- Program provides appropriate individual student support, assessment, and maintains records of attendance, course completion, and other relevant documentation.
- Teacher curriculum includes a balance of the following (see Appendix A):

- (20-25% in each of the following) Anthroposophical studies & human development, child development & Waldorf education, practical and artistic activities, artistic and handwork activities for the educator
- (10-20%) Professional and social aspects of Waldorf education
- Mentored teaching, practicum, or internship in an established Waldorf ECE setting.
- Independent research project

**LifeWays teacher preparation.** LifeWays is an early childhood teacher preparation and education program, also known as “home-like care” established in 1998 (LifeWays, 2012).

LifeWays is Steiner-inspired education for very early development (birth to age six), designed to provide home-like care for young children (Aldinger & O’Connell, 2010). Conceptually, the training program is an ideal fit for the family child-care provider but, according to Founder Cynthia Aldinger, is also utilized by center-based individuals.

**Population.** There are 11 training sites for LifeWays in nine states (AK, CA, CO, ME, NC, OR, PA, TX, and WI). The training was previously included in Hawaii and New York. Aldinger reported there are 24 states with over 50 LifeWays Programs operating across them (personal communication, 2013). Graduates of the program receive a Certificate. To become a LifeWays representative site, the graduate goes through a self-study process. There are 15 sites that have LifeWays representative site status. Representative sites must receive a site visit every three years and attend a conference every two years. LifeWays training graduates can attend any future LifeWays training tuition-free; ongoing professional development is encouraged.

Workshops, held in various locations, are often attended by LifeWays students, graduates and non-affiliated teachers; annual training hours for those workshops have been readily

accepted in all states (Aldinger, personal communication, 2013). The summative training certification, however, is not freely recognized in state workforce registries. According to interactions with students from these programs, they face a situation where they complete and pay for this training program but are then required to take additional basic coursework from vocational colleges that do not always reflect or support their own teaching and professional values (Aldinger, 2013). “At times,” one interview participant reported, “students have expressed they felt this secondary vocational training was substandard to their own unrecognized LifeWays training, through our program.”

*Admission and preparation.* There has been one LifeWays training location situated in an institution of higher education. The Rudolf Steiner College in Sacramento, CA, has offered the LifeWays Training in the past and provided 12 undergraduate college credits for that training. Ashland University in Ohio provides graduate credit hours for students who enroll and complete extra requirements such as research papers and working with a mentor (through the university). All other trainings were conducted in freestanding private institutions.

LifeWays training programs include a minimum of 220 training hours over 12-13 months, which includes a requirement for working with a mentor, completion of a project or research paper, observation at various types of early childhood programs, child observations, a mentor-observed practicum, and several other integration of learning requirements. Aldinger estimates there are over 500 graduates of the LifeWays training program (2014). Ashland University in Ohio offers up to 12 semester hours of graduate credit for the year long, part-time LifeWays Early Childhood Certification Program (LifeWays, College Credit, 2011).

The LifeWays Early Childhood Training cost is \$4,995 for one year (LifeWays, 2014). To take the training for graduate credit, the additional cost would be \$2,700, bringing the graduate certificate cost to \$7,695. The mission of the LifeWays program for child care providers is to provide, “as closely as possible, the best elements of care found in a healthy home...based on healthy sense development, social interactions, creative arts, practical domestic skills, nurturing care, development of the mind and the body, and continuity of care” (LifeWays, 2004, para 1).

*Accreditation and principles.* The LifeWays teacher preparation program was not accredited at the time of this study. It does utilize a member recognition program whereby model training programs adhere to specific principles and site visits to maintain membership. Aldinger, its founder, said they are actively seeking and desire to find a pathway for accreditation of their teacher preparation program (personal communication, 2013).

LifeWays’ philosophical commitment is to “protect childhood and enhance optimal physical, socio-emotional and cognitive growth and health” (LifeWays, 2004, para 1). The vision is based on “...Steiner-inspired child care based on the routine activities and natural rhythms of a healthy home life, bathed in the warmth of secure relationships and family-style mixed ages, and made to feel as non-institutional as possible” (LifeWays, 2011/2012; Aldinger & O’Connell, 2010).

The LifeWays training was included in this study for its valuable growing role in providing teacher preparation access to an alternative pedagogy community. It was also selected for its function as an alternative pedagogy teacher preparation option not readily situated in an

institution of higher education; they do not regularly result in college credit or diplomas. The training does, however, result in a permanent-training certification.

### **Reggio Emilia-Inspired Education**

Similar to its skillfully designed, aesthetically pleasing classrooms, filled to the brim with fluid artistic impressions, the Reggio Emilia pedagogy is challenging for a non-member to define. It is founded on a social constructivist orientation that sees the child first, as the commonly quoted cornerstone of Reggio philosophy describes, “competent, strong, inventive, and full of potential” – a powerful human-being with “rights instead of needs” (Goffin & Wilson, 2001; Parker-Rees & Willan, 2006; Williams & Johnson, 2009). Teachers, schools, and communities inspired by this pedagogy are expected to demonstrate respect for childhood, children, and adults through a culture of communication that leads to a curriculum of play and exploration (active research).

Howard Gardner, Harvard University, wrote that the Reggio Emilia system can be described succinctly as follows:

It is a collection of schools for young children in which each child’s intellectual, emotional, social, and moral potentials are carefully cultivated and guided. The principle educational vehicle involves youngsters in long-term projects, which are carried out in a beautiful, healthy, love-filled setting. John Dewey wrote about progressive education for decades but his school lasted a scant four years. In sharp contrast, it is the Reggio community, more so than the philosophy or method, that constitutes Malaguzzi’s central achievement. Nowhere else in the work is there such a seamless and symbiotic

relationship between a school's progressive philosophy and its practices. (Gardner in Edwards, Edwards, Gandini & Forman, 2012, p. xiv)

Amelia Gambetti, a Reggio Emilia municipal preschool educator for 25 years and one of the project coordinators for Harvard's Project Zero, wrote this about Reggio teachers:

No one in Reggio wants to teach others how to "do school." What we seek to do rather is to try and deepen our understanding, together with others, of why it was possible in Reggio Emilia for an (educational) experience founded after the war to grow and consolidate with time... What we want to do is look together for the values we might have in common, in order to build a better tomorrow. (Reggio Children, 2008)

The Reggio Emilia Approach is, as described by The Reggio Children Foundation and Loris Malaguzzi International Centre of Italy, a philosophy of the human being who learns and grows in relationship with others (Reggio Children Foundation, 2014). The Reggio Children Foundation (2014) continues by identifying seven "distinctive characteristics," including:

- participation of families
- collegial work of all personnel
- educational environment
- atelier (art studio)
- atelierista (resident artist/ teacher)
- in-school kitchen
- pedagogical coordinating team.

Ultimately, the central focus is on the development of what they characterize as the hundred languages belonging to every human being. Through the atelier, children receive daily

opportunities to express and develop these forms of expression (Reggio Children Foundation, 2014).

In a personal interview conducted for this study, Dr. Brenda Fyfe (Dean of the School of Education for Webster University in St. Louis and board member of the North American Reggio Emilia Alliance) (2014) described it as pedagogy, with philosophy, theory, curriculum, method and socializing components:

The curriculum is kind of a negotiated learning curriculum, there are project studies; for instance, the Reggio, they have something that is not talked about a lot but they actually are grounded in this. They have fields of knowledge and experience that are a curriculum framework for them. They know them so well that they don't have to keep referring to them like we do with a prescribed curriculum of some sort. They insist on not following a prescribed curriculum, but they always have a set of standards and concepts that they know young children should be learning. They study the source of what they're learning like the philosophy in theory pieces, they will draw from not only psychology and educational philosophers, but also they will go to the fields of neurology, biology, history, architecture, sociology, and on and on. They are more of the renaissance line of thinking about what are the sources of knowledge that contribute to our study of children. They're learning because children are part of the society, part of our family, and part of the system; so one has to think about all of those things. They're drawing from many philosophical bases and theory bases to create curriculum every day that supports children's learning, of the particular children they have. (personal communication)



Originating in a small city in Italy, Reggio Emilia, is a post-WWII (1945), parent-run school established on the values of: participation/constructivism, continual professional development (6 hrs/week), collegiality, an inspiring environment, school as studio/laboratory, family/school cooperative, documentation, and social constructivism (Innovative Teacher, 2012). This philosophy is often referred to as supporting the *culture of childhood*. Culture is central to the Reggio philosophy; family, in particular, is essential to their origin, as is a shared *communal responsibility* for children. In Reggio-inspired schools today, the local dialect and culture play an important factor, as does an aesthetic appreciation for a high quality environment (arts, innovation, collaboration, and engagement). Loris Malaguzzi (1920-1994) is credited with articulating the philosophy that outlined the theory, shaped the curriculum, and described the heart of the pedagogy in this way, “creative is not separate but central to thinking, knowing, and choosing...therefore the arts and creative process are key to intellectual success” (Malaguzzi, 1998, p. 75).

The Reggio-inspired approach to learning has a curriculum that is inherently indefinable; sometimes called a *play-based curriculum*. The non-prescriptive, inquiry-based curriculum is designed to co-create knowledge; what children want to know and respecting what they already do know are significant (Edwards, Gandini, & Forman; New & Kantor, 2009; Wurm, 2005; 2012). Therefore, teachers are (as are the children) in a constant state of documentation, research, and experimentation. It is not a pedagogy overly concerned with meeting academic standards but rather on knowing, knowledge co-creation, and the recording/documenting of this process and growth (New & Kantor, 2009). Essentially, the children write their own curriculum, facilitated and mapped with the help of the adults in their lives. Value is placed on questioning,

experimenting, drawing on previous experiences, and demonstrating their knowledge through the use of *The Arts* (Edwards, Gambini, & Forman, 2012; Wurm, 2005).

The environment is considered a teaching member because the items made available to children inherently give them experiences that develop fine and gross motor capacities, counting, and language skills. Cognitive ideas are built into the projects that unfold without excessive time or attention spent on academic core content. Teachers are facilitators of discussion, inquiry, and mapping of previous knowledge and experiences with the acquisition of new thoughts and ideas. Loris Malaguzzi put it this way:

They [children] are autonomously capable of making meaning from their daily life experiences through mental acts involving planning, coordination of ideas, and abstraction...The central act of adults, therefore, is to activate, especially indirectly, the meaning-making competencies of children as a basis of all learning. They must try to capture the right moments, and then find the right approaches, for bringing together, into a fruitful dialogue, their meanings and interpretations with those children. (Edwards, Gandini, and Forman, 1998, p. 81)

In a fascinating TED (Technology, Entertainment, and Design) Lecture, Steven Johnson gave a short talk on “where good ideas come from.” In it, Johnson broke down a very sophisticated discussion about how “break-through ideas” are generated, resulting in something new being created. He pointed out that we must learn to think differently about deep thinking (Johnson, 2010). It actually does not happen in ways we have been conditioned to think, he said. In fact, he suggested that the coffee house is the kind of place where big thinking happens; in “convergent innovative dialogue with others.” This description, he offered in the generation of

genuine contribution to knowledge and knowing, is a close description of the Reggio pedagogy and classroom.

When asked about Reggio Emilia being more than just an approach to thinking about childhood or as something that inspires people (as has been alluded to by some academics and policy makers), Dr. Fyfe (2014) responded:

Absolutely. It definitely is. It's a very demanding and challenging approach. It can, however, when you get into it...it's just extremely energizing as well. It brings the best out of people, but they have to have a strong commitment to it. To continue to study, an effort to really shift in their attitudes from guiding, directing, and facilitating children to learning with them, studying their learning processes, collaborating at every level.

Collaborating with parents, which means not just educating them, but again, learning from and with them and involving them as real partners in the process. It's a very strong systems approach to education. You think about the child, the teachers, the parents, and the community. They're all in a tight relationship with each other and that's not always the mindset of a teacher; and it is a mindset. (personal communication)

Edwards, Gandini, and Forman (2012) described the preparation of teachers in this way:

The educators in Reggio Emilia prefer language in which we speak or write of their experience (as opposed to their method or model), and of their experience entering into a dialogue with (as opposed to instructing, improving, informing) educators in other contexts. We agree that this kind of language best conveys genuine partnership and respect for the knowledge, wisdom, and cultural integrity embedded in the systems of meaning held by those of educators who live in places outside Reggio who may be

inspired (as opposed to following or doing) the practice of educators in Reggio Emilia.  
(p. 367)

The “propagation of the inspiration,” wrote Edwards, Gandini, and Forman (2012), “is surfacing through teacher educators who are promoting constructivist inquiry and the practice of observation and documentation among young aspiring teachers” (p. 371). Other factors include “fostering a culture of inquiry and intellectual engagement,” a commonality with social justice and anti-bias movements (p. 372). Having said that, the authors concluded the primary aim is the “diffusion” of good ideas shared throughout a community of individuals committed to both closely replicating/representing and infusing the general theme of constructive inquiry-based education (p.372).

**Pedagogisti teacher preparation.** Teachers in this system are called *pedagogisti*. Pedagogisti have an extraordinary commitment to documentation, observation, and communication. In each classroom there are two co-teachers. One is not a lead (although they can be mentors), but they are equals in the classroom (Edwards, Gandini, & Forman, 2012; Fyfe, Personal Communication, May 2014). Filipini (in Edwards, Gandini, & Forman, 1998) stated in *The 100 Languages of Children* that:

...teachers in our system do about 190 hours a year of work outside the classroom, including 107 hours of in-service training; 43 hours of meetings with parents and committees (part of our community-based management) and about 40 hours for other seminars, workshops, school parties, celebrations, and so on. (p. 130)

This equates to nearly 5 weeks of full-time work (outside the classroom) or the time equivalency of at least 6 semester college credits annually. This total figure is created using the 30 clock-

hour minimum equivalency formula from Accrediting Council for Independent Colleges and Schools (ACICS/DOE, 2011).

In a unique formula for school oversight, the Reggio-inspired school has no principal in the technical sense of the word. School management is decentralized and run by a teacher/parent cooperative with the assistance of a Pedagogista. The Pedagogista was described in a chapter dedicated to its detail in *The 100 Languages of Children* (Filippini & Bonilauri in Edwards, Gandini & Forman, 1998). In this interview, Filippini discussed the need for someone to help with the organizational needs for coherence and consistency across several school communities.

The pedagogista helps work across teams in each school; “facilitating flexible, sensitive, open change and dialogue” (Filippini in Edwards, Gandini & Forman, 1998). Filippini spoke about the cross-community organizing that pedagogistas do (in policy, administration, and assisting teachers with new themes and continuous professional development). The role of the pedagogista varies greatly but primarily consists of facilitating problem solving by community members, mentoring teachers, and acting as researcher.

**Pedagogista preparation.** Currently in the US, there is only one location for obtaining the 18 credit-hour graduate certificate for Reggio Emilia Pedagogista (coordinator/consultant/mentor); it requires a bachelor’s degree for admission. The Webster University Training, modeled after the University of Modena and Reggio in Italy, offers a graduate school certificate. Now available in the US, this program began as an invitation extended from the President of Reggio Children, Carla Rinaldi to Brenda Fyfe, in partnership with Webster University in St. Louis, MO and the Italian program in Modena.

**Population.** According to the North American Reggio Emilia Alliance (NAREA), the Reggio-Inspired Community has reached 34 countries, infused 100 languages, and has more than 15,000 teacher/pedagogists teaching over 50,000 children (North American Reggio Emilia Alliance, 2014). Reggio-inspired forms of professional development are occurring across the country; a current and evolving list of opportunities across the country is available on the NAREA Website.

There are at least 38 Reggio-inspired early childhood schools listed in the North American Reggio Emilia Alliance's Website directory of schools (2014). These schools represent Reggio-Inspired access in over 19 states: CA, CO, DC, FL, GA, IL, MA, MD, MT, NJ, NV, NY, OH, OK, OR, PA, TN, TX, and VI. What is unique about this program is that it is the newest alternative pedagogy in this study, and relatively new to the country. As Howard Gardner pointed out, we cannot duplicate the model perfectly; therefore, we must make it our own (Gardner in Edwards, Gandini & Forman, p. xiv). With the silent advantage of institutions of higher education quickly picking up the pieces, it seems only time can tell how deeply this pedagogy may travel.

**Admission and requirements.** The Webster University Reggio Pedagogista program is designed to reflect the Reggio Emilia program because it includes two semesters of full-time study and internship. Courses include negotiated learning/Reggio Emilia approaches to early education; creating learning environments; expressive languages; applied research; pedagogical internships; and valuing expressive languages in education, etc. At 18 credits and roughly \$535/credit hour, this certificate cost is approximately \$9,630 (2014). The internship, which occurs in both public and private Reggio-inspired schools, is an average of 8 hours, one to two

days per week. Students receive six-semester college credits for the internship. Graduates receive a graduate certificate in Pedagogical Coordination in the Reggio Emilia Approach from the university.

The graduate certificate program at Webster did not definitively require an undergraduate degree in early childhood for program entrance until 2015. For example, specialists from other fields who are interested in becoming part of this community of learners could (theoretically) be accepted into the program (for example an artist, architect, or school program director). In an interview, Dr. Fyfe (2014) shared that these individuals would not be turned away from the program but may be advised to increase their foundation by taking some additional early childhood coursework from the other programs within the university (personal communication). In the fall of 2014, the university Website language changed to reflect a requirement of an undergraduate or graduate degree in Early Childhood Education with a GPA of 2.5 or higher (Webster University, 2012, 2014).

The Webster University Pedagogista program is anticipating unveiling a new online pedagogista certificate, which will utilize technology to support and facilitate learning (Fyfe, 2014, personal communication). For example, teachers using live stream in their classrooms, like Skype conferences, have the strong potential to connect learners from all over the world to learn from one another. Currently, the Early Childhood Program at Webster University can accommodate up to 70 students, where they average 50-60 students per semester. With the inclusion of the online training program, they remove significant barriers for interested community members from all over the country. This increases their access to pedagogistas from all over this country who can serve as mentors, lecturers, and provide classroom access for

internships, potentially expanding the pool of Reggio applicants. A steady interest in access to Reggio Emilia focused teacher professional development is readily recognized through public demand exhibited in professional development conferences, such as NAEYC 2014, where a workshop on Reggio-inspired teaching overfilled the room, and teachers and speakers were moved into the hallway to accommodate the abundant interest (personal communication from attendees).

*Principles and access.* Although no Reggio-inspired teacher credential was identified in researching U.S. options, Reggio Emilia-inspired institutes and study groups occur across the country with informal group learning and are not certificate producing. Currently, there are formal IHE pathways to Reggio-inspired teacher preparation/education resulting in college credits. There are many universities in this country offering Reggio-inspired education through their institutions' teacher education programs. There are traditional early childhood degree holders being instructed in this philosophy and through these methodologies, although there are no known program graduate students with "Reggio Emilia-inspired" in their program's degree or certificate title. As a direct result of institution of higher education housing, these types of teacher preparation are accredited through U.S. Department of Education accreditation via the teacher education program and the university.

The Reggio Emilia pedagogy is not doctrinaire; there are not rules to the unfolding. Yet, universities all over this country are absorbing the practices and approaches into their own institution's early childhood education programs. Is it conceivable, in the near future, that certification programs will soon develop in institutions of higher education providing documentation of or tracking potential for Reggio Emilia-inspired educators? Could Reggio



Pedagogisti teacher preparation programs, resulting in ECE Reggio teacher specialization/endorsements/certification, occur in the early care workforce? Particularly as a form of endorsements similar to what we find for infant/toddler, directors/administration, special education or before/after school care, where specialized education is tacked on to or offered independently of a degree plan. Is it possible this could evolve into freestanding training programs, located outside of the university? Or, in the case of this alternative pedagogy, has its fortuitous foothold in institutions of higher education made it somehow more valid or research-based than its counterparts; more quality-favorable due to its IHE endorsement?

Lesley University in Massachusetts, for example, offers summer intensives and semester classes in Reggio-specific courses, but they do not lead to a Reggio-specified recognition. Many other universities are offering Reggio-inspired coursework for college credit: Webster University in St. Louis, Thomas College in Maine, Columbia College in Chicago, Antioch University of the Midwest in Ohio, Naropa University in Colorado, Portland State University of Oregon, University of Nevada, Reno and the well-recognized Harvard University's Project Zero to name a few.

### **Montessori Education**

Montessori's work is highly visible in the young child's environment as we commonly know it today; she was the first educator to have child-sized furniture of every kind made to reflect the child's needs (small, light, mobile, elegant, clean). Many of the educational materials we find across early childhood classrooms the world over can be traced to a Montessori environment. Montessori education is based on the lifework and lived experiences of Dr. Maria Montessori, one of the first female physicians in Italy (1870-1952).

Montessori's early work focused on institutionalized/mentally-disadvantaged children, and later, young children living in extreme poverty. Utilizing a prepared environment, Montessori worked with 50-60 children in one room (Lillard, 2005, p. 17; Montessori, 1912). Her strict science background led her to utilize observational approaches that required little-to-no interference, "one can only have true scientific observation if one is able to restrain from altering the situation, in which case, the child must be free; free to choose, free to move, free to work without interruption from his adults" (Montessori, 1912). Anchored in her observation-based notes, Montessori adapted self-directed lessons and materials to respond to the children's developmental needs.

Biographies on Dr. Montessori's life reveal her thoughts on her "approach" to childhood. In Kramer (1976), she is quoted thus:

The subject of our study is humanity; our purpose is to become teachers. Now, what really makes a teacher is love for the human child; for it is love that transforms the social duty of the educator into the higher consciousness of a mission. (p. 98)

In 1914, Montessori wrote, "I did not invent a method of education, I simply gave some little children a chance to live" (Association Montessori Internationale, 2014, para. 16). She later described the preparation of the teacher in this way:

Actual training and practice are necessary, to fit for this method teachers who have not been prepared for scientific observation, and such training is especially necessary to those who have been accustomed to the old domineering methods of the common school. My experiences in training teachers for the work in my schools did much to convince me of the great distance between these methods and those. Even an intelligent teacher, who

understands the principle, finds much difficulty in putting it into practice. She cannot understand that her new task is apparently passive, like that of the astronomer who sits immovable before the telescope while the worlds whirl through space. This idea, that life acts of itself, and that in order to study it, to divine its secrets or to direct its activity, it is necessary to observe it and to understand it without intervening—this idea, I say, is very difficult for anyone to assimilate and to put into practice.

The teacher has too thoroughly learned to be the one free activity of the school; it has for too long been virtually her duty to suffocate the activity of her pupils. When in the first days in one of the ‘Children’s Houses’ she does not obtain order and silence, she looks about her embarrassed as if asking the public to excuse her, and calling upon those present to testify her innocence. In vain do we repeat to her that the disorder of the first moment is necessary. And finally, when we oblige her to do nothing but watch, she asks if she had not better resign, since she is no longer a teacher.

But when she begins to find it her duty to discern which are the acts to hinder and which are those to observe, the teacher of the old school feels a great void within herself and begins to ask if she will not be inferior to her new task. In fact, she who is not prepared finds herself for a long time abashed and impotent; whereas the broader the teacher’s scientific culture and practice in experimental psychology, the sooner will come for her the marvel of unfolding life, and her interest in it. (*Montessori Method*, Chapter 5, paragraph 5)

Dr. Montessori’s early work was prescriptive with materials, an environment and training that required precise implementation to be replicated accurately (a scientific method). Later, when

Mussolini exiled her from Italy (1934), her work evolved to take on more philosophic tones (Montessori, 1972). Schools continued to increase worldwide. It was during her time spent in India (in the company of Gandhi, Nehru, and Tagore) that she began worldwide lectures on the special role she felt childhood held for humankind and society. As the result of a lifetime's work, Montessori education means many different things to different sects of educators (theory, method, curriculum, philosophy). Her work culminated with six nominations for the Nobel Peace Prize.

Montessori education is research-based and, while over 100 years old, is corroborated with modern neurological research (Lillard, 2005). Montessori education is often referred to as the "Montessori method" in short; it derives from the title of Dr. Montessori's first book, published in 1912 and written based on the notes she penned while providing her first teacher preparation course. It may be shortsighted to continue to refer to Montessori education in this way. It disadvantages the pedagogy that became distinctly more than a method or approach to education. Its founder was immersed in systemic examination of the purpose of childhood, as well as the mechanics of it, in ways few can claim. She was a medical doctor, student of psychology, social worker, anthropologist, professor, researcher, lecturer, theorist, philosopher, writer, child advocate and mother. Her system of education is best explained as a culmination of all of those components (Torrence & Chattin-McNichols, 2009). Although it is prescriptive, the Montessori pedagogy is not patented, trademarked, or copyrighted.

In the later part of 2014, a movement began to gain traction to create a definition for what qualifies as Montessori. There has not been an active movement to endorse a threshold for the definition of "what is Montessori," or rather the deficit version, "when is it not Montessori" to

this degree in this country's history. There is a wide range of interpretation and application of Montessori education ranging from those who are inspired to those who are resolute practitioners. Recently, in the past few years, an organized movement has unfolded resulting in a need to and desire for "validating" what "counts as Montessori" and what does not.

This movement generally accounts for three required components of the child's educational experience (structure, teacher, and environment). The trend appears to be moving towards requiring Montessori Accreditation Council for Teacher Education (MACTE) accredited teacher graduates as opposed to a teacher who is intrigued by or interested in Montessori-like education. Another common criteria is an environment that contains a specific number or type of materials, classroom layout, and use or interaction with learning didactics; this can include the absence of specific or certain kinds of materials. For example, the inclusion of small glass pitchers, cups, plates, tweezers, scissors, and the pin-stylus compared to the exclusion of a dolls, trucks, dress-up or drama corner. The other concern related to verifiable Montessori is the structure, which addresses issues many are beginning to claim as mandatory to authentic implementation. For example, mixed age groupings (ages 3-6), three-year cycles in one class with one teacher and one aide, three hour-long child work-cycles each morning, rights and freedom for the child, and larger child/adult ratios such as 24-30:2.

This authentication effort has one long-standing validation that currently exists in school accreditation. To be accredited, schools must meet both environmental, teacher preparation, and structural requirements. These will be explicit and uncompromising in their standards and are available through many affiliation-specific school accreditations. One example could be a group in Texas who are partnered with the child care licensing office to license "Montessori" schools.

Schools must meet specific requirements to achieve this type of child care licensing. The newest form is a pilot program that was run in Maryland, where the Montessori community took definitions and recognition into their own hands. In its current early version, this is being called “The Montessori Validation Project” (Montessori Forward, 2014).

This is a project whereby a community of Montessori schools worked together to create a set of definitions to police one another. Those schools that subscribe to these community-based definitions and participate in approved site visits by their peers are recognized by the state group for peer reviewed authenticity in meeting Montessori thresholds set by their community. The term “validation,” while not yet vetted, has some competing reactions. Some feel the terms are an appropriate application due to the definition of being community “authentic, endorsed, or substantiated” and desperately needed to reduce negative perceptions. Others, in leadership circles, are opposed to the term for its potential to be confused with school accreditation; these members advocate for articulation towards “verification.”

This movement is being driven primarily as a response to policy and policy infractions that are fundamentally changing Montessori classrooms and experiences from the inside out. The community is responding in varying degrees. Some are accommodating policy change; others are resisting and incurring policy infractions. As it stands, schools can either choose accreditation from an affiliation or through an outside accreditor. The new option for the “validation” project allows more schools to be recognized for their efforts without the cost and accommodations required for affiliate accreditation. The concept is being promoted as a way of “policing” or accounting for peer-endorsed practices. The potential for developments is rich but

must reflect the diversity within the community; there are at least seven Montessori affiliations in the U.S.

**Population.** The Montessori Accreditation Council for Teacher Education (MACTE) accredits 26 international teacher preparation programs in 17 countries around the world. Overall, MACTE accredits 184 preparation programs in the U.S. (not exclusively counting ECE). MACTE currently accredits 121 permanent sites in the U.S. (Pelton, personal communication, 2014). There are an additional 63 locations associated with those sites, for a total offering of 184 MACTE accredited teacher preparation programs across the country. Of the 121 permanent sites, 32% (39) are associated with college or university coursework for academic credit as opposed to clock hours. Of those 39, just 13 MACTE accredited teacher education programs are encompassed by a college or university teacher preparation program. About 10% of the 121 permanent sites were identified as being located in conjunction with a university or college (MACTE, 2014). Roughly 36 states offer MACTE Montessori teacher preparation; 14 do not (MACTE, 2014).

It is difficult to access hard data on Montessori Schools. The North American Montessori Teachers Association (NAMPTA) estimates there are roughly more than 4,500 Certified Montessori Schools in the U.S. and over 20,000 worldwide (2014). According to the National Center for Montessori in the Public Sector (NCMPS), there are at least 447 documented public Montessori school programs in the U.S. Of that, 137 (roughly 31%) serve adolescents. An average 112,500 students are enrolled in public Montessori programs (National Center for Montessori in the Public Sector, 2014). Seven states had 20 or more public Montessori schools (SC, CA, AZ, TX, FL, CO, and WI). Ten states did not have any public Montessori schools.

Another source, from 2003, estimated there were nearly 6,000 Montessori schools and close to 500 Montessori magnet schools (Gutek, 2004, p. 40).

**Admission and requirements.** Accredited Montessori teacher preparation is not easy to acquire, whether it is taken in a university or a free-standing institute. Students normally spend two years but not less than one year per age/instructional level; costs range from \$2,500-\$11,500 per age/instructional level. Accredited infant/toddler or early childhood teacher preparation includes 200 academic and 400 practicum hours, for a minimum of 600 teacher preparation contact hours per training level, or more depending on the institution. By comparison, the average college would provide upwards of 30 credits for a similar commitment (based on the ACICS clock-to-credit-hour conversion from 2011, using the 30-hour direct instruction minimum).

**Diversity and access.** Montessori teacher preparation is unique in the alternative pedagogy community, being the only community to have a nationally recognized teacher preparation program accreditation council recognized by the U.S. Department of Education. MACTE was first recognized by the U.S. Department of Education in 1995. This organization was established to determine and publish which institutions are providing quality Montessori teacher preparation. This includes postsecondary institutes and free-standing institutions. Accreditation from the MACTE Agency makes the institution eligible to offer Title IV funds (federal student loans); it also allows students of free-standing institutes unaffiliated with a college or university to qualify for federal student loans. Dr. Rebecca Pelton described MACTE Accreditation in the collective picture, this way:



The universe of recognized accrediting bodies by the U.S. Department of Education is divided into two groups, one of six regional agencies, which accredit colleges and universities as whole institutions, and another group of accrediting bodies, which focus on professional, specialized, and also free-standing institutions. The Montessori Accreditation Council for Teacher Education (MACTE) is the nationally recognized accreditor for Montessori teacher education programs and a part of the second group mentioned above, along with the Council for the Accreditation of Educator Preparation (CAEP) for traditional teacher education programs. The goal of accreditation is to ensure that education provided by programs and institutions of higher education meets acceptable levels of quality. (Pelton, 2015)

MACTE recognizes seven U.S. affiliates within the Montessori teacher preparation community who are fully-recognized, accredited Montessori teacher preparation programs. They are listed in Table 1. MACTE accredits 26 teacher education programs (TEP) internationally as well. If pressed by outsiders, those without membership, one might describe the Montessori community in the U.S. as having three main factions of Montessori practitioners. The two most commonly recognized organizations are AMS and AMI owing to quantity and longevity, respectively.

The Association Montessori Internationale (AMI) was founded by Dr. Montessori in 1929 and guided by her son for over 50 years. The world AMI headquarters are located in Amsterdam, with a U.S. Operational Affiliate Office in Alexandria, Virginia. The AMI/USA office “oversees the school recognition and consultation program, conferences and events, the MES FUND, INC. and individual membership opportunities. AMI/USA supports the work of

AMI training centers, Montessori parents, teachers, administrators, and schools” (AMI/USA, 2014). It is important to note that the AMI/USA office does not dictate or oversee teacher preparation, which is considered to be meticulously safeguarded by the AMI world headquarters office.

<b>Table 1. MACTE Affiliations, 2013 Figures</b>			
<b>Affiliation</b>	<b>Acronym</b>	<b># of graduates in 2013</b>	<b>Total # of TPP</b>
American Montessori Society	AMS	1,535	92/5
Association Montessori Internationale	AMI	84	3/5
Independents Not In A Consortium	IND	250	18
International Association of Progressive Montessorians	IAPM	27	3
International Montessori Council	IMC	24	1
Montessori Educational Programs International	MEPI	89	2
Pan American Montessori Society	PAMS	9	2
<i>*Teacher Preparation Program (TPP) figures represent both those who are Current and Pending</i>			

There are 16 locations for AMI training in the United States, available in 15 states (AMI/USA, 2014). Roughly half of AMI teacher preparation programs were MACTE accredited in 2014. Applicants of AMI training must have a bachelor’s degree to graduate from most AMI training programs. There are only two locations that offer the AMI Montessori teacher certification in conjunction with obtaining an undergraduate degree (Metropolitan State University in MN and Marylhurst University in OR). There are 15 locations offering a masters degree of varying types through four institutions of higher education (Endicott College, TX; University of Hartford, CN; University of San Diego, CA; and Loyola University, with locations in CA, CO, FL, GA, MD, MN, MO, OH, OR, TX, and WI).

The AMI training program is based on a journeyman/apprentice model of training (meaning novice teachers are paired with mentor/master teachers) and courses either run for an academic year (Sept-May) or summer sessions (2-4 summers). This group has been predominately characterized by a strong adherence to Montessori's original training, methods, techniques and interpretations. They are often thought of as being the more classic of the Montessori factions.

The American Montessori Association was founded in 1960 by Nancy Rambusch, through an agreement with Dr. Montessori's son, Mario, after Maria's death. According to AMS, Dr. Rambusch is responsible for the upsurge of Montessori schools and teacher preparation in the U.S. beginning in the 1960s. Her efforts, although appreciated by many, were controversial at the time. Traces of this tension are still palpable today. According to the AMS Website (2014):

Dr. Rambusch and AMS advanced Montessori education into mid-20th century American culture. AMS insisted that all teacher educators have a college degree so that the coursework could, potentially, be recognized by state education departments. AMS also broadened the curriculum for teachers and sought to forge inroads into mainstream education by offering Montessori coursework in traditional teacher preparation programs.

(para. 9)

Today, AMS-prepared teachers can get a Montessori credential without a college degree. The resulting certification is called an Associate Credential. When a degree has been obtained and submitted, those candidates are eligible for the Full Credential. According to AMS (September 2014), there are nearly 100 AMS-affiliated, MACTE-accredited teacher preparation programs in

the U.S. The community has over 1,300 AMS accredited schools and nearly 13,000 AMS members. AMS asserts they are the largest representatives of Montessori education in the world, and they require all affiliated teacher education programs to be MACTE accredited (AMS Website, History of Montessori Education, 2014).

The AMS cohort is often seen as more liberal, or modern, in their interpretations of Montessori's teachings, training, and practice. There are cases where the Montessori educational theory, methodologies, and materials have been absorbed into traditional teacher preparation programs housed in colleges and universities. In those cases, anyone getting teacher education at that particular institution is getting a form of Montessori Teacher Preparation. This type of preparation may be done indirectly. To get the credential, however, additional requirements must be met.

Finally, there is a third, somewhat uncategorized group, who may be Montessori trained or utilize Montessori methods/materials/environments but do not affiliate themselves with the two widely recognized organizations. This occurs for a variety of reasons. There are individual members of both AMI and AMS communities who do not want to be associated with those communities. There are first-generation Montessori trainers (trained by Montessori herself) who started their own teacher preparation centers. Some individuals have fundamental philosophical, organizational or cultural differences from AMI, AMS, or both.

In this third loosely categorized group, only teacher preparation programs accredited by MACTE were included in and are referred to in this study; it happens to be the strongest way to account for both quality and diversity in the community (referring to MACTE Accredited Teacher Preparation Programs). This allows for responsibility and quality measures to be

recognized while accounting for variety within the community-at-large, without explicitly identifying each one or potentially inadvertently excluding validated Montessori teacher preparation programs. MACTE is the only US government recognized Montessori teacher preparation accreditation organization in the world.

**Accreditation and principles.** The Montessori Accreditation Council for Teacher preparation (MACTE) is one of many nationally recognized accrediting agencies the Secretary of Education authorizes to assist in determining institutions providing quality adult training and education (MACTE, 2014). MACTE is recognized by the National Council for the Accreditation of Teacher Preparation (NCATE) and the Teacher Preparation Accreditation Council (TEAC). MACTE’s mission is to improve Montessori teacher preparation by developing valid, reliable accreditation standards contributing to quality, evaluating compliance with these standards, recognizing institutions who demonstrate compliance with the standards, serving as a resource to stakeholder groups on issues concerning quality, and serving as a unifying body for the field of Montessori teacher preparation (MACTE Website Homepage, 2014). Their guiding principles are described in detail on their Website and *Guide to Accreditation*.

Accreditation is wholly about accountability: taking ownership for oversight, quality, and performance. Teacher preparation accreditation exists to verify and validate to students, schools, children, families and the educational community a program does what it says it does. Interest in teacher preparation is a topic of vested federal interest. In the 1990s, 12-21% of all child care in the U.S. rated as “poor” and only 12-14% rated as “good.” In 2013, more than 500,000 children were served in public pre-K programs that met less than half of the quality standards benchmarks

(Clark, Stewart, & Allhusen in Lowe Vandell & Wolfe, 2009, p. 77; Barnett, Carolan, Fitzgerald, & Squires, 2012). A 2013 report cited in the *2014 State Fact Sheets*, "... state laws, policies and oversight for child care centers showed state requirements were minimal; the average score out of 150 was 92, 61% of all available points" (Child Care Aware, 2013, p. 4).

Those investing in monetary resources and children's futures want to know where the quality and accountability can be found. Accreditation is the preferred way to accomplish oversight between those who are subject matter and developmental period experts and those who enforce rules and regulations related to reliability. The community can expect to see a sharp increase in accountability requirements for teacher preparation programs in both university and freestanding settings. By the summer of 2015, the U.S. Department of Education plans to roll out accountability policy and recommendations for this population as well.

### **The Early Childhood Workforce**

Almost 5 million non-relatives provide care to children, but we do not know very much about them (Laughlin, 2013). According to Child Care Aware, in 2014, 2.2 million individuals earned a living caring for children under the age of five; their average income was \$21,490 in 2013 (2014). The Office of Planning, Research, and Evaluation (OPRE), adds an additional 2.7 million unpaid individuals cared for non-related children, at least five hours each week (2013). The Office of Planning, Research, and Evaluation estimated that in 2013 there were one million teachers/caregivers employed at 130,000 center-based programs. Of this, it is estimated there are almost 450,000 lead teachers; 225,000 assistants; 212,000 teachers; and just over 100,000 aides.

The DHHS has estimated that the median hourly wage for center-based teachers of children ages 0-3 was \$9.30 and for ages 3-5 was \$11.90 (OPRE, 2013). When education was

accounted, the median wage by educational attainment broke down as follows: \$14.70 for bachelors or above, \$11.00 for associate degree, \$9.30 for some college, \$9.00 for high school education or less (OPRE, 2013, p. 12). The national average fee for full-time care in a center (for 4-year-olds) is \$4,515-\$12,320 per year, and full-time center-based care for infants is \$5,496-\$16,549 (Child Care Aware, 2014).

When it comes to requirements for education, 31 states require a high school diploma or less for child care center lead teachers and 41 states have this requirement or less for family child care providers (Child Care Aware, 2014). For teachers and caregivers of preschool aged children, 45% report having a bachelors or higher, 17% have an associate degree, 24% have some college but no degree, and 13% have a high school education or less (OPRE, 2013). For teachers and caregivers of infants and toddlers, 19% reported having a bachelors or higher, 17% have an associate degree, 36% have some college but no degree, and 28% have a high school education or less (OPRE, 2013).

On issues of quality, 39 states have implemented Quality Rating and Improvement Systems (QRIS) statewide (QRIS Newtork, 2014). QRIS performance measures include program standards, high quality supports to programs to improve quality, financial incentives and supports, quality assurance and monitoring, and outreach and consumer education (CCDF, 2013; Child Trends, 2010). In 2013, 45 states had early learning standards or developmental guidelines for infants and toddlers. In 2013, 12 states required districts to offer full-day kindergarten. More than half a million children, or 41% of nationwide enrollment in state-funded pre-K, were served in programs that met fewer than half of the quality standards or

benchmarks (NIEER, 2013). Across the country, approximately 10% of centers and 1% of family child care homes are nationally accredited (Child Care Aware, 2014).

**Professional development systems.** In an effort to combat low quality in the field of early learning, the Federal Government set mandates for states to begin efforts of continuous improvement. A professional development system (PDS) is a system of tiers or layers of training (skills), education (knowledge), and experience (application) that are evaluated to recognize a caregiver/provider's professional accomplishments, and this assists them in setting and achieving professional goals. Each state's ECE PDS looks different and serves uniquely: most states have a career ladder, most have registries; those that do not currently have, will. Some PDSs advertise child care jobs, yet others offer technical assistance for training, evaluation, and accreditation. Most states offer some combination of the previously named programs.

According to the National Office of Child Care (OCC, 2010), "Responsive, well-qualified caregivers are the most important factor in children's development and learning" (p. 4). In 2012, about one-third of states required a Child Development Associate (CDA/ECE Certificate) or less to be a publicly funded preschool teacher assistant. Of the 52 state-funded pre-K initiatives offering public school preschool, 60% required a higher education degree for preschool teachers, with the majority specifying a bachelor's degree (Barnett, Carolan, Fitzgerald, & Squires, 2012). Family child care providers are often required to have a high school diploma or a CDA to meet licensing regulations. The professional bar has remained significantly low (Bryant & Clifford, 1992; Herzenberg, Price & Bradley, 2005).

To get a better idea of what the field looks like and to better estimate the quality of care, states are implementing the federally mandated PDS. These programs are multi-faceted in their



mission and work. Most systems are comprised of the following components: technical assistance, ECE workforce registry, individual development plan/career path, and ECE provider trainer and training approval. The overarching aim of PDSs is to professionalize and to standardize the field of early care and teacher preparation/education, implicitly increasing the quality of care in the field. Further, the U.S. Office of Child Care aims to build workforce initiatives to “help child care professionals pursue better training and higher education,” so that they can “move up ECE Workforce Registry ladders to higher compensations” (Early Childhood Professional Development and Education Collaborative, 2011; U.S. Department of Education, 2010).

**Workforce innovation and the big policy picture.** With so much change happening at an unprecedented rate in the field of early learning, it is easy to get swept away in a belief that we are unique in our experiences and objectives. However, it can be helpful when researching an issue to occasionally pull the lens we look through back to see a much broader context for the issue under examination. In this section, I provide explanations from the U.S. Department of Labor on workforce initiatives and the historical unfolding of the career pathway and registry movement in response to research on the workforce.

During the Great Recession, the workforce investments and initiatives were fast-tracked as a priority. Billions in workforce incentives and programs were streamlined through the American Recovery and Reinvestment Act of 2009 (Eyster, Anderson, & Durham, 2013). Workforce development for individual, community, and organizational economic sustainability required new ways of thinking about what is and is not working for the workforce and economy (Haralson, 2010). Gaps between workforce readiness and skills and knowledge required in the

employment marketplace prompted the U.S. Department of Labor and the U.S. Department of Education to work collaboratively in restructuring the school to training/education to work paradigm. From this collaboration, several new pieces of research are available.

The first is research provided by the Alliance for Quality Career Pathways, a project of the Center for Law and Social Policy (CLASP, 2013a). What is interesting about their work is that it is designed to “provide common understanding of what high-quality career pathway systems and programs look like, regardless of the targeted industry, occupation, or credentials...” (p.1). The Alliance for Quality Career Pathways (AQCP) provides a definition for a career pathway as “well-articulated sequences of quality education and training offerings and supportive services that enable educationally underprepared youth and adults to advance over time to successively higher levels of education and employment in a given industry sector or occupation” (p. 1). Moreover, the Alliance defines a career pathways approach as “reorienting existing education and workforce services from a myriad of disconnected programs to a structure that focuses on the individuals in need of education and training and their career paths” (p. 1). This is an important distinction, in the definition alone, because at its core the career pathway is described as bringing all training and education under one umbrella.

Variables identified in the data collection facilitated by the career pathway (for those in this study) included: postsecondary program completion, GPA, apprenticeships, short-term/vocational programs, technical diplomas, degree completion, technical skill attainment, credentials, certificates, diplomas, related employment, employment retention and earning gains (CLASP, 2013b). The report goes on to say that a comprehensive career pathway system includes: “traditional academic high school-to-college career pathways; secondary and post

secondary career and technical education career pathways; apprenticeships,” as well as others (2013b, p. 6). The section related to state level career pathways should be “responsive to labor market contexts and significantly engage multiple employers” (p. 6).

The Career Pathways Toolkit (Larsen, 2011), created by the U.S. Department of Labor, provides further definitions, explaining that a career ladder “displays only vertical movement” and a career lattice “shows both vertical and lateral movement between jobs and reflect more accurately...complex career paths...” (p. 33). The toolkit goes on to say that leadership of the pathways is to “systematize what already exists, creating an educational/training/certification framework that corresponds to and coordinates with what exists in the work world” (p. 33). The toolkit then goes on to recommend the “Pathways Leadership Team” seek employer validation, to ensure the career ladder is complete or if anything may be missing.

Many states have defined their ECE Career Pathways to reflect definitions that correlate with their child care licensing regulations. Levels and lattice associations with specific career options directly reflect the language and/or definitions used by the child care licensing department to qualify for specific roles such as assistant teacher, lead teacher, teacher aide or director. As this is the case, it is also helpful to understand the mission of ECE Workforce Registries and intended purpose. The National Workforce Registry Alliance has a registry brief located on the NAEYC Website (2013). It says that the registry was designed to recognize professionals who work with children and collect data and have advanced to become a critical component of the QRIS system by collecting and providing critical information for policy makers and researchers. The briefing continues by saying the role of the data collection is crucial to informing quality initiatives related to QRIS.

Research on quality career pathways, workforce development, and initiatives demonstrate inclusivity at entry-levels and for novice professionals. Across industries, this is established through the inclusion and recognition of vocational training, technical certificates, and apprenticeship programs. Preliminary research into ECE career pathways and registries showed that some states had many levels that accounted for these types of teacher preparation, while others did not. It is not clear what the rationale for that discrepancy in development could be. This is an interesting incongruity, given research that supports the vocational and apprenticeship presence in workforce development. Child Care Apprenticeship, which began in 1989, is now available in 30 states (West Virginia Apprenticeship for Child Development Specialist, 2010).

In the field of ECE, a shift has unfolded during the past ten years to move from “input-to-output-based criteria” as measurements of quality teacher preparation; this movement, led by the National Council for the Accreditation of Teacher Education (NCATE), recommends using criteria such as the demonstration of knowledge and skills as indicators of quality (Hyson, Tomlinson, & Morris, 2009). Burchinal, Hyson, and Zaslow (2011) wrote that quality can be improved “when teachers receive carefully selected and implemented professional development (either training outside of an institution of higher education or via higher education courses)” (In Zigler, Gilliam, & Barnett, p. 76). This mechanism for professional growth is supported in research indicating “regular, individualized feedback and professional development” for teachers observed in their own environments using My Teaching Partner (Pianta, 2006, p. 249). Other factors have been associated with quality outcomes and teacher preparation, including: a supportive mentor, intense supervision, and deep sense of belonging to the community (Tout, Zaslow, & Berry, 2006).

Workforce development research on the issue of vocational and apprenticeship training are convincing enough to justify a \$100 million investment into the American Apprenticeship Grants Program, with an objective to expand apprenticeship options and access across the country. Apprenticeship research shows that not only are they an effective form of professional development, they are considerably cost effective as well (Reed et. al, 2012). ECE apprenticeship models exist in 30 states, as alternative pedagogy preparation programs also widely exist. The extent to which the ECE career pathway and workforce registries will recognize them as contributing members of the workforce is unknown at this time.

**Early childhood workforce registries.** Early childhood registries are in varying degrees of development in all states across the country. The structure each registry varies based on each state's policy and child care infrastructure, as well as financial resources. According to a 2012 State of Registries Survey, 31% of state registries are housed in a university or institution of higher education (National Registry Alliance, 2013). The second most common location is in a state department (21%), then child care resource and referral agencies (18%), non-profits/501c3s and organizations in which they are housed (15% each). The NWRA report did identify the states included in each description; so it is unknown, at the time of this study, the degree to which institutional housing is influencing career pathway development.

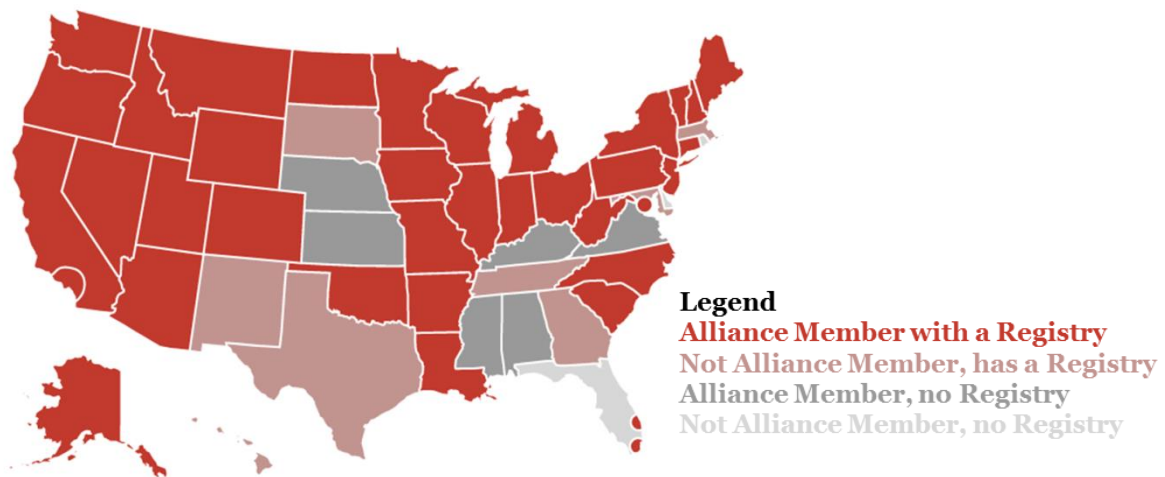
For example, are the states with a registry housed in an Institution of Higher Education more likely to impose a credit-exclusive recognition system? Has the conflict of interest in both monopolizing and influencing public access to publicly funded initiatives fully been examined? A map of registry implementation across the country is available from the National Workforce

Registry Alliance (NWRA, 2014), provided in Figure 2. Almost all (90%) of NWRA survey participants reported being funded by Child Care Development Funds (CCDF).

State ECE Registries vary tremendously. The biggest commonality they have is the overarching aim to systematically collect, store, retrieve, and report on information regarding child care providers. While they are broadcast to providers as a way to validate their learning and experiences, they serve a much greater purpose in providing a snapshot to policy makers and state office of early care staff and child care licensing offices as red-line indicators of state quality and training. In many ways, registries, due to centralized power, have become gatekeepers for training and education deemed recognition worthy in each state.

**Figure 2. Map of National Workforce Registry Alliance** (Courtesy of the NWRA, 2014)

Depicting nationwide implementation of ECE Workforce Registries



State career ladders vary more than any other element in the PDS. For example, Wisconsin has 17 career levels, whereas Vermont has six. Hawaii does not call their system a career ladder but rather use it as a licensing tool. Depending on your registry qualifications in

Hawaii, you can be “licensed” as an “assistant caregiver/teacher” to a “lead caregiver/teacher” or “program director” (People Attentive To Children, 2012).

One’s placement on a career ladder is extremely valuable, particularly when it comes to initiatives related to ECE recruitment, retention, and recognition (The Center for the Study of Child Care Employment, 2009; NCCIC, 2008b, p. 2). Most states envision what many have already done, making wage incentives or benefits commiserate with the career ladder levels (Career Lattice Paper, 2014; Mitchell, 2002; NCCIC, 2008b). In Washington, for example, a “lead teacher” with five years of experience and a CDA will earn \$10.75/hr, but the same individual with an associate degree earns \$12.25/hr through wage supplements; with a bachelor degree, they make \$14/hr (Economic Opportunity Institute, WA Wage Ladder, 2009).

Rather than wage increases, Louisiana offers a Child Care Provider & Facility tax credit (Quality Start, 2012). A Level I “director/teacher” earns a \$1,500 refundable tax credit, while a Level IV “director/teacher” earns \$3,000. In refundable tax credits, even if the individual gets back all of the taxes they paid in, they can still receive all of their eligible tax credit. In Illinois, wage supplements are provided every six months (Gateways to Opportunity, 2012). Teachers with a CDA get \$225/6mo, while teachers with a bachelor’s degree get \$975/6mo. A teacher or Level III director with a masters degree makes an additional \$1,950/6mo.

Other benefits can be found on a case-by-case basis. Illinois offers up to \$5,000 loan repayment (matching funds) programs. Other states offer comparable loan forgiveness (CO, PA, and TX). Arkansas offers a CDA scholarship program, as other states offer a version of scholarship (CO, CN, FL, KY, MN, NE, NV, RI, VI, and WY). Grants are also offered for registry members (AZ, CN, IL, MD and WY).

A small, yet significant portion of the early care community is exempt from the financial benefits of the PDS. For example, some Montessori-trained teachers are placed on career ladders equivalent to a high school diploma and are not eligible for wage supplement or increases. Others who may want to take Montessori training (not offered through the local university) would not be eligible for scholarship dollars or other financial support. This can effectively exempt entire Montessori or Waldorf schools from participating in or being counted as quality in ECE. Before conducting this study, I was not aware of any mention made of Reggio or Rudolf Steiner-inspired education teachers/training in most state registry systems. Figure 3 provides a snapshot of alternative-pedagogy community access to teacher preparation (Belcher-Badal, 2015).

### **Federal Policy Guiding Modern Pedagogy**

Today, early learning has made its way to the front of the line, finding its way into President Obama's 2014 State of the Union address, expanding its place in federal budgets; multiple gubernatorial races succeeded by running on an early learning platform and agenda (Bushouse, 2009; White House, 2014). These changes are occurring at the hands of decades of Early Childhood Advocacy and Research (Goffin & Washington, 2007; Zigler, Marsland, & Lord, 2009). The field of ECE now has the Federal Government's full attention. Federal policy has taken the reins on advancing the early childhood movement. Early learning now has initiatives addressing many issues in the field ranging from quality evaluations, to professional development and learning standards. Perhaps this has occurred without sufficient input from humanist traditions, as an "academic push down" silently spreads. Nevertheless, an advanced policy agenda was set and states are responding in record time.



Figure 3. Map of alternative pedagogy teacher preparation access.



Color Code:  
 Red: LifeWays  
 Yellow: Waldorf  
 Blue: Montessori

What does that mean? A policy agenda in education refers to the transmission of culture and knowledge deemed necessary for future successes in employment and acquiring of institutions of higher education. This policy agenda becomes problematic as “dominant” culture holds strong and, predominantly through policy-driven representation of cultural transmission, diversity becomes less representational of the individual and minority, and increasingly mechanistic as it is reproduced over time. Progressive, humanist agendas are more about maintaining open mind sets and striving to nourish individuals in their personal development

towards maximizing their own potential. Both traditions aim for transformation in society, but they are not necessarily aiming for the same outcome.

**Investing in early learning.** The integration of federal funding for early care and education has escalated to an annual investment of 34+ billion dollars since the Aid for Dependent Children Act was first approved in 1935 (Committee on Economic Security, 1935; Reese, 2002; U.S. Department of Health and Human Services, 2010; Wright, 2002). This price tag comes with amplified focus on quality for dollar and spawned a plethora of research-based quality definitions and measures in ECE (Office of Child Care, 2010, 2011; Schweinhart, Montie, Xiang, Barnett, Belfield, & Nores, 2005; Thornburg, Mayfield, Hawks, & Fuger, 2009; Vandal, 2004; Zaslow, Martinez-Beck, Tout, Halle, 2011). Within ECE research, there are two commonly referred to quality domains: structural (ratio, group size, health, safety, training, etc.) and process oriented (responsiveness, classroom management, instruction and interactions) (Burchinal, 2010; Ramey & Ramey, 2006).

As precisely described in a 2007 Child Trends document, quality measures were initially developed for researchers to identify and quantify specific variables in relation to environments and practice with young children. Those variables and measures have crossed into a different, unintended area of application as they are now utilized by policy makers to *define* quality and *measure progress* in the direction of quality (Halle & Vicke, 2007). Although efforts are being made to correct for this, in 2009, the CLASS Assessment Tool was actually designed to capture the quality of teacher/student interactions within the QRIS policy environment and the MyTeachingPartner system are contributing to evolution in capturing quality (Hamre, Goffin, Kraft-Sayre, 2009; Pianta, Hamre, & Downer, 2011).

Keeping in mind Watkins' and Mortimore's (1999) perceptive realization that quality means different things to "practicing teachers, educational policy makers, academics, and researchers" (p. 3), there is also definite controversy around definitions of quality. This community debate, regardless of validity, has been growing steadily for the past 30 years (Ramey & Ramey, 2011). Ramey and Ramey flatly deny this perceived controversy is real and directly correlated perceived confusion as interrupting "crucial policy decisions" (p. 356). They go on to disagree with the notion of quality as subjective and insensitive to culture but indicate that "there are remarkably high levels of agreement among parents and professionals about what represents high-quality child care" (p. 356). Ramey and Ramey make a strong point in favor of stifling the debate on definitions of quality by writing about vast sums of children who are currently exposed to poor quality child care; we do know that poor quality child care is negatively impacting one of the single most crucial growing periods of the human's development. Their solution is a need to call for an "alliance" between the invested members of many perspectives and simplify the definitions of quality to "improving child care for all children, in all places," with an emphasis on observable features of quality rather than structural (p 357).

Ramey and Ramey (2011) provide a model for the definition of quality (Four Diamond Model), which "reflects well established, extensive research that is not highly controversial" (p. 358). This model is based on a) health and safety, b) adult-child interactions, c) learning and language activities, and d) care-giver family relationships (p. 358). Ramey and Ramey argue, moreover, that this is better because it is generalizable to most any environment the child migrates to, making it portable and universal in all settings and with all care providers. This

concept is supported by research from “standardized observations in several thousand U.S. early education classrooms clearly demonstrating that, on average, the quality of child-teacher interactions is not high, and effective curriculum implementation is inadequate” (Pianta, Hamre, & Downer, 2011, p. 298). It also makes sense from the perspective of the child care workforce, for which 2002 estimates placed only 24% of the workforce in child care centers; almost half of the field (47%) were relatives providing care, and 28% were Family Child Care Providers (NACCRRA, 2012).

Yet, in policy realms and dialogue, “quality” and “developmentally appropriate” are terms used as freely and confidently as if they were long-standing, widely-accepted truths. Quality sounds good and is well-meaning at its core; things like, “teacher preparation, training, continuity, safety, health, curriculum, ratios, best practices, and now standards,” are summarily good things but merely hanging policy on empty rhetoric of brain research or science is just not enough (Anderson-Levitt & Alimasi, 2001; Frede, 1995; Kim & McMullen, 2012; Sutton & Levinson, 2001). Wanting children to enter kindergarten ready to learn is, at the surface, another good idea; the formula for providing and evaluating quality and defining readiness is a lot more complicated than current quality policy is accounting for.

The issue is not whether these policies are conceptually good, rather disagreement is in the goodness of fit. Dr. Fyfe, Dean of the School of Education at Webster University in St. Louis, MO and Reggio Emilia Community Expert Representative, encompasses this sentiment in a statement she provided during an interview with Gandini and Kaminsky (2004):

I am concerned that some of our documents on best practice in the U.S. still have the tendency to narrow and limit our image of the child, boxing them into predetermined

expectations about learning. The heavy emphasis on goal driven instruction and assessment is not balanced with an openness to going into uncharted territory with children. (p. 6)

The need for consensus is very real; policy on quality is moving forward at an impressive pace and, as a field, we still do not even agree “quality” research, as empirical science, is in fact durable. Martinez-Beck and Zaslow wrote that current policy questions related to quality “outstrip the research base” (2006). They follow this up by illuminating contradictions based on knowledge versus practice; conflicts abound in policy and advocacy debates on “quality correlation comparisons of training vs. workshop vs. education;” “is more education better or are there thresholds for impact;” “is a degree more effective or is immediate feedback by a mentor,” etc. (Zaslow & Martinez-Beck, 2006, pp. 11-12). Or, in the long-established case of developmentally appropriate practice (DAP), we do not even agree on what is touted as “based on research” (Kim & McMullen, 2012).

Alas, as a field, we are well-intentioned but not clear in explanations. I would argue this is, in part, because we have not yet concurred on the pedagogical conundrum, “Where do we wish to lead young children, and how will we go about accomplishing that” (Flinders & Thornton, 2009; Goffin & Wilson, 2001; Pinar, 2004; Tyler, 2013)? What is known is that when children are in “good” care and environments, “good” things happen: variables that impact futures and change lives can be measured (literacy rates go up, testing scores are higher, high school graduation rates go up, people are more gainfully employed, crime rates go down, etc.), but we have not yet been able to correlate why (Barnett, 1995, 2002; Burchinal, Peisner-

Feinberg, Pianta, & Howes, 2002; National Institute of Child Health and Human Development, 2006; Schweinhart, et al., 2005).

**Systemic assessment does not equate quality.** There is no unanimous definition of quality or professional development in the field (National Head Start Association [NHSA], 2008; Neuman & Cunningham, 2009). It is also understood, in research, that the relationship between ECE professional development measures and these quality measures do not yet have scientifically causal outcomes (NHSA, 2008). In fact, there is reason to believe professional development outcomes that rely solely on IHE degree obtainment fail to deliver in pragmatic situations (Bernhard, 1995; Early, et al., 2007; NHSA, 2008; Neuman & Cunningham, 2009; Tout, Zaslow, & Berry, 2006).

Narrow definitions of quality, based on ill-fitting systemic assessment, may lead to the exile of many esteemed pedagogies to the peripherals of educational quality. For example, consider a LifeWays program in Wisconsin where children play on over an acre of preserved land in a Steiner-inspired program and are committed to serving families in low-income communities. The program was applauded by state licensing inspectors prior to the STARS program quality evaluation and received high marks, public recommendations, and accolades. However, after the STARS quality evaluation, the program did not receive points for the following reasons: 1) lacked access to an indoor sand table; 2) did not offer computer access to children; 3) lacked adult-led exercise programs; and 4) did not measure food quantities children were served.

The director of the LifeWays program shared that, in this center, the following activities were also not acknowledged as available (or awarded points): 1) children had access to a very

large sand box structure as part their daily outdoor experiences; 2) computers, by philosophical ideology, are not introduced to young children; 3) children participate in an extensive nature program that consists of prolonged daily outdoor experiences thereby reducing the need for adult-led exercise; and 4) children at this nature preserve/LifeWay's program grow their own food on the farm. Because A Child's Garden of Thyme, a LifeWays program in San Diego, was so highly considered, a representative from that program was part of a group interviewed by First Lady Michelle Obama's "Lets Move" campaign to help develop knowledge of and models for active schools. "Now," said Director Cynthia Aldinger, "we're struggling to get the points that match [the standards we helped create]" (personal communication, 2013).

Montessori schools across the nation have been facing similar problems, losing points and stars on evaluations for their own philosophically induced differences. Representatives for the American Montessori Society and Association Montessori Internationale/USA have shared that schools have been penalized for the utilization of glass items in their practical life centers, allowing children access to use seemingly "hazardous" child-sized tools such as dull knives in food preparation, small hammers in woodworking, child sized scissors in art, and large darning needles for practical life experiences. Schools have been evaluated poorly for not providing activities and resources that run counter to Montessori philosophical adhesions, such as block play, dress up corners, and stuffed animals. But most problematic for them has been the lack of recognition for their teacher preparation. According to Montessori Forward (2014), "Many states do not recognize Montessori credentialed teachers as 'highly qualified.'"

Through research, interviews, and work with state policy planners and university faculty, an interesting perspective has been revealed by policy makers and academics that incorrectly

assume Montessori, Reggio Emilia and Rudolf Steiner-Inspired Education are only “*approaches* to thinking about childhood.” These highly educated but misinformed individuals have asserted in un-apologetic terms that these programs are not based on child-development, are not founded on research, and are not qualified as pedagogies. They claim, rather, that these types of programs are not quality measurable or standardized and rest on questionable, even outdated approaches to childhood. Sentiments privately expressed in the past decade by ill-advised educators and policy planners compare these communities to cults (personal communication, Spring, 2014).

Some state ECE quality policy systems are bogged down by definitions related to accreditation and jurisdiction of Regional, National, and Programmatic Accreditation; those policy language conditions, for example the state recognition system, only acknowledge teacher preparation from regionally accredited institutions of higher education but not nationally accredited or freestanding institutions. This circular debate implies that all teacher preparation must be regionally accredited to be recognized. To see why this is problematic, see Figure 4.

To better understand the dynamics of this situation, we have to look at the actual definitions, rather than the commonly perceived application of these variables. First, there are three general avenues for teacher preparation: a) college or university, b) freestanding institutions, c) informal preparation (workshops, conferences, refresher courses, annual training, etc.). Then, there are two basic domains of postsecondary accreditation: a) institutional, and b) programmatic. Within institutional accreditation, there are two accreditation venues: a) regional and national, overseen by the Council for Higher Education Accreditation, and b) national, regional, and freestanding, overseen by the U.S. Department of Education. Under the U.S.D.E,

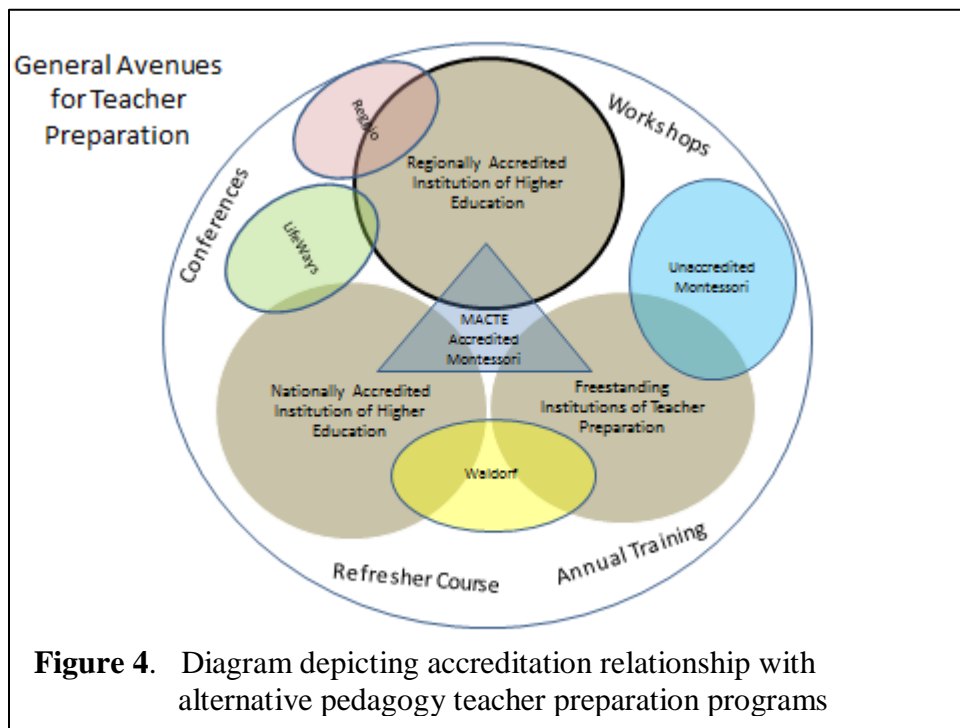


there is “specialized” accreditation authority recognized with expanded accreditation jurisdiction; MACTE, for example, is authorized to accredit both teacher preparation programs in colleges and universities and institutional accreditation of the freestanding institution, including those offered through distance education (U.S. Department of Education, 2015).

According to CHEA, regional accreditation pertains to a college or university’s institutional soundness and accountability factors, those of “public and private, mainly non-profit and degree granting, two- and four-year institutions” (Eaton, 2008). As an example, University “X” has Regional Accreditation, accounting for variables related to physical structure, financial management, human resources, principle guidelines, and additional accountability measures related to institutional practices. University “X” has several programs in its delivery of higher education (psychology, business, education, social sciences, etc.). Those programs acquire programmatic accreditation by their relevant fields (psychology program, American Psychological Association [APA], etc.). Programmatic accreditation is specialized to the type of preparation being provided and looks different for nurses, midwives, dentists, lawyers, businesses, and Montessori teachers.

National accreditation is authorized by both CHEA and the U.S. Department of Education. Regional accreditation of colleges and universities is authorized by CHEA, a non-government agency that has been self-regulated by institutions of higher education for over 100 years. Both agencies readily recognize accreditation recognition by one another, as a quality indicator (Eaton, 2008). The ECE Workforce Registry recognition limitation of “regional accreditation only” is muddled by a longtime issue regarding colleges and universities that are regionally accredited institutions not readily accepting credit or degree transfer from nationally

accredited institutions. This is more of a currency issue than it is an indicator of validity. A bank, for example, is unlike a store; whereas a store in the U.S. will not accept Canadian currency, it is reasonable that a U.S. bank not only recognizes Canadian currency, but that it will exchange it too. Along the same line of reasoning, it is not uncommon in Canada for stores to accept U.S. currency. By design, a workforce registry should operate like a bank—able to accept all forms of accredited teacher preparation, and, working with experts, accreditation authorities, and stakeholders, identify an equivalency recognition level for all types of teacher preparation to be recognized and count in data collection.



Like Ramey and Ramey’s (2006) simpler-is-better model of quality, we can deduce that widely generalizable acknowledgement of quality preparation is not only logical, it can more readily follow teachers as they migrate across state lines and increasingly contribute to healthy child development. Discounting or even excluding teacher preparation programs that do not

have regional accreditation is comparable to saying, “We have a professional recognition system designed to collect data and reward professional investments, but we only count the ones who obtained professional preparation from a university or college with a specific type of accreditation, one based on institutional dependability; additionally, we aren’t really concerned with the program’s accreditation.” How is it possible that institutional and programmatic accreditation recognized by the U.S. Department of Education is not identifiable in a workforce registry or career pathway? These professional development components are mandated and supported by the Federal Government and informed by U.S. Departments of Labor, Health and Human Services, and Education.

There are many other examples of alternative programs in which philosophical considerations run counter to traditional values found in mainstream early childhood communities, like the Ecojustice Model or the Pikler Approach to infancy. It is important to understand that, in many ways, the preparation to “teach” differently rests on a process of indoctrinating differently. Montessori, Rudolf Steiner-inspired education, Reggio-Emilia models, and LifeWays classrooms are a few well-established examples. If a teacher preparation program does not fit into the policy box, if they are downgraded by their orientations, and if their teachers are not recognized, how will this quality movement impact parent choice, democratic variety, and potentially eliminate a humanistic philosophical lens on early learning that is already at risk?

## **Chapter Three:**

### **Methods**

#### **Overview of Study Design**

The purpose of this study was to prioritize the experience of the alternative-pedagogy teacher and looks for trends, allies, and data through inquiry and reporting on current professional development processing efforts in all 50 states, using a critical pedagogy lens in a transformative analysis framework. This study was designed to contribute to better understanding about how state policy makers comparatively define and recognize early childhood professional development, training, and education in relationship to alternative-pedagogy teacher preparation models, particularly those not readily available in institution of higher education's teacher preparation programs (TPPs)..

This study employed mixed methods, using qualitative and quantitative methods to access the strengths in both techniques and to best illustrate the policy situation under examination (Creswell, 1998, 2009). For example, one question that led to the use of the mixed methodology, particular to this line of inquiry, was that there was not enough data in either education policy or alternative pedagogy data sets to adequately capture the essence or magnitude of the problem. Capturing the individual experiences through qualitative data collection alone, while rich in insight and empathetic value, failed to articulate the magnitude of the problem on a national scale. Conversely, while the exclusive use of the quantitative methodology could address gaps in the data that required causal explanations such as validating indicators that the perceived problem was real, it could not tell us what it felt like, what contributed to it, what had been done, what was effective or provide access to the rich language

articulating what participants thought about obstacles and solutions (Glaser & Laudel, 2013). In fact, as Glaser and Laudel (2013) wrote, “Causal explanations with qualitative methods is one of the more ambitious research goals in the social sciences, the possibility of which is still contested by both quantitative and qualitative researchers” (Section 2, para. 4); making the use of mixed methods research methodologies an even more appropriate fit for an inquiry of this type and at this time (Creswell, 2009; Tashakkori & Teddlie, 2003).

The survey portion was designed to collect descriptive data aggregated to assemble a national snapshot. Survey questions were designed as both open-ended (looking for more thought and descriptions) and closed-ended (towards data collection, through numerical responses). The survey invitation was sent to registry representatives in all 50 states. After the 28 survey responses were categorized and coded, states that indicated an interest in participating in follow-up interviews were contacted with an invitation. Eleven state registry directors were invited to interview; followed by interviews of key leadership across diverse communities (see Figure 5). Participation from 11 cumulative interviews included five from state registry directors in strategic states and six from representatives of teacher preparation and accreditation or recognition systems:

- Alaska
- Georgia
- Nevada
- New Hampshire
- Oregon.
- MACTE Executive Director of Accreditation for Montessori Communities

- Dean of the School of Education for Webster University in St. Louis representing the Reggio Emilia Community
- WECAN Coordinator, task force chair and board members for the Waldorf Community
- Founder of the LifeWays Program
- Former Montessori IHE-TPP Director, professor and policy advocate
- Former Waldorf IHE-TPP Director, Current Waldorf freestanding TPP director

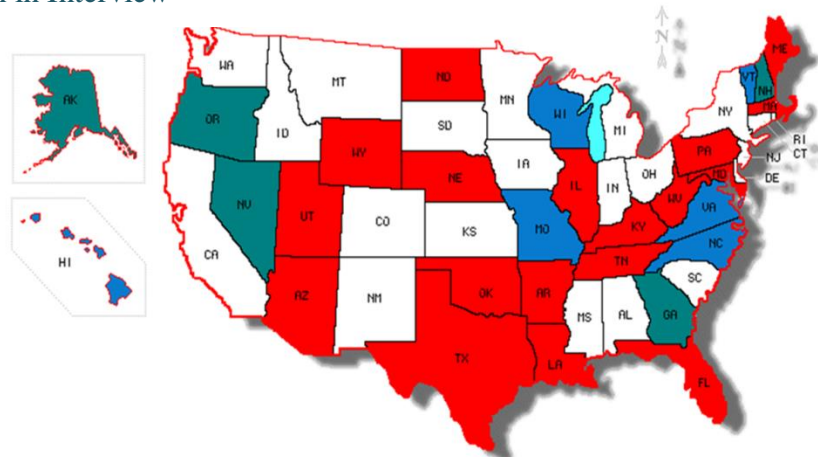
Finally, in the last phase of data collection, 125 alternative pedagogy teacher preparation directors were contacted, (representing a mixed alternative-pedagogy training cohort of LifeWays, Montessori, and Waldorf Teacher Preparation Programs); there were 46 responses, representing 25 states. Procedures of the study are discussed in this chapter; findings of the study are discussed in the next chapter.

**Figure 5. Map of Study Participation from Policy Makers**

**Registry Director Participation by State**

*All states with color represent policy maker participating states*

- State with Participation in Survey
- State with Invitation to Interview
- State with Participation in Interview



## Theoretical Framework

The methodological research framework utilized in this study is Merten's *Transformative Research and Evaluation* (2009). The reason this methodology was selected as the best fit has to do with the membership role played by the researcher, a desire to illuminate the power relationship and marginalized standing of the alternative pedagogy community, and an aspiration to facilitate a social change towards a more just policy system by leveraging recognition for marginalized teachers. Transformative research guided the creation of the lines of questioning and the unfolding of the study phases of data collection. As Merten (2009) wrote:

When a transformative lens is applied to data analysis and interpretation, different facets of the data and their meaning emerge. Theoretical frameworks can be used to filter data in a way that brings to the fore issues of discrimination, oppression, and social justice. (p. 282)

As a pathway for prioritizing the community, as often as possible participants' own words are used to describe their perspectives.

The courses of action selected were informed by the policy analysis recommendations found in Dunn's 2004 *Public Policy Analysis*, Tashakkori and Teddlie's 2003 *Handbook of Mixed Methods in Social and Behavioral Research*, Merten's 2009 *Transformative Research and Evaluation*, Forester's 1993 *Critical Theory, Public Policy, and Planning Practice: Toward a Critical Pragmatism*, and Creswell's 2009 *Research Design: Qualitative, Quantitative, and Mixed Methods Approaches*. This is a mixed methods study utilizing a concurrent transformative strategy (Creswell, 1998; Tashakkori & Teddlie, 2003).

**Mixed methodology.** The rationale for using this method was to overcome gaps that would be created utilizing one method exclusively. Mixed methods allow for a “convergence of findings, minimizes alternative explanations, and elucidates divergent aspects” (Tashakkori & Teddlie, 2003, p. 299). The proposed mixture of qualitative and quantitative methods was carefully selected to increase the validity of the study, while uncovering as much information as possible by reflecting diverse and complex communities.

Mixed methods research builds on two common methods for implementing combined qualitative and quantitative approaches (Creswell, 2008). Quantitative methods represented the need for aggregate data collection in terms of national trends. Qualitative methods utilized open-ended survey questions, interviews, and a humanistic approach to constructing knowledge. I elected to use transformative mixed methods, which is based on advancing a particular social justice agenda (often advocacy or reform based) (Creswell, 1998, 2009). This method was an ideal fit due to the conceptual framework, analysis of power, need to examine multiple realities, and desire to “advance a dialogue of ideological differences” (Greene and Casracelli, 1997, p. 24).

**Policy analysis.** Using Dunn’s “problem structuring in policy analysis” (2004), the “problem situation” described in the literature review is in the “problem sensing phase.” This indicates a problem has not yet been clearly defined but is sensed by an expert(s) in the field. Therefore, this policy study aimed neither towards problem resolving nor problem dissolving but, rather, at problem structuring.

In literature on policy problems, there is a continuum that is referred to, ranging from ill- to well-structured. A concise definition is offered in Hoppe and Dunn (2001), where they



describe ill-structured problems as being “diffuse and difficult to separate from other problems,” making it difficult to determine which “disciplines or specializations” are necessary to solve the problem (Hoppe & Dunn, 2001, p. 51). Furthermore, they explained, “solving un-structured problems requires new insight to learn what the problem is about” (p. 51). Using the continuum, Hoppe and Dunn wrote, “A problem is called unstructured when there is neither consensus nor certainty, yet there is still widespread sense of discomfort with the status quo” (p. 52).

In *Public Policy Analysis*, Dunn (1994) described policy problems that “involve many different decision makers” with “unknown values” as ill-structured (p. 146). As the policy under analysis was in the problem structuring phase and ill-structured, it was important for the analyst to take “an active part in defining the nature of the problem by imposing a part of themselves on the situation by exercising creative judgment and insight” (Dunn, 2004, p. 81). This method was a strong fit between this inquiry and my background.

There are many paradigms, communities, and cultures (each with specific languages) at play in this study, including the following: education policy research, early childhood research, alternative pedagogy culture, quality improvement and professional development policies, workforce initiatives, career pathways, workforce registries, and broad and underlying federal and state policies and initiatives. Having membership and fluency in dialects and demonstrating cultural competence are critical to successful use of mixed methodology in this context. There was strong “goodness of fit” between the research method employed, the needs of the community, the perspective of this problem, and my strengths as a researcher.

I have been involved in the field of early care and education since 1994. In that time, I have been active as a nanny, teacher’s aide, assistant teacher, co-teacher, lead teacher and

assistant director in ECE classrooms/schools, and I taught undergraduate courses. I also served as program coordinator for a state child care apprenticeship program and program director for a statewide ECE scholarship program. Further, in those capacities, I had a full range of ECE workforce registry experiences, from an applicant to a policy maker, and served in an advisory capacity for community colleges, a state ECE registry, joint technical skills committees, and with non-profit and public stakeholders.

I have established associations with Rudolf Steiner-Inspired Education and Reggio-Inspired Schools, am Montessori Certified, and have experience with indigenous/immersion schools. Based on these credentials, I assumed an active role describing and defining the problem, while intending to promote the voices of the participants as shared realities.

**Grounded theory.** Grounded theory is a specific form of analysis where the researcher goes into data analysis without a hypothesis but looks for trends that emerge and sorts descriptive and qualitative data to tell a story as accurately as possible. Glaser's (1999) grounded theory is used to continually examine the data to inform additional phases of data collection. For example, interview questions or Phase III survey questions were informed and created in response to the survey responses that were initially provided from the states registry offices. The data were read again and again, over a period of months, looking for new connections and strengthening the initial coding analysis with growing examples from data.

### **Sample**

Jansen (2010) said that a qualitative survey is the "study of diversity (not distribution) in a population" (section 2.0, paragraph 6). In this case, I was looking for both diversity and potential trends across regions or the nation. I utilized mixed methodologies to identify and to

understand the variability between states in relation to specific policy and application to a specific community to create the most accurate and informed depiction of this situation (Tashakkori & Teddlie, 2003).

This study used total population sampling for the survey; followed by expert and targeted sampling for follow-up interviews (Tashakkori & Teddlie, 2003). Total population sampling is advantageous in making a contribution to the field and research because, at the time the study was undertaken, it was unknown if any trends or common themes existed between regions or states and, if so, why. All states started as non-inclusive, the question became why did they change and how? In order to identify and to understand the variability of application and discrepancy from one state system to another, ample state participation was desirable to validate or determine adequacy of information.

The rest of the study included expert sampling with interviews and surveys. This method was appropriate because it allowed informed cross-questioning to occur. Direct experience, in the form of expert sampling, is valuable. It informs research and the field how these policies are impacting and responding to marginalized communities. Interview selection was based on the state's application of policy and expressed interest. The interview portion was designed to collect in-depth information and feedback on policy development and strategy. The transformative analysis functioned to move beyond data collection, adding insight about how both populations stand to gain from one another and how they might collaborate in the future to strengthen the professional development movement.

The subjects for the Phase II survey were state policy representatives of the ECE workforce registry in each state's office of child care registry/professional development division

(office titles and administrations vary by state). The subjects for the Phase IV interviews include state participants from the survey. One non-participant state was added in Phase IV, due to its unique longevity in the Professional Development Registry; that state did not respond to the second phase research invitation either. Directors of training and education sites for Waldorf Education, Montessori, LifeWays or Reggio training programs located outside institutions of higher education were added to Phase V's data collection. Alternative pedagogy training directors were selected based on two categories: they were either located in states that participated in the state surveys or located in states with policy makers who did not participate. Adding additional subjects to the third phase allowed communities in states that had not elected to participate initially the opportunity to contribute and to avoid eliminating their voices, stories, or potentially relevant struggles.

### **Setting**

The study began in the fall of 2013 and concluded in the summer of 2014. All of the data collection in this study occurred off campus, from my home office. The use of Skype interviews, phone calls, emails, physical mailings and electronic survey access were utilized in the unfolding study. The survey included electronic survey methods (online access) with follow-up paper surveys sent by mail/fax to requesters. Two states requested copies of the survey prior to online completion; none submitted paper copies. Telephone interviews took place online, based on director availability. Interview transcripts/summaries were sent via PDF file attachments to emails. Summarization and analysis of research also took place in my home office.

## **Preparations**

In preparation for this study, no research was undertaken until the Indiana University-Bloomington Institutional Review Board approved the study, methods, and instruments. The next step required obtaining points of contact in every state for the ECE workforce registry or similar office/representative. Succeeding that phase, each pedagogies' teacher preparation institutions had to be identified. Key leadership, participants, and stakeholders were also identified, and initial contact with them was made. The initial survey was created in Survey Monkey, software for recording interviews was selected, and letters of invitation were compiled for a mass mailing with study information packets.

## **Procedures**

In this study, there were seven general phases of data collection, including three for public data collection. The following descriptions are to give a summary of what occurred during the study but should not be interpreted as a distinct beginning or end to each phase; many phases overlapped and intertwined. The phases are described in the following details.

### **Six phases described:**

**Phase I – Prepare contacts.** Preparatory phase outlined in the preparations section; primarily groundwork, defined as the identification of points of contact across several communities as well as survey development.

**Phase II - Nationwide registry survey.** Established contact with a representative for each state and six territories' office of early care and education with both a physical and emailed letter introducing myself, explaining the purpose of the study, requesting public information, and providing a web link to the survey (Appendix E). After two weeks, a follow-up letter was sent to

non-responders via email, to both the initial individual and a secondary individual cross-organizational referenced, as listed in the QRIS contact list from each state's office of early care and education. After two weeks, the regional Administration of Children and Families or Department of Human Services representative who supports state professional development system progress was contacted in an effort to seek support for the study completion (either through providing a better contact or encouraging survey completion). After eight weeks, Phase I of the study "State ECE Policy Representatives Survey" was closed to most participants; individual states requesting more time were allowed continued access. A letter of thanks was sent to participants.

A total of 28 states were represented in the survey responses; 27 states/territories did not participate in the survey (their data is represented only by information obtained in public domains and phone calls). Responses from the survey were analyzed for both congruency and diversity by regions, policy trends, stages of development, and alternative pedagogy representation. Eleven states were identified for follow up interviews.

**Phase III – Engaging in dialogue with leadership.** At this point in the study, initial analysis of survey responses from the registry representatives was complete. To verify understanding and discuss thoughts further, several states were contacted for feedback and answers to policy system and institutional questions related to organizational culture and policy practices.

**Phase IV – Leadership interviews with policy makers and alternative pedagogy community.** Shortly after Phase II was completed, both hard copy and emailed invitations were sent out to policy makers representing 11 states. The letter thanked the contributor for

participating; explained why their state was selected; contained a summary of their ECE workforce registry policy system's process for and recognition of alternative-pedagogy trained teachers and an additional summary of the study's purpose; and invited participation in the second phase (Appendix F).

Ten states selected were participants from Phase I; one state (contacted for an interview) was a non-participant from Phase I. This non-participant state was contacted because of their unique longevity in the PDS since 1991. The other states invited to interview represented the following categories: three states recognized Montessori teacher preparation on their career ladders; four states did not recognize any alternative pedagogy training; three states were selected to learn more about unique or conflicting information gathered during the pre-survey research or survey answers. These states were also selected because they had a disproportionately high mix of alternative pedagogy communities and training institutions in all types of pedagogies, including a number of alternative pedagogy schools.

Altogether, 12 individuals and five states agreed to be interviewed: Georgia, Nevada and Oregon, which recognize Montessori training; New Hampshire, which does not recognize any alternative pedagogy training; Alaska, which recognizes Montessori training and reported providing scholarships for this type of training (the only state to indicate this).

Policy representatives from Georgia, Oregon, Nevada and New Hampshire agreed to phone interviews. Interviews conducted by phone averaged an hour and were recorded to increase accuracy in reporting. Alaska participated in the interview process via email. Interviews (5) were transcribed by a transcription service. Interview transcripts were returned to participants to verify clarity and accuracy. The data collected, along with Phase I data, were

coded. This information was utilized to create a response survey for directors of alternative pedagogy training programs.

Following the state interviews, the process for filling in the rest of the communities' perspectives was initiated through interviews with individuals representing different components of the alternative pedagogy community considered to be key informants. Three individuals were contacted, representing different aspects of the Waldorf and LifeWays communities. Each of them talked about this policy situation from personal experience. One individual interviewed represented a WECAN recognized (Waldorf-member institution)-Waldorf training; it was once housed in a university setting but now is a free-standing institution. Another represented a different training program ideally geared toward family child care providers. The third represented a birds-eye view as the coordinator for the membership recognition of teacher preparation in Waldorf Education.

In the Montessori Community, three individuals were interviewed. One was a professor and former department chair for a university offering Montessori training for college credit. Another co-founded an advocacy Website for the Montessori community and was working as a consultant with many states across the country to address policy issues. The third was another overarching representation of what accredited teacher preparation institutions were experiencing; she is the Executive Director and President of the Montessori Accreditation Council for Teacher Education (MACTE).

The final interview occurred with an individual who served in a unique capacity. She has longevity within the Reggio Emilia-inspired movement, served on the North American Reggio Emilia Alliances Board, is a university professor and dean of the School of Education at Webster



University, and is deeply involved in the expansion of Reggio-Inspired education in public and private schools in Missouri. She is the founder and overseer of the nation's only certificate available in Reggio Emilia Education, The Pedagogista Graduate Certificate.

Nine months were needed to conduct all of the interviews, which sometimes took months to schedule. The wait was worthwhile as they added to the unique perspectives brought to the study and contributed to community representation.

**Phase V – Teacher preparation program survey.** Several weeks after the interviews started, an emailed invitation to participate in the study was sent to directors of alternative pedagogy (training) institutions. In the letter, I introduced myself, explained the study, invited participation and provided a link with survey access (Appendix G). There were 40 directors of alternative pedagogy teacher preparation contacted, representing states that had policy makers who had previously participated in the study; 15 responded (38% response rate). There were 86 non-participating-states alternative pedagogy training institution directors contacted; 39 responded (45% response rate). Two follow-up emails requesting participation and providing survey access were sent, each a week apart. Three weeks after opening the survey, a closing a note of thanks and appreciation was sent to participants.

**Phase VI – Follow-up emails and phone calls.** During the final months of the study, participants were contacted as needed in conjunction with analysis of the data, requests for clarity, or confirmation in reporting accuracy. All states received a follow-up phone call to confirm policy placement accuracy. Leaders in the alternative pedagogy community were also contacted for clarity, detail, and insight. All individuals included in the data collection were

contacted for permission to use their statements. Such statements were provided to the participant for verification and accuracy prior to use.

**Phase VII – Final verification calls.** Prior to closing the study, a final rotation of calls went out to key states to discover if any new developments occurred and to encourage states where consideration or advocacy work had already begun. This phase was also marked by the development of an action-based work group dedicated to housing the study findings and recommendations for moving the study agenda forward. In April of 2015, the study summary was sent to all state registry offices, alternative pedagogy representatives, and presented at the Montessori Accreditation Council for Teacher Education Symposium in Alexandria, VA (Appendix H)

### **Instruments**

The Survey Monkey online survey system was employed to conduct this research. Each survey was designed with a participant consent form as the entry point to the survey. Participants who consented were given access to the survey; those who declined were thanked for their interest and exited from the survey. Survey question responses were randomized, where applicable, and the option was provided to return to the survey to change responses. Questions included in this study are listed in Appendices, E, F, and G.

## Chapter 4

### Analysis and Findings

The data were analyzed using a lens for policy problem definition and a transformative framework with the intended objective of leading to social justice outcomes, primarily to empower a community to overturn a socially-imposed inequity. The data collected was viewed with priority given to the perspective of the alternative pedagogy community. Questions and interviews were driven in an effort to highlight the alternative pedagogy community's experiences, to encourage advocacy building, and to identify trends or data supporting these efforts. In this chapter, I describe what took place, who was involved, and how the information was examined.

Approximately four weeks after the first surveys were sent out, results were coded and aggregated using both survey software and analytic note taking. Survey data were coded first using the survey software, to examine general trends (such as similar responses and types of language/perspective). Data were organized using a table for data representation in an excel worksheet. Participating states were additionally coded for inclusivity to alternative pedagogy communities (APC). For example, based on the use of language, policies, and overall recognition, states were categorized as APC inclusive, APC neutral, and APC restrictive.

Examples of language used to identify a state as inclusive included, "The [state] registry acknowledges that there are many high quality programs and pathways to working with children. All programs that connect to [state's] childhood care and education standards, the core body of knowledge, should be represented in the [state's] registry." Language from a neutral state indicated neither inclusive nor restrictive language towards working with APC. Language-

neutral statements resembled this survey participant's comment, "As mentioned in an earlier answer, we are considering whether we should allow alternative pathways, but no decision has been made at this time."

States coded as APC restrictive utilized language as evidenced in the following sample comments, "No, this is not something we have entertained" (in relationship to a question about whether the registry office has been contacted by community members regarding their placement level); "[These communities] have minimal presence in [state];" and "...Waldorf training hours are accepted, but no type of Waldorf credential is on par with a CDA." These comments were categorized as restrictive because they indicate a level of difficulty for the community working in that state, a closed approach on the part of the registry office, or lacked evidence of neutrality.

The categorical, demographic, and language rich data from the survey helped identify which states to select for interviews. The survey information also raised questions, pointing to the need for more information from leaders in the field and the community of impact. For example, several state registries indicated that they had never been contacted about alternative pedagogy recognition by constituents in their states; it was important to find out if state constituents would corroborate that information. Another state indicated that they had "well-informed" staff because those staff members had taken course-work that discussed those pedagogies; it was appropriate to question the community whether they felt that they were well represented or understood by their policy office. Approximately six weeks after the initial registry survey went out, state interviews were sent.

Interviews with "experts" who could further inform the study were developed using the information analyzed in the first phase. Outliers, or polarities, were examined for goodness of

fit, and several state agencies that either explicitly did or did not recognize alternative pedagogy teacher preparation were initially selected. A third group of states was added to the interview queue based on unique responses, variables, or policy language. The answers indicated further exploration was needed to better understand that state's position on alternative pedagogy training. Participants are described in the sample section of the methodology chapter.

Next, an analysis of data from the alternative pedagogy community occurred. The number of public and private schools offering each type of pedagogy was layered over the registry states that participated. Another layer of data was added to show which states, and how many, offered APC training programs in their states (see Figure 3). After accounting for survey responses and APC presence, states were prioritized for selection to invite for interviews in the next phase of the study.

Eleven states were selected for invitations to interview; the categorical break down was (3) APC inclusive states, (4) APC neutral, (4) APC restrictive. One state (WI) was added that did not originally participate in the survey. This was due, in part, to the longevity of their registry's existence and strong presence of APC in their state for 20+ years. Using registry survey responses and public information, a policy synopsis was created for each state invited to interview. This policy description was included as an attachment to each registry office's invitation to interview. Participants were asked to review and confirm the description of their information as accurate and to correct language, policy, or descriptors as needed. A list of 10 relevant questions was included to allow the participant to prepare for the interview.

Questions were developed to expound on many of the comments regarding recognition policies, such as: how did they arrive at said policy, what has been the communal reaction, what

is the policy culture in their state, etc. The full set of questions is listed in Appendix F.

Consideration of states to interview included: balancing regional areas (urban/rural, large/small, coastal/Midwest, north/south, east/west); trends in processing (recognize/do not recognize); expressed interests (reported interest in participating further in the study at close of survey); intention to create a cross-examination (verify or inform trends that were emerging); as well as the need to clarify specific information reported (for national representation).

Five states responded that they were interested in participating in the interview. There were three APC-Inclusive, one Neutral, and one Restrictive states represented. Interviews were conducted independently, over the phone, and recorded (with permission) for transcription purposes. The interview data were sent to a third-party transcription service to provide a neutral transcription and to remove potential inferred bias of the author. The summaries were reviewed and compared to the audio recording to increase validity. Transcriptions of the discussions were returned to each interview participant for feedback and clarity. Three of the five interviewed state participants responded to the receipt of the transcripts.

Interviews for another set of seven “experts” included leadership from varying alternative pedagogy communities. This included identifying people who impacted policy change in states or those who could describe the impact of the policy for their community. It was also important to include representatives from states that participated in the study to create an opportunity to listen to their descriptions and ask questions directly as they related to reported data from the surveys. These interviews were designed to assist in developing the final survey that would be sent to the teacher preparation program directors. Some of the interviews were recorded, transcribed, and returned to participants. Other participants responded in writing to the interview

questions. Two participants responded with feedback regarding their summarized interview statements.

Interview responses were analyzed for common themes in language, sentiment, and policy application/development. Statements offering insight into the development of policy or the impact of the policy were highlighted and sorted into emerging categories. Excerpts, highlighted and coded, from the interviews revealed six themes: Policy Obstacles, Policy Influence, Policy History and Current Development, Policy Culture Mindset, Working Together, and Alternative Pedagogy Reservations (policy maker hesitation and advocates securing a place at the table). The coded data were used to develop questions for directors of alternative pedagogy teacher preparation programs.

The final survey was analyzed in the same way as the first. Survey software was used to code the responses for aggregate totals or potential trends, then the responses were categorized by themes related to the emerging topics previously discussed. New areas were expounded to include two new themes: Community Response and Perceptions, and Attitudes.

A summation of preliminary information collected, trends or patterns, and concerns was represented in a handout that was returned to the registry participants and forwarded to alternative pedagogy teacher trainer sites. Community representative leaders were invited to respond to the handout either verbally or in writing. Their responses were included as relevant, valid perspectives, and any requested changes were honored, included, or discussed respectively. The exchange is summarized in the next chapter as a dialogue that forwards collaboration and progression. The study summary handouts are included in Appendix G.

## Reporting Data

Data collected during Phase II of the study resulted in demographic information, individual state system's language and policy explanation, and policy maker perspectives about alternative pedagogy teacher preparation. Details on some of the data collected are provided here.

**Phase II registry data self-reported by survey participants.** In the initial survey to state registries, three types of data were collected. There was data related to demographic types of information, which included how the policy makers described their own system, what kind of data they could produce out of their system, and the variables included or excluded in their state's professional development system at that time. Examples of this data included survey participants reporting the following details: Sixteen states (32% of the nation) reported using a career pathway for professional recognition; related to benefits, as variables of their system, 32% of all states nationwide (16) reported that incentives and opportunities were linked to placement levels in their career pathway; and a total of 14 states (28% of the nation) confirmed having an appeals process for teacher recognition placement levels.

Participants reported that nearly 24% of states across the country offer free training access through their registry system. Seven states, nationwide, reported having financial incentives tied to registry recognition levels. Five states indicated a wage supplements, grants, or "other" benefits as incentives (such as a tax credit); two states specified wage incentives or stipends. Five states indicated they had no benefits or incentives attached to the registry.

Demographic information related to scholarship dollars, associated with increasing teacher quality through advancing teacher preparation, revealed that nearly half the nation (24



states) indicated scholarship opportunities were available for associate degree completion. There were 21 states (41% of the nation) that reported scholarship availability for the CDA and for bachelor's degrees. A sum of 13 states (26% of the country) specified scholarship availability for master's degrees and 12 states (24% of the nation) for technical certificates in ECE or a child care apprenticeship program. Finally, eight states (16% nationwide) indicated scholarship availability for doctoral degrees in ECE. When asked further about the application of scholarship dollars to the alternative pedagogy teacher's preparation, only one state answered affirmative to inclusion; Alaska included Montessori teacher training/education in scholarship availability.

Policy information and policy maker perspectives, gathered through self-reporting participation in the state survey, are best discussed in targeted communities. Not all states respond to all communities the same way; to assist in the analysis of trends, data was aligned by and reported by community. In fact, by categorizing the data, the Montessori community was most commented on, followed by some indications of policy awareness for the Steiner-inspired community, and few references were made regarding Reggio Emilia-inspired teachers.

Beginning with the most recognized group, Montessori specific survey responses indicated that of the 24 states indicating their state registry used a career pathway, one-third (8) specified they recognized accredited Montessori training. Phrased another way, 48% of the country confirmed that 16% of the nation recognizes Montessori teacher's qualifications in state policy. Asked about tracking Montessori teachers in the state registry, six states provided actual numbers (two estimated over 100; three estimated 60 or fewer; and one estimated there were 10 or fewer Montessori teachers in their registry).

Of those recognizing Montessori teacher preparation, four states reported Montessori teacher preparation was recognized at a level above the CDA (aggregate study findings were six). See Figure 4 for aggregated study findings. Two state registries reported recognition of the Montessori credential at an entry level, equivalent to 40 hours of training or below the CDA (aggregate findings were four). Georgia had the highest recognized equivalency placement levels in the country, with a MACTE-accredited training recognized on the same level as the associate degree. Similarly, Nevada and Oregon reported providing a level of recognition one level below the associate degree, but above the CDA, and allowed the Montessori credential to be used in conjunction with a degree in any field for higher recognition levels.

When asked if anyone from the registry office had Montessori knowledge, experience, or education, 12 states reported having Montessori-knowledgeable staff (six indicated registry directors, seven reported registry staff, and five specified a registry advisory committee member). When asked who the registry office consults with on Montessori credentials, 12 states (24% of the nation) reported using a non-Montessori agency such as the National Association for the Education of Young Children (NAEYC), National Workforce Registry Alliance (NWRA), regional technical assistance, and the state early learning advisory council. Only one state indicated they used the training institution in their state to consult.

At the time of the study, there were fully operational child care workforce registries in 38 states and DC (76% of the country). Cumulative study findings estimated 32 states nationwide did not recognize Montessori teacher preparation and education (64% of the country). Montessori recognition in the career ladder/registry was offered in 19 of 38 states and DC (49%). A total of three states had Montessori Credential recognition that was inclusive of the full

spectrum of diversity in accredited Montessori Teacher Education Programs (WA, OR, NV). This was due to policy articulations that recognized “MACTE Accredited Montessori Teacher Education Programs, as opposed to identifying any of the seven specific affiliations.

Of the aggregated 19 states that recognized Montessori teachers, 21% (four) recognized their training at a level below that of the CDA. A nother 47% (nine) recognized the Montessori credential on a level equal to that of the CDA, which was generally still lower than the preparation equivalency of 30 college credits. Finally, 32% of “Montessori-recognizing states” (six) did this at a level above the CDA, typically a level right below the associate’s degree (DE, GA, MN, NV, OR, WA). Of those six, half did so with articulations that focused on accredited Montessori Teacher Education Programs, as opposed to individual affiliations. Delaware, for example, only recognizes AMS Credential holders. Minnesota includes only credentials from AMS or AMI. Georgia does not have any apparent limitations, it generally accepts “any” Montessori Diploma. This raises a different set of questions about how the quality of the Montessori Credential is accounted for; it matters because there are Montessori diploma mills, where one can simply purchase the training and accompanying credential.

In May 2014, five non-recognizing states reported they were in the process of correcting the omission of Montessori teacher preparation but did not indicate where in their pathway the recognition level would be. Collective study findings show 17 states (45%) currently recognize Montessori preparation publicly in print. Cumulative study findings estimated 19 states had indicated a willingness to work on Montessori policy language.

Waldorf-community-specific findings from registry survey responses included a finding that of the 24 states that indicated their state registry used a career pathway, five indicated they

recognized accredited/member recognized Waldorf or LifeWays training, even when presented without higher education credits (AZ, GA, HI, MD, VA). In VA, Waldorf or LifeWays teacher preparation, without college credit, places two levels below the CDA. Of those states reporting, four indicated Waldorf teacher preparation would be recognized at a level equal to the CDA (AZ, GA, HI, MD). The same four states indicated entry-level recognition between levels 1-3. Three separate states said it would only be recognized as on-going/annual training hours for child care licensing. Another seven states reported Waldorf or LifeWays teacher preparation was not known or not applicable in their state.

Recognition levels for the Waldorf or LifeWays teacher who had a degree in a field other than ECE and obtained Waldorf or LifeWays training were similar. Six states reported the training/education could be used in conjunction with an unrelated degree for recognition at the degreed level (as a specialization or endorsement in ECE). Two said it depended on how many ECE credits were in the transcript. Twelve states reported they would still not identify the individual in their state's professional recognition system.

Asked if there were any Waldorf or LifeWays training or education options available in their state, five states indicated either Waldorf or LifeWays was offered. Regarding estimates for how many Waldorf or LifeWays trained teachers were in the registry, three states provided actual numbers (two reported less than ten, one reported 20-29, and seven indicated there were none). An additional eight states reported they did not know how many Waldorf or LifeWays teachers were in their state.

Information relating to whom or what informs policy related to the recognition of the Steiner-inspired teacher, limited data revealed sources outside the Waldorf or LifeWays

community. When asked if anyone from the registry office had Waldorf or LifeWays knowledge, experience, training or education, eight states report they have Waldorf- or LifeWays-informed staff (three indicated registry directors, six reported registry staff, four specified an advisory committee member, and one state listed someone serving in another capacity). As to whom the registry office consults with on alternative pedagogy certificates, 12 participants reported using a non-affiliated agency such as NAEYC, National Workforce Registry Alliance, regional technical assistance, and the state early learning advisory council. Only one state indicated using the in-state training institution for consultation.

Findings related to Reggio Emilia-inspired teacher preparation relayed the following information. Reggio-inspired teacher recognition in a career ladder/registry was offered in five states. Of the five states recognizing Reggio-inspired teachers (AZ, GA, HI, MD, VA), four states reported teachers were recognized at a level equal to the CDA. The same four states indicated entry-level recognition between levels 1-3. One state (VA) indicated this level of preparation would be recognized at two levels below the CDA. Two states indicated it was recognized as on-going/annual training hours. Another ten states reported that it was not known or not applicable in their states.

No states' registries or career ladders recognized Reggio Emilia teacher preparation publicly in print at the time of the study. Roughly three states indicated Reggio specialization was available in their state. When asked to estimate Reggio-inspired teachers in the registry, one state provided numbers (reporting less than ten). Seven states said there were none in their state. An additional ten states reported they did not know. Asked if anyone from the registry office had Reggio Emilia knowledge, experience, training or education, eight states reported they had

Reggio Emilia-informed staff (five responded registry directors; seven indicated registry staff; six reported an advisory committee member; and two states indicated someone serving in another capacity).

In capturing language and perspectives of policy makers as they addressed the alternative pedagogy teacher, registry participants relayed in their own words language to validate the reality of the problem. For example, one participant wrote, “We have had numerous discussions about how to best quantify Montessori training and recently changed the descriptors on the career pathways to better recognize those individuals.” Another individual indicated, “Yes. Waldorf and Montessori have contacted the Registry to be recognized. The Montessori credential from an accredited program is recognized as equivalent to a CDA. Waldorf training hours are accepted, but no type of Waldorf credential, is on par with a CDA.”

In reference to the policy situation, the following comments were indicators used to decipher the problem: “When an applicant with a degree in another field also submits a Montessori diploma, the highest level of formal education obtained will be granted” (the Montessori diploma is viewed in the same light as an “ECE Endorsement”).” Another recognizing state wrote, “The Oregon registry acknowledges that there are many high quality programs and pathways to working with children. All programs that connect to Oregon’s childhood care and education standards, the core body of knowledge, should be represented in the Oregon registry.”

New data was examined, as revealed by the participants’ comments, related to what was informing policy. For example, one participant wrote, “No one [state staff] has formal certificates of achievement in these alternative pedagogies. Many of the state staff have all taken

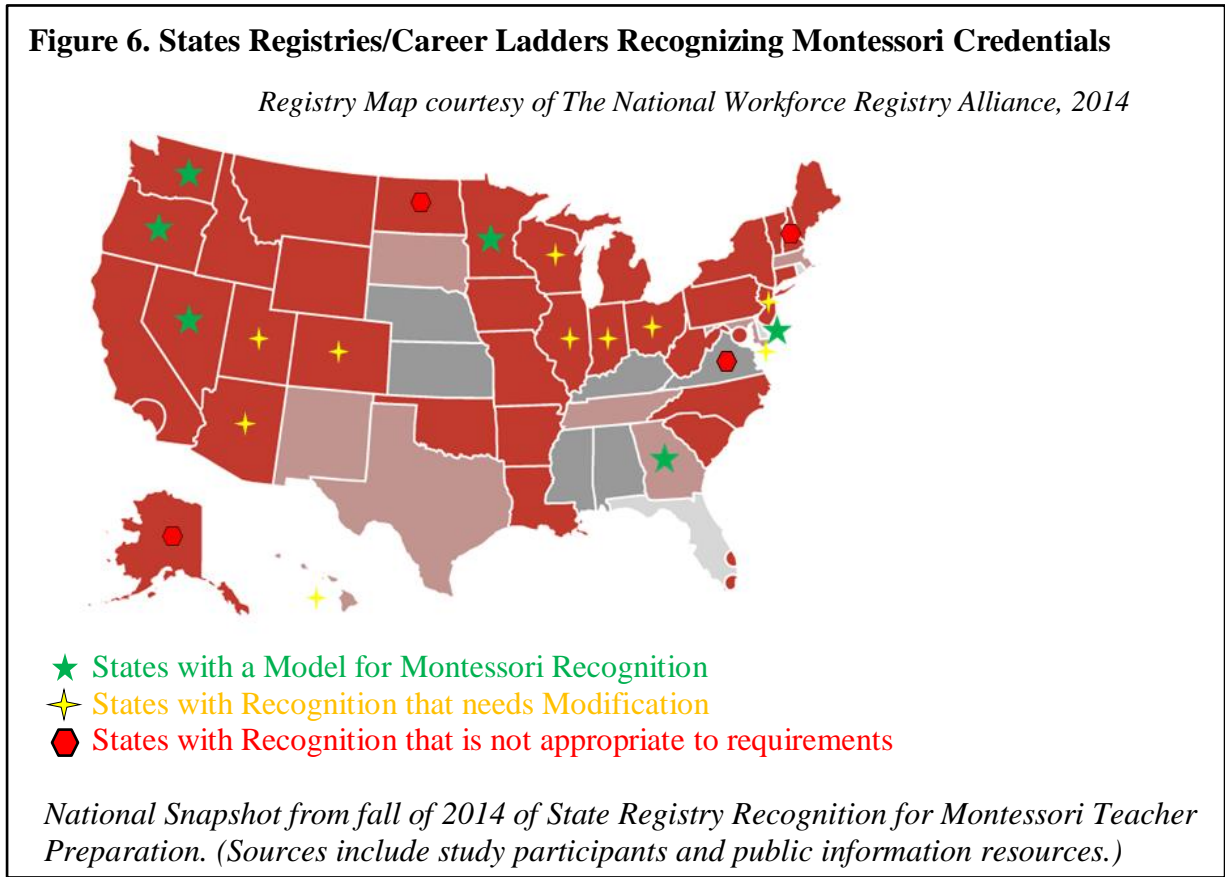
ad hoc classes that included information about these learning strategies/philosophies.” This was supported by another state participant’s perspective, who wrote, “We will need to find out if these specialized certifications meet the 120 clock hours of training and the [State] Standards for Licensed Child Day Centers.” Similarly, regarding difficulty translating the language, a respondent wrote, “As stated previously, we value the Montessori credential, and it is a Level 4 on the career ladder. For the Waldorf and Reggio Emilia certifications, I am not familiar with those, and to my knowledge we haven’t had either one of those certification presented. If those two certification[s] have the 3 components of our demonstrated competency (training, observation, assessment), then they would definitely be considered for Level 4.”

For easy reference, Figure 6 shows a mapped representation of the pedagogy most reported on and recognized in state registries, MACTE Montessori teacher preparation programs, by overlaying recognition status on top of the National Workforce Registry Alliances Nationwide Map of Registries.

Table 2 provides a national snapshot showing comparable data on the most widely-recognized alternative pedagogy included by all 50 states. Montessori is highlighted because it was the most widely referred to. The chart shows where Montessori recognition is at the time of the study, how it compares to the CDA level of recognition, where an associate degree is recognized, and then what was the study recommended level. A word of caution is provided to the reader, this list is only a snapshot of self-reported and publicly corroborated data.

As the study continued to unfold, details on the data revealed increasing layers of exclusion. Many of the “green” states, that reportedly accept/recognized the Montessori Credential, later revealed they only accept one or two affiliations credentials (for example, only

from AMS, only AMI or only AMS/AMI). Moreover, state policy makers contacted for confirmation of data, indicated the recognition levels were what was advocated for by schools and teachers in their state. In states that had levels of recognition that turned out to be lower than the CDA or significantly lower than the preparation equivalent of 30 college credits, policy makers verbally reported, they were receiving “no complaints” and that providers were “happy with just being recognized at all.”



As a reference point, highlighted in yellow on the left, are states that referenced recognition for Steiner or Reggio-inspired teachers. In all cases, these states’ references included entry-level recognition or a level below the CDA, a level that was tantamount to 40-hour field-entry training. Some states referred to the Steiner and Reggio-inspired training and education, saying they would recognize them in child care licensing as ongoing, annual training hours. The



common indicator here, for finding a place for these credentials in their state system, was due to expansive and inclusive language in the policy, such as a “national credential.”

**Phase III interview data.** Six themes were identified in the interviews as common language, and descriptions of policy landscape were coded. The initial six were: policy obstacles, policy influence, policy history and current development, policy culture, working together, and alternative pedagogy reservations (policy maker hesitation and advocates securing a place at the table). Support for the themes, by way of quotes from interviews, are provided below.

The first theme to be identified was obstacles related to policy inclusivity. Non-inclusive states indicated one of the main obstacles they encountered was the way their registry and career pathway structure was defined. Examples of this were evident in issues related to narrow definitions of what is recognized as professional development. A comment from an interview participant provided a reference point: “Our system is designed to recognize credit-bearing coursework, so, unfortunately, this is no way for us to recognize the type of training described.”

Another policy obstacle revealed in the interviews related to external institutional definitions of inclusion, as evidenced in this interview participant’s perspective: “The National Registry Alliance has ‘Best Practices and Standards,’ and they do not accept credit-bearing coursework from any nationally accredited institutes of higher education, only regional accredited credit-bearing coursework counts.” Another comment included, “We use the Council for Higher Education Accreditation for degree and training recognition, which is regional only; so unless an accredited training institution has regional accreditation, it will not be recognized in a Registry.” Other states indicated, as shown here, that the obstacle lies with child care licensing

definitions outside the scope of control by the state registry, “Our system correlates with our licensing standards for the state, so we can’t change the registries recognition without changing licensing regulations. That requires a much more intensive process than just changing our own system.”

In states that identified obstacles, they had to overcome to become inclusive. One common theme was getting the marginalized communities to the policy table. This was cross-evident in the comments from the states’ policy participants who reported that they had never been contacted regarding an issue with recognition and, if they were ever contacted, would be willing to discuss policy inclusion. Such an example was discussed by one interview participant, who shared, “In our state, our committees work together. Once each year, we sit down and literally look at the list of participants and ask, ‘Who is missing?’ Then we go after those people in personal invitations and attempt to get someone who is interested in doing this. It has become a mindset, to get more and more people involved.” This policy-inclusive state indicated they implemented a proactive solution to the previously described problem. Another example was provided: “Part of our specific recruitment strategy—because we have some national technical assistance dollars—was to go and ask, did we have representation? Did we have representation from Waldorf? Did we have it from Montessori? Did we have it from Reggio? Did we have it from Head Start? Did we have enough family child care providers at the table? We literally went down the list. Did we have school-age programs?”

**Table 2. Workforce Registry Recognition Table, Fall 2014:**

*National Snapshot of Registry Recognition for Alternative Pedagogy Teacher Preparation*

State	Montessori Recognition Entry Level, if no other college credit	CDA Recognition Level (Location/Total # of Levels)	Equivalency Levels for Comparison	Montessori Entry Level Recommended Change:
Alabama	0 – in process	2/8	4 is an AD	3 = TC
Alaska	4/12	5/12	8 is an AD	7= 24 CC
Arizona (Waldorf equivalent to CDA/Montessori)	?/J (previously was level 2)	C-E/J	E-G is an AD	D-F
Arkansas	0 – in process	4/8	6 is an AD	5= 18 CC
California	*In Process	Not Statewide		
Colorado	I – in process	Unknown, rewriting to a Point System like Ohio		
Connecticut	0	6/15	9 is an AD	8= 30 ECE CC
Delaware*	5-8/10	4/10	7 is an AD	
DC	0	2/11	5 is an AD	3= 24 CC
Florida	*In Process	Not Statewide		
Georgia* (Waldorf below the CDA)	7-8/12	4/12	7 is an AD	
Hawaii (Waldorf equivalent to level 1-3)	3.2/6	3.2	4 is an AD	3.3= 30 CC (????)
Idaho	0- in process	2/6	4 is an AD	3 = TC
Illinois	2/6 (with 6 ECE CC)	2/6 (with 6 ECE CC)	4 is an AD	3 = 18 ECE CC
Indiana	Equals CDA	In process of Rewriting system		
Iowa	0	3-4/11 ; 1-2/7	4 is an AD	3=ECE Diploma
Kansas	Requires Articulation	3/5	4 is a BA	3 = 20 CC
Kentucky	0	2/5		
Louisiana	0/11	7-8 teach, 5 admin	9 is an AD	8= 9 CC
Maine	0	3-5/8	5 is an AD w/5 yrs	3-5 (experience)
Maryland (Waldorf equivalent to level 3)	?/6	2/6	6 is a BD	5= option 2 (30cc)
Massachusetts	0	3/5		
Michigan	?	3/8	4 is an AD	3= 1 yr Certificat

Minnesota*	7	6/12	9 is an AD	8= 30 CC
Mississippi				
Missouri	0	2/5	3 is an AD	2= 1 yr Certificat
Montana	0	3/10	5 is an AD	4= 30 CC
Nebraska	0	3/6	4 is an AD	4 based on description
Nevada	3.2	2.1/7	4 is an AD	
New Hampshire	0	IT	5 is an AD	4= 18 CC
New Jersey	2	2/7	6 is an AD	5=15 CC
New Mexico	0	2/6	3 is an AD	2 = TC
New York	2	3/10	5 is an AD	4 = 18 CC
North Carolina	0	0/12	3 is 18 CC	4 = 24 CC (?)
North Dakota	D/10	E/10	G is an AD	F = ECE Credential
Ohio	15 Points (AMI/AMS Only)	Same points	30 pts for teacher licensure	I/T is 10 points...because?
Oklahoma	0	4/10	7 is the AD	6= 30 CC
Oregon	8.5	7/12	9 is the AD	
Pennsylvania	0	3/8	5 is the AD	4 = 30 CC
Rhode Island		1/4	2 is the AD	2 = 24 CC
South Carolina	Credential System	Articulation Agreements	Montessori Not Listed	In State Only
South Dakota		3/7	5 is the AD	4 = apprenticeship
Tennessee	0	2-3/7	5 is the AD	4 = TC
Texas	?	2-4/9	4-6 is the AD	4-5= TC
Utah	4	4/10	9 is the AD	5-8? <i>Specialization</i>
Vermont	0	2/8	3 is the AD	3 = Apprenticeship
Virginia (recognizes Waldorf at a Level 1.2).	1.2	3.4/10	6 is the AD	5 = 30 CC/TC
Washington	7-9	5/15	9 is the AD	
West Virginia	0	4/8	6 is the AD	5 = Apprenticeship
Wisconsin	6	6/17	12-13 is the AD	11= 30 CC
Wyoming		5/9	7 is the AD	6 = 15 CC

- **Green** have a model for inclusivity, some\* need refining to become inclusive of diversity.
- **Light Green** is a state that is recognizing Montessori equal to CDA but needs modifications.
- **Gray** are states not recognizing Montessori Credentials.
- **Red** is a state that is recognizing Montessori Education below the CDA.
- **Yellow** states indicated some recognition for Waldorf or Reggio-inspired teacher preparation.

**Abbreviations:**

AD: Associate Degree  
IT: Infant & Toddler

CC: College Credit  
TC: Technical Certificate

The next theme to emerge from the interview had to do with how to influence policy. One common theme, in policy inclusive states and states not yet policy-inclusive, was a message of communication. One state interviewee said this in response to why they changed their policy position, “Because teachers came to us and said, ‘I have a Montessori credential, and you’re acting as if I don’t have any education by not accepting it, and I challenge that. Here is my transcript and here is the certification my school is recognized and accredited.’ So, through that process, we contacted accrediting bodies and cross-walked them; sure enough, it was totally aligned to academic credit.” This sentiment was further supported by the following perspectives, “So it was really a push by teachers who came to us with these credentials and said, ‘We want to be recognized at these career levels and our certification should allow us to do that,’” and “It was brought to us, and through the community it was verified.” In a state where policy had evolved, the policy maker explained the process in this way, “We develop a plan that we think is one-size-fits-all, and then people elevate it to us, ‘Here’s an outlier that doesn’t quite meet your needs, and we want you to identify it,’ so we do.”

Policy history and developments, as another category, were identified through language pertaining to how the current policy snapshot developed. For example, as interview participants described the establishment of their current policy practice and the development of their definitions and practices, some common indicators surfaced. Registries that were more recently established referenced the National Workforce Registry Alliance or the National Association for the Education of Young Children as their primary sources for policy development, as shown here, “We use both the NAEYC standards and guidelines for professional preparation as well as our state’s licensing regulations for professional development and training.”

Conversely, this interview participant wrote, “Our state has always been unique in the professional development structure. Many career lattices across the United States are different—they have served very narrow constraints. These can include things like accepting college course credits only, or degrees only, or in the field only. Our state is one of the handful of states that accepts community-based training, and then even a smaller number that accept community-based training that’s not prescribed. I think part of that has to do with the relatively short period of time that our state had an identifiable structure. It’s been less than 25 years since we passed licensing, and since 1997 that we had the first version of our Registry.”

As to the progression of policy, one respondent said:

I don’t know that I have all that much to offer in this area just because it’s not that we’re not supportive of it, it just hasn’t come up in our state. It just hasn’t been something that has prompted us to take action on in terms of Waldorf and Reggio. Maybe that will change with some of this work that you’re doing, and when we see what other states are doing and we’re going to be looking at in this—now, that we are ten years in, we’re going to be looking at our career ladder and deciding whether we need to make any changes to it. We’re going to be in another period of growth, and so you never know. There might be another way for things to be captured and recognized.

The next theme that occurred across states had to do with policy- and organizational-cultural practices. In this regard, states referenced a common value or practice that was directly correlated with policy. For example, a state that was policy-inclusive used language to indicate that their organizational structure was to capture all providers, or a state that was not policy-inclusive might use language that indicated a closed mindset for policy culture. In the case of a

policy-inclusive state, an interview participant said, “No, we shortened the long history of really engaging stakeholders. So, again we are very open to teachers or institutions coming to us saying, ‘We would like you to look at this.’ Whether it be the National Administrators Credential or in our quality rating improvement system, we’re working with the Montessori community to make sure that the environment rating scale is able to be aligned with their pedagogy. That’s been a really fascinating process, but we were pretty open to that, and we have professionals in our quality initiative division that really specialized in making sure that we are investigating and working with stake-holding groups to align the systems as much as we can.”

Another comment supporting a culture of inclusion that was evident in the state’s policy practices was, “That’s the way that we tend to do our business here at the Child Development Bureau when we’re working on quality initiatives. Before anything’s finalized, we ask for public feedback, and we provide a comment period. Yes, so that would include, during the revision process, inviting more representation from the child care community. We had family providers and child care program directors participate in the revision process. Also would involve surveying the community, asking questions as the process moves along, gathering the feedback.”

As a reference to culture as practice, another comment from the interviews provided, “Child care licensing has held forums across the state. When they’re getting ready to think about their rules revisions, they will set up forums across the state and our child care resource and referral programs are very good about pulling everybody together and setting those venues up and bringing folks in. That’s the kind of process that we use.”

As the interviews unfolded further and participants discussed how the policy status in their state formed, there was a common conversation about how they worked with the

stakeholders in their state. For example, “One of the things that we do, because I think we’ve become—working with the groups has also created great relationships with the professionals in the field that work in those pedagogies, especially Montessori and Reggio. Now, when they have a question, we’ve moved from a place—because those groups both talk about the success of the work, especially Montessori. So, when somebody has a question, there was an assumption that, ‘I won’t be represented,’ ‘I won’t be heard.’ It’s now more, ‘How do we match this up? What do we do? We know we need to talk to you.’” Another interview comment revealed, “For Reggio, we have a connection to the school. Since we’ve been working with them—we also have a personal connection, because I’m in the Graduate School of Education, and my adviser is the chair of the Early Childhood, so we work directly. And with some other of the big Reggio-inspired programs, I had personal relationships, so we really started to make those connections.”

Yet in states where policy inclusion is lacking, participants spoke to the absence of the stakeholder in dialogue:

Actually, no activity. I mean, other than the few people who have submitted Montessori certification with their career ladder application, there’s not been any real dialogue beyond what was generated when you were here. We haven’t done anything on our end, either. I mean, it’s a two-way street. We haven’t done anything to actively solicit. I think we’re just—it’s been one of those things that hasn’t been expressed, so we haven’t really—we’re not actively seeking it, because it doesn’t seem like it’s being actively pursued by our membership.

Another interview respondent said this in relation to non-recognition:



I would like the Montessori community in particular, since I was contacted by them, to know and understand that they are invited to be part of our professional registry. I think that they're under the mistaken assumption - some folks - that they have to have a credential to be part of the system and that there's no entry point for them.

The final theme identified had to do with reservations at the policy table and perspectives on the alternative pedagogy community's preparation of teachers. Policy-inclusive states used language that reflected an inclusive culture and policy-exclusive states indicated primarily a lack of understanding. For example, "I just think that having multiple pedagogies is really important, because there are many ways that families want their children to learn, and that high quality program exists from many different stances. When we're open to that, that serves our children and families best," as compared to, "Waldorf and Reggio do not have that, mainly because there's such an abstractness to the Reggio approach. It's not a pedagogy like Montessori is. Waldorf isn't a pedagogy, it's an approach to thinking about. So, there's no way for our state to recognize Reggio and Waldorf training as anything but training—an opportunity for you to receive state-approved hours about a different way of thinking about teaching children. We will recognize it if it's a state-approved training, but we don't recognize it as a credential, because there is no such thing."

Some of the reservations had to do with specific pedagogical orientations, for example, "...I don't know that we could open it up to every type of curriculum. I feel like Montessori is a little different, because there's a whole certification process and diploma. I don't know if others, like high scope, can you get a diploma or certification? I think it really would be case-by-case, and it would have to be heavily dependent on the research behind it and the training hours that go

into it. I mean, I forget. I don't remember all the details about Montessori, but it was a huge amount of hours....” In relation to another:

We accept the Montessori credential to have an equivalency for us in our state at one of our higher career levels, which is a career level that would be equal to a Bachelor's degree. Because there is no other equivalent credential in any of the other specialized fields like you had listed Reggio and Waldorf. Reggio Emilia does not have any formalized institute or credentialing process. States offer trainings about Reggio Emilia, you can go to Reggio Emilia and do a learning institute, but there is no transfer to that information to a credential like Montessori has.

Many of the state interview perspectives were echoed in the interviews with community leadership representatives. Regarding policy change, sentiment included, “Attending the meetings where the decisions were being made really helped...making sure policy makers understood the relationship between the Montessori program and the more standard ECE programs. I helped to connect the dots by pointing out how they were alike. As I said, it was a university-based program with both WASC and MACTE accreditation. We also pushed for out-of-state approval for people with Montessori credentials from programs (not necessarily university based) that were MACTE accredited. That was a little harder, but, again, I could show how the dots connected and how their programs, although they were not university-based were held to the same accreditation rigor as our university based program...and our program was organized in terms of credit-hours that were understandable by the folks creating the lattice and registry.” Another respondent said, “Prior relationships, trust (to some degree), a willingness on everyone's part to work together, and me being able to ‘code switch’ and connect the dots for

those who did not have Montessori experience. I had both kinds of experiences so was able to bridge a possible gap.” One comment captured the bridge of suspicion expressed by some members of the alternative pedagogy community, “Grudging respect is more the phrase that comes up. There was kind of no choice but to include us at the table or they would have looked really mean-spirited since it is such a small community.”

Interviews with leadership within the alternative pedagogy community further illuminated and expounded on the concerns that would emerge from the data from the alternative pedagogy teacher preparation surveys. Some examples are contained here:

Our teachers are increasingly being required (because our programs enroll preschool aged children and we have to be licensed with the states as ‘day care centers’) to take mainstream courses in addition to what we require of our teachers in Waldorf curriculum. It is essentially becoming a double training, as we do not have recognition for our trainings within the mainstream establishment and licensing agencies. This is becoming a very big challenge for us—asking for time commitments and costing valuable professional development dollars that we would rather devote to deepening Waldorf training rather than to fulfilling legal licensing requirements. A teacher just last week asked me how do we make sense to our assisting teachers, many of whom are new to Waldorf, who are required to take the mainstream EC classes with their traditional approach to early childhood and early academics; they are being taught things that we do not do with children—that we actually object to as developmentally inappropriate to young children. It is quite a dilemma.

A different interview respondent shared:

...our full schools go through an accreditation process with AWSNA and also often with Independent School Associations in the different states. Some states are adopting rating systems like Qualistar as an easy way to assess the quality of a program. Our school considered doing this some years ago so we could qualify for local funding to assist tuitions for 4-year-olds in our community. The money was to come from a special tax levy. We quickly found that this rating system did not fit us at all. The Qualistar coach who came to visit our classrooms could see that we were an exceptionally high-quality program. But the rating scales and items looked for are things that we do not use—and hopefully never will. We would have had to put on a masquerade to have things in our classrooms that do not fit our philosophy or activities at all. So we respectfully withdrew from the process.

Finally, a third perspective was included from the alternative pedagogy community's leadership related to how policy definitions were impacting experience:

For example, qualities are not measurable the way quantities are—how many different kinds of art drawing materials one has in the classroom as opposed to expensive, quality materials from natural sources that produce true colors from nature rather than 20 different neon-colored markers—which would get a higher score.

**Phase V teacher preparation survey data.** A total of 127 alternative pedagogy teacher preparation program directors, representing a cross-section of three different communities, were contacted for participation. A total of 55 responses were recorded. Of those, nine were incomplete and dropped out of the study results; this left a total of 46 survey responses, making the survey response rate 36%. From this response, there were 38 Montessori TPP directors, four

LifeWays directors and one Waldorf TPP representative. The breakdown of Montessori representatives, by affiliation, was abundantly American Montessori Society (AMS) (69%). Other affiliations included in the survey were PAMS (two), MEPI (two), AMI (two), IND (three), IMC (one), and IND (one).

The first area of information requested from the TPP respondent was demographic information to help triangulate whether or not the issue was “real.” Is it possible there are teachers getting alternative pedagogy certificates who do not have higher education in conjunction with their APC certification? According to the survey, 41% of the 46 who participated (19) reported, no higher education was required for entrance to their program. An additional four reported it was preferred but not required. Another respondent indicated some college was required. The MACTE requirement for accredited Montessori early childhood (Infant/Toddler and 3-6 years) teacher preparation programs is 200 hours of direct academic instruction, with an additional 400 in the supervised practicum. Waldorf teacher preparation programs require 400 hours of academic preparation and an extensive mentored internship. LifeWays required 220 hours of direct instruction and a three-week mentorship and site visit in the participant’s classroom.

The breakdown for academic requirements within the survey respondents averaged 380 hours of academic instruction (accounting for outliers). The direct academic instruction varied across the survey responses; a total of four respondents reported over 900 hours; five indicated between 500-899 hours; 24 specified between 200-499 hours; while three identified less than 200.

Hours of observation required of graduates ranged from a high of 90 hours (two participants) to a low of 30 hours or less (21 participants). In reference to the topic of practicum, 37 respondents replied. The survey software averaged the amount of practicum to 480 hours; after accounting for outliers, the average was 477, although there were 14 respondents who indicated a practicum of 540 hours or more.

Respondents were asked about the final or culmination of the training and whether students were required to pass any type of requirement to graduate. A total of 37 individuals responded to the question; 92% in the affirmative. The most common forms of evaluation included Demonstration or Performance (14, 38%); Portfolios (3, 8%); Oral Exams (17, 45%); Written Exams (18, 49%); Research Projects (14, 38%), and another six indicated a case study. Nineteen percent of respondents (7) incorporated a requirement for handmade manuals, including written descriptions of lessons that are accompanied by illustrations of some type (photo, drawing, or magazine cut-out).

Upon graduation, 70% of the 36 participating institutions reported awarding a Certificate, and 30% indicated a Diploma is awarded. Demographic information on the teacher preparation programs revealed the following information: 35 of 36 institutions reported being accredited or having an affiliation (97%); most (84%) require an IHE degree of some kind to teach in the preparation program, specific types of experience (59%), and endorsement in the training methods (54%).

The estimated cost of attendance ran in the \$5,000-\$7,000 range for 56% of the 36 reporting institutions. For 22%, the cost averaged over \$10,000. No institution reported a tuition cost under \$1,000. The majority of the responders (47%) specified having more than 200

graduates. Another 42% indicated less than 100. However, several sites reported their programs served very large populations (3,000+; 18,000; 800; 500; 3,000; 500). Those programs often indicated they have been in operation for over 50 years.

Of the 46 survey participants, 24% (11) of institutions had requirements of a BA for program entrance; only one reported requiring students to take coursework for Master's credits. Another question asked regarding college credit was whether or not college credit was optional in their institution. There were 37 responses for this question: 30% indicated no college credit was offered in conjunction with their training. Another 10% indicated college credit was required for attendance. Even though college credit was not commonly identified, 36 participants answered questions related to the number of hours their students received. The study response average was 461 hours of adult instruction.

The survey was designed to provide a virtual dialogue between registry policy offices and TPPs. In essence, the survey was intended to be thought-provoking and a data collection tool. Survey questions were both closed (yes/no or for numerical data) and open (seeking descriptive responses). Questions included asking how TPPs felt about policy activity in their state; what courses of policy action they had taken; how they felt about their relationship with policy makers in the state; and professional development advances.

Two themes emerged while analyzing the data from the second set of surveys. The first involved how the "TPP community response" was coordinated, extent of development, and results. The other was around "perceptions and attitudes." The responses in this section of data collection were forthright in self-reporting; many respondents indicated they did not feel well informed on the subject; some indicated they were not aware of a problem; others indicated they

intended to become more involved. The participants' willingness to candidly access their true knowledgeable state is a critical key to understanding and defining this policy problem.

#### *TPP Directors Respond to Registries*

When asked how familiar they were with registry initiatives in their state, 67% of participants replied they were aware of, informed on, or knowledgeable about state registry initiatives. An almost equal number of respondents indicated they were either not aware (19%) or, conversely, highly involved (17%). Roughly 57% reported having never been contacted by the state for information regarding their teacher preparation program, 24% indicated they had been contacted, another 19% were not sure. When asked about institutional representation on policy and initiative committees within their state, 33 participants (72%) skipped the question. One state indicated their institution was represented in the ECE workforce registry advisory committee, another indicated representation within quality rating and improvement system advisory committee. There was one response for joint technical skills committee, and five who indicated "other or another form of consulting."

Of all the directors that responded, representing alternative pedagogy teacher preparation programs, only two were from states that participated in the study or were included in direct registry data collection (Virginia and Wisconsin). Although invited to interview, Wisconsin did not elect to participate in the study. When participants were asked about state registry recognition for their institution, 34 individuals responded. Responses were evenly distributed, with 30% responding affirmative towards inclusion, 30% responding negative, and 40% reporting they did not know or only for training hours related to child care licensing.



In the last seven questions of the survey, the respondents were asked open-ended questions to allow them to speak freely on the subject of policy inclusivity. Participants provided an array of responses ranging from informed and involved to marginalized and frustrated. Some of the participants' comments are outlined here. In general, after sorting and coding the language, two additional areas were identified, which included the teacher preparation programs' (TPP) community response and perceptions, and attitudes, which were sub-sorted into collaboration and marginalization.

*Teacher preparation programs respond in their own words*

When the section was provided for TPPs to respond to open-ended questions, significantly fewer responded; five of the questions had a response rate of 50% or less (23). One question, which had a heavier response rate (70%), asked what action their institution had taken to impact policy in their state. To that question, there were 32 responses. Roughly one-third indicated they had not taken any measures to communicate with policy makers in their state, one-third reported they contacted state offices to voice their opinions, and one-third reported having invited policy makers to visit their institutions. In the same question, 40% reported providing policy makers with information on their program, and 50% indicated instructing students on advocacy measures.

As to affiliate representation in the policy community, 22% indicated they had joined policy or advisory committees. Almost 30% reported having attended public forums or community meetings. Additionally, 19% specified they had met within their independent community to identify next steps or to create an agenda. A large portion of the respondents (47%) indicated they did educate the public or community-at-large on their training or pedagogy.

When asked if they could share any results of this activity, 22 participants responded and 17 skipped the question. Of the 22 reporting, 55% indicated “No.” Those who elaborated went on to describe efforts underway with no known results at the time of the survey.

Some of the comments regarding community response included, “...we participate to the extent that we are made aware.” Another participant wrote, “I know I need to do more of this. Perhaps after this report is complete I will go visit them.” One response included, “This is all new to us.”

#### *Teacher preparation programs directors’ perceptions and attitudes*

In one question, participants were asked if they felt their institution was an ally in the professional development movement in their state. Eleven (39%) responded “no” and 11 (39%) responded “yes.” Two participants gave “not applicable” as responses. When asked about what they perceived the strengths to be of their state’s policies, 16 individuals skipped the question. Of the 23 who did respond, several noted an encouraging or interested response from policy makers. One individual wrote, “They encourage continuing education, which makes a difference for children.” Another individual wrote, “ECE theories are generally incompatible with Montessori Philosophy....” Several participants reported observing that Montessori and Waldorf schools do not “rate well, nor do our training receive appropriate recognition or respect.”

Dissatisfaction with recognition was evidenced throughout the comments in responses, such as, “Montessori credentials [are] very comprehensive; both academic and practicum and should be recognized as a teaching credential.” Another individual wrote, “Teachers do not currently receive financial incentive for having Montessori credentials, and it would be good if that were honored on the pay scale/pathway.” One individual summed up the thoughts of many

by saying, “I would like to see a broader definition of quality early childhood care, which recognizes child care providers and trainings that offer unique pedagogical perspectives.”

Finally, another response described the poor fit by writing, “We are under the postsecondary and are in a group of bar tenders, truck drivers, etc. We do not fit in the group we are placed. We have been regulated by this group for at least the past 40 years. Many of their policies are not applicable to our institution. We expressed this concern to no avail.”

This concludes the data reporting included in the study’s findings. In the following chapter, the findings are discussed in terms of what they mean. Data provided here is used to demonstrate the reality previously described in the transformative research methods. The data demonstrates what is real for registry representatives and for representatives of teacher preparation programs.

### **Verification and Trustworthiness**

Policy developments, particularly in light of Race to the Top Early Learning Challenge, Preschool Development and Expansion Grants, or Early Head Start Partnership Grants, make it increasingly difficult to accurately represent policy snapshots over any period of time. While the study was admittedly surveying a moving target, the pace at which policy activity and changes are occurring is daunting. In the current ECE policy climate, a period of six months is sufficient time for significant policy change to occur, as well as for key staff to turn over. Few Websites or handouts on policy information are updated often enough to keep pace.

Every effort was made throughout the study to verify that the information was an accurate reflection of each community involved. States were contacted to self-report, rather than

solely speculate on their policy practice. For non-participating states, data were gathered from their public information sources (Websites, phone calls, and requested materials).

Once an aggregate of data was compiled nationwide, every state was contacted to request confirmation that reporting was accurate. Not all states responded to emails. Follow-up calls were made in two separate phases to confirm data and inquire about any potential changes to policies. The first round of confirmation calls was made in April 2014, and the second round was made in November 2014. An attempt to reach every state was made via either email, phone calls, or through mail. Any conflicting data was noted in reporting. In the winter of 2015, a survey summary of findings was sent to every state registry in the nation and DC. State offices were encouraged to read the findings and to contact the author to make any corrections. A 30-day window for written requests was provide to again check for corrections, offer requested changes, or to add new information. This information summary was also provided to a leadership representative in all of the alternative pedagogy communities from the study.

Findings, as well as descriptions of the alternative pedagogy communities, were provided to several members of the communities to request feedback, to identify misinformation, and to solicit missing supporting documentation. All suggestions and edits were honored and incorporated into the reporting of the study. The full study was then provided to not less than six academic peers for a review of the study in its conceptualization, methodology, analysis, reporting and recommendations. Readers were asked to hone in on different areas, including conceptual framework, community representation, cohesiveness, and applicability.

An added layer of verification was built in when a study conducted by the Missouri Coordinating Board for Early Childhood released their Career Lattice Paper (2014). This

nationwide registry survey was able to get participation from 37 states. Many of the survey questions were similar in nature to this study. One in particular provided a strong form of verification to this study; it asked specifically about recognition of the Montessori Diploma. According to their survey findings, 19% of the registry/career ladder “steps for advancement” recognized Montessori Diplomas. They identified seven states that did recognize Montessori Diplomas, which correlated with the states identified in this study. While this study went beyond that number to identify 12 additional states that also recognized Montessori Teachers. Information from the Career Lattice Paper (2014) was especially helpful in the verification of several states that were not clear and helped eliminate states that were difficult contact.

A secondary informational report from the National Child Care Information and Technical Assistance Center was another useful source in triangulating data and checking against the self-reporting that occurred in the study. The “Career lattices in state professional development system” packet (2010) is a 20-page resource outlining the state’s career lattice system, levels and training requirements, and notes on the systems details. A total of 30 states were reviewed in this document. While it did not address alternative pedagogy specifically, it did outline the levels and specifies the CDA in the system.

## **Chapter 5**

### **Discussion**

In this chapter, I offer a dialogue related to the findings intended to illuminate new information, and I apply it to the questions from the onset of the study. Is this problem real? For whom is it real? Are there any trends emerging or identifiable? Where are any obstacles identified and, if so, what can be done? The new data reported in the Findings Chapter include a snapshot of what alternative-pedagogy teacher preparation recognition currently looks like across the nation. New insights are discussed that did not just confirm assumptions about recognition but revealed variations of which the field was not fully aware.

One such example is the conceptual inclusion of not just “recognition or non-recognition,” but the addition of “recognition at a level that is not reflective” of the pedagogical training requirements or of the population as a whole (segments are included/excluded). Information regarding collaboration, advocacy impacts, and acknowledged allies were identified. There were also some new insights provided that were previously undocumented, such as apprehension or bias toward the exclusion of some or all of these pedagogies by states/offices/individuals, which are important knowledge for case building. This was evident in the form of interviews and phone conversations where policy makers candidly spoke about what they considered “questionable practices” of certain pedagogies, lines of inquiry related to whether or not these pedagogies address child development, or if they correlate with research. Another policy maker shared that these were not actually communities who produced prepared teachers, so there was no way for their inclusion. These indicators suggest some individual bias

or lack of open-mindedness but did not collectively produce a pattern or generalizable trend in this study.

### **Is this problem real?**

The survey response rate for the policy states was 56%, and for the accredited/recognized alternative-pedagogy teacher preparation population it was 36%. Both of these response rates are considered high for online surveys. Of the three populations data were collected from (state registry directors, community leaders, and directors of teacher preparation programs), few denied this problem exists. How the problem was defined varied, but there were no responders who flatly avoided the topic, with one exception (“due to licensing definitions, credit-bearing system, or never approached about it”). One registry director did indicate the alternative pedagogy issue was not real because, in her opinion, Waldorf and Reggio Emilia were not actually pedagogies but, rather, approaches to thinking about childhood and did not produce certified teachers. This individual explained she felt that since they were approaches to childhood and not training or education options, they could not be a “real” problem for their state. I point this out because there is a sense of this bias in conversations that occur within the alternative pedagogy communities. However, as previously stated, the data from the vast majority of policy makers in this study did not reflect this (all but one). This is not to say the sentiment does not exist for other policy makers or permeate policy conversations on this topic, but no other policy maker expressed that bias in in this study.

Why does this matter? In my observation, it matters because much of the lack of cross-community interaction or directed/coordinated interaction has a predisposition towards using an “othering” approach (Almeida, 2013). In research, othering is a term used to explain differential

treatment, lack of understanding, or bias in working with unlike communities. This approach rests on assumptions and practices that the policy maker or policy office does not like or is not willing to extend a positive working relationship to the alternative pedagogy community, due to their being different from or ‘less than’ their mainstream counterparts. In fact, the overwhelming majority of policy respondents in this study indicated, even if they do not currently recognize a pedagogy, that they were willing to consider or dialogue about it with that community. This does not account for the “othering” bias that may or may not exist, but it can change the paradigm in which it thrives. Knowing that the majority of states reported openness to unbiased working relationships informs the alternative pedagogy community about how best to approach policy makers when seeking inclusion; it also served to create a baseline for feelings and receptivity when later approached by community members.

Further data supporting the reality of the problem included 48% of the country reporting that 16% of the nation recognizes Montessori teacher preparation, and significantly less for the other pedagogies. This was supported by the fact that one-third of participating teacher preparation programs reported no institution of higher education for their program entrance; 30% reported college credit was not an option, and just 10% reported college credit was mandatory.

This problem was further demonstrated when 32% of the nation reported using a career pathway for recognition, and 31% reported career pathway placement to access incentives and benefits. Even though 24% of states indicated they provided scholarship dollars for the CDA or technical certificates, just one state said Montessori teacher preparation qualified for scholarship access, and no other pedagogies were included.



Clarity was also revealed when credit-based workforce registries and career pathways indicated it would be difficult for them to become inclusive of a specialized credential, even if it was accredited by an agency recognized by the Department of Education. Many states reiterated that accreditation had to be “Regional” to count. It is not clear, at the time of this study, why there is a bias against National Accreditation. National Accrediting Bodies are able to obtain recognition from both the Department of Education and the Council for Higher Education. Why a workforce registry or state child care licensing team would determine that National Accreditation is not worthy of professional recognition not clear.

This may be where representatives of colleges and universities are confusing the role of the Workforce Registry and Career Ladder with restrictions on “currency” for Institutions of Higher Education. For example, many college and universities do not readily accept professional development, college credit, degrees/diplomas for transfer recognition from Nationally Accredited Programs. The Regional/National “currency” (value) has no bearing on the worthiness of the professional development for the purposes of a registry or career ladder, whose role it is to collect, track and report data or guide professionals in their career development. It is counter-intuitive to penalize nationally accredited programs, particularly vocational-style programs resulting in stand-alone credentials, for not have regional accreditation; a form of accreditation for which they are not eligible because they are not housed in or administered by a Regional College or University.

Finally, although we can make an educated guess that there are tens of thousands of Montessori credentialed teachers, thousands of Waldorf teachers, hundreds of LifeWays teachers, and thousands of Reggio Emilia-inspired teachers (estimates being derived from

membership numbers and numbers of identified schools in the nation), only a few hundred Montessori teachers were reported to exist in state registries, and only dozens of the other types of teachers. All of the pedagogies in this study reported, in literature, a demonstrated need for more teachers in their community than the community currently supplies. Therefore, alternative pedagogy school growth is limited to the qualified teaching pool. However, there is no known source of data to tell us about these teachers, not even in the workforce registries designed to do this work. This information matters because a framework and resources to collect this data now exist in nearly every state. Researchers, alternative pedagogy community leaders, and state policy makers need these alternative pedagogy teachers identified, tracked, and reported on to inform decisions related to these types of teacher preparation.

The data from the study triangulates the magnitude of this problem as a nationwide issue requiring policy evolution to resolve. For whom is this problem real? Without glossing over the obvious, alternative pedagogy teachers are a clear winner. Alternative pedagogy teachers who did not take their training for college credit have still invested substantially in their pedagogical and professional preparation and the collective field of early learning. The study found an average cost for alternative pedagogy preparation between \$5,000 and \$7,000 (based on self-reported data from the program directors surveys). Many programs', 22%, costs exceeded \$10,000. These teachers are in direct academic instruction for 220, 200, or 400 hours, as a threshold minimum; that component of preparation, does not yet account for practicum, practice, and observation. This well exceeds the 120 hours required for the CDA. All of the pedagogies require multiple, in-depth observations, and Montessori/Waldorf require extensive mentored practicums (the LifeWays program's practicum is much shorter by comparison).

The data on educational components and requirements has been directly communicated to every state registry office in the country. Data gathered in this study unequivocally describes, in detail, a rationale for inclusivity in state policy recognition efforts based on research in the field pertaining to quality correlation and components provided in these types of training. A quarter of the nation, 24%, reported using a non-pedagogical authority to inform their policy decisions. All states have since been provided a point of contact for a direct liaison in each pedagogy's quality assurance representative.

Finally, in many of the survey responses and interviews, a lack of communication was identified. This was consistent in both the registry and alternative pedagogy participant's perspectives; meaning, registry directors reported they were not contacted often or at all regarding this policy situation, and an equally convincing number of alternative pedagogy directors indicated they were not doing outreach, were unaware of issues, or admittedly needed to get involved. In fact, in all the states where alternative pedagogy recognition was provided, can be attributed to coordinated efforts to become inclusive. At the time of the study, no example was provided of an effort made for inclusion that was denied by a state policy office.

## **Trends**

Driving questions for the study included whether or not any trends were developing. The data suggests that the current trend is a non-inclusive status shared by all of the pedagogies, marked by a willingness to consider inclusivity on the part of policy makers. The movement towards inclusion is unfolding and has firm examples from multiple states and data to rest on to indicate a possible way forward. Six states act as inclusion models, and several policy makers offered to be points of contact for questions related to policy evolution. Workgroups and task

forces have been identified or are forming in nearly every state to address this work. So, a potential trend we can forecast is a range of policy dialogue, evolution, and inclusion.

An unexpected trend captured at the time of the study indicated that a sense of collaboration was needed and interest in partnership is growing. Many state registries are maturing to a place where conversations with stakeholders are a natural progression towards their own continuous improvement. State workgroups within the different pedagogies are also forming to develop partnerships with policy makers. The almost palpable energy towards a forward motion is evident in the comments from the interviews and the descriptive language from the participants survey responses; additional trends follow.

### **Dominance and absence in recognition**

It is essential to begin this section by identifying one of the study outcomes undocumented at the time the study was undertaken. The Montessori community has a serious advantage in recognition efforts, although their community may not feel that way. The reason for this is multi-dimensional. It includes their population, which is far larger than the other pedagogies discussed, as was described in the literature review. The Montessori community, while discouraged by policy bias, is organizing and responding at a swift pace. It also helps that the Montessori community has developed some influential relationships and philanthropic investors putting resources into public relations. They have a foundation or platform for advocacy and policy change in place, but the primary advantage they have is a government-authorized institution awarding federally-recognized programmatic and institutional accreditation.

The well-established Waldorf community appeared to be considerably less understood by outsiders and policy makers. Based on conversations with registry representatives and alternative pedagogy leaders, one could say it was the most resisted of the pedagogies discussed in this study, based on comments that revealed considerable aversion by registry representatives when Waldorf was specifically named as an example for inclusion. Several state representatives indicated they were not interested in “entertaining” such an idea of recognizing Waldorf teachers. This is problematic not just for Waldorf teacher preparation programs. It is disconcerting for their schools, faculty, families and communities at large. Moreover, it should be disturbing for Montessori and Reggio Emilia communities as well. The argument against inclusion is based on a lack of pedagogical comprehension and a deep need for public outreach; the loss of information and lack of recognition is identical to the position many Montessori leaders have asserted is impacting their own work. To synthesize, the simplicity of being different is not a sufficient variable to merit exclusion, any more than a lack of knowledge is a rationale for discrimination.

The LifeWays’ community was rarely recognized but seemed to receive less apprehension from policy actors, probably in light of the way it is described as “Steiner-inspired home-like care” (Aldinger & O’Connell, 2010). This certificate, although a smaller population, did not invoke the same level of resistance and was often discussed in terms of the kind of support it offered for family child care providers (curriculum, professional development, nurturing care, and a focus on family) as a “potentially good idea.”

The Reggio Emilia-inspired teacher community was difficult to isolate. Partial reason for this is due to the fact that there is “no teacher preparation program graduating certified Reggio

Teachers.” Registry directors reported, “They simply don’t exist;” “there is no such thing;” “one can be inspired to teach using this approach, but that does not make you a Reggio certified teacher.” This point cannot be argued in its entirety; an identifiable pipeline for Reggio-inspired teachers with Reggio Credentials was not identified in this study. However, Reggio Emilia-inspired education is embedded in many universities’ early childhood programs across the country. There is a national organization dedicated to teachers in this community, and Reggio Emilia-recognized schools exist in the U.S. and the world over.

At national conferences, such as NAEYC 2014, ECE professionals attending Reggio-specific workshops were spilling over into the hallways. Interviews and research show there are Reggio-inspired schools across the country; those schools do not hire just any teacher inspired by Reggio Emilia. Those Reggio teachers do not practice like their traditional counterparts. “Circumstantial evidence” is not sufficient argumentation against the inclusion of recognition for Reggio Emilia-inspired teachers in registries across the country.

Perhaps their enigmatic professional preparation points to a demand for greater research, more in-depth conversations, or evolution in our reporting and data collecting methodology, but under no circumstance should it be a rationale for remaining unidentified. Without an inclusivity option, even voluntary reporting states, policy makers, and researchers have no way to identify or track data specific to these teachers, their training, their practices, and their communities. This is a serious predicament for a system tasked with comprehensive reporting on quality and accountability as it relates to the relationship to teachers’ professional development. These teachers need to count and to be counted. They ought be included in data collection.

## **Recognition table**

Regarding trends, this data instrument was particularly useful. Arguably, the most widely sought after piece of information from this study is the data collected in the snapshot represented in Table 2, “Registry Recognition Table.” This document lists all of the states, whether the state recognizes alternative-pedagogy teachers currently, and what is the state-specific study-recommended entry-level recognition access point. This is the information alternative-pedagogy teacher-preparation programs and their teachers prioritize above all other data. Prior to submission of the dissertation, this information was released directly to the Waldorf, Montessori, and LifeWays leadership for accountability (WECAN, MACTE, Aldinger).

Previous to the collection of these data, there was no baseline for discussing recognition efforts on a national or regional scale. Even if these data are continuously changing, researchers and community members can use this information now to discuss efforts and progress. For example, we can now say that roughly 19 states are recognizing MACTE-accredited Montessori education. Of those, six are in ideal recognition range, nine need minor modifications, and four require significant modification. This information will be critical, as well, for the Waldorf community to advance their recognition efforts. The table helps prioritize and map strategies to identify where there is already a precedent for working with state registry policy makers and techniques to address issues of recognition, diversity, and inclusivity.

An unexpected piece of information uncovered in the course of creating Table 2, “The Registry Recognition Table,” was that there are not just recognized or un-recognized states. There were actually five categories of states: 1) States that did not recognize and expressed

indifference in working on alternative pedagogy inclusion; 2) states that did not recognize but expressed interest in collaborating in the process of inclusive recognition; 3) states that recognized Montessori teachers at a level commiserate with their training and recommended levels of career pathway recognition; and 4) another group to emerge was a group recognizing alternative pedagogy teacher preparation but at a level that did not reflect the pedagogy accurately, comparable to the competencies and skills acquired during the course of that training or inclusive of the community as a whole and not just parts of it; 5) states who needed a modification or clarification in the articulation.

This categorization has allowed the alternative pedagogy representative taskforces to begin prioritizing a response and strategy going forward. The collected data fortifies them to take on a nationwide or regional course forward, using appropriate language to match each state's model. It helps the workgroup connect with the right individual and advocate for a cohesive message. This message includes a rationale and research to support the facilitation of recognition per community. Consultation and feedback with those communities have been provided in the months since the study closed. Members of the Waldorf, LifeWays and Montessori communities are eager to initiate and complete these tasks as efficiently as possible.

### **Teacher preparation scholarships**

The extent scholarships are available for higher education appeared to be new knowledge for many in the alternative pedagogy communities. Having worked as a statewide scholarship director, this situation was not new to me. I did notice physical and emotional reactions members of alternative pedagogy communities had while discussing scholarship



availability in ECE. Conceivably, they were unaware of the extent this aspect of professional development had gained traction across the country.

While scholarship dollars are prioritized in states as “for credit” education leading to a degree for targeted populations, it is also common for states to provide scholarships for the CDA and apprenticeship programs, both leading to technical certificates. Within reason, alternative-pedagogy teacher-preparation programs and their teacher constituents might request eligibility for a percentage of a scholarship, the same amount to which a teacher might have access to for a CDA or apprenticeship program.

The percentage scenario is the closest explanation capturing Alaska’s scholarship implementation. Alaska was the only state to identify Montessori teacher preparation as an option for scholarship dollar eligibility. Upon further inquiry regarding the accuracy and application of this policy, it became increasingly evident that it was not necessarily an effort to recognize an alternative pedagogy as much as it was a state effort to be open-minded about supporting teachers seeking professional development in an assortment of models. In Alaska teachers can apply a percentage of their professional development scholarship dollars towards a range of options, providing they equate to a recognizable form of professional development within that state. Since Montessori schools require Montessori prepared teachers, subsequent use of or access to scholarship dollars for this population is valid. This option exists, if only in theory; there may or may not be access to this training. In Alaska teachers may choose to complete the education program online or through a nearby summer program. There are also LifeWays teacher preparation options in Alaska.

## **Collaboration and allies**

As part of the transformative research function, identification of allies, collaborative language, and a network of support were provided as an outcome of the study. This information was previously inaccessible on a national level. Identification of which states were interested and willing to work in collaborative relationships was revealed through surveys and follow-up phone calls. Inevitably the framework for how to work with states, from a variety of perspectives, was provided through the participation of some states, but not all. The study however, will be valuable for leaders in all states to use. It will be particularly useful for the states that do not recognize APC teachers but were willing to talk about the issues and that participated in extended answering of questions. It is also true for those states that are preemptively working toward inclusion where a model did not exist.

## **A big misunderstanding**

Little data provided real rationales for intentional APC exclusion. The research and data showed that, more often than not, registry offices indicated they did not know enough about these populations to be inclusive of them in creating policies. When contacted, many states indicated a willingness to work with alternative communities. Alternative pedagogies have no reserved seat at the table. Policy makers expressed, however, no intention to exclude them or to deny their reality, suggesting instead a willingness to make space at the table.

During a conversation with Susan Howard from Sophia's Hearth, a Waldorf school and teacher preparation program, a very important distinction was identified: non-traditional teacher education programs attempt to acknowledge these alternative perspectives but with what degree of accuracy? In some ways, registry professionals or policy makers may know (or not know)

just enough to be harmful to the alternative pedagogy community. This occurs when there is in the assumption on the part of ECE policy maker, as former ECE student, that the information provided to them as adult learners, in terms of an alternative ECE pedagogical overview, summary, and application was accurate, sufficient, and informative. In other words, they may believe they are informed when, in fact, they are not. Alternative pedagogy members readily claim more damage comes from the reproduction of misinformation, distortion, and misinterpretation about their pedagogy than from a lack of information about what they actually value/believe/practice. What is harmful comes from what is not true, rather than what is.

The policy maker or outsider (myself included) who know just enough to describe a pedagogy are still lacking the significant knowledge, understanding, and transformation that occur in the process of completing specialized training and education. This is comparable to the differences between reading about New Zealand versus actually visiting the place versus living in that space. This is similar to reading about Waldorf Education versus touring a school versus progressing to become a Waldorf teacher. In this way, the colonialism we have come to identify in dominant society is very much applicable in this policy and research context. For it is in our willingness to make assumptions regarding the capacities of a population we have spent relatively little effort to understand, and in our determination of what they most need or whether or not they can be seen, participate, or count, that we reproduce a patriarchal system of assimilation (Almeida, 2013).

## **Diversity**

An unexpected finding during the course of the study was the need to recognize diversity within the alternative pedagogy communities. Throughout this study, a strong trend surfaced

toward the need to underscore multiplicity within the models. While prepared for variability from state to state, it was less evident at the onset of the study that this was going to surface for the alternative pedagogies communities as well. There were many conversations that included leaders and community representatives insisting that differences between communities must be recognized. These differences included that Waldorf and LifeWays were not the same, and that AMS and AMI-USA were different in training expectations. There are situations where previous individual advocacy efforts meant states had been lobbied to recognize AMS teachers in policy language but failed to include any other affiliations, or vice versa. There was dialogue regarding the alternative pedagogy groups defined in the study not being kin.

This preoccupation with setting one organization's activity apart from another is necessary within the scope of the communities themselves. People unfamiliar with new or varied forms struggle to understand why there are so many options, what the variations mean, what they have in common, and where they are different. The differences are there and should not be minimized. Affiliation to a philosophy, methodology, vision or strategy is very personal and value laden, but it is not of interest to policy makers. Policy makers are not concerned with who was first, who branched off from whom, or what "right" looks like. What registry offices and policy makers/regulators, at every level, want to know and hear is what is shared, agree upon, and how policy language can be used to validate efforts, strengthen quality, and support diversity in early learning. The lowest priority role of any registry office is to police or mediate among competing affiliations.

An effort needed to be made to draw significant boundaries around behavior, advocacy, and issues of diversity. For example, using the Montessori community, it became obvious

through discussions early on that the only appropriate place and phrase for a unified message advocating for the advancement of Montessori teacher recognition, on behalf of all accredited Montessori teacher preparation programs, was through MACTE rather than through isolated efforts by affiliate state workgroups. Delaware for example, only accepts AMS Credentials, Connecticut only AMI Credentials, Massachusetts only AMI or AMS, Minnesota AMS or AMI, and New York only the AMS/AMI.

MACTE represents diversity through its myriad of affiliations, which, while different, are equal and have made a commitment to meet a threshold for quality and accountability. MACTE does not favor or prioritize affiliations within the accreditation model. Institutions outside that scope of recognition could not be advocated for to the same degree or with the same level of confidence as those making a voluntary, transparent effort to be accountable to a government-recognized –mechanism for accountability.

This lens of appreciation for diversity can also be widened to ask for membership in the larger professional development movement. One TPP director candidly pointed out what it feels like to be different in the ECE professional development system:

I feel like our state only engages in traditional preschool professional development practices. We either have to make our own community or look to a national level to find similar pedagogy. The [state system] is currently optional. We are not really interested in becoming part of it. It is similar to rating Catholics on how well they practice Judaism. That profound analogy is particularly fitting in summing up diversity in these communities; it is denominational.

## **Community-Based and Participatory Research**

Using this study as an example, community-based participatory research may help these communities in moving forward; it is a textbook example of the need and desire for application of CBPR methodologies. In this study, even though an effort was made to represent and include marginalized communities, they were not scaffolded into the framework in a way that gave the kind of ownership and insight that could have forged cross-community members and leaders together. Having overlooked the need to do this foundational work, issues related to territory, ownership, and power broke down in many areas, regionally, with affiliations, leadership styles, philanthropic and entrepreneurial.

My vision for the alternative-pedagogy community is to bring leadership and members to the point of a “mature coalition” (Bushhouse, 2009, p. 15). In a fitting example from the Pew Charitable Trusts, the 10-year commitment to campaign for high-quality, voluntary pre-k concluded that major reform would require collaboration among diverse stakeholders (Karch, 2014). Specifically, it stated:

Effective collaboration will demand more than merely cooperating better. At every stage of implementation, these stakeholders must be willing to change how they think, talk, and operate, especially with respect to entrenched systems and long-held maxims about early childhood, pre-k, and public education. (p. 139)

This sentiment is befitting alternative pedagogy both within diverse communities and in the spaces between the communities as a whole. Alternative pedagogy is poised to respond to families looking for different aims for their children. The growing whole-child, holistic education movement is ready to accept its position as the pendulum of educational focus and

policy is predicted to make a sweeping pass to the other side of the spectrum. The communities referred to in this study stand as successful models meeting the needs of a growing interest toward child-realized education. Ensuring the policy framework effectively accepts, recognizes, and represents them is critical to keeping these choices available to children, families, teachers and communities who value a different place to lead children (pedagogy).

Further, it can only be made a possible reality for the disadvantaged child, family, and community if the infrastructure is built to support translation. That means creating a policy climate of inclusion and zero tolerance for institutional bias. Maintaining diversity and choice in educational objectives for children, families, and teachers alike is critical to the democratic construct.

### **Outcomes**

The study revealed new information in the form of data and anecdotal descriptions; it confirmed many of the initial assumptions about the policy situation related to alternative pedagogy. This study validated what alternative pedagogy communities are experiencing as a true concern. Trends have been identified across communities. Allies and implications about moving forward are also suggested by the recommendations of this study.

In conclusion, the policy situation described is distinctly identified and defined. According to this study, the policy situation is influenced by a lack of adequate and accurate information, more than a personal bias toward exclusion. The study provides a platform for advocacy work that clearly delineates a rationale for overcoming policy exclusion or personal policy maker bias by using appropriate and powerful language to counteract this reality.

This study was undertaken as more than a scientific journey to prove or disprove a theory about a policy issue. Unlike some types of policy work, it did not set out with policy change as the singular, prioritized goal. The use of transformative research methods goes beyond describing a situation or a solution, to motivate a population through empowerment techniques to change their circumstances. Arming a community, providing a strategy forward, and grooming leadership for success are part of a transformative commitment that goes beyond publication. The action forward is the most important undertaking of this effort. Presently, community-related outcomes from the study are not available. It will require continued aid, consulting, and resources to see this activity through to a socially just conclusion.

In the final chapter of this dissertation, I include recommendations for future policy activity. That section is extensive in its reach because recommendations are detailed and provided to a variety of communities. Including this information in the dissertation, rather than one to one, is part of a commitment to transparency and to demonstrate how transformative research expands beyond simple recommendations for future research.



## **Chapter 6**

### **Recommendations**

A desirable outcome of this study was to facilitate a virtual dialogue among several communities who do not necessarily use the same terminology or culture to communicate on a common theme, teacher preparation. Suggestions on how to move forward from the findings are framed as recommendations distinguished by communities as follows: ECE workforce registry, alternative-pedagogy community as a whole and in parts (Montessori, Waldorf, Reggio Emilia-inspired, and LifeWays), and the field of early childhood education. Recommendations include policy strategies in the context of Social Justice and Transformative Research.

#### **Early Childhood Workforce Registry**

A problem for alternative-pedagogy teachers was presented to state registry directors or their representatives, indicating these teachers may be marginalized due to policy language and definitions that act as barriers to inclusion and to potentially unfounded bias against their pedagogy. At no point in the examination of research on teacher preparation, quality variables associated with teacher preparation, workforce development literature, or quality principles of career pathways did any research, data, or information reveal evidence advocating policy exclusion of the alternative-pedagogy teacher. Recent literature on components of teacher preparation correlating with increased classroom quality (mentorship, extended practice, use of observation, and manuals/portfolio use) did advocate for alternative-pedagogy teachers' preparation to count for recognition efforts, even when acquired outside an institution of higher education.

Theory used to establish workforce initiatives, which were designed to strengthen the economy and the workforce by aligning training and education with career advancements and opportunity, provide further evidence to evolve narrow policy definitions to include the alternative pedagogy teacher's preparation in career pathways and to count them in registry workforce data collection. The study data collected indicated the extent to which the reality existed, as is evidenced by the Table 2, "Recognition Table." Interviews and anecdotal data, however, indicated that in many states, and with many policy makers, open-mindedness to alternative pedagogy collaboration did exist. Suggestions about what can be done to address this issue, in a Registry Policy context, follow.

Lisbeth Schorr, Senior Fellow for the Center for the Study of Social Policy, wrote about becoming policy inclusive in the Pathways Mapping Initiative, "...by being inclusive about what we consider credible knowledge we were able to get beyond identifying successful programs to find essential attributes...that seem critical for success." In an interview on the subject, she pointed to the following outcome, "...we provided policy makers with new ways of understanding and of what works, so they can think and act broadly to improve outcomes" (Schorr, 2014, para. 9).

Several states have models of alternative pedagogy policy inclusion. These states have some similarities between them while remaining unique in reflecting their state's demographics. Collaborative, inclusive efforts exist that should be applauded and recognized. Of all the states' models, the most comprehensive and inclusive registry model examined was Ohio's Formula-based Recognition System. Ohio provides a formula for practitioners with many variables to represent their training, education, experience and preparation. Through this formula, a much

wider net is cast in capturing the demographics of the community and significantly reduced institutional bias by providing a large array of opportunities that included alternative pedagogy options.

In order to accomplish the intended objective of the registry movement, which is data collection, variables related to multiplicity, inclusion, and access must be re-examined and policies re-designed to account for diversity and cultural equity (NAEYC, 2008; Almeida, 2013; Schorr, 2014). The intended role of workforce registries is to inform policy makers, researchers and future policy incentives to strengthen the workforce, by capturing data that illustrate individual efforts and workforce trends towards professionalism in a field (including variables reflecting education, training, and experience). Having a system whereby a community is exclusively required to have a college credit or a degree for recognition severely limits its ability to participate and to count in quality recognition, and also handicaps data reporting to policy makers and researchers.

Literature on quality principles regarding the development of career pathways does not support exclusionary policy either. To better understand this, we can look at other fields; hypothetically, for example, if all career pathways were set up to serve the greater workforce by degree only, as a general practice, its problem becomes increasingly obvious. This is articulated through an analogy provided by Kagen and Gomez (2011); we do not expect everyone in the medical field, for example, to have the same level or type of education and training. Instead, we expect them to have training and education that directly correlates with the role they serve within the medical field; that professional composition looks different for a certified nurse's aide than it does for a physician's assistant.

In the field of engineering, as another example, individuals operating equipment will require more hands-on and practice-related training and education as opposed to an individual interpreting or applying blueprints. Midwifery is another field where education alone is simply inadequate preparation, and practical hours of experience and mentored observation for competency play an equally important role. Much the same can be said about fields such as those found throughout the 19,000 U.S. Department of Labor-registered apprenticeship programs across the U.S. (DoL, 2014), for whom preparation is more than just college credit.

The U.S. Department of Labor, Career Pathways, and the Bureau of Apprenticeship and Training advocate for the full spectrum of career recognition, from a true novice, through apprenticed teachers at the mastery level, on to subject matter experts. Any system operating without the capacity to meet people where they are falls severely short of its intended purpose. This is tantamount to the field of medicine requiring everyone to be qualified as a doctor, knowing there is a need for and a workforce possessing other types of medical practitioners skills including the surgeon, physician's assistant, nurse, nurse's aide, etc. (Kagen & Gomez, 2011, p. 72).

There is no literature to support policies related to registries that suggests they were created to perform a role of segregation, discrimination, or separation (Willer, Lutton, & Ginsberg, 2011). No policy language exists encouraging the exclusion of the pedagogies found in this study; yet, just six out of sixteen states recognized Montessori teachers at a level equivalent to their actual preparation. The unintended policy consequence is exclusion. The specific teacher preparations required to implement alternative pedagogies are not only underrepresented but also not represented. This documented fact leaves the majority of these

alternative communities unable to access benefits available to their counterparts. It is problematic in that they often offer model early childhood education that remains unrecognized, and often not “counted” in quality computations. This oversight undermines the value of having a registry and fails to adequately inform policy makers, researchers, and the workforce.

While registries were not inherently designed to serve as gatekeepers of teacher recognition, it is essentially what they risk becoming. When a registry system looks at a Montessori or Waldorf teacher’s credentials (particularly one offered by a member-vetted organization) and chooses not to recognize that professional effort, they are the deciding factor on which types of pedagogy are valued. When Reggio Emilia-inspired teachers’ commitment to their professional development is only recognized as on-going training hours, something intended to be captured is lost.

The registry community is self-represented in the form of the National Workforce Registry Alliance (NWRA). The board of directors is composed of registry directors representing regions and states across the country. The first recommendation of this study, based on data from the study and literature on workforce development addressing registry offices, is for the NWRA to compose an institutional policy position of inclusivity, publicly disseminate this position, and unambiguously encourage the recognition of accredited Montessori-teacher, member-recognized Waldorf teacher, LifeWays North America, etc. teacher education, training, preparation and experience. Assistance in accomplishing this task is available from the author of this study or the community representatives indicated in the Appendix H contact list.

The second recommendation for this community is that an organizational culture be created providing value statements from the NWRA. In this case, language and policy

recommendations that include an emphasis on diversity, inclusion, and access should be specifically addressed. This is intended to provide continuity to the constantly evolving role of registries and their rapidly changing staff. Theory and practical application are provided through the work of Lisbeth Schorr and are readily accessed on her Website. There, one can find dozens of articles, blogs, and video interviews on the topic of policy inclusion to account for diversity and to strengthen data and regulation systems.

State representatives interviewed during the course of this study, from states possessing a policy climate of inclusivity, often referenced an organizational culture intended to be all encompassing. The opposite could be said for a select number of states where it was indicated there was no interest in working with these communities. In those places, alternative-pedagogy teacher preparation was valued as an introduction to early childhood equal to or below a CDA; however, given the research provided in this study that reveals the number of hours and coursework alternative-pedagogy teacher preparation (as described in this study) is clearly comparable to or exceeds the CDA's level of teacher preparation.

In the study data collection, only 14% of the nation was represented with a confirmation of access to an appeals process for registry participants. The third and final recommendation arising from the study is that registries in every state develop and include an appeals processes for grievances within the system, a policy feedback mechanism, and policy language and practices that reflect a desire to work with all types of adult learning communities. The latter is important to represent their mission as authentically as possible. More specifically, policy language should address the aspiration to represent all early childhood teachers and their accredited education and training, including vocational career preparation, similar to those found

outside institutions of higher education, including all types of accreditation. A policy feedback mechanism insures transparency, accountability, and continuous improvement for state registries and should be included in the requirements for NWRA membership and partnership eligibility. Best policy practices suggest regular, publicly-accessed reports on organizational performance contribute to continuous improvement and mission-driven performance standards, particularly when stakeholder experiences and feedback are prioritized in policy evolution.

### **Alternative Pedagogy Community**

At this time in the U.S., Montessori, Waldorf, and Reggio classrooms are often accessed by affluent children and families, as referenced by community members and demonstrated by the fact that most are found in private education. Whether through the private school model or lack of presence in public schools, few children and families in disadvantaged communities have access to pedagogy designed with them in mind. Children in poverty-stricken communities, those with parents who suffer from mental health issues, children with disabilities, families experiencing homelessness, and children exposed to violence are not well-served by educational policies and systems failing to address realities of marginalization, oppression, rights, empowerment, social-justice, environmental literacy and spiritual growth. The alternative-pedagogy community holds a unique potential for restoration and special power for children with broken homes, families, and spirits; these children could greatly benefit from access to these types of programs, those which have holistic practices in place. A different pedagogical orientation may impact how they heal their histories and strengthen their foundations; it may also assist them in unlocking the power and potential they have the right to protect and define.

While a flurry of discussion on this topic of policy exclusion/inclusion is unfolding, at the time of the study reportedly little progress had been attempted. At the time the study was undertaken, Fall 2013, most teacher preparation programs participants (67%) reported they were aware of these policies and their impact; 19% indicated they were not aware. Yet, when asked about their participation levels, between 50-72% of respondents skipped the question. Some readily identified a need to act and attributed policy context to an insufficient effort on the part of their community as well. During the study, many state policy makers reported that they have not received any indication from the community that they desired something different. At the same time, most of these same policy makers reported they were willing to work on these issues.

Using Almeida's (2013) formula for "social equality as a paradigm to guide" cultural equity (p.1) and as the closest source to inform this study, the first recommendation for the alternative-pedagogy community is to strengthen allies. Action must include written requests and multiple contact efforts. Policy change hinges on building relationships. Alternative pedagogy leaders and community members interviewed for this study conveyed they have predominately kept to themselves. They can be a tightknit group who typically do not mix with their traditional counterparts, nor their compatible allies. They may also be resistant to getting involved in policy development. A frequent question is, "Do we need a lobbyist?" My answer has been, "No, you need to build relationships and participate in conversations." There is a particularly strong need for the Teacher Education Program Leadership to become active in leading these discussions; they are uniquely qualified to describe both the pedagogy, the preparation of the adult learner, the transformation of the teacher, and their methods for ensuring accountability and quality.



The second recommendation is to find a common agenda and use organized messages utilizing complementary language. A cohesive message from the community as a whole is absolutely essential at this time. Subtle differences or great philosophical divides are of no relevance in this policy recognition context. When a community comes before a state policy maker, it should be as a collective whole. It is not the role of the policy maker to determine which form of the community is “authentic.”

The business of working with policy makers and using them, directly or indirectly, to exclude factions or minority members of a community is unconscionable. With the policy climate in which early childhood professionals currently work, and the policy growth around accreditation and accountability, there is no way forward that does not include advocacy on behalf of the whole community, alternative pedagogies together. Progress is achieved through the use of accredited or member-recognized endorsement efforts; this means making a commitment to consistently and unapologetically use uniform terminology. In the Montessori community, this means explicitly using MACTE to represent the diversity of the affiliations. In Waldorf, it means referring to WECAN and AWSANA membership.

The last recommendation is to form a broader community that recognizes overarching likenesses and goals for excellence. The similarities and objectives of these communities are largely complementary; also, they can be a positive force for change in the development of society. Bringing this knowledge/application forward, like-minded alternative-pedagogy communities at large need to move to the forefront of dialogue in Early Learning; it has the capacity to lead and influence the field of early childhood in a manner that no other community may be able.

In this widely-varied community, it would go a long way to establish a forum for collaboration between the different communities, including the ones described in this study (Montessori, Waldorf, Reggio-Inspired, and LifeWays), but it should expand to include others unidentified in this study who share socio-justice aims and eco-justice objectives. This type of membership and recognition of one another as allies and resources provides leverage and expands the validity of these efforts. Their cross-community dialogue show rich potential for lasting, powerful solutions to our modern needs.

As a suggestion, establishment of an “Alternative Pedagogy Alliance” could provide the opportunity to establish collaboration and consultation with like-communities. Common variables being tackled across similar settings can strengthen “group” intelligence and identity and decrease duplication of effort. This could include teacher recognition, teacher preparation methods, learning evaluation models, and child socializing/normalizing outcomes. For example, the explicit commitment between these four pedagogies, to nurture and to protect the value and role of childhood in the development of humanity, does not exist in traditional early learning policy objectives and benchmarks. An occasion to create an invigorating platform to advance that dialogue could impact practice, awareness, and respect for the child and childhood.

**Montessori community.** This community has the advantage of being much larger and more formally organized than any other alternative-pedagogy community in this country. Not only are they well known and associated with the education of affluent, highly influential families, they also have a long history on which to build. The strength in their history is also their weakness, in terms of a divisive past. Using Almeida (2013), the first recommendation for this community is to treat all affiliated members as valuable, to demonstrate kindness and

compassion. Almeida's article and theoretical use of cultural equity hold strong implications for the fractions within this community. Through Paul Born's work on Communities in Conversation and Almeida's cultural equity, the Montessori Leaders Collaborative (MLC) could gain substantive insight in the attempt to bring together a community who often demonstrates incomprehensible levels of "othering" and alienation. While it seems counterintuitive to think a peace-promoting alliance could be anything but accepting, othering is an unambiguously tangible component of this community's story. That past still resonates when issues of "authenticity" arise; a competitive venue for who "counts" is presently alive and well. Overcoming these differences, acting in one another's best interests, and seeing each other as allies is critical for these communities to steer the kind of positive impact they seek.

In the presentation of study findings and recommendations to the community, an unintended outcome unfolded. Instead of a unified effort to become inclusive of one another, affiliations began to break into individual efforts to work on behalf of their own communities' members in state policy recognition efforts. To a degree, this could be traced through conversations referencing the affiliation's capacity to provide authentic/valid teacher preparation or to "accredit" school programs or their own teacher preparation programs. This misapplication of the definition of accreditation and affiliation has resulted in conversations with policy makers who are now being approached to recognize both MACTE as an accreditor, and teacher preparation affiliations; with the exception of AMS, all other affiliations have programs in which a percentage of the programs are accredited and another percentage are not. How should policy makers make sense of this competing message for recognition? Should a Montessori Teacher Education Program need to be accredited to have its credential recognized? Should all seven

affiliations contact policy makers separately to advocate for their own communities? Can a government recognized accrediting body advocate on behalf of programs that are not accredited? Answers to these questions should be assessed through public dialogue in this community as to how they proceed.

The second recommendation for this community from this study is to become absolutely clear about the differences between school accreditation and the accreditation of teacher preparation programs. They are not the same. While this is a linguistic issue, it is causing consistent confusion at nearly every level of the Montessori community. A school can be accredited by an affiliate organization, such as AMI, AMS, PAMS, MEPI, etc., but the institutions providing the affiliates' teachers with training can't be accredited by the affiliation itself. Montessori Teacher Education Programs are accredited by MACTE, the only government recognized accreditor for Montessori Teacher Education in the U.S., and then affiliated by a specific community, meaning they choose which affiliate's principles and values to which they will adhere.

MACTE represents diversity in Montessori education by acting as the umbrella for accountability in teacher preparation. It neither determines which is authentic or more rigorous, nor suggests a hierarchy. In its most basic terms, it acts as a mechanism for government-recognized accountability and provides common guidelines within the larger context of Montessori teacher preparation. MACTE sets the threshold for a quality teacher preparation program and holds the community accountable for meeting those self-published measures. Due to the unique standing as a U.S. Department of Education recognized accreditor, MACTE is the single, strongest representation the Montessori community has in working with policy makers on

issues of teacher preparation, education, and recognition. Embracing this concept and putting full-fledged support into MACTE efforts are critical in advancing this community.

The third recommendation is the dispatch of MACTE as a leading voice for the Montessori teacher recognition effort. The capacity exists for MACTE to act on behalf of the community as a whole, demonstrating diversity and accountability. That makes it the best representative and spokesperson for Montessori teacher recognition. It is the recommendation of this study that MACTE facilitate relationships with policy makers in every state and a wide range of policy venues, as it relates to teacher preparation. This can include outreach efforts, public education dissemination, and acting as a facilitator for advocacy and change on behalf of the community. These efforts should be conveyed and communicated regularly to the Montessori community-at-large. The effort should also include the Montessori Teacher Preparation Programs in all relevant states.

The fourth recommendation is to engage in a nationwide effort to provide widespread teacher recognition in every state. MACTE could lead an effort to include working with state registry directors to revise recognition of accredited Montessori teacher preparation to a minimum equivalency standing of 30 college credits in all states, with a clear public statement of its inclusion in career ladders. This could allow state incentive directors to include accredited Montessori teacher preparation programs in the pool of eligible institutions for scholarships, recognition, and rewards. Other work could grow out of this movement to include state teacher licensure offices to have Montessori certification recognized as a special license or endorsement required to teach in Montessori public/charter schools. The potential to create a Montessori

praxis for ECE and public school use and to include/qualify all Montessori credentials is also on the table and could potentially grow out this work— depending on capacity for community unity.

While MACTE is a good fit to represent issues in teacher preparation, it may not be as effective in contributing to policy change for the community on its own. Two additional layers of outreach and advocacy should occur. One is at the community level, which can be addressed by organizing state work groups. More information on how this might be done is available through AMI, which is working in collaboration with AMS in an effort called the Montessori Public Policy Initiative (MPPI). At the time of this study, it was unknown how comprehensive the MPPI's representation would be, owing to its restriction to two of seven affiliations.

Collaboration within each state's community is critical to the success and recognition of alternative pedagogy communities. This responsibility must be initiated through voluntary efforts by those schools, directors, and organizations. Guidance and resources for members should be the responsibility of their affiliate organizations, the Montessori Public Policy Initiative, and veteran leaders within the collective community. As was recently conveyed at the 2014 NAMTA/Ohio Montessori Alliance annual conference, instead of fighting over the same puzzle piece, "figure out which piece of the puzzle you have and which piece you need," then act on that information.

The other layer of outreach and advocacy needed in the community is institutional clarity and definition of roles, which is also needed by the leadership and national representatives. National leaders need to form more effective communication networks, to build their trust and relationships with one another, and to get up to speed quickly on policy impacts and change as it is occurring. Through this study, I developed a community advocacy map and model for

organizing and have made it available to the leadership in the Montessori communities through the MPPI and MACTE.

Finally, a fifth recommendation, based on my experience as a cultural broker and participant in public policy discussion in this community, is that the executive leadership of the Montessori community absolutely must overcome a cautious, divisive, exclusive mind set that dominates much of these efforts. It permeates every level of leadership throughout the system.

When Montessori teachers go through excellent Montessori teacher preparation, they inevitably experience a metamorphosis, not only as a teacher but also as a human-being. What that means varies by individual, but it exists. It is not over-reaching to expect the same of their leadership. A mandate to act in a way that is kind, collaborative, and compassionate should be required and explicitly articulated in organizational policy language, setting a tone for an organizational culture that has absolutely no tolerance for negative or close-minded leadership. It is not only the place of the leadership to set a tone of inclusion and compassion for their community; it is also the role of the membership and the organization to hold their leaders to a similar demonstration of competencies.

**Steiner-inspired community.** Based on discussions with WECAN Program Coordinator, Susan Howard, and a thorough reading of the membership guidelines, it is clear to me that standards and quality are extremely important to this community. However, that is not clearly understood by non-members; as evidenced by policy maker and Montessori community members' comments that the Waldorf preparation is not as demanding or informative as the CDA or Montessori preparation. The first recommendation is to brand the message of quality and membership recognition across community leadership and members. Make awareness of

standards and recognition widely known, understood, and easily talked about. Equip teachers, directors, schools and training centers to adequately discuss talking points/common language. This is an advocacy effort to arm the Steiner-inspired community with important connections they need to make about themselves, particularly as they work with non-member policy makers to address accountability and quality policies. This recommendation is aligned with the variables described by Almeida (2013) to aid in addressing cultural equity using a social equity paradigm.

During interviews, data collection, and in conversations regarding member-checking of the study, it was revealed that more harm comes to this community based on what is not true about them rather than what is. To overcome the prevalence of mysticism and myth regarding their practices and teacher preparation, recommendation two is to develop and disseminate an information packet encompassing the basic components and threshold for Waldorf teacher preparation. Such a packet should include, but is not limited to: a summary, including accurate data, reflecting the minimum number of hours of teacher preparation, observation and practicum; the content covered in teacher preparation (to include child development, etc.); required teacher competencies and how they are assessed or demonstrated; and how quality of teacher preparation programs are monitored. Make this information widely available to researchers, policy makers, and other interested parties. This will help policy makers in the translation of teacher preparation to see/understand where Steiner-inspired teachers fit in the larger system. For example, use information to show why it should be worth more than a 120-hour CDA and more similar in nature to the Montessori credential (a concept which many states already comprehend). Grounding easily translated information in the theory and suggestions from Almeida (2013) will give increased leverage to this community due to the cultural equity and social equity paradigm.



During the member checking stage, it was revealed in one state issuing policy revisions that the state policy makers had worked with the Waldorf teachers and schools in their state to overcome policy exclusion. Unfortunately, the policy revisions resulted in even more restrictive language and marginalization because the Waldorf teacher now had to work in a WECAN-recognized school (as opposed to any program) and had to have a bachelor's degree to be recognized (which defeated the purpose of addressing the issue of exclusion). Based on this documented case, the third recommendation is to determine who should advocate for Waldorf teachers training and recognition; who would offer a cohesive voice, use consistent language, and provide a focused message (WECAN). Send out mass communication identifying the entity advancing the effort, contact information, and communication chain. Communicate progress regularly to members of the community. This will help avoid situations encountered in which every state is handled by different groups advocating for diverse agendas.

A fourth recommendation comes from Almeida's recommendation to use action strategies and progressive coalition building (2013); it is to establish a relationship and point of contact for every registry office in the country. Consider making a Webpage with this information available for every state in the nation to facilitate communication, highlight advancements, and publicly educate teachers and the community on the status of Waldorf teacher's recognition efforts. Prepare a message that articulates the Waldorf communities' endorsement of high quality for children and teacher, expresses their desire to be included, and promotes professionalization in the field of ECE.

Using Almeida's community learning circles, the final recommendation is to identify phases of desired state recognition. For example, start with states open to recognition but which

need to be fortified with inclusion. Layer in states where a protocol exists; and defer “closed” states for the last phase when a coalition of more united allies exists. This can most easily be accomplished following the Montessori communities’ advancements. The author of this study is available and willing to work with this community if such a relationship is desired. Use the identified representative to work with state registry directors to revise registry/career ladder recognition of recognized Waldorf teacher preparation to a minimum equivalency recognition of 30 college credits in all states and to contain a clear public statement of inclusion in career ladders.

*Long-term goals (3-5 years)*

In a recent study, the U.S. Department of Education Council for Higher Education Accreditation (CHEA) examined the possibility for accreditation inclusivity for alternative providers of secondary education, parallel to the accreditation level the Montessori community has acquired. Currently, CHEA has expressed an interest in supporting this type of community; this was recently documented in a study the Council for Higher Education Accreditation published on November 4, 2014 (CHEA).

Under CHEA’s description for an alternative pathway for accreditation, Category C, for accreditation of alternative providers of postsecondary education, the Waldorf community should reach out to CHEA and similar allies to negotiate a process for vetting their teacher preparation programs through an entity that also holds government recognition. Work with state incentive directors to get recognized Waldorf teacher preparation programs included in the pool of eligible institutions for scholarships and incentives. Collaborate with state teacher licensure offices to have Waldorf teacher certification recognized as a required special license or an endorsement to

teach in Waldorf public/charter schools. Create a Waldorf Praxis-like exam for ECE and public school use, as a method to include/qualify WECAN Waldorf teacher preparation.

**Reggio Emilia community.** The Reggio Emilia Community is something of an enigma. They have no official “certification,” no “program pipeline,” nothing by which to be measured; like the curriculums in their own classrooms, they remain organic. Yet, like the classroom example, literature and interviews tell us they are also concrete and deliberate. The abstractness in no way detracts from their profound impact; and, still, no one can point to them in a professional development system and say, “There’s one.” There is currently no method to identify from where their training comes or how it is being processed in registry systems across the country.

The lack of definition surrounding Reggio Emilia is problematic in that it does not facilitate recognition of these unique teachers, especially their tremendous efforts and dedication to quality education. It is not possible to apply incentives in recruiting or retaining these teachers unless they qualify under “traditional” standards, however, their teacher preparation and mindset contradict traditional training, practice, and policy. Of all the pedagogies discussed, this one is of greatest concern to me for two reasons. The first is that its ideology, having been integrated into many university programs, results in semi-immersed teachers who are not readily identifiable on paper as having obtained these types of qualities/training/or preparation. The second is the failure to capture them in counts of quality, to make their pedagogical outcomes widely documented, or to encourage emerging professionals to consider this an option. This ultimately robs children, particularly those from disadvantaged communities, the opportunity to

experience non-traditional pedagogy that may provide opportunities for different educational objectives, ones that account for cultural renewal.

Based on this study's interviews and policy recognition data, which show very little evidence that Reggio Emilia teachers exist at all in data or recognition, the first recommendation to the Reggio Emilia-inspired community is to actively get involved in policy circles. It is imperative this community advance the leadership and momentum to organize, in writing, the identification of preparation programs and teacher qualities used to distinguish those prepared to implement this pedagogy from those who are simply inspired. A certification seems plausible with a documented number of hours of approved training or coursework. Accreditation for such training programs (within universities and colleges or in freestanding institutions) is available from the U.S. Department of Education.

The second recommendation is to join advocacy measures for teacher recognition and inclusion in counts of quality that specifically allow researchers and policy makers to track the efforts and impact of teachers of this pedagogy. This recommendation comes from Almeida (2013), who refers to "the paradigm of individualism," which encourages awareness and responsibility for participation in collective empowerment (p. 12). Fears that categorical recognition will eliminate the organic nature of the pedagogy's teacher preparation fail to account for the wide-reaching outcomes in these classrooms. Pedagogista Certification is one example, dedicated to master teachers or advanced professionals due to its mentoring and organizational leadership duties, which make it unobtainable to the average teacher. Yet, should not teachers utilizing this philosophy, theory, and methods count? It seems counter-intuitive that

pedagogisti (teacher) preparation of knowing and teaching should be accessible only at the graduate level.

Family child care providers, assistants, parents, and anyone working with children stand to gain substantially from exposure to this type of preparation and education. Allowing Reggio Emilia-inspired teacher preparation access to more adult learners also makes it available to more children. It is unacceptable and misleading to indicate the level of training and commitment given by teachers dedicated to this pedagogy is equivalent to the training and education provided in CPR/First Aid, mandated reporting, or nutrition classes. Not capturing what occurs in those classrooms and the teacher preparation that created that reality does not fit in the recognition and data collection objectives.

The third recommendation is to actively join with similar communities to advance a dialogue that helps course correct on early childhood perspectives of learning and knowing. This recommendation comes from Almeida's (2013) discussion on becoming active, collaborative, and part of a team. On a positive note, a strength for the Reggio Emilia-inspired educational community is their dedication to professional collaboration, resource sharing, and community involvement. Working in teams, with attitudes of partnership, is the heart of their theory and practice. This community, however, simply needs leadership to coordinate efforts of recognition for their teachers, schools, and the families being served. This effort goes beyond benefits for teachers; it creates a pathway of accessibility for children of disadvantaged families. Ultimately, it is about inspiring the large-scale systematic treatment of early learning professionals and curricula.

### **The Field of Early Care & Education**

This study provided only one recommendation to the field of early childhood: Embrace the strengths alternative pedagogies bring to the table. These communities were founded on works of some of the most powerful advocates for children and childhood the modern world has known. The defining source within their philosophy, theory, methodologies, curriculum and social/normalizing is as relevant and profound today as they were in their delivery a century ago. These alternative pedagogies recognize a truth about infancy and young children that all caregivers of young children (parents, policy makers, and practitioners) often fail to comprehend. It would be fitting for the field of early care and education to deeply examine the core of the messages embedded across these communities. Strive to really hear their messages and be open to de-colonizing institutional thinking by seeking an appreciation for diversity of “approaches” to childhood in theory, practice, and teacher preparation.

The pedagogies included in this study were selected because they had strong, positive influences on the field of early care and education. They are not exclusive options; additional, similar types of alternative education communities exist (Peabody, Pickler, the Alternative Education Movement, Unschooling, Homeschooling, etc.). Influence of the magnitude these pedagogies bring can be of interest to more than alternative pedagogical practitioners; it should retain the attention of those vested in contributing to lasting socio-economic change. It can continue to inspire traditional education in the pursuit of continuous improvement; the implications for students from marginalized, minority, special-needs and low-income communities, as well as all children, are profound. Sacred and indispensable keys to change, progress, success, and evolution of society rest with persuasive alternative perspectives on where to lead children.

At least five strong advantages exist within these communities, which are weak or absent from traditional views on early learning; primarily, the alternative pedagogies' recognition of the child's spirit. It bears repeating the spirit of the child is considered outside religious contexts; it is simply that children carry within themselves a driving force for development.

The second feature of alternative-pedagogy study is a focus on the rights of the child. A child provided with rights is seen, approached, understood, and responded to differently. In many ways, this is intertwined with recognizing the child's spirit. Once that conception occurs, it is easy to respect the child as a full human being with all the inalienable rights (primarily those named by Thomas Jefferson) to include freedom and the incapacity to be property. To dispense any doubt, it is important to note this is not the freedom that relies on external discipline as punishment or for boundary setting. It is a methodic and elevated freedom that is nurtured through the development of self-discipline and internal regulation designed to liberate the child and decolonize childhood.

Third is the understanding that children, like seeds, carry within themselves a blueprint for extraordinary development. The child comes into the world with all the potential they will ever have, and with that comes a responsibility from the community to develop that potential. This magnificent power towers over the rudimentary attempts of traditional education to "educate" and relies almost exclusively on the transformed teacher to see, nurture, and protect the potential. This teacher, who sees and hears differently, responds differently by affirming in each child that he or she is fully capable of astonishing accomplishments.

The fourth attribute the alternative pedagogy community offers to the field of early learning is a polarity shift in its approach to teaching and learning. In alternative pedagogies, the

role of the teacher is transformed into that of a facilitator and co-creator of knowledge. This is not allocated to a special day of the week or project/lesson plan; it is a mindset and way of life. It comes from specialized training that requires the teachers themselves to morph in their personal and professional developments. This is not a reflection of a religious pilgrimage; it does, however, require a significantly different perspective and approach to the child and to childhood.

Finally, the biggest hurdle traditional caregivers and our field must overcome is a failure to operate in a child-centric framework. This is not a reference to the rhetoric that exists in developmental guidelines but to the actual reality in which the majority of young children are cared for and educated. The pedagogies described in this study have a common desire to make learning and development contingent on the individual, never a competition or comparison with one another.

The conceptual framework for creating this environment rests on a responsibility to deeply know, protect, and nurture the child. Operating from this agenda requires parents, teachers, and community members to respond to each child in an authentic, unique, and endearing way. It is a reflection and communication to the child that: a) we know who you are; b) we like who you are, and; c) we support who you are becoming. It comes from a different way of “being” with children.

The packaging of these five qualities for children is not done exclusively by the pedagogies featured, yet they are complete models that exemplify these attributes. They rest on powerful language, time-tested, research-founded examples, and non-traditional teacher preparation and environments to accomplish their goals. Without identifying with and



incorporating these five keys, traditional public early education methods will continue to offer empty oratory on the plausible outcomes that education holds for future success and expanded human consciousness. Education alone cannot solve a radical power inequality for children any more than the elimination of segregation alone could reform US socio-economic status for minorities. A paradigm shift in the power relationship of the child must occur. It begins with the power attributed to Almeida's (2013) cultural equity and social equality, achieved through inclusive policy practices described at length by Lisbeth Schorr. The way forward is through awareness, an awareness shared through the recognition of the specialized training and preparation of the alternative-pedagogy teacher.

## Chapter 7

### Conclusion and Implications

In Merten's *Transformative Research and Evaluation* (2009), she closes the manuscript stating, "...utilization of the findings to further social justice is the most critical factor in transformative work" (p. 348). While many of the direct aims of this study have already been discussed (data collection, developing partnerships, and empowering communities), one indirect aim of this topic selection, research framework, and methodological options included a much larger target for the humanistic pedagogical perspective of social justice.

At the onset of the second chapter, while reviewing relevant literature, pedagogy as a definition was considered. All early childhood conversation, every policy, every teacher in training must begin with the answer to that philosophical question in mind; where do we desire to lead young children? Where are we trying to take them; how do we get there; how will we know when we arrive? Who is guiding children to this place? Consistent with the critical pedagogy framework outlined in the beginning of the study, there is a penchant on the part of the author to address social reconstruction through the outcomes of this work.

In the alternative pedagogy community, there is a definitive reverence for the role of childhood in the making of men. Maria Montessori (1995) wrote, "It is the child who makes the man, and no man exists who was not made by the child he once was" (p. 15). The possibilities that lie in the role of childhood is not for predictable outcomes such as national economic security through academic and occupational preparation, but for the purpose of forming a more perfect social union. This study seeks to accelerate awareness of alternative-pedagogy teacher preparation and recognition as an important core element of diversity in the preparation of future

wo/men and leaders. The need to protect the freedom that families and individuals have, to choose to lead children somewhere different, is an urgent priority and desirable outcome of the work carried forward through the onset of this study.

Another indirect goal for the study was to initialize cross-sector dialogue to advance an agenda for community intelligence and collective impact (Born, 2012; Almeida, 2013). The intended outcome for this objective was merely to ignite the flame of discourse and critical examination that would lead to positive impact. The aspiration was to bring diverse groups of like-minded leaders and communities to see themselves as part of a larger commitment to serve the child, family, society, and humanity through non-traditional, albeit precious, pedagogical allegiances. The point at which these communities see the power they wield, collectively, to impact the field of early learning and socio-economic outcomes will be the tipping point in moving the field of early childhood policy into meaningful progress for actual social-justice consequences.

To be explicit, the change lies not just with the power of policy but in the power of policy to protect the right to raise children and build communities from whom lasting peace can flourish; Almeida describes this as power with, rather than power-over (2013). These children are then at liberty to grow into wo/men allowed to think differently, to respond differently, and to perform in non-traditional ways. This action of the community, even united, pales in comparison to the possibilities that exist in future leaders, born out of the opportunity to be the child raised to own her/his power, gaining experience, using it responsibly, and empowering others to do the same. This is a different trajectory for the human being; a pedagogical compass bearing

revelations that traditional education and educational policy has yet to consider. It lies within the question, “Where do we wish to lead young children?”

A real opportunity lies before these communities in taking the time to align and distinguish their educational systems. Teacher Preparation Programs are in the unique position to both help policy makers, researchers, policy enforcers, and the public to better understand their pedagogical mission and objectives; moreover, they alone are uniquely qualified to describe the role and preparation of the teacher in this capacity. We might now ask, “How can Alternative Pedagogy Teacher Preparation Programs inform Traditional Teacher Education Programs and how can what can the Alternative Preparation Program learn from its traditional counterparts? To be more specific where can the Alternative Pedagogy Educational System be used to push back or inform discourse against policy that does not protect communities with different needs?

### **Study Summary**

The study began with two questions regarding alternative pedagogy teacher preparation: “What is the role and relevance of alternative pedagogy teacher preparation to the professional development movement; does it count? Where does alternative pedagogy teacher preparation fit in the current policy landscape, and what is the process for changing it?” Through the process of unfolding the components of the study, answers to these questions are more apparent than previously understood.

Early inquiry and review of the literature was vague on this topic and unable to inform these questions completely. The need for a study to define a policy problem, as well as to employ transformative methodologies that would empower alternative pedagogy communities to overturn an oppressive policy paradigm, was discussed. The conceptual framework drew from

critical pedagogy and transformative research and evaluation, and was influenced by community-based participatory research. A cross-sector of alternative pedagogy communities (Montessori, Waldorf, Reggio Emilia, and LifeWays) engaged in a virtual dialogue with state workforce registry directors across the country.

Over the course of one year, the data collected was coded and analyzed in phases and relationship to one another. One categorical outcome was the identification of states that were policy inclusive, policy inclusive but needed modification, policy neutral and policy restrictive. Another compilation of data resulted in a Table of Recognition that mapped each state in the country, where recognition levels currently were, and recommended levels of recognition. Relationships were built over time with both policy offices and with leaders across the alternative pedagogy communities in an effort to bring the groups into contact and collaboration with one another.

Study findings validated a perceived reality of marginalization and oppression experienced by the alternative pedagogy communities identified, which is evidenced in the data. The analytical records and dialogue, however, suggested this was commonly reported to be policy oversight, owing to a lack of knowledge, contact, and interaction. Policy makers in 17 states indicate a willingness to work with constituents on policy inclusion and language. Much of that work began before the study had concluded. Two unintended findings included a need for alternative pedagogy communities to strengthen internal collaboration efforts through the use of cohesive language and a unified message via an authority on the preparation of the communities' teachers. The other was a strong self-reported indication that scholarship dollars were available as an incentive tied to registry participation. This finding pointed to a need to

connect alternative pedagogy teachers and preparation programs with access to this policy incentive as well.

Consistent with transformative research methodologies, a series of recommendations were provided to communities and included in the study. Consulting, planning, and development of a strategy were also provided to interested community leaders. Plans within individual communities now exist for moving forward with the study findings and recommendations.

The role and relevance of the alternative pedagogy community in professional development systems are limited at this time. An anticipated nationwide inclusion movement is expected to unfold over the following year. The process of inclusion will require the assistance of registry policy makers to put policy language in place that protects the diversity and recognition efforts of all early care professionals, not only those coming out of institutions of higher education.

Does alternative pedagogy teacher preparation count? Yes, sometimes, and it depends on who you ask. In roughly one-third of the country, MACTE-accredited Montessori teacher preparation does count but at an appropriate level in less than 15% of the country. For Waldorf or LifeWays, the answer is “not yet.” A few states recognize the teacher preparation at a level consistent with a 120-hour entry-level training to the field or as annual training hours. Reggio Emilia-inspired teachers were not identified or not reported on categorically across the country.

In the policy landscape, where do they fit and what is the process for change? Detailed recommendations were provided in the study. The short answer to this question is that this policy problem has been structured and is no longer weak; it also rests on advocacy work within the communities to overcome the marginalization they are experiencing. A willingness on the

part of many states to work to overcome the policy oversight was put forth in the study data. The work of advocating for those changes belongs in the hands of the communities' leaders, Teacher Preparation Programs, and well-informed community workgroups..

### **Limitations**

One significant limitation of the study is that it rests on self-reporting by individuals about themselves. While this is a strength of working with community-based research, it is also a weakness in the sense that self-reporting may be influenced by social pressure or inaccurate self-reflection. The study attempts to overcome this possibility by requiring self-reporting study participants to remain unidentified or confidential. The study then examined reported definitions against secondary, public sources to confirm reliability. Moreover, policy maker descriptions of policy definitions, interpretations, and applications were summarized and forwarded to their state's constituents for feedback in accuracy and how true to their experiences were the descriptions. An example of this is when states reported being inclusive but it was later determined they were only policy inclusive of one or two affiliations.

It is important to acknowledge that this subject and setting were and continue to be a moving target. Fledgling and veteran state policies continue to develop at an unprecedented pace; they are also influencing one another. Consequently, this research aimed to provide a snapshot of current policy practices that are subject to change and may not reflect the most current information following the close of the study, a realistic expectation and limitation of the study.

While the purpose of this study was to examine the variability and to identify commonalities between states or consistencies in policy and processing, the reader is cautioned

against generalizing the results of the study. It is inevitable that, although searching for trends, each state's program is truly unique. The intended outcome was to identify, categorically, what participation looks like and to illustrate, through information solicitation, how those policies and processes were developed. The results contribute to our collective knowledge in both ECE curriculum and policy.

Initially, the intention was to use a conference call to involve all of the state policy representatives in a single dialogue on the subject. That format appeared more informative and insightful. From a critical analysis perspective, it would provide access to the language policy makers used in communication with peers regarding stakeholders. Because of the time zones, it was difficult to facilitate this. Another reason it was not possible was because state policy representatives hesitated at the suggested format. In discussion, several states underscored they could not be compared to any other state's work (demographics, funding, resources, institutional housing, staff turnover, policy climate, etc.). In an effort to respect their comfort levels and willingness to participate, interviews were conducted individually. It would still be worth following up on this idea at a conference or workshop for state policy makers on this subject, for the very reasons previously described, but in a format where voluntary participation and interest has already been established.

### **Implications**

Awareness of this subject is perhaps the single most important contribution of this study. This study provides information to researchers, policy makers, state registries, and communities that was not available prior to the research. The definition of a policy problem now lends itself to dozens of implications from policy advocacy to policy change processes, policy inclusivity,



and impact studies. The implication for registry directors (who did not have access to information on alternative pedagogy trends, training and education background, or on the recommended recognition levels) is that they can be empowered to respond differently to a local and national policy problem; additional implications follow.

**Awareness.** Alternative-pedagogy leadership is aware that they can no longer choose to remain passive. They are equipped with more information, with a context for policy change, and are able to respond to policy impacts by articulating their needs and wants. This study has contributed to these practitioner communities by sounding an alarm with the need for organized, collaborative leadership to get involved and shape public policy in a positive way.

This is also an opportunity to raise awareness for policy makers at state and federal levels, as well as researchers and academic or national organizations to give real consideration to the power of their position. Through their own awareness they use language and make policy that is inherently inclusive at the onset or not, and risks unintentionally marginalizing relevant allies or support networks. This story for the alternative-pedagogy community does not end here. There are more policies they will have to pursue, one state at a time, to overturn unintentional policy-induced oppression. School regulations, curriculums, staff qualifications, professional development, quality counts, rating systems, and scholarship access are part of this list. These communities will have to address and participate in upcoming policy shaping. They will want to advocate for inclusion to remain eligible for consideration in massive movements designed to shape and respond to society (Early Head Start Partnership Grants, Preschool Expansion and Development Grants, Race to the Top Early Learning Challenge, etc.).

If policy makers do not intentionally change their awareness and effort from the top down, this cycle of policy reconciliation will take a toll on these small communities' resources. Federal policy makers should defend the public's right to diversity, choice, and access and make a concerted effort from the beginning of policy formation to explicitly, in written and verbal policy language, commit to both traditional and non-traditional ways of thinking, doing, knowing, and learning. Moreover, constructing a policy culture that does not tolerate oppression or marginalization of any kind is the objective.

**Set a compass.** Another contribution from this study is based on the methodology and research framework. Transformative Research and Evaluation requires more from the individual than data collection and evaluation; it also expects the facilitator to assist or consult with the community in empowerment strategies to advance the findings to knowledge dissemination, organization, and action. This study has provided a platform to move communities, teachers, leaders and policy makers past speculation into discussion and change. In some states, that work has taken-off on its own. In others, people are waiting for next steps. On a national scale, movement has occurred in the past months that outpace cumulative change over the past decade.

**Platform for organizing.** One more impact from the study is setting a context for which community organizing is taking place that has never previously existed. State work groups, advocacy factions, and national organizations have not been able to create a widespread response to this issue until now. In the Waldorf, Montessori, and LifeWays communities, a hierarchy of responsibility to respond to this (and other) policy situations is underway. Although advocacy efforts have existed with occasional significant outcomes, a design for addressing this issue was not in place.

Furthered through consulting and advising, this study has contributed to the tense but necessary work of configuring who is responsible, and for what. Ironically, it sometimes seems like everyone wants to decide or do everything. The process of understanding the gravity and deeply-needed work and resources to accomplish a multi-faceted policy response nationwide requires some lane changing, merging, and painting of lines on the road to success. The required inclusion of recommendations has assisted in this effort. Encouraging the researcher to consider multiple perspectives and the big picture, this methodology puts the study and the facilitator, acting as a resource, in a position to share a vision and information.

### **Need for Further Research**

Due to the limited scope of the dissertation study, many new questions have been proposed that could not be answered by this study. For example, policy makers and researchers would benefit from knowing more specifically to what degree traditional and alternative-pedagogy teacher preparation is categorically alike and different. We can speak to generalizations, but we do not know in terms of data or anecdotal evidence how the teacher preparation objectives, competencies, and outcomes look. With new regulations being provided by the U.S. Department of Education regarding the preparation of teachers and the use of the workforce registries, it will be interesting to learn more on these variables, where they correlate, and if there are areas that set them apart.

Another issue that grew out of the study was access to scholarship dollars for teacher preparation. There is considerable discussion on this issue in the alternative-pedagogy community, indicating a need for student choice. Should access to a percentage of teacher preparation funds be provided based on the student's preparation choice, or should states have

the power to limit access to funds; if so, based on what merit? More specific research-related questions include: to which institutions do scholarship money go, and what percentages of scholarship dollars are spent on the CDA versus higher education? Who gets to determine who has access to public funds for teacher preparation; who qualifies for scholarship incentives; and what is their relationship to the colleges and universities in each state?

Policy makers have posed questions about data that correlates alternative-pedagogy teacher preparation with quality indicators. Certainly there is a need for research that correlates the cumulative components of the alternative-pedagogy teacher preparation with quality outcomes. While we can speculate the outcomes by cross-walking variables that are corroborated with increasing quality, there is limited or no known research on alternative-pedagogy teacher preparation and its causal outcomes on quality in the classroom. It would certainly mark a step in the right direction if data were being collected on these teachers in state, regional, and national databanks.

While the Reggio Emilia teacher was included in this study for the purposes of reconstructing how workforce registries collect data, in many ways, it was dropped from community collaboration efforts. This was primarily due to the difficulty in identifying a leadership source to take up the work of policy advocacy. This community really is the least coalition mature and least defined of the pedagogies included in this study. Future research should seek to define the parameters of this group of teachers better, if for no other reason than to increase its capacity to serve as an option for marginalized communities. Is there a teacher pipeline; if so, what is it? How is a Reggio Emilia-inspired school or teacher defined? What is the threshold for calling someone a Reggio Emilia-prepared teacher? How many options exist

through the university system providing Reggio Emilia-inspired teacher preparation; is it being tracked, and, in the future, can any registry in the nation give us data on Reggio-inspired teachers?

Another area rich in need for research is studying the power relationships, hierarchy, and power sharing in the alternative-pedagogy community leadership. This is a perplexing situation from the conceptualization of power in theory. These communities are exceptionally concerned with empowering children. They also empower teachers in a way non-traditional education has yet to realize. At some point along the way, there is a significant disconnect in the leadership regarding the use of power. It is not a small problem, and it may be the single most debilitating factor these communities face. The loss of resources, energy, and momentum due to power struggles is remarkable. It is unclear but worth asking if this is in any way related to whether or not alternative-pedagogy leadership have actually experienced the metamorphosis their teacher preparation programs are designed to provide or have the capacity to demonstrate the type of collaboration Paul Born offers in deepening community.

A new revelation for me over the course of this study occurred in the closing of the writing. As an educator who received teacher preparation in a progressive university that also provided alternative-pedagogy training for college credit, I realized how slanted my perspective of teacher preparation was in traditional education. There was a bias that existed for me against traditional teacher education programs. I assumed, in some perverse way, that their interpretations and reproductions of John Dewey's philosophy, upon which it was based, were deeply marred. I later came to understand that where Steiner, Montessori, and Malaguzzi were able to create highly reproducible models, Dewey's work was less successful at creating

systemic barriers to push back against policy. Is this due to his philosophy lacking prescriptive methods for teacher preparation, or classroom and environmental design, or some other variable unaccounted for? .

If, at its heart, Dewey's progressive philosophy is compatible with Steiner and Montessori, to what degree does it carry through to the child in a traditional child care environment? What evidence do we have it reaches the child? Are teachers prepared with Dewey's philosophical and theoretical material able to apply it? If not, why? Could ECE policy related to quality and standards derail humanistic implementation of progressive early childhood education? Could pedagogical pushback have something to do with the types of boundaries provided to alternative-pedagogy schools via their teacher preparation or accreditation standards? I believe there is something here worth digging deeply to understand. How do progressively-trained Dewey adherents push back against ill-fitting early childhood policy, and is it in the same or in different ways from alternative-pedagogy communities? If they are in fact pushing back, then how and with what effect?

Finally, the spirit of the child; this subject is not new in literature. There is abundant research on this topic in alternative-pedagogy doctrine. The new frontier, however, is the modern acceptance and understanding of this concept in the educational setting. There is a need to fuel a new theory in the perspective of public education and that has to do with inspiring teachers to better practices by examining the role of the spirit in child development, teacher preparation, and diversity policy. Richard Johnson wrote an article on the advent of the rush to Reggio, published in the 1999 issue of *Contemporary Issues in Early Childhood*. I found his article intriguing because he virtually dismisses the Reggio Emilia movement as the newest

“hype” in the long-line of “cargo cults” bound to fall short in exalting the work of child development (such as multicultural, whole language, Vygotsky, developmentally appropriate, constructivist, etc.). In the article, Johnson unpacks cargo cults against the Reggio Emilia movement by implying what is exciting about it, that it is strange and exotic but does not really exist.

I found this perspective interesting because I also encounter that perspective 15 years later when I speak with enthusiasm on alternative pedagogies. Johnson (1999) says, “The zeal with which we are attracted to Reggio, the latest cargo cult, illustrates our fixation with outdated, limited theoretical traditions...[in which] the progressive movement is instead moving us backward and offering the same old false promises (p. 75).” I want to address this observation, because I still encounter it in the work I do with alternative pedagogy outsiders, that the passion being perceived is about how enticing a new idea can be.

I believe the passion and dedication these pedagogies project comes rather from their capacity to take what we know to be “true,” in regard to the child’s best and insulate childhood from the material that’s not “true” (the stuff Johnson and “other specialists are moving against”) (Johnson, 1999, p. 75). It succeeds in putting that knowledge directly in contact with children in ways traditional teacher preparation has not. This may not seem like much of a feat, but the reality for the majority of young children is that, particularly in traditional child care, they are not given access to this child “truth” in practice. In other words, while scholars, researchers, and academic elites may know the conversation in the context of a much larger framework, few care providers are succeeding in connecting the philosophy and theory to the child. In practice, it just isn’t seen. I think, in this context, we agree that the “truth” is not novel; however, what I see as

original is how alternative pedagogies have succeeded in reproducing this in classroom practice, with a high degree of accuracy, all over the world and for more than a century.

One deep concern for this study was how the impact of strengthening ECE quality policy is impacting the alternative-pedagogy teacher and schools through policy exclusion. It is one thing to wonder or to worry about this reality but something quite different to research it. Without providing any real sustenance as to how this should be answered, it seems worth at least asking in what ways is school choice impacted by the domino effect of unrecognized teacher preparation, resulting in lower QRIS ratings for programs and, ultimately, how that school is then publicly perceived. Is there an impact on attendance or teacher retention? Are less specialized but more highly-educated teachers being hired to replace teachers with only credentials rather than degrees? To what extent is the alternative-pedagogy communities' existence impacted by quality-driven policy exclusion?

All of these future research questions, the current study, and widespread discussion on this professional development movement matter. When we widen the conversation to become inclusive of larger ideas and thought, we become informed in ways we had not previously considered. For example, ECE professional development conversations and research can be informed by general workforce development research and discussion. If we expand our current mindset from defining quality and who qualifies, to the larger care population, perhaps we can ask how we can become inclusive of all types of care providers, including the majority who are not found in institutional child care settings.

In writing the Literature Review, a new question surfaced based on data related to who cares for children ages four and under. Census data indicates nearly 75% of children ages four



and under are cared for in home-based settings by parents, relatives, and non-relatives. It seems logical to ask then, based on the current quality and professional development conversation, what percentages of all children are served by these professional development initiatives? The U.S. Census (2013) estimated in 2011 that roughly 24% of children were cared for in an “organized care facility” (provided outside of home-based care, i.e., Head Start, Day Care, Nursery, Preschool, etc.), and this has been consistent since the 1980s (Child Trends, 2013). If individuals who are not identified, invested in, or tracked by the Workforce Registry care for three out of four children, what are the real gains for the early childhood population on the whole?

For example, in the 2011 census, 27% of children ages birth to four were cared for in their home by a relative, 26% were cared for in center-based programs, 24% were in parental care, and 14% were in home-care by a non-relative (Child Trends, 2013, p. 3). In this case, three-quarters of child care providers are not captured by Career Pathways and are not tracked by workforce registries. If the direct aim of the workforce registry and career pathway system is to increase child care quality and benefit young children, how does it serve the three out of four care providers not captured in professional development systems?

Moreover, I ask, what is the policy agenda and investment for children cared for in home-based settings? How can policy and professional development movements better support these care providers and children? How can humanistic pedagogy inform policy related to these populations? The types of pedagogical preparation examined in this study may inform the answers to these questions. Models of enriching home-based care and delivery models for adult-learners currently exist in the alternative pedagogies highlighted in this study. LifeWays, in particular, is enhancement of home-based care or the replication of home-based care in a child

care setting. Waldorf, Montessori, and Reggio do not currently have certificates for parents, grandparents, or home-based providers in the same way LifeWays does, but they do provide strong models and a pedagogical orientation that can inform policy in supporting these types of care providers in domestic settings.

Alternative pedagogy models are at the forefront of this movement toward holistic, balanced, child-development practices. As they are increasingly adapting to support parents and home-based child care providers with their methods and orientation, only early childhood research can provide the structure to develop this thought further. In fact, it is only possible through further research to understand what the variables and needs are of the child care population as a whole, including those in non-institutionalized settings. But research alone will not make the difference, putting the research, the pedagogy, the providers and the policy in the same room at the same time will be critical to tangible outcomes.

## **Conclusion**

Alternative Pedagogy is not simply an “approach” to childhood. It is research-based, systematic implementation of value-laden attempts to strengthen a reverence for childhood. It requires specialized training, education, experience, and transformation of the teacher and his/her role. This effort is undertaken through experienced experts in these pedagogies who guide the novice through a metamorphosis deeply rooted in respectful work of protecting, nurturing, and developing the spirit of the child.

To access social reconstruction, society must own their failure to comprehend the sacredness of infancy and early childhood. It is not because of ignorance; it is because we cannot hear and cannot see, as Malaguzzi wrote. Education in this country has a long, colonizing

history with young children and children in general. Their, our, history reads of the worst kinds of objectification, including: children being born evil, child labor, child mothers, slave babies, factory babies, mortality rates, orphaned and abandoned babies of the 1920s-30s, boarding school babies, and daycare babies (Lascarides & Hinitz, 2011). This speaks nothing of the babes who were neither nursed nor nurtured, were never gazed upon or deeply revered, resulting in generation on generation of empty love and fragile attachments.

Raising souls, growing bodies, and cultivating minds is not easy work. When will we ask children what they can teach us? The value of the alternative-pedagogy community, in this regard, is tremendous. It is the antithesis of colonized early childhood. Instead of protecting childhood, its unique value, and unidentified contribution to society, traditional early childhood “policy,” metaphorically speaking, exploits children for their potential labor power and childhood for its potential to deeply ingrain capitalistic ventures and priorities. In this regard, they have seized childhood. A system that privileges the right of the child to access and to develop innate potential is not simply a nice idea. Its potential for social reconstruction is worth advancing, to protect the rights of children, families, teachers, and communities who choose to exercise a different perspective—pedagogy that embraces all care providers for all children, whatever that setting may be.

### **Reflection**

After working on this study for the past three years, I am humbled by the professional and personal growth that occurred both for myself and across sectors. Those working on this study regularly heard me reference an overwhelming feeling that this conversation has reached a season for which the harvest has come. While I remember vividly the distinct injustice I felt was

being inflicted on an already-marginalized population, as this journey started eleven years ago, that sentiment has grown, through discourse, to a much more widely-understood and actively-engaging place of transformation and acceptance. In presenting the study findings, I frequently find myself connecting to those emotions as I work with communities who share the frustration and feelings of oppression of unrecognized members in a community to which they passionately belong.

I still hear the voices of my dissertation committee members when I presented my first copy of a prospectus dissertation topic, asking, “What do others say on this matter, who are you in conversation with, and how are you informing this topic?” At the time, I felt confident this dialogue was in its infancy. I had no idea the therapeutic effects opening this conversation up, on a national scale, would have for myself and for others. In hindsight, I realized that through identifying with marginalized populations, engaging both those with power and those without in cultural brokerage, and relying on transformative methods to empower participants, an undisclosed reality surfaced— one that rested on emotion (sometimes anger or resentment or hurt) and is generated by actual pain. The fact is that it hurts to be left out. It is uncomfortable to have to ask to be seen as existing; it is embarrassing to be judged inadequate. In all communities, these feelings are aggravated by circular conversations with like-minded colleagues, failing to be informed by outside perspectives or engaged in dialogue with outsiders and non-members.

Through Almeida’s (2013) description of “Cultural Equity and the Displacement of Othering,” I gained a much larger appreciation for this issue by taking the first steps on a voyage upon which I was unaware I was embarking. The cultural equity healing process Almeida described includes:

- Building critical consciousness
- Embracing teamwork
- Creating circles of healing and liberation
- Legitimizing cross-pollination
- Building coalitions
- Inviting allies from dominate groups as partners
- Building bridges
- Instituting rituals of empowerment
- And the use of wellness and spirituality to heal (p. 14).

Through conversation with leaders in alternative-pedagogy communities, through the feedback from registry directors, in discourse with traditional educators, and with advice from my own dissertation committee, I find myself full circle but with the advantage of a heightened perspective on this issue. I neither expected to experience such personal transformation, nor did I anticipate how effective the methodology would be in motivating others to strive for open-mindedness and partnerships. It has been awkward at times and, despite attempts to the contrary, often involved stepping on peoples' toes. For that, I can only be grateful to those who were willing to hold the space to allow the process to unfold.

As the final note on this study, I want to address what, late in the study, came to feel like a tangent, in the literature review and early conversations regarding the spirit of childhood in the context of education and pedagogy. It began to feel unnecessary to have devoted such a large discussion to the issue of one component in these non-traditional perspectives on early education. The point of expounding on spirituality in these pedagogies was to address what I believed to be

a major commonality they share which also sets them apart from traditional definitions regarding the role of the child or that of the teacher. By shining a light on this theme, the intention was to directly face the “elephant in the room.” Many interviewed participants during the study shared awareness for the discomfort they collectively feel, when outsiders project uniformed bias on their practices and allegiances.

More than once in conversation and interviews, individuals from policy and pedagogy referenced the association or conception of these pedagogies as being a cult or cult-like. A particularly perceptive participant shared that she thought perhaps, in part, society has demonized the notion of the spirit of the child (as children are inherently bad and need to be taught to be good) so as to imply this pedagogy has cult-like orientations or possibly references to spirit are understood only through religious contexts. While the descriptive language has failed to present itself as of yet, in public education, the essence of “spirit” is being embraced by and growing across other fields. Not to acknowledge this in the field of education is a bit like implementing education that fails to incorporate, or even denies the existence of, psychology because we cannot physically locate the ego.

I recently took a Massive Open Online Course through MITx on “Transforming business, society, and self,” offered through edX. The course, among other characteristics, focused extensively on the use of energy to invoke cutting-edge leadership skills and concepts. The course had over 28,000 participants register from 190 countries, representing numerous fields; the discourse was interesting as the core content was generalizable across sectors. The course was described in *The Huffington Post* by the instructor, Otto Scharmer, as revolutionizing higher education. Many of the course’s core tenants are compatible with or exemplify hallmarks of

spirit in education: to move learning out of the box and into the creative process; using head, heart, and hands by tying it to passion and compassion; the use of stillness and connecting to our source of self knowledge; holding spaces to activate self-organizing potential; tools for evolving consciousness; knowledge co-creation; activating a social field, allowing members to see themselves from the whole. The course is the only example I know of in higher education that embodies the core tenants of the alternative pedagogies covered in this study.

In so many other areas, however, we can find the spillover of spiritual awareness and development. Dr. Jill Bolte Taylor, a neuro-anatomist who experienced a stroke, was able to document and survive her ordeal. From a brain-science perspective, she gives credence to the concept of spirit through articulation using the right brain. In the field of psychology, Danish art therapist Vibeke Skove describes the use of the Jungian approach to reconnect the conscious mind with the unconscious self. The use of this philosophy and creative tools to heal and strengthen psychological understanding are strongly associated with spirit. Further building on the premise of “healing from the inside out” (Skove), and representing the medical field, is Dr. Deepak Chopra who advocates that the mind and the body work in unison to co-create experience and reality, as well as to self-correct and heal when imbalances occur. His work is substantiated and embraced by many highly regarded and publicly-recognized medical doctors. These scientifically situated conversations symbolically address issues of spirit. From the social, emotional, and self-help genre, Oprah Winfrey has dedicated an entire television network to leaders speaking on the growth of human consciousness and spirit.

To get to the point, public education in the U.S. does not yet address issues of spirit. Howard Gardner comes close in his descriptions of the different intelligences through reference

to the self-knowledge domain. Qualities of this and other socio-eco-justice curricular theorists also talk about variables that can be associated with spirit, which can be seen in the work of Dr. Chet Bower or Dr. Pamela Joseph's *Cultures of Curriculum*. As our universal consciousness grows, a need to address the spirit of the child, the embryonic stage of spirit situated in childhood, and the role of education to address the development of spirit in humans-being, these alternative pedagogies have thoughtful contributions to make. Until that time, it only makes sense that the facet of these communities that makes people uncomfortable, the spirit of the child, should be opened wide up to the discourse of the many. Through the course of this study, I have come to appreciate, definitively, the role of talking about the very thing that makes us most uncomfortable; this time-tested approach to collaboration and deep listening cannot be overemphasized.

I am moved at times to tears to see policy makers and alternative-pedagogy advocates working in collaboration. I empathize in the tension and courage it takes on both sides of that aisle, to open up to dialogue that is filled with passion, to develop trust, and to choose to act with compassion. If the capacity to articulate and to question, to deeply listen and to hear continues, the landscape of education stands to be permanently altered. While the emotion remains embedded within conversations regarding societal equity, strength lies not in the discussion of the feelings but in using the energy and passion of the emotion to fuel the dialogue—a dialogue in which the framework relies on societal and cultural inequalities which are not supported by research and rely on a paradigm shift to overcome. Through the application of more inclusive policies and equity consciousness, the early learning system, its representative data, outcomes, children, and families are continuously improved.



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## APPENDIX A

### Shared Principles for Waldorf Early Childhood Teacher Education from the *WECAN Early Childhood Teacher Education Handbook April 2012*

#### Curriculum and Course Content Areas

Curriculum and course content include the following areas, with the understanding that program elements may be configured in a variety of ways.

1. Anthroposophical Studies and Human Development (20 - 25%)

Evolution of consciousness  
Karma, destiny and biography  
Anthroposophical view of the human being  
Spiritual foundation of the human being  
Path of inner development of the adult/educator  
Life and work of Rudolf Steiner

2. Child Development and Waldorf Education (20 -25%)

Child development pre-birth to 21  
First grade readiness  
Overview of Waldorf education  
Sensory development/emphasis on the foundational senses  
Role of imitation and play  
Development of movement, language and thinking in the first 7 years  
Child observation and study  
Health and nutrition

3. Practical and Artistic Activities (20 - 25%)

Rhythm of the day, week and year  
Festivals and their celebration  
Indoor and outdoor environments for young children  
Meaningful, purposeful work and domestic arts  
Language arts - speech, verses, hand gesture games, fairy tales and stories, puppetry  
Music and mood of the fifth  
Rhythmic games, movement, gesture  
Working with mixed-age groups  
Bodily care of the young child  
Gardening and working in nature

Hygienic and therapeutic approaches

4. Professional and Social Aspects of Waldorf Education (10 - 20 %)

Education towards social renewal  
School organization  
Working with colleagues  
Working with parents  
Outreach and advocacy for children  
Meeting the needs of children of diverse backgrounds

5. Artistic and Handwork Activities for the Educator (20 - 25%)

Eurythmy  
Painting  
Sculpture - beeswax, clay modeling and/or woodcarving  
Instrumental music and singing  
Speech  
Handwork and crafts- sewing, knitting, soft toy making (dolls, marionettes, etc.), plant dyeing, felting and working with natural materials

6. Mentored teaching, practicum or internship in an established Waldorf early childhood setting

7. Independent research project



**APPENDIX B**



**LifeWays Early Childhood and Human Development Training  
CORE CONTENT**

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**Human Growth and Development**

Developmental Cycles from Birth to Twenty-One	Many R's of Early Childhood—Routine, Rhythm, Repetition, Respect, Reverence, Resistance, Resilience
Adult as Curriculum/Child as Apprentice: Imitative Nature of the Young Child	Child Development from Medical Perspective – Natural Development and Health Issues:
Understanding Children's Drawings	Nutrition, Sleep, Warmth, Health and Safety
Comparison of Developmental Theorists and Contemporary Child Development Views	Nurturing and Nourishing: Care of Child / Care of Caregiver
Development of Speech	Spiritual Nature of the Child
Development of Thinking	Development of Play
Mantles that Support Walking, Speaking, Thinking	Development of the Senses
Seven Life Processes	Development of Movement
Working with Adult Temperaments	Body Games for the Very Young
Brain Development and Neurological Research	Discipline: The L.O.V.E. Approach
Biography Themes/Life Phases	Threefold and Fourfold Human Being
Working with Self-Awareness	Meditative Practice

**Child, Family and Community**

Relationship-Based Caregiving	Personal Life Balance
Breathing/Flexibility in Working with Parents, Colleagues and Children	Mindfulness as a Tool for Work and Daily Living
Creative and Healthy Environments for Children	Seasonal Festivals and Celebrations
Joyfulness as an Approach to Working With Children and Families	Nature Study through Community and Nature Walks
Diversity	Community and Social Skills
Framing and Scheduling	Personal Pacing
Tools of the Trade – Establishing Child Care Programs	Tools of the Trade – Establishing Parent-Child Programs

### **Program/Curriculum for Child Care and Parenting**

Crocheting/Knitting	Doll Making
Sewing	Puppet Making
Fabric Dyeing	Toymaking
Felting	Watercolor Painting
Woodworking	Music – Voice and Kinderharp
Storytelling	Nature Play
Movement – Eurythmy/Spacial Dynamics	Speech Exercises
Gardening	Cooking
Introduction to the Living Arts	History of Steiner Early Childhood Care/Education

### **Domestic/Nurturing Arts**

Nurturing Care of Children (e.g., clothing, feeding, sleep, warmth, bathing, hair brushing, foot baths, bodily care, comforting, diapering, toileting)	Domestic Arts (e.g., cleaning, cooking, tidying, laundry, baking, manners, table setting, caring for things, repairing)
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### ***Integration of Learning / Independent Study Requirements***

**With the support of an assigned mentor, each student will fulfill the following requirements outside of the scheduled training sessions:**

#### ***Mentoring***

Students will be assigned a mentor who will provide the following services:

- Regular telephone consultation – students are expected to phone their mentors six times in the course of the training.
- Possibility of observing mentor in her or his own working environment if applicable
- Offering advice, if needed, in selecting a theme for final paper or project
- Help in finding a location for observing a LifeWays or Waldorf-based setting and a conventional program setting and for the practicum if needed (usually practicum will be in student's own site unless s/he will be working in a Waldorf school)
- Reviewing student's samples of child observations and offering comments.
- Reviewing and offering comments on student's final paper or project before it is submitted to the program director.
- Two-day observation of the student during the practicum with a follow-up conversation.
- Written report on mentor's two-day observation and general comments on student's progress. Student reviews mentor's report and has an opportunity to discuss it with mentor. Mentor sends final report to the program director.
- The mentor and the program director, with input from the student, will determine if the student has completed all of the Integration of Learning Requirements and is prepared to receive certification.

#### ***Practicum***

- Three-week practicum, preferably in student's own program or home to better assess student's work with relationship-based care. This is a time period where student does her/his regular routine, and during that time period the mentor observes for two days. [If student is planning to work in a Waldorf school, practicum must be in a school.]
- Student sends mentor a description of her/his daily and weekly rhythm. This helps student to clarify the schedule and intentions. It is not meant to be anything different from student's regular weekly schedule with children. This gives the mentor a window into how student works with rhythms and routines. If student is doing a practicum in a site other than student's own, student must spend a minimum of two-weeks in that program prior to mentor's visit.

#### ***Observation in a LifeWays-Approved Early Childhood Program and in a Conventional Program***

- Student observes a Steiner-based early childhood program and documents the observation based upon the criteria in the Observation Report Form. If the program student is visiting is an all-day program, student is to observe through lunch and the beginning of the nap routine to see the transitions and the nurturing activities. If student is planning to work in a Waldorf School, observation must be in a school.
- Student observes a conventional early childhood program and documents observations based upon the criteria in the Observation Report Form.
- Both observation reports are sent to the program director or student services director.

***Child Observation Project (Observing two children during the course of the training)***

- Student selects a child to observe over a three- to four-month period. Upon completion another child is chosen for the next three to four months. Student's written observations are meant to be objective and based purely on what is observed. For example, "Johnny takes very small bites of his vegetables. He eats all of his rice and asks for more. He eats quickly with little chewing. When he is finished, he starts wiggling in his chair and kicking the bottom of the table." Some people journal by taking a few notes every day. Others prefer to write an overview paragraph weekly. Student's style of journaling can be individualized, but brevity is recommended in order to help remain in the realm of pure observation. The following observations are to be journaled:  
1) how the child moves; 2) how the child speaks; 3) how the child interacts socially; 4) how the child plays; 5) how the child listens; 6) how the child sleeps and wakes; 7) how the child eats.
- Samples of journal entries are sent to mentor upon completion of each observation. Student and mentor discuss them.

## ***LifeWays Integration of Learning / Independent Study Requirements***

### ***Page Two***

#### ***Improving Observation Skills and Gardening Project***

- Student plants and cultivates a small garden during training period and may consult with the gardening teacher if needed.
- A report and photographs of the gardening project is brought to the final session of training.
- Daily Nature Observation: Student chooses a particular object in nature (a plant in a garden, a tree, the sunset or sunrise, etc.) to observe every day for 5 minutes to support the schooling of observation skills and the ability to note subtle changes that take place over time. Student may choose to journal this, but it is not required.
- Monthly Nature Walk Journal: Student will go on a nature walk each month for 45 minutes to an hour in the same location and journal the changes observed in that location each month. This does not need to be more than a paragraph each month.
- Student must bring monthly nature walk journal to the final session to share one entry in class.

#### ***Celebrating Festivals***

- Student must plan and celebrate a seasonal festival with student's community. This could be student's own family, neighborhood, child care, playgroup or pre-school families, or whatever context works. The festival needs to include the elements taught in the LifeWays training on festival development, namely: story, songs, game (could be a circle time), craft activity, simple decorations, festive food, blessing, and brief sharing with the adults on the meaning of the festival. If student plans to work in a Waldorf school, s/he is encouraged to gather and work with a festival committee.
- Student sends outline of the festival plan and photographs of the festival to program director or student services director.

#### ***Improving Music Skills***

- Weekly voice and kinderharp practice.
- Any other homework assigned by music teacher to include composing a song in mood of the fifth.

#### ***Movement and Handwork***

- Any homework assigned by movement teachers.
- Any homework assigned by handwork teachers to include completion of all handwork projects started during training.
- Samples of completed handwork items are brought to final session to display at graduation ceremony.

#### ***Cooking with Whole Foods***

- Student must practice cooking whole foods on a weekly basis.
- Student submits three recipes to program director to be shared with all the students. These should be recipes that student has cooked at home or for the children in her/his care during the training period.

#### ***Inner Work***

- Student develops or continues personal inner work to include exploring exercises and meditations offered by Rudolf Steiner.

#### ***Reading***

- Student completes all required readings.

***Research Paper or Approved Project***

- If writing a paper, it needs to be a 6-10 page double-spaced paper on a child development topic approved by program director.
- If doing a project, it needs to reflect student's understanding of how the chosen project observes and/or serves the developmental well-being of young children. The project must be approved by the program director.
- Paper or project description is sent to mentor for proofreading and comments.
- Final paper or project description is sent to mentor and program director.
- The student presents the paper or project during final week of training.

Revised 02/22/14

## **LIFEWAYS Credit Hours– Rudolf Steiner College, Fair Oaks, California, 2005**

### **LIFEWAYS CHILD CARE TRAINING PROGRAM – Part-time**

#### **Human Growth and Development: 4.0 credits**

ECE 101 A – Human Growth and Development 1, Child As Apprentice (1.25 credits, 18.75 hours, Summer Session 1)

Understanding the imitative nature of young children and the importance of our continuous self-development on behalf of the children. What do young children really need - at home, in childcare, in life? To know what they need, we must first understand the fundamentals of who they are and from whence they came. Through the insights of Rudolf Steiner, founder of Waldorf education, and other contemporary research, we will cultivate our understanding of how the child develops from pre-birth to seven, including the development of movement, a glimpse at the developmental cycles from birth to twenty-one, the development of the twelve senses, the spiritual nature of the child, and seven life processes for a healthy family. We will also compare various educational theorists' (e.g., Vygotsky, Piaget, Dewey, Bowlby, Erikson) viewpoints on the educational needs of the young child. Of particular importance, we will consider the role of the child as apprentice to the environment and the people in his life. We will also work with three R's of early childhood – rhythm/routine, repetition and reverence/respect.

#### **Human Growth and Development: 2.75 credits**

ECE 101 B – Human Growth and Development 2, Nurturing and Nourishing (1.0 credits, 15.0 hours, Fall Session)

Focusing on child development from the point of view of physical well-being - natural development and health issues, importance of warmth, sleep and nutrition, and safety issues Also focus on care of the adult – nurturing the nurturer.

ECE 101 C – Human Growth and Development 3, supporting the Development of Speech (0.50 credits, 7.5 hours, Spring Session)

From Karl Konig's *The First Three Years* and other sources, we will study the development of speech and will work with puppetry and storytelling that is appropriate in the various stages of early childhood development.

ECE 101 D – Human Growth and Development 4, Brains, Boundaries and Bounce! (1.25 credits, 18.75 hours, Summer Session 2)

The nature of play in early childhood and its relationship to brain development and thinking; the L.O.V.E. approach to discipline. Through play the child meets the world. This course will further develop an understanding of the child from birth to six; the development of walking, speaking and thinking; an introduction to an understanding of 1children's drawings; current neurological research; and an introduction to the temperaments. We will also work with eight ways to work with creative discipline.

#### **Child, Family and Community: 2.0 credits**

ECE 102 A – Child, Family and Community 1. It Takes A Village (1.0 credit, 15.0 hours, Summer Session 1):

Of particular importance, we will consider early childhood education as a relationship-based curriculum compared to a program-driven curriculum. Course content will include relationship-based care giving; seasonal celebrations and festivals; breathing/flexibility in working with parents, colleagues and

children; mindfulness as a tool for work and daily living; and nature study. We will also look at the fundamentals of establishing parent-child programs, childcare programs, and working with licensing and the community at large.

ECE 102 B – Child, Family and Community 2, Keeping the Village Whole (1.0 credit, 15.0 hours, Summer Session 2)

Focusing on joyfulness and personal life balance as an approach to working with children, families and communities. We will further work with the development of community social skills, seeking and understanding diversity, seasonal celebrations and festivals, and continued nature study.

### **Lifeways Curriculum: 2.25 credits**

ECE 103 A – Program Curriculum 1, We Are the Curriculum (0.75 credit, 22.5 hours, Summer Session 1)

In keeping with the understanding that the self-development of the adult is primary in early childhood education, the curriculum includes a variety of skill-based classes, such as crocheting, knitting, painting and fabric dyeing, to facilitate the student's ability to create useful and beautiful things. The daily movement and music classes will include games and songs to do with children as well as exercises to develop personal posture, singing skills and work with the children's kinderharp. We will also study how the environment affects young children and will look at how to set up environments that support their physical, emotional, cognitive and social development.

ECE 103 B – Program Curriculum 2, Puppetry, Storytelling, Nursery Rhymes (0.25 credit, 7.5 hours, Fall Session)

With a master puppeteer and storyteller, we will learn how to work with simple storytelling, how to create enchanting felted puppets and how nursery rhymes support developmental growth in young children. We will also work with speech exercises to tune our own speech and will continue with our movement and music curriculum.

ECE 103 C – Program Curriculum 3, Nurturing through Doll Play (0.50 credit, 7.5 hours, Spring Session)

Along with the ongoing music and movement curriculum, we will create a simple doll and blanket and consider the role of doll play with young children, regardless of gender.

ECE 103 D – Program Curriculum 4, We Are The Curriculum, Part Two (0.75 credit, 22.5 hours, Summer Session 2)

In keeping with the understanding that the self-development of the adult is primary in early childhood education, the curriculum includes a variety of skill-based classes, such as simple woodworking, toy making, sewing and felting to facilitate the student's ability to create useful and beautiful things. The daily movement and music classes will continue to include games and songs to do with children as well as exercises to develop personal posture, singing skills and work with the children's kinderharp. We will also consider various components of natural outdoor environments for young children and the benefits of nature play. We will look at various outdoor play settings for children, including the garden.

### **Domestic Arts Program Curriculum Lab: 1.5 credits**

ECE 104 A – Domestic Arts 1, Practical Life Skills and Nurturing Care (0.5 credit, 10.5 hours, Summer Session 1)

Discussion and hands-on experience working with setting and cleaning the table, manners, scheduling, washing dishes, cleaning the environment, tending garden, other outdoor care, general household management. Discussion and hands-on experience working with clothing children, diapering, toileting, hand and foot washing, holding and touching, rocking and comforting.

ECE 104 B – Domestic Arts 2, Practical Life Skills and Nurturing Care, Part 2 (0.5 credit, 10.5 hours, Summer Session 2)



Continued discussion and hands-on experience working with setting and cleaning the table, manners, scheduling, washing dishes, cleaning the environment, tending garden, other outdoor care, general household management. Discussion and hands-on experience working with clothing children, diapering, toileting, hand and foot washing, holding and touching, rocking and comforting the child.

**Independent Study: 5.5 credits**

ECE 105 A – Observation in a LifeWays-Approved Early Childhood Program, (0.50 credit, Independent Study)

Student must observe in a LifeWays-approved or Waldorf-style early childhood program and document the observation. Student must also observe in a non-LifeWays early childhood program and document observations. A set of criteria for the documentation will be provided to the student. Documentation is to be reviewed by student's mentor and program director.

ECE 105 B – Mentoring (1.0 credit, Independent Study):

Student will have regular monthly telephone mentoring with assigned mentor throughout training period. Mentor will read and assess student's written journals and research paper. Mentor will spend two days observing student during student's two-week practicum. Student must submit description of practicum to mentor in advance of the visit. Preference is that student practicum is in student's own program so as to be able to assess student's work with relationship-based care. If not, student's practicum will be in a setting agreed upon by the LifeWays Training Director and the mentor.

ECE 105 C – Child Observation Project, (1.0 credit, Independent Study)

Student must select a particular child to observe over a three-month period and journal the following observations: 1) how the child moves, 2) how the child speaks, 3) how the child interacts socially, 4) how the child plays, 5) how the child listens and, 6) how the child sleeps and wakes. Upon completion student will choose a different child for the next three months. A total of three child observations are required.

ECE 105 D – Improving Your Observation Skills, (1.0 credit, Independent Study)

Daily nature observation - Student will choose a particular object to observe every day for 5-10 minutes to support schooling of observation skills. Student is to note the subtle changes that take place over time. Such observations school the student's skill at noticing the subtle changes taking place in young children as they grow. Monthly nature walk with journal observations - Student will walk for at least one hour every month in the same location and will journal the changes observed in that location over time.

ECE 105 E – Cooking with Whole Foods, (1.0 credit, Independent Study)

Cooking with grains and whole foods - Students will practice cooking with whole foods on a weekly basis and will submit three recipes to be compiled into a cookbook for all the students.

ECE 105 F – Research Paper, (1.0 credit, Independent Study)

Students will write a 10 page double-spaced paper on a child development topic approved by students' mentors and program director or create a project that reflects depth of understanding of early childhood development. Mentors and program director will evaluate papers and projects. Students will present paper or project during final week of training.

**Total: 14.75 Credits**

**NOTE: 40+ more hours of class attendance have been added since this document was submitted - see attached syllabus**

*[\*\*An 11 page syllabus providing description of the entire training and individual courses is available, to state policy makers, from LifeWays on request.\*\*]*

## OVERVIEW

### *Human Growth and Development*

#### ***Human Growth and Development, Understanding Our Children***

What do young children really need - at home, in childcare, in life? To know what they need, we must first understand something of who they are and from whence they came? Through the insights of Rudolf Steiner, founder of Waldorf education, and other contemporary research, we will cultivate our understanding of how the child develops from pre-birth to seven, including a glimpse at the developmental cycles from birth to twenty-one. We will also work with three R's of early childhood - rhythm/routine, repetition and reverence/respect. Understanding the spiritual foundation of the imitative nature of young children and the importance of our continuous self-development on behalf of the children.

#### ***Human Growth and Development, Speaking, Listening and Understanding***

From Karl Konig's *The First Three Years* and other sources, we will study the development of movement, speech and thinking. We will further develop our understanding of early childhood development through an exploration of children's drawings and the development of play from infancy through six years old. We will introduce puppetry and storytelling that is appropriate in the various stages of early childhood development.

#### ***Human Growth and Development, Nurturing, Nourishing and Understanding***

We will focus on child development from the point of view of physical well-being - natural development and health issues, importance of warmth, sleep and nutrition, and safety issues. Further focus will be on the care of the adult - nurturing the nurturer. We will learn about neurological development and the relationships between walking, speaking and thinking in the first three years. We will also be introduced to the L.O.V.E. approach to child guidance. We will conduct a comparison of several developmental theorists and study adult temperaments as a tool for working with colleagues, parents and ourselves.

### *Child, Family and Community*

#### ***Child, Family and Community, Adult As Curriculum, Child As Apprentice***

Of particular importance, we will consider early childhood education as a relationship-based curriculum compared to a program-driven curriculum. Course content will include relationship-based caregiving; seasonal celebrations and festivals; breathing/flexibility in working with parents, colleagues and children; mindfulness as a tool for work and daily living; and nature study. We will also look at the fundamentals of establishing parent-child programs, child care programs, and working with licensing and the community at large.

#### ***Child, Family and Community, It Takes A Village***

Focusing on personal life balance as a support for working with children, families and communities. We will further work with the development of community social skills, seeking and understanding diversity, seasonal celebrations and festivals, and continued nature study.

#### ***Child, Family and Community, Loving Our Work***

Further working with development of community social skills as well as understanding joyfulness as a healthy approach to working with children and families.

### *Program Curriculum*

#### ***Program Curriculum, We Are The Curriculum***

In keeping with the understanding that the self-development of the adult is primary in early childhood education, the curriculum includes a variety of skill-based classes, such as crocheting, knitting, fabric dyeing and gardening to facilitate the student's ability to create useful and beautiful things. The daily movement and music classes will include games and songs to do with children as well as exercises to develop personal posture, singing skills and work with the children's kinderharp. We will also study how the environment affects young children and will look at how to set up environments that support their physical, emotional, cognitive and social development.

#### ***Program Curriculum, We Are The Curriculum, Part Two***

We will be introduced to the art of water color painting for ourselves and with young children and will continue our crafts classes with a simple woodworking project. With a master puppeteer and storyteller, we will learn how to work with simple storytelling, how to create enchanting felted puppets and how nursery rhymes support developmental growth in young children. We will also work with speech exercises to tune our own speech and will continue with our movement curriculum. We will consider the various elements of a healthy early childhood environment and how to establish such an environment.

#### ***Program Curriculum, We Are The Curriculum, Part Three***

In keeping with the understanding that the self-development of the adult is primary in early childhood education, the curriculum includes a variety of skill-based classes. We will create a simple doll and blanket and consider the role of doll play with young

children regardless of gender. We will also introduce sewing and simple toymaking to facilitate the student's ability to create useful and beautiful things. The daily movement and music classes will continue. We will also consider various components of natural outdoor environments for young children and the benefits of nature play. We will look at various outdoor play settings for children, including the garden. We will introduce an approach to self-evaluation and will continue to work with methods to support personal pacing skills.

### ***Domestic Arts and Nurturing Arts***

#### ***Living Arts - Domestic, Nurturing, Creative and Social Arts***

Discussion and hands-on experience regarding how to establish healthy routines and rhythms with children. Also working with setting and cleaning the table, manners, cooking, scheduling, washing dishes, cleaning the environment, tending garden, other outdoor care, general household management. Discussion and hands-on experience working with clothing children, diapering, toileting, hand and foot washing, holding and touching, rocking and comforting.

### ***Integration of Learning / Independent Study Requirements***

With the support of an assigned mentor, each student will fulfill the following requirements outside of the scheduled training sessions:

#### ***Mentoring***

Students will be assigned a mentor who will provide the following services:

- Monthly telephone consultation – students are required to phone their mentors monthly
- Possibility of observing mentor in her or his own working environment if applicable
- Offering of advice in selecting a theme for final paper or project
- Help in finding a location for LifeWays and conventional program observations and for the practicum if needed (usually practicum will be in student's own site)
- Reviewing and offering comments on student's program observation reports and on final paper or project
- Two-day observation of the student during the practicum with a follow-up conversation.
- Written report on mentor's two-day observation and general comments on student's progress.
- Student reviews mentor's report and has an opportunity to discuss it with mentor.
- Mentor sends final report to the program director.
- The mentor and the program director, with input from the student, will determine if the student has completed all of the Integration of Learning Requirements and is prepared to receive LifeWays certification.

#### ***Practicum***

- Two-week practicum, preferably in student's own program or home to better assess student's work with relationship-based care. This is a time period where student does her/his regular routine, and during that time period the mentor observes for two days.
- Student sends mentor a description of her/his daily and weekly rhythm. This helps student to clarify the schedule and intentions. It is not meant to be anything different from student's regular weekly schedule with children. This gives the mentor a window into how student works with rhythms and routines. If student is doing a practicum in a site other than student's own, student must write out the schedule of that site and send to mentor.

#### ***Observation in a LifeWays-Approved Early Childhood Program and in a Conventional Program***

- Student observes a LifeWays-approved early childhood program and documents the observation based upon the criteria in the Observation Report Form. If the program student is visiting is an all-day program, student is to observe through lunch and the beginning of the nap routine to see the transitions and the nurturing activities.
- Student observes a conventional early childhood program and documents observations based upon the criteria in the Observation Report Form.
- Both observation reports are sent to student's mentor and the program director.

#### ***Child Observation Project (Observing two children during the course of the training)***

- Student selects a child to observe over a three- to four-month period. Upon completion another child is chosen for the next three to four months. Student's written observations are meant to be objective and based purely on what is observed. For example, "Johnny takes very small bites of his vegetables. He eats all of his rice and asks for more. He eats quickly with little chewing. When he is finished, he starts wiggling in his chair and kicking the bottom of the table." Some people journal by taking a few notes every day. Others prefer to write an overview paragraph weekly. Student's style of journaling can be individualized, but brevity is recommended in order to help remain in the realm of pure observation. The following observations are to be journaled: 1) how the child moves; 2) how the child speaks; 3) how the child interacts socially; 4) how the child plays; 5) how the child listens; 6) how the child sleeps and wakes; 7) how the child eats
- Samples of journal entries are sent to mentor upon completion of each observation.

#### ***Improving Observation Skills and Gardening Project***

- Student plants and cultivates a small garden during training period.
- A report and photographs of the gardening project is brought to the final session of training.
- Daily Nature Observation: Student chooses a particular object in nature (a plant in a garden, a tree, the sunset or sunrise, etc.) to observe every day for 5 minutes to support the schooling of observation skills and the ability to note subtle changes that take place over time. Student is not required to journal this.
- Monthly Nature Walk Journal: Student must go on a nature walk each month for 45 minutes to an hour in the same location. Student must journal the changes observed in that location each month. This does not need to be more than a paragraph each month.
- Student must bring monthly nature walk journal to the final session to share one entry in class.

#### ***Celebrating Festivals***

- Student must plan and celebrate a seasonal festival with student's community. This could be student's own family, neighborhood, child care, playgroup or pre-school families, or whatever context works. The festival needs to include the elements taught in the LifeWays training on festival development, namely: story, songs, game (could be a circle time), craft activity, simple decorations, festive food, blessing, and brief sharing with the adults on the meaning of the festival.
- Student sends outline of the festival plan and photographs of the festival to program director.

#### ***Improving Music Skills***

- Weekly voice and kinderharp practice.
- Any other homework assigned by music teacher.

#### ***Movement and Handwork***

- Any homework assigned by movement teachers.
- Any homework assigned by handwork teachers.
- Samples of completed handwork items are brought to final session to display at graduation ceremony.

#### ***Cooking with Whole Foods and Grains***

- Student must practice cooking whole foods and grains on a weekly basis.
- Student submits three recipes to program director to be shared with all the students. These should be recipes that student has cooked at home during the training period.

#### ***Research Paper or Approved Project***

- If writing a paper, it needs to be a 6-10 page double-spaced paper on a child development topic approved by program director.
- If doing a project, it needs to reflect student's understanding of how the chosen project observes and/or serves the developmental well-being of young children. The project must be approved by the program director.
- Paper or project description is sent to mentor for proofreading and comments.
- Final paper or project description is sent to mentor and program director.
- The student presents the paper or project during final week of training.

#### ***Required Reading Materials LifeWays Training (there may be some slight variations according to training location)***

*Home Away From Home: LifeWays Care for Children and Families* by Cynthia Aldinger and Mary O'Connell- coming soon

*The Education of the Child* by Rudolf Steiner – Part One and 2<sup>nd</sup> Lecture of Part Two

*You Are Your Child's First Teacher* by Rahima Baldwin Dancy – Chapters 2, 3, 4, 5, 7, 8, 11

*Beyond the Rainbow Bridge* by Barbara Patterson – Chapters 2, 3, 4, 5 & pgs.148-162, 169

*Work and Play in Early Childhood* by Freya Jaffke – Chapters 1, 2, and 4

*Creating a Home for Body, Soul and Spirit* by Bernadette Raichle

*The First Three Years* by Karl Konig – Chapters 1, 2, and 3

*Toymaking With Children* by Freya Jaffke – Chapter 1

*The Developing Child: The First Seven Years – WECAN Gateways Series*

*Sing a Song with Baby* by Mary Schunemann

#### ***Recommended References (These may vary with the different training sites)***

*Lifeways* by Bons Voors and Gudrun Davy, *The Spiritual Tasks of the Homemaker* by Manfred Schmidt-Brabant, *The Genius of Play* by Sally Jenkinson, *A Holistic Wellness Guide* from Lilipoh Magazine, *Nurturing Children and Families: One Model of a Parent/Child Program in a Waldorf School* by Sarah Baldwin, *The Incarnating Child* by Joan Salter, *Understanding Young Children* a Compilation by Rudolf Steiner, *Our Twelve Senses* by Albert Soesman, *Bringing Love, Giving Joy* by Wilma Ellersiek, *This is the Way We Wash-A-Day* by Mary Schunemann, *Homemaking as a Social Art* by Veronica van Duin, *Homemaking and Personal Development* by Veronica van Duin, *Healing Our Children- A Collection of Articles for Parents* by Susan Johnson MD, *Completing the Circle* by Thomas Poplawski

## APPENDIX C

### MACTE Montessori Teacher Preparation Requirements

#### Quality Principle III

##### *Program Capacity*

MACTE defines a quality program as one that has credible and consistent evidence that the program has the capacity to operate. The essential idea of this principle is a program's ability to demonstrate sound management practices within the program, which will support ongoing candidate learning.

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#### **Preamble**

A Montessori teacher education program offers a comprehensive set of certification course levels which provide integrated academic and practicum experiences intended to qualify the graduate for certification in Montessori teaching with a specified child age range within the period from birth through age 18. Each certification course must achieve substantial compliance with the following Quality Principles, as defined in the accompanying Criteria.

#### **Minimum Requirements for Each Certification Course Level**

##### **Infant and Toddler (Birth to 3 Years)**

Completion of this level requires a minimum of 600 clock hours. The academic portion must contain a minimum of 200 clock hours, and the practicum a minimum of 400 clock hours. The practicum must include the following: supervised teaching, observation, interaction between Adult Learners and materials, interaction between Adult Learners and children, integration of knowledge with practice, preparation and care of the environment, communications, demonstration of skills, further study, internalizing of theory, and application of theories and methods.

##### **Early Childhood (2 ½ through 6 Years)**

Completion of this level requires a minimum of 600 clock hours. A minimum of 200 academic clock hours is required. The academic portion must include lecture, presentation with materials, group process and discussion, and supervised practice with materials. The practicum is comprised of 400 clock hours with at least 120 hours student teaching. Material-making, additional academic contact hours, independent research, and album making are all considered additional hours and may not count towards practicum hours.

##### **Elementary I (6 through 9 Years)**

Completion of this level requires a minimum of 800 clock hours. A minimum of 200 academic clock hours is required. The practicum is comprised of 400 clock hours with at least 120 hours student teaching. A minimum of 200 additional clock hours is required which must include one or more of the following: independent research, material-making, album preparation, additional student teaching hours, or additional academic contact hours.

##### **Elementary I-II (6 through 12 Years)**

Completion of this level requires a minimum of 1,200 clock hours. A minimum of 200 academic clock hours is required for Elementary I and 175 academic clock hours for Elementary II. The practicum is comprised of 400 clock hours with a minimum of 120 hours student teaching. A minimum of 425 additional clock hours is required which must include one or more of the following: independent research, material-making, album preparation, additional student teaching, or additional academic contact hours.

**SECTION D: COMPETENCIES FOR MONTESSORI TEACHER CANDIDATES**

Categories of competency:	As relates to each level the candidate for certification understands:	Suggested Evidence:
<b>I. Knowledge</b>		Written and oral assignments and examination results
	1a. Montessori Philosophy	
	1b. Human growth and Development	
	1c. Subject matter for each Course Level* not to exclude: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Cosmic education</li> <li>• Peace education</li> <li>• Practical life</li> <li>• The arts</li> <li>• Fine and gross motor skills</li> </ul>	
	1d. Community resources for learning	
<b>II. Pedagogy</b>	Understands:	Written and oral assignments, examinations and demonstrations
	2a. Correct use of Montessori materials	
	2b. Scope and sequence of curriculum (spiral curriculum)	
	2c. The prepared environment	
	2d. Parent/teacher/ family/community partnership	
	2e. The purpose and methods of observation	
	2f. Planning for instruction	
	2g. Assessment & documentation	
	2h. Reflective practice	
	2i. Support and intervention for learning differences	
	2j. Culturally responsive methods	
<b>III. Teaching with Grace and Courtesy</b>	As relates to each level the candidate for certification demonstrates and implements with children/adolescents:	1. Employer, field consultant, supervising teacher observation and evaluation 2. Children's learning and progress 3. Post-graduate professional performance
	3a. Classroom leadership	

	3b. Authentic assessment	
	3c. The Montessori philosophy and methods (materials)	
	3d. Parent/teacher/ family partnership	
	3e. Professional responsibilities	
	3f. Innovation and flexibility	

I. Knowledge	1. Montessori philosophy and methods 2. Montessori materials	
*1c Specific Course Level Subject Matter	<u>Infant and Toddler</u> Sensory and motor experiences, language experiences, positive social experiences, self care <u>Early Childhood</u> Practical life, sensorial, math, language, science, physical geography, cultural studies <u>Elementary</u> The Great Lessons, language, mathematics, physical and natural sciences, geometry, history, geography <u>Secondary</u> Language, mathematics, economic experiences, outdoor education, service learning, career education, college admissions/career readiness, science and history	
II. Pedagogy	1. Montessori philosophy and methods 2. Montessori materials 3. The Montessori environment 4. Montessori teacher education preparation 5. The process of Montessori observation 6. Planning for Montessori 7. Montessori documentation 8. Montessori writing 9. Montessori assessment 10. Montessori research	
III. Teaching with Cultural Competency	1. Montessori philosophy and methods 2. Montessori materials 3. Montessori environment 4. Montessori teacher education preparation 5. The process of Montessori observation 6. Planning for Montessori 7. Montessori documentation 8. Montessori writing 9. Montessori assessment 10. Montessori research	



## APPENDIX D

Pedagogical Coordination in the Reggio Emilia Approach

# Pedagogical Coordination in the Reggio Emilia Approach

*This program offered by School of Education*

### Program Description

In Reggio Emilia, Italy the role of pedagogista is to support and collaborate with teachers in their daily work with children, their families and community. The pedagogista does this by working closely with teachers to observe, document, analyze and interpret the rights and needs of each child and family and then use this knowledge to plan and project responsive learning experiences with children. This certificate is designed to offer an in-depth understanding of the fundamental principles and pedagogical practices of Reggio Emilia's social constructivist approach to early learning and to enable teachers to learn the role of pedagogista in schools that are inspired by this approach.

This program is offered in partnership between Webster University, Reggio Children, the University of Modena and Reggio Emilia, the Municipal Infant-Toddler and Preschools of Reggio Emilia, and the Maplewood Richmond Heights School District.

The program consists of two semesters of full time university study and internship experience in St. Louis, MO. Students will take coursework through Webster University in collaboration with the University of Modena at Reggio Emilia and Reggio Children. Students must complete a two-semester internship in the Maplewood Richmond Heights Early Childhood Center in the St. Louis area. University of Modena and Reggio faculty will co-teach this program via online and face-to-face interaction.

### Learning Outcomes

- Identify and analyze the historical, social, philosophical and psychological underpinnings and principles of the Reggio Emilia approach and educational services in relation to those of other recognized approaches to early education in the U.S. and around the world.
- Analyze systems thinking perspectives about early childhood services and the pedagogy of listening that support an interdependent community of learners (including children, teachers, families and the broader community).
- Develop and apply the skills and concepts of observation and documentation in relation to a) the pedagogy of listening, b) principles of organization of the day that support interdependence of learners and learning, c) the creation and ongoing development of learning environments, and d) the concept and practices of *progettazione*.
- Explore the role and functions of the pedagogical coordinator and demonstrate ability to carry out these functions in collaboration with teachers, children, and families from diverse cultural and economic backgrounds.

### Requirements

- ECED 5750 Negotiated Learning: The Reggio Emilia Approach to Early Education (3 hours)
- ECED 5820 Creating Learning Environments (3 hours)
- ECED 5870 Expressive Languages (3 hours)
- ECED 5800 Applied Research (3 hours)
- ECED 5810 Pedagogical Internship (3 hours)
- ECED 5811 Pedagogical Internship (3 hours)

The university coursework will be totally integrated with the internship.

### Admission

#### Admission Process:

Candidates may pursue the certificate by itself or integrate their certificate work with their MA degree in Early Childhood Education. All candidates must have prior teaching experience and a bachelor's or master's degree in early childhood education or a closely related field. All applicants must meet the admission criteria for the MA in Early Childhood Education

Students who are interested in applying to this certificate program should also see the Admission Section of this catalog for general requirements.

#### Admission Requirements

- Receipt of official transcripts from the baccalaureate-granting institution.
- Undergraduate cumulative GPA of 2.5 or higher.
- Admission to the Early Childhood Education MA program.
- Essay: What motivated you to become an early childhood educator? Based on the School of Education's mission statement, the program description and candidate learning outcomes, how do you think your participation in this certificate program will help you accomplish your personal and professional goals?

#### Send all admission materials to:

Office of Admission  
Webster University  
470 E. Lockwood Ave.  
St. Louis, MO 63119

Completed application files will be reviewed by the Communication Arts, Reading and Early Childhood Department

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## APPENDIX E

### [Template] Cover letter for State PDS Offices

Return Address

ATTN  
Address

Date

Dear (Insert State) Representative for the Office of Early Care & Education:

My name is Kimberlee Belcher-Badal. As a PhD Candidate at Indiana University, I am examining the implementation of Early Childhood Professional Development Systems and their relationship with Alternative Pedagogy Training Models Nationwide, such as those not commonly offered in institutions of higher education, for my dissertation. I am inviting you to participate in the compilation of this research by completing an online survey representing policies for the Early Care & Education Office in your state.

The purpose of this study is to collect information nationwide about what individual states Early Childhood ECE Workforce Registry policies and procedures look like, relative to non-traditional early childhood teacher preparation programs (for example: Montessori, Reggio Emilia, Waldorf, and LifeWays teacher preparation programs). The results of this material will inform and contribute to discussions related to professional development in the field of Early Childhood Education Curriculum and Policy.

The questionnaire contains approximately 12 questions and may require about 30 minutes to complete. There is no compensation for responding, nor are there any known risks. In order to ensure that all information will remain confidential, please do not include your name but simply refer to your state's name/office. Copies of the project will be provided to my Indiana University Dissertation Committee and to IRB Human Subjects Office.

If you choose to participate in this project, please answer all questions as honestly as possible. Completed surveys received by (September 30, 2012) will be included in the study results. Participation is strictly voluntary and you may refuse to participate at any time.

Thank you for taking the time to assist me in my research endeavor. The data collected will provide useful information regarding how State Early Care & Education Professional Development Systems and Alternative Curriculum Models are interacting, assisting us in understanding how these organizations are coexisting at a national level within this framework.

If you would like a summary copy of this study please complete the Request for Information Form and return it or indicate your interest in receiving a copy at the entrance to your online survey. Completion of the questionnaire will indicate your willingness to participate in this study. If you require additional information or have questions, please contact me.

For more information regarding participation in the study, please read the attached Study Information Sheet. If you are not satisfied with the manner in which this study is being conducted, you may report (anonymously if you so choose) any complaints to the IU Human Subjects Office at (812) 856-4242 [for Bloomington] or (800) 696-2949.

Sincerely,

Kimberlee Belcher-Badal, M.Ed., PhD Candidate  
(270) 317 - 3305      kimbel@indiana.edu

David Flinders, PhD  
(812) 856 - 8189      dflinder@indiana.edu

Phase II Online Survey Questions:

*For all questions, the subject in question is Accredited Alternative-Preparation Programs, Taken without college credit or without culminating in Higher Education Degree.*

1. Please provide your state's name and the total number of placement levels that exist on your state's professional development system or career ladder/lattice/pathway/path/etc? If this question does not apply to your state, just enter your state's name and 0.
2. Does your state's Professional Development System or Career Ladder include or have any benefits attached to it? If yes, please describe... *(options offered to check off: financial support, grants, stipends, wage incentives, insurance support, scholarships, wage supplements, free formal education, increased funding percentages related to CCDF, professional recognition, no benefits, loan forgiveness, bonuses, free training, tax incentives, other...described below...)*
3. If your state offers Professional Development System Dollars for training or education scholarships, please indicate the types of training/education those scholarship dollars can be used for: (options offered to check off include: our state does not offer scholarships, CDA Credential, Technical Certificate *(ECE Director's Certificate, Infant/Toddler Certificate, Apprenticeship, etc., High Scope Certification, Associates Degree, Bachelors Degree, Masters Degree, Doctoral Degree, Montessori Certification, Rudolf Steiner Education Certification, Reggio Emilia Certification, other...)*)
4. If you know, are any of the following training or education models available in your state? *(CDA, Technical Certificate, High Scope, Montessori Certification, Rudolf Steiner Education Certification, Reggio Emilia Specialization, Early Childhood Apprenticeship Certification, other....)*
5. If your state has a career pathway/lattice/ladder/etc., where/what level does the CDA place? *(if no pathway exists, just enter N/A)*
6. Do you, any of your PDS or Registry Staff, Advisory Committee, or Governing Board Members have any "Formal Education," "Formal Training," "Personal Experience," or "Personal Knowledge" of any of the following Alternative Pedagogy Training Programs:  
*\*If yes, please indicate who, the position they hold, and what training/experience they have with the specific pedagogy. (options to check off included director, staff, advisory committee member, governing board member, other...)*
  - a. Montessori
  - b. Rudolf Steiner Education
  - c. Reggio Emilia?
7. If you have no representative for the preceding types of Alternative Training Programs, with whom does your office consult and/or what information does your office use to

inform policy decisions regarding these types of teacher's certifications and their placements on your state's ECE Workforce Registry? (*options to check off included: training site in state, personal contacts, national organization, other state registries, other...*)

8. Does your state use a Career Pathway/Laddeer/Lattice/Path/etc.?  
\*This question applied question logic, meaning those who answered NO automatically skipped to question #15.
9. If your state collects this data, do you know approximately how many people have registered, in your state, with early childhood certification in the following Alternative Training Programs: (*options to check off, in APT columns, <10, 10-19, 20-29, 30-39, 40-49, 50-59, 60-69, 70-79, 80-89, 90-99, 100+*)
10. This question is asking about Accredited-Alternative Certifications, that were not taken for college credit: Where on your state's career ladder/registry/pathway/lattice does an individual with each type of training place if they have NO OTHER COLLEGE CREDIT or higher education to speak of? (*APT types each have an answer box provided*)
11. If the SAME individual, previously described, had a degree (AA, AS, BA, BS, MS, MA, etc.) in a non-related field (say geography) AND an Accredited-Training Certification that was NOT taken for college credit, would that change their placement within your state's Professional Development System or on your career ladder? If so, how?
12. Is there a career placement appeals process? If so, please describe...
13. Have individuals from these alternative-pedagogy programs contacted your office regarding the state's career pathway or their placement on the career pathway? If so, please briefly describe...
14. Are you aware of any concerns your office has regarding placement of Alternative Trained Teachers? If so, please describe. (*options to check off included: Yes, No, Do not know...*)
15. What role or relevance do you perceive these programs (Rudolf Steiner Education/Montessori/Reggio Emilia) to have in relationship to the mission of Your State's Early Childhood ECE Workforce Registry or Professional Development System?
16. Does your state now offer or have they ever offered an Early Childhood Apprenticeship Program?
  - a. If so which institution was the certification offered through?
  - b. Where does completion of the certification place on your state's career ladder?
  - c. If you collect this data, how many people have registered in your state with this certification?

## APPENDIX F

### Phase IV State Policy Interview, Potential Questions (provided to participant in advance):

*For all questions, the subject in question is Accredited Alternative Training Programs Taken without college credit or Higher Education Degree (Montessori, Reggio Emilia, Rudolf Steiner Education).*

1. A policy summary was previously provided to your office, were there any changes you wished for me to make? Will you tell me a little about how (STATE) arrived at these policy practices
  - a. For example, what was the process in deciding on this course of action?
  - b. Who were included as stakeholders?
2. Who was at the table and why were they selected? Were any Alternative Pedagogy Trainers/Directors consulted during these developments?
3. Who or what informs the knowledge base on these particular alternative training programs? (for example: training hours required, curriculum coverage, O&P, etc.)
4. To what extent has (STATE)'s PDS allied with Alternative Pedagogy Training Sites, Schools or Teachers? (for example, Rudolf Steiner Education, Montessori Reggio Emilia)
5. How was public, family, and teacher perspectives incorporated into (STATE)'s policy practices and how has public response been to policy and processing?
6. Is there anything (STATE) may change in the future or in recommendation to other states with similar population/policy issues to do differently?
7. (STATE) is unique in specific ways, in your experience and knowledge, what do you feel were key influencing factors in the creation of your State's Policies, as they apply to this Alternative Pedagogy Population?
  - a. Possibilities:
    - i. Presence or lack of presence of Training Sites
    - ii. Presence or lack of presence in Selection of Members serving in key influencing positions
    - iii. Presence or lack of presence Leadership or Grassroots Efforts
    - iv. Presence or lack of presence of Alternative pedagogy schools
    - v. Policy Maturation or lack of (refinement/development over time)
    - vi. Presence or lack of presence of collaborative activities
    - vii. Perhaps another variable not previously mentioned
8. In (STATE), how is it determined which stakeholders to include in policy developments?

9. Is there anything regarding this topic, Alternative Pedagogy Policy or Training, that you would like to clarify or want the public to better understand?
10. (For States without recognition) What happens when a teacher who was previously recognized in another State's Career Recognition System arrives in (STATE)? Is their previous training recognized in *any way*? Have there been cases where this has happened?
11. Based on (STATE)'s current Alternative Pedagogy Policies, do you feel the QRIS and PDS currently capture quality adequately? If not, what do you feel is not being captured?
12. Do you know if your current system of QRIS/PDS has standards to examine, measure, or support "Spiritual, Emotional, or Social" Development in Early Childhood? If so, what are they?

## APPENDIX G

### Phase V Alternative-pedagogy Teacher preparation Program Director Survey Questions:

1. Please list identifying information for the institution you represent: (*institution name, type of training offered, if accredited/by whom, certificate or diploma offered, city/town, state, zip, point of contact, email address, phone number*)
2. Is higher education (for college credit) required for acceptance into your training program? (no, yes, details)
3. Is the training taken at your institution affiliated with college credit? (no college credit affiliation, optional college credit availability, training is for college credit only)
4. How many hours do your graduates receive of adult course instruction? (Please enter a number only, due to the design of the question, it will not accept any additional language)
5. How many hours of Observation, in a child's classroom, are your graduates required to complete?
6. How many hours are your graduates required to complete of Participation, "classroom practice?"
7. Is there a final, culminating project, exam, or presentation required to graduate from your training program? Could you briefly describe what that entails?
8. When an individual completes your training/program of study, do they receive a certificate of completion or diploma of some kind? If yes, please describe: (No, they do not receive any document similar to this; yes, they receive a certificate; yes, they receive a diploma)
9. Is your institution accredited or a member of any regulating agency? If so, who is your institution affiliated with?
10. What is the minimum qualification required to be a trainer or instructor at your institution? (no requirements, specific amount of experience, endorsement/certification in this training, some college credit, associate degree, bachelors degree, graduate degree, some other combination of merit described here...)
11. What would you estimate is the total cost for a graduate from your program (including tuition, fees, books, and other required materials/experiences)?  
If you offer multiple programs, please distinguish. Estimates are fine, this question is simply attempting to create an average cost for estimates of alternative training programs. (<\$1,000; \$1,000-3,000; \$3,000-5,000; \$5,000-7,000; \$7,000-10,000; \$10,000-\$13,000; \$13,000-\$15,000; \$15,000+)



12. What do you consider unique about your training program that makes it different from traditional training programs?
13. How many students admitted/graduated do you estimate have been affiliated with your training institution? (1-25; 26-50; 51-75; 76-100; 101-125; 126-150; 151-175; 176-200; 201+; other. You do NOT have to provide exact numbers, this question is attempting to create an estimate of the Total Possible training population impacted by these policies).
14. How familiar with your State's Quality Initiative Policies are you? (For example, Teacher/Trainer Career Path or Registry, Program Quality Evaluation, ECE training/education Scholarships, Quality Incentives or Benefit Programs, etc.). (options offered to be checked off: I am not familiar with or aware of these initiatives, I am aware of the fact that they exist but I am not involved with them, I feel that I am informed and knowledgeable about them, I am involved with the incentives by use or information dissemination, I am intimately working with these initiatives as a policy adviser, policy maker, or consultant.)
15. Have you, or a representative of your institution, ever been contacted by the State for more information about your training institution? If so, what was the information to be used for?
16. Does your institution have a representative serving on any of the following committees? (ECE Workforce Registry advisory committee, quality rating and improvement advisory committee, resource and referral advisory committee, head start collaboration committee, state associate for the education of young children advisory committee, joint technical skills committee, some other committee not listed where a representative is in an advisory or consulting capacity, other...)
17. In this section, you are provided with a state policy summary. This summary was co-created during Study Phases I & II by relevant Policy Makers in your state and the investigator(s) of this study. This summary was provided to the Policy Makers in your state, some chose to participate in shaping the summary, others did not. At this time, we are asking Training Institutions in your state to co-verify, edit, or respond to this policy summary statement. Please Identify which state your are responding from: (Oregon, Georgia, Nevada, Hawaii, Alaska, New Hampshire, Missouri, North Carolina, Vermont, Virginia, Wisconsin, OTHER).  
\*This question contained question logic. When participant selected their state, they were redirected to a state policy summary specific to their state. Participants who selected "other" were redirected to a page with an apology that a summary for their state was not available due to a lack of participation from their state's ECE Policy Representatives. The participants were then encouraged to continue in the closing section to aid in providing baseline information on their experiences in with these policies in their state.  
Summary statement provided in 2-4 paragraphs with information related to placement, recognition, scholarships/benefits, representation, and training availability. Participants were asked to check either (I find this policy summary to accurately describe the policy system in

our state OR I find this policy summary to be inaccurate in the following ways described below...)

18. Does your state's Professional Development System's "Teacher Recognition or ECE Workforce Registry" recognize your institution's program of study certification or diploma and, if so, what level will your training graduates place in your state's career ladder/lattice?
19. Regarding your state's ECE Teacher Recognition Systems policy implementation, is there anything you would add to help describe the policy development or policy application experience?
20. What do you feel are the strengths of your state's policy and procedures, as they relate to Teacher Recognition for the Alternative Pedagogy population in your state?
21. Is there anything you would like to see changed or implemented differently related to policy or procedure and your state's ECE Workforce Registry or Teacher Recognition System?
22. Has your training institution taken any action related to these policy developments?  
If yes, please describe your course of action. (options provided to be checked off: Our institution has not taken any measure to communicate with policy makers regarding these policy developments; we have contacted state offices to voice our concerns or issues; we have invited ECE policy makers to visit our training intuition; we have provided state offices or policy makers with formal information regarding our training; we have attended/represented our community at public forums on these subjects; we have instructed our students on advocacy measures; we have met within our independent communities regarding steps to be taken or forming an agenda; we have joined advisory committees or acted in similar capacities; we have represented or educated the community-at-large on our training or pedagogy methodology; other...)
23. Can you comment on or share results of any specific action your institution has taken to respond to, influence, or change policy or processing as it relates to Teacher Recognition or ECE Workforce Registry?
24. Do you feel your institution is an ally in the Professional Development Movement in your state? (open text box)
25. What activity has your state's Office of Early Care & Education taken that has contributed to your feelings, related to partnering in Teacher Recognition/ECE Workforce Registry or Professional Development Movement?
26. Regarding teacher recognition placement or treatment of your community of training programs, is there anything that you would like the public to better understand or that you would like to know more about, related to your specific community of learners?

## APPENDIX H

### Study Summary Handouts

Kimberlee Belcher-Badal  
117 Humphreys Street  
Fort Leonard Wood, MO 65473  
[kimbel@umail.iu.edu](mailto:kimbel@umail.iu.edu) OR  
[edpolicyconsulting@gmail.com](mailto:edpolicyconsulting@gmail.com)  
(207) 317 – 3305

February 19, 2015

Dear State ECE Workforce Registry Director & Career Pathway Advisory Committee,

It is with gratitude and excitement I am contacting your office to share with you some of the findings from the surveys and Nationwide ECE Workforce Registry Study your state participated in regarding Alternative Pedagogy Teachers and their communities. As you may remember, this study was needed to assist in developing a map of the policy terrain as it related to Non-Traditional Teachers and recognition of their training and education in state policy systems such as the State ECE Workforce Registries or Career Matrixes (pathways, ladders or lattices). At the opening of the study, Fall 2013, there was no source for reference or guidance on general trends or variations in how Alternative Pedagogy Teachers were incorporated in relation to teacher recognition, retention or recruitment.

With the help of 28 participating states and 54 Alternative Pedagogy Teacher Preparation Programs we now have a foundation to build on! Through access to public information, we have triangulated relevant data for every state in the country. This study specifically asked about the recognition and placement levels of Teachers who had MACTE Accredited Montessori Credentials, Member Recognized Waldorf Education, LifeWays Training, or Reggio Emilia Teacher Preparation. The objective was to identify, track and report on every State ECE Workforce Registry & Career Pathway, the process and policies related to these teachers.

The rationale for the study was that many of these teachers across the country were expressing feelings of isolation and under-recognition for professional commitments and investments they had made. This was particularly true in states where no recognition is given for their specific training and education. At the opening of the study, we knew that some states were providing CDA level recognition for their efforts and in some states no recognition was provided. In contrast, however, there were a handful of states who were offering recognition at higher levels. At that time, we were uncertain of whether or not any policy trends or patterns existed; in that regard, this study mapped state ECE workforce registry policy nationwide.

I am pleased to provide you a portion of the findings and to discuss them with you at any time. If you have questions or concerns, please do not hesitate to contact me. This dissertation study, for the degree of Ph.D. from Indiana University, will be submitted in April. If anything specific about your state should be included, changed or omitted please don't hesitate to let me know. You are also welcome and encouraged to provide any relevant feedback, concerns or points of clarification if you like. Feel free to share this document with other policy makers in your state.

In Gratitude,  
Kimberlee Belcher-Badal, Ph.D. Candidate  
Curriculum & Instruction / Educational Leadership & Policy Studies  
Indiana University

# **Alternative Pedagogy**

## **Teacher Preparation Programs:**

### **Do they count?**

**A Comprehensive Nationwide Study of Early Childhood  
Professional Development Systems' Childcare Workforce Registries  
& Career Pathways**

Kimberlee Belcher-Badal, PhD Candidate

Indiana University

Curriculum & Instruction and Educational Leadership & Policy Studies

Contact [kimbel@uemail.iu.edu](mailto:kimbel@uemail.iu.edu) or [edpolicyconsulting@gmail.com](mailto:edpolicyconsulting@gmail.com) for more information.

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*Partial Findings from Belcher-Badal Study 2014 ©.*

**Background:**

**Nationwide Study on Child Care Workforce Registries and  
Alternative-Pedagogy Teacher Preparation**

In the Fall of 2013 and Spring of 2014, a nationwide study of Child Care Workforce Registries and Alternative Pedagogy Teacher Education (Montessori, Reggio Emilia, Steiner-Inspired) unfolded. Three phases of public data collection took place; first a survey invitation was sent to all Early Childhood Registry Directors or their Representatives in every state, 28 participated. The second phase was interviewing key leadership across diverse communities. There were a total of 12 interviews; five from State Registry Offices in strategically identified states: Alaska, Georgia, Nevada, New Hampshire, and Oregon. Another seven interviews came from Leadership Representatives of Alternative Pedagogy Communities including: President of the Montessori Accreditation Council for Teacher Education, representing the Montessori Community (MACTE); Dean of the School of Education for Webster University in St. Louis, representing the Reggio Emilia Community; WECAN Teacher Education Chair and Board Members for the Waldorf Community; and Founder of the LifeWays Program. Finally, in the last phase of data collection, 125 Teacher Education/Preparation Directors (representing a mixed alternative-pedagogy training cohort) were contacted, with an invitation to share their experiences and respond to policies from their state; there were 54 responses, representing 25 states. Attached are some of the study findings as they relate to the Alternative Pedagogy Community's Teacher Education, Training & Recognition.

As a preface, the three pedagogies chosen were selected for their alternative perspective on the role of the teacher and childhood, which require a specific type of teacher training to transform the teacher and elevate the child. For the purposes of this study, Pedagogy is defined as the cumulative objective of five educational components: philosophical foundation, educational theory, curriculum, methodology, and socializing/normalizing. Teachers in these particular pedagogies have demonstrated a professional commitment to the child, school and training, particular to their chosen pedagogy. Their specialization in the instruction of young children and recognition of that competency were the catalyst for conducting this study. At the time the study was undertaken, it was unknown what trends were evolving in the recognition of the Alternative Pedagogy Teacher, as they related to ECE Workforce Registries & Career Pathways. Early research indicated a broad range of recognition and policy. This study was designed to survey the landscape, engage stakeholders and create a set of recommendations and courses of action to aid all of the communities involved with moving forward in solidarity.

Only accredited or "member recognized" training programs were reflected in this study. Attached is a partial list of findings from the study. Data collection for the study has closed and findings have been shared to facilitate dialogue, help create a set of recommendations and support the relationship building that began as an outcome of the study. The study is expected to be submitted for dissertation approval in April of 2015 for the degree of Ph.D. from Indiana University. To discuss the findings, consult on recognition, or initiate new questions, please contact me at any time. Feel free to share this document with other relevant policy makers.

**Further information and questions about the study can be directed, at any time, to  
Kimberlee Belcher-Badal at [kimbel@umail.iu.edu](mailto:kimbel@umail.iu.edu). (270) 317 – 3305**

Contact [kimbel@umail.iu.edu](mailto:kimbel@umail.iu.edu) or [edpolicyconsulting@gmail.com](mailto:edpolicyconsulting@gmail.com) for more information.

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### **Research on Workforce Registries and Career Pathways**

- Workforce Registries are designed to capture data and promote professional growth. This is accomplished through the utilization of a Career Pathway which uses an integrated, incremental system to help individuals identify their status in a proficiency spectrum ranging from entry level and novice to specialized and master professional.
- Workforce Registries act as the primary source of information for workforce demographics and indicators of quality used to inform policy makers on workforce strengths and needs. They also serve as the framework for recruitment, rewards and retention efforts.
- Career Pathways are the heart of a Workforce Registry. “Career pathway programs are clear sequences of coursework and training that help individuals of varying skill levels earn credentials valued by employers, to enter rewarding careers.....and advance to increasingly higher levels of education and employment” (DoL, Feb, 2014; p1).
- Career Pathways are not unique to the field of Early Learning and are a representative component of a much larger workforce development strategy, collaboratively implemented by the Departments of Labor, Education, and Health & Human Services. This large-scale effort supports the Workforce Innovation & Opportunity Act of 2014, a response to the Great Recession, by braiding efforts to strengthen the economy and workforce through:
  - Preparation for participation in Institutions of Higher Education (through layers of quality and accountability in early care & education, primary and secondary education).
  - Workforce skill preparation (through higher education, vocational training, credential systems, and employment certifications).
  - The use of more complete workforce data collection and tracking to inform policy, incentives, and support services.
- The Alliance for Quality Career Pathways includes steps for higher education but also entry level steps for technical skill attainment, such as industry-recognized credentials, certificates or diplomas and apprenticeships (CLASP, 2013).

Struggle for inclusion of Alternative Pedagogy Teachers may rest on definitions of ECE Workforce Development that, in some cases, were defined too narrowly or were based on research no longer reflecting current quality variables triangulation. Early research on quality indicators encouraged higher education as directly correlated to high quality Early Care & Education; however, current research (*provided by the Administration of Children & Families, 2010, p.24) and others*) indicate teacher’s diplomas, isolated, are not individually correlated to quality outcomes. However, other factors such as mentorship, specialized training, and professional investments can be direct indicators (*Zaslou & Martinez-Beck, 2006*). Alternative Pedagogy Teachers contribute to professionalism, quality, and accountability in teacher training and education. Through better understanding and inclusive policy practices quality partnerships across diverse communities are possible.

*The process begins with dialogue and information exchange on the part of both Alternative Pedagogy Communities and relevant Policy Makers; this document was created to support that effort.*

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**Findings on Montessori Teacher Early Childhood Teacher Training/Education:**

- The Montessori Accreditation Council on Teacher Education (MACTE) is recognized by the United States Department of Education as the accrediting body for Montessori teacher education programs/institutions, that adhere to the standards, and quality principles established by MACTE. MACTE Accreditation, based on U.S. Department of Education definitions, allows free-standing Montessori teacher education institutions to qualify for Title IV funds, including federal grants and student loans.
- MACTE, along with the National Council for Accreditation of Teacher Education (NCATE), and the Teacher Education Accreditation Council (TEAC) (NCATE and TEAC have unified to become the Council for Accreditation of Education Preparation, CAEP) are the only three organizations recognized by the United States Department of Education to accredit teacher preparation programs. (MACTE, 2015)

*See MACTE's scope of recognition listed on the USDE website:*

[http://www2.ed.gov/admins/finaid/accred/accreditation\\_pg7.html#ed](http://www2.ed.gov/admins/finaid/accred/accreditation_pg7.html#ed) .

- MACTE is a national accrediting agency committed to effective preparation of Montessori teachers. Its mission is to recognize, assure and promote high quality teacher preparation, in free standing institutions and programs within universities and colleges through its system of accreditation and the ultimate purpose of advancing Montessori student learning in Infant/Toddler through Secondary education.
- MACTE accredits Teacher Education Programs affiliated with several professional Montessori organizations including:
  - The American Montessori Society (AMS), which mandates MACTE accreditation for its TEPs,
  - The Association of Montessori International USA (AMI/USA),
  - International Association of Progressive Montessorians (IAPM),
  - International Montessori Council (IMC),
  - Montessori Educational Programs International (MEPI), and
  - Pan American Montessori Society (PAMS).
  - Programs can also choose to affiliate with the Independents (IND) not in a consortium.
- Having a MACTE Credentialed Montessori Teacher in the classroom has been found critical to successful Montessori School implementation and is compulsory by some Montessori affiliates as a requirement for the accreditation of their Montessori schools. (example, to be an AMS preschool, the school must have teachers who have MACTE Accredited Montessori Credentials in each classroom).
- MACTE Accredited Teacher Preparation includes a threshold of 600 direct education contact hours (200 academic and 400 in a mentored practicum) or more, depending on training level and the affiliating organization. Total minimum clock hours for Infant/Toddler or ECE Preparation, including out-of-class clock hours, are 1200 combined clock hours (MACTE, 2015). MACTE has a table demonstrating their translation of clock hours to credit hours.

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***Partial Findings from Belcher-Badal Study 2014 ©.***

- Montessori Teacher Education is very similar to Apprenticeship-style preparation programs, where there is significant focus on guided practice, and internalizing information. Graduates are tested on both information/knowledge and skills/competencies.
- In 2014, there were 184 MACTE Accredited Teacher Preparation Programs across the US, excluding an additional 16 Countries. Fifteen of these programs are located in conjunction with a university, college or access to college credit.
- Roughly 36 states have MACTE accredited Montessori Teacher Education Programs; this is not an indicator of state approval or lack-there-of. At present, state governments are not generally monitoring MACTE accreditation in Montessori teacher education programs. However, there are several states that have a protocol agreement in place.
- MACTE has three accredited Distance Education Programs, which also require 120 hours of residency (MACTE, 2015).
- Depending on the affiliation of the program, students train for an average of two years but not less than one year/per instructional level; average costs range from \$2,500-11,500 per age range (instructional/age levels span groupings such as 0-3 years, 3-6, 6-9, 9-12, etc.).
- The North American Montessori Teachers Association (NAMTA) estimates there are over 4,500 Montessori Schools in the US and over 20,000 worldwide (2014). According to the National Center for Montessori in the Public Sector there are, "447 Montessori public schools offering nationwide" (2014). Another source, from 2003, estimated there were nearly 6,000 Montessori schools and close to 500 Montessori Magnet schools (Guttek, 2004, pg. 40).
- As an example: The American Montessori Society (AMS) reports having over 1,300 AMS Accredited ECE and Elementary Schools with nearly 13,000 Members (2014).

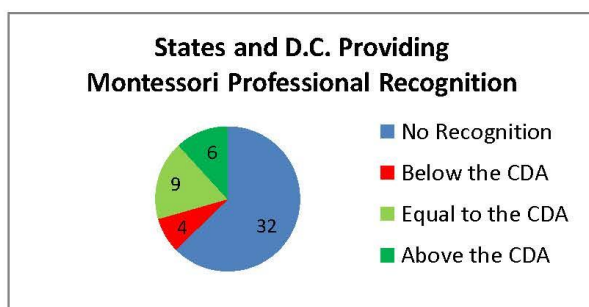
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### Workforce Registry-related Study Findings related to Montessori Teacher Preparation

- Montessori Recognition in a Career Ladder/ Registry was offered in 19 states and DC.
- Of the 19 states recognizing Montessori Teacher Preparation, 21% (4) recognized training at a level below that of the CDA (Child Development Associate Credential, a 120 hour training program). Another 47% (9) recognized the Montessori Credential on a level equal to that of the CDA. Finally, 32% of Montessori recognizing states (6) do so at a level above the CDA, typically a level right below an Associate Degree (DE, GA, MN, NV, OR, WA).
- There are 17 State Registries currently recognizing Montessori Preparation publicly in print.
- Roughly 19 states indicated a willingness to work on Montessori Policy Recognition.



#### Registry Survey Participants' Perspectives:

*"We have had numerous discussions about how to best quantify Montessori training and recently changed the descriptors on the Career Pathways to better recognize those individuals."*

*"When an applicant with a degree in another field also submits a Montessori diploma, the highest level of formal education obtained will be granted (the Montessori diploma is viewed in the same light as an "ECE Endorsement")."*

- Asked about tracking Montessori Teachers in the Registry, 6 states provided actual numbers (2 reported over 100, 3 reported 60 or less, and 1 said there were 10 or less).
- Georgia had the highest recognized entry-level preparation-equivalency career ladder placement level in the country, with MACTE Accredited Training (without college credit) recognized on the same level as the Associate Degree. Nevada and Oregon both provide a level of recognition one level below the Associate Degree, but above the CDA, and allowed the Montessori Credential to be used in conjunction with a degree in any field for higher levels of recognition.
- When asked if anyone representing the Registry Office had Montessori Teacher preparation knowledge, training, experience, or education, 12 states reported they had Montessori knowledgeable representation (6 indicated Registry Directors; 7 said Registry Staff; 5 reported a Registry Advisory Committee Member).
- When asked who the Registry Office consults with on Montessori Certificates, 12 reported using a Non-Montessori Agency such as NAEYC, National Workforce Registry Alliance, Regional Technical Assistance, and the State Early Learning Advisory Council. Only one indicated they used the training institution in their state for consultation.

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**Recommendations for Registry Offices regarding Accredited Montessori Teacher Preparation**

- Address issues of inclusivity for Accredited Montessori Trained Teachers in state registry systems and career ladders/lattices/pathways to become comprehensive workforce registries and recognition systems.
- Re-evaluate current Montessori Recognition levels, to address giving Accredited Montessori Teacher Preparation (obtained without college credit) a designated recognition level higher than the CDA. A generalizable Montessori Recognition Table is available for state reference, from the author of this study or MACTE, for policy maker use.
- Utilize the MACTE Montessori Accreditation Council for Teacher Education as the foremost resource and authority on quality preparation principles for consultation on issues related to or in the recognition of a Montessori Teacher Preparation Programs.
- In response to this study and to facilitate more cohesive communication, MACTE has an information packet designed for State Workforce Registries and Career Ladder articulation is available on request.

Dr. Rebecca Pelton,( [Rebecca@macte.org](mailto:Rebecca@macte.org) ) or  
Kimberlee Belcher-Badal,( [edpolicyconsulting@gmail.com](mailto:edpolicyconsulting@gmail.com) )

- Consult with states that already have a framework to support the capacity for Montessori Credential Recognition. A current list of states and points of contact is available for state policy makers to connect with from the author of this study. ([kimbel@umail.iu.edu](mailto:kimbel@umail.iu.edu) )
- Consider reaching out to the Montessori Community in your state with a customized invitation to join the professional development movement or Registry effort in your state, expanding the opportunity for collaboration and increasing the pool of quality recognized teachers in each state.

### **Steiner-Inspired Early Childhood Teacher Training/Education**

#### *Waldorf*

- Waldorf Teacher Education Programs use a “Member Recognition System.” Founded in 1983, the Waldorf Early Childhood Association of North America (WECAN) has a program coordinator and early childhood teacher education committee with a path to membership that includes self-study and peer review. It requires renewals every three years for Developing Member Institutes, and every five years for Full Member Institutes. Recognized training programs have established "Shared Principles for Waldorf Early Childhood Teacher Education" in collaboration with the International Association for Steiner/Waldorf Early Childhood Education (IASWECE) (Howard, 2014). They are also represented by CAPE (Council for American Private Education).
- WECAN Coordinator and Task Force Chair, Susan Howard, indicated WECAN Member Recognized Training Locations must provide a minimum of 400 hours of academic training and include an extensive Mentored Internship (Personal Communication, May 2014).
- Teacher Preparation occurs in multiple settings including Institution of Higher Education and Freestanding Institutions; there are a few recognized teacher education programs connected within local Waldorf schools as well (*particularly at the foundation or introductory levels*).
- There are 16 Waldorf teacher training institutes in North America recognized by the Association of Waldorf Schools (AWSNA) and (WECAN) (2014, *personal communication with Susan Howard*).
- WECAN recognized Waldorf Early Childhood Teacher Training is available in seven states.
- At least 36 states have WECAN/AWSNA Recognized Schools or ECE Programs (2014). There are roughly 38 Public Waldorf Charter Schools in 12 states: AK, AZ, CA, CO, ID, HI, MA, MN, OR, PA, TX, & WI (Alliance for Public Waldorf Education, 2014). There are currently more than 1000 Waldorf Schools and 2000 Waldorf Early Childhood Programs worldwide in more than 60 countries (Howard, 2014).
- Waldorf early childhood teacher training consists of a minimum of 400 class hours which are offered in several different full-time and part-time formats. This includes, for example, a part-time, in-service program for practicing Waldorf EC educators that meets for four sessions each year over the course of three years and costs roughly \$18,000 at Rudolf Steiner College and a low-residency program for practicing early childhood educators at Sunbridge Institute, NY, with a three-week session each summer and one-week sessions each fall and spring for 25 months. Rudolf Steiner College also has an “Early Childhood Associate Program” which is a two-year program that meets for five days in March and October, ten days in August. It is specially designed for child care assistants, family child care providers, parents and grandparents. The program provides 15.5 ECE Units for Licensing. Its cost is roughly \$15,500 in 2014 (see [www.rudolfsteinercollege.edu/ecisp](http://www.rudolfsteinercollege.edu/ecisp) ).

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***Partial Findings from Belcher-Badal Study 2014 ©.***

***LifeWays of North America***

- The LifeWays of North America Program was included in this study, under the auspice of Steiner-Inspired Education. While it is distinctly different preparation from that of the Waldorf Classroom Teacher, it provides a remarkably good fit for the Family Child Care Provider as well as Classroom Teachers.
- The mission of the LifeWays Program is to provide, “as closely as possible, the best elements of care found in a healthy home...based on healthy sense development, social interactions, creative arts, practical domestic activities, nurturing care, development of the mind and the body, and continuity of care...protecting and enhancing optimal physical, socio-emotional, and cognitive growth and health” (Aldinger, 2013).
- LifeWays, an Early Childhood Teacher Training & Education Program also known as “Home-like Care,” was established in 1998.
- LifeWays Teacher Preparation requires 220 hours of training over 12-13 months and includes a requirement for working with a mentor.
- The average cost of this training is \$4,995 a year (2014).
- In 2014, there were nine training sites for LifeWays, in nine different states (CA, CO, HI, IL, ME, NY, OR, TX, and WI).
- There are over 24 states with over 50 LifeWays Programs operating across the country (Founder, Cynthia Aldinger, 2013).
- It is estimated there have been over 500 graduates of the LifeWays Training and an additional 200 who have taken portions of the training.
- To become a LifeWays Representative Site, graduates complete a self-study and receive a site visit every three years. Professionals are required to attend conferences, training and/or workshops, with benchmarks every two years. All graduates are allowed to retake any portion of the training or related workshops, tuition free.
- In the past, LifeWays Training Programs have been provided via Institutions of Higher Education, such as The Rudolph Steiner College in Sacramento, CA. Currently, Ashland University in Ohio provides graduate credit hours for students who enroll in the university and complete additional research papers. Up to 12 semester hours of graduate credit are available for the year-long, part-time LifeWays Early Childhood Certification Program (LifeWays, College Credit, 2011).
- While both the Waldorf and LifeWays Teacher Education Programs are founded on Steiner’s Work, the LifeWays Program is distinctly separate and should not be considered a representative training program of the WECAN or AWSNA teacher-training membership network. The two “approaches” to Steiner’s legacy, while complementary, are acknowledged (within their own community) as distinctly different teacher preparation programs.

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**Workforce Registry Related Findings related to Steiner-inspired Teacher Preparation**

- Waldorf & LifeWays Teacher Recognition in a Career Ladder/ Registry was reported in 5 states to varying degrees of entry level recognition (AZ, GA, HI, MD and VA).
- Of the five states reportedly recognizing Waldorf & LifeWays Teachers, three states indicated Waldorf or LifeWays Teacher Training would be recognized at a level equal to the CDA (Child Development Associate Credential, 120 hour training) (AZ, GA, HI). Four states indicated entry level recognition between levels 1-3; one state reported recognition below the CDA (VA). Separately, three states reported it would only be recognized as on-going/annual training hours and not used for recognition purposes. Another seven states replied, it was not known or not applicable.
- When asked if the Waldorf or LifeWays Teacher had a degree in a field other than ECE AND had their Waldorf or LifeWays training (taken without college credit) how would they be recognized: 12 states reported they would not identify the individual in their state's recognition system. Six states reported the training/education could be used in conjunction with an unrelated degree for recognition at the degreed level (as a specialization or endorsement in ECE). Two said it would depend on how many ECE credits were in the transcript.
- No State Registries or Career Ladders publicly recognize Waldorf or LifeWays Preparation.
- Six states indicated a willingness to work on Waldorf or LifeWays Policy Recognition.
- Asked about tracking Waldorf Teachers in the Registry: three states provided estimated numbers. Of participating states, 2 reported less than 10 (ND, HI); 1 reported 20-29 (OR), and 7 said there were none. An additional eight states reported they "did not know."
- When asked if anyone representing the Registry Office had Waldorf or LifeWays knowledge, experience, training or education, 8 states reported they had Waldorf or LifeWays Informed Staff (3 indicated Registry Directors; 6 reported Registry Staff; 4 replied an Advisory Committee Member; and 1 state indicated someone serving in another capacity).

**Registry Participant Perspective:**

*"Yes. Waldorf and Montessori have contacted the Registry to be recognized. The Montessori credential from an accredited program is recognized as equivalent to a CDA. Waldorf training hours are accepted, but no type of Waldorf credential, is on par with a CDA."*

*"We will need to find out if these specialized certifications meet the 120 clock hours of training AND the [State] Standards for Licensed Child Day Centers."*

*"As stated previously, we value the Montessori certificate and it is a Level 4 on the Career Ladder. For the Waldorf and Reggio Emilia certifications, I am not familiar with those and to my knowledge we haven't had either one of those certification presented. If those two certification have the 3 components of our Demonstrated Competency (training, observation, assessment) then they would definitely be considered for Level 4."*

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**Recommendations for Registry Offices regarding Steiner-Inspired Teacher Preparation**

- Address issues of inclusivity for Member Recognized Waldorf or LifeWays Trained Teachers in state registry systems and career ladders/lattices/pathways to become comprehensive Professional Development and Teacher Recognition System.
- Re-evaluate current Waldorf and LifeWays Teacher Recognition levels, to address giving Recognized/Member Teacher Preparation Programs a designated recognition level higher than the CDA, making sure knowledge of availability is provided to the community via public access venues. This could occur in a half step or a designation level of their own but, in any case, this type of teacher training investment should be able to be used as an ECE specialization or endorsement in conjunction with other higher education attainments.
- Consider reaching out to the Waldorf and LifeWays Communities in your state with a customized invitation to join the local professional development movement or Registry effort expanding the opportunity for collaboration and increasing the pool of quality recognized teachers in each state.
- Contact the WECAN Waldorf Early Childhood Association of North American and its Early Childhood Teacher Education Committee Chair, Susan Howard, as the foremost resource for consultation on issues related to or in the recognition of Waldorf Teacher Training.

Susan Howard, [showard@waldorfearlychildhood.org](mailto:showard@waldorfearlychildhood.org)

Or Kimberlee Belcher-Badal, [edpolicyconsulting@gmail.com](mailto:edpolicyconsulting@gmail.com)

- Utilize Founder and Director of LifeWays of North America, Cynthia Aldinger, as the primary contact for consultation and issues related to the recognition of LifeWays Teacher Preparation.

Cynthia Aldinger, [CynthiaA@LifeWaysNorthamerica.org](mailto:CynthiaA@LifeWaysNorthamerica.org)

### **Reggio Emilia-inspired Teacher Training/Education**

- The Reggio Emilia-inspired Pedagogy is not merely an approach to thinking about childhood; it is a distinct pedagogy, complete with philosophy, theory, methodology, curriculum and socializing/normalizing. To unfold authentically, it is not something one can simply be inspired to do, it requires much more. In many ways, through professional development, it requires a metamorphosis of the teacher as a human being. To see, hear, think, and respond differently. In the words of Dr. Fyfe, Dean of the School of Education for Webster University St. Louis and Board Member of the North American Reggio Emilia Alliance,

“It's a very demanding and challenging approach. It can, however, when you get into it... it's just extremely energizing as well. It brings the best out of people but they have to have a strong commitment to it. To continue to study, an effort to really shift in their attitudes from guiding, directing and facilitating children to learning with them, studying their learning processes, collaborating at every level. Collaborating with parents which means not just educating them but again, learning from and with them and involving them as real partners in the process. It's a very strong systems approach to education. You think about the child, the teachers, the parents, and the community. They're all in a tight relationship with each other and that's not always the mindset of a teacher; and it is a mindset.”

- There is no accrediting body for Reggio Emilia-inspired Teacher Education or Schools.
- According to Filipini, “[Reggio Emilia-inspired] teachers do about 190 hours a year of work outside the classroom, including 107 hours of in-service training; 43 hours of meetings with parents and committees and about 40 hours for other seminars, workshops, school celebrations, etc.” This equates to nearly five weeks full-time work (outside the classroom).
- Founded in 2002, the North America Reggio Emilia Alliance (NAREA) does not accredit or endorse any school or training program. They do, however, serve as a grid for conferences, networking and resource sharing across the country, supporting professional development and learning in Reggio Emilia-inspired individuals and environments.
- Facilitated by the NAREA, there are study groups, research institutes, conferences, exhibits, professional development, initiatives, and learning journeys to Reggio Emilia but there is currently no teacher certificate/diploma in Reggio Emilia Education. This type of professional development is recognized in two forms: (a) it is offered through universities and colleges and therefore, correlated with college credit or (b) it is folded under annual training hours for child care licensing.
- There is at least one Reggio Emilia Pedagogista Graduate Certificate available. This 18 credit Masters Level Certificate does not require an ECE degree for admission. It is possible for individuals to acquire this training without the ECE foundation (for example administrators, architects, artistes, etc.). This certificate is also available via online education through Webster University of St. Louis (*Dr. Fyfe, 2014*). Therefore, in theory, it is possible a person could have a non-ECE-related degree, obtain the Reggio Emilia Pedagogista Graduate Certificate and still not be recognized in many state's Registry Systems or Career Ladders.

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**Partial Findings from Belcher-Badal Study 2014 ©.**

- Lesley University in Massachusetts, for example, offers summer intensives and semester classes in Reggio Specific Courses but they do not lead to Reggio-specified recognition. Many other universities are offering Reggio-Inspired Coursework for college credit: Webster University in St. Louis; Thomas College in Maine; Columbia College in Chicago; Antioch University of the MidWest in Ohio; Naropa University in Colorado; Portland State University of Oregon; University of Nevada Reno; and, of course, the well-recognized Harvard University's Project Zero to name a few. Yet none of those specifically recognize a teacher as having Reggio-Emilia Training. Education, Preparation.
  - There are at least 16 states offering preschools and schools who are acknowledged by (not endorsed by) NAREA (2014). According to the NAREA, Reggio-Inspired Education has reached 34 countries, infused 100 languages, has more than 15,000 teacher/pedagogists teaching over 50,000 children (2014).
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**Preliminary Study Findings**

- Reggio-Inspired Teacher Recognition in a Career Ladder/ Registry was offered in 5 states.
- Of the five states recognizing Reggio Inspired Teachers, four states reported teachers would be recognized at a level equal to the CDA (AZ, GA, HI, MD). The same four states indicated entry level recognition between levels 1-3. One state indicated recognition levels below the CDA (VA). Two states said it would be recognized as on-going/annual training hours. Another ten states reported it was not known or not applicable.
- There are no States Registries or Career Ladders recognizing Reggio Emilia Teachers publicly, in print (2015).
- Roughly three states indicated their state offered a Reggio Specialization.
- Asked about tracking Reggio-Inspired Teachers in the Registry, one state could provide actual numbers (reporting less than 10). Seven states said there were none. An additional ten states reported they did not know.
- When asked if anyone from the Registry Office had Reggio Emilia knowledge, experience, training or education, 8 states reported they had Reggio Emilia Informed Staff (5 replied Registry Directors; 7 indicated Registry Staff; 6 reported an Advisory Committee Member and 2 states indicated someone serving in another capacity).

**Registry Participant Perspectives:**

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*"No one [state staff] has formal certificates of achievement in these alternative pedagogies. Many of the state staff have all taken ad hoc classes that included information about these learning strategies/philosophies."*

*"The Oregon registry acknowledges that there are many high quality programs and pathways to working with children. All programs that connect to Oregon's childhood care and education standards, the Core Body of Knowledge, should be represented in the Oregon Registry."*

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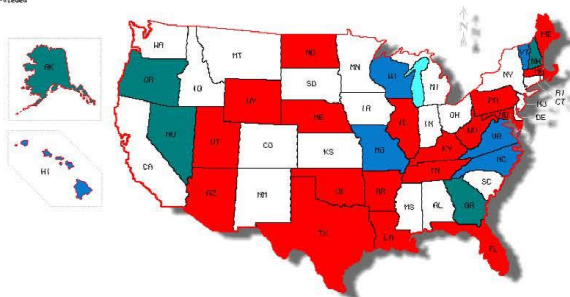
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### Recommendations for Registry Offices regarding Reggio Emilia-inspired Teachers

- Re-evaluate state registry systems and career ladders/lattices/pathways to be inclusive of Reggio Emilia-inspired Teacher's Professional Development; if only to begin tracking these teachers for trends and reporting measures (perhaps as an optional/voluntary reporting variable), making certain it is explicitly stated as such in public information packets.
  - Consider giving a form of recognition to these dedicated teachers who clearly *go beyond* in terms of commitment to quality, as well as their pedagogy. While their "system" of education is still young, in this country, it seems counterintuitive to not capture their contributions to quality and professional development efforts at all. Based on the overwhelming responses to and interest in Reggio Emilia Teacher Professional Development at National Conferences Platforms, such as NAEYC, not tracking them in the workforce registry is leaving a big gap in data reporting.
  - Utilize the NAREA North American Reggio Emilia Alliance, as the foremost resource for consultation on issues related to or in the recognition of Reggio-Specialized Teacher Training.
  - Consider reaching out to the Reggio Emilia Community in your state with a customized invitation to join the professional development movement or Registry effort in your state; perhaps working in collaboration, a form of recognition and tracking for this population could be demonstrated.
- 
- To more authentically represent the overarching workforce registry mission, it would be beneficial if the lead agency guiding best practices in ECE Workforce Registries, the National Workforce Registry Alliance, encouraged state policy language for Partnership Eligibility that includes:
    - An appeals process for grievances within the registry system
    - A policy articulated community feedback mechanism informing policy evolution
    - Policy language that reflects a desire to work with **all** types of ECE professionals

Badal Dissertation State Representation

- Study Participants
- Invited to Interview
- Interviewed



"Best policy practices suggest regular, publicly accessed reports on organizational performance contribute to continuous improvement and mission driven performance standards; particularly when stakeholder experiences and feedback are prioritized in policy evolution."

-Belcher-Badal Study (2015)

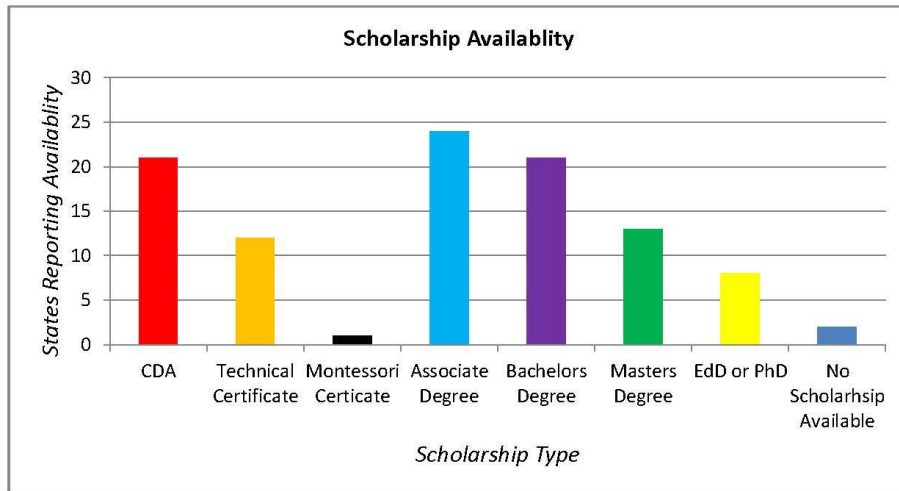
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**Partial Findings from Belcher-Badal Study 2014 ©.**

**Specifics to State Registry Study Participants:**

- Nationwide, 16 states (32%) reported using a Career Matrix for Professional Recognition.
- For Scholarship Opportunities, 32% of all states (16) reported opportunities linked to placement levels in the Career Matrix and 24% of all states indicated free training access.
- Seven states, nationwide, reported having financial incentives tied to registry recognition levels. Five states had wage supplements, grants or other benefits. Two states indicated they offered wage incentives or stipends.
- Five states indicated they had no benefits or incentives attached to their registry.
- Nearly half the nation, (24 states) indicated Scholarship Opportunities were available for Associate Degree Completion. There were 21 states who reported scholarship availability for the CDA and for BA Degrees. A total of 13 states specified scholarship for Master’s Degrees and 12 states for Technical Certificates in ECE or Child Care Apprenticeship Programs. Finally, 8 states also indicated scholarship availability for Doctoral Degrees in ECE.
- Alaska included Montessori Training/Education in scholarship availability. Reggio Emilia Training and Education available through the University would be covered by traditional Institution of Higher Education Scholarships. It was not identified in this study whether Waldorf Education, available in IHEs, were also covered under traditional state scholarship dollars.
- A total of 14 states reported having a Registry or Career Ladder Placement appeals process.



**\*\*\*All information contained within this study summary is the responsibility of the author of this document. All errors in communication and reporting belong to the author and are not representative of the organizations being reported on.**

**Please contact the author to correct data or information.\*\*\***

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## Points of Contact for Registry Offices & State Policy Makers

### **MACTE: Montessori Accreditation Council for Teacher Education.**

- Rebecca Pelton, Ed.D., Executive Director
- MACTE, 108 Second Street S.W. Suite 7, Charlottesville, VA 22902
- Phone: (434) 202-7793
- Fax: (888) 525-8838
- Email Registry/Policy related inquiries to: [rebecca@MACTE.org](mailto:rebecca@MACTE.org)
- Assistance is available Monday through Friday 9:00 - 4:00 EST.
- Website: <http://www.macte.org/>

### **WECAN: Waldorf Early Childhood Association of North America.**

- Susan Howard, WECAN Coordinator and Chair of the WECAN Early Childhood Teacher Education Committee.
- Coordinator Office: 528 Pine St., Amherst, MA 01002.
- Phone: (413)-549-5930
- WECAN Administrative Office, 285 Hungry Hollow Road, Spring Valley, New York 10977
- Administrative Office: (845)-352-1690
- Fax: (845) 362-1695
- Email Registry/Policy related inquiries to [showard@waldorfearlychildhood.org](mailto:showard@waldorfearlychildhood.org)
- Website: [www.waldorfearlychildhood.org](http://www.waldorfearlychildhood.org)

### **LifeWays North America**

- ✦ Cynthia Aldinger, Executive Director
- ✦ LifeWays North America, 403 Piney Oak Drive, Norman, OK 73072
- ✦ Phone: (405) 579 - 0999
- ✦ Email Registry/Policy Related inquiries to: [CynthiaA@LifeWaysNorthamerica.org](mailto:CynthiaA@LifeWaysNorthamerica.org)
- ✦ Website: <http://www.LifeWaysnorthamerica.org/training-programs/overview>

### **Webster University Pedagogista Graduate Certificate**

- ❖ Dr. Brenda Fyfe, Dean of the School of Education , Webster University- St. Louis
- ❖ Email: [deansoe@webster.edu](mailto:deansoe@webster.edu)
- ❖ Dr. Cheryl Breig-Allen, Coordinator of the ECE Department, Webster University- St. Louis
- ❖ Email: [allencb@webster.edu](mailto:allencb@webster.edu) Phone: (314) - 246-7652
- ❖ Website: <http://www.webster.edu/certificates/pedagogical-coordination.html>
- ❖ Website: <http://www.reggiochildren.it/corso/pedagogista-dei-servizi-educativi-per-linfanzia/?lang=en>

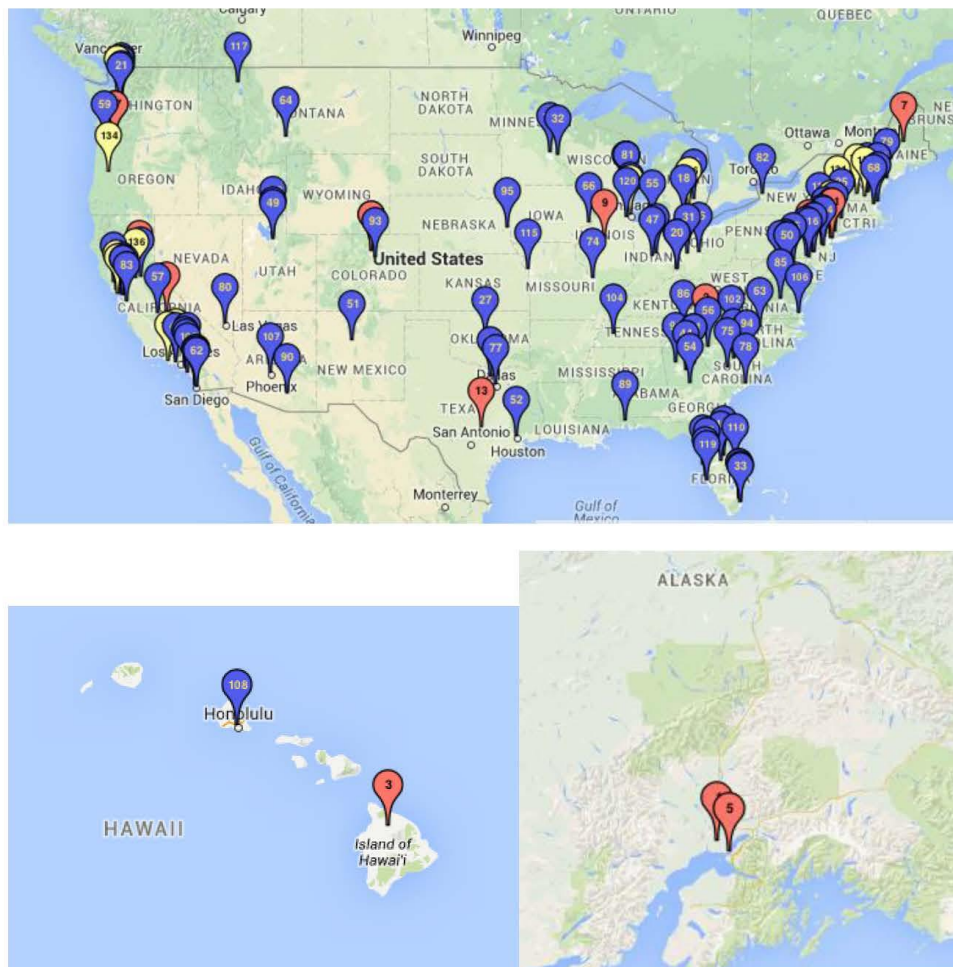
### **NAREA: North American Reggio Emilia Association.**

- Laruren Dap, Administrative Coordinator for NAREA.
- Email: [lauren@reggioalliance.org](mailto:lauren@reggioalliance.org)
- NAREA, 1131 Canton St., Roswell, GA 30075
- Phone: 770-552-0179 Fax: 770-552-0767
- Email: [NAREA@reggioalliance.org](mailto:NAREA@reggioalliance.org) Website: <http://reggioalliance.org/narea/>

Contact [kimbel@umail.iu.edu](mailto:kimbel@umail.iu.edu) or [edpolicyconsulting@gmail.com](mailto:edpolicyconsulting@gmail.com) for more information.

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**Nationwide Map of Alternative Pedagogy Teacher Training/Education Availability (2/15):**



- Red = LifeWays Member Training Site
- Yellow = Waldorf Member Teacher Preparation Location
- Blue = MACTE Accredited Montessori Teacher Education Program

Contact [kimbel@umail.iu.edu](mailto:kimbel@umail.iu.edu) or [edpolicyconsulting@gmail.com](mailto:edpolicyconsulting@gmail.com) for more information.

## APPENDIX I

### Alternative Pedagogy Accreditation/ Recognition Contact List

#### **MACTE: Montessori Accreditation Council for Teacher Education.**

- Rebecca Pelton, Ed.D., Executive Director,
- MACTE, 108 Second Street S.W. Suite 7, Charlottesville, VA 22902
- Phone: (434) 202-7793
- Fax: (888) 525-8838
- Email Registry/Policy related inquiries to: [rebecca@MACTE.org](mailto:rebecca@MACTE.org)
- Assistance is available Monday through Friday 9:00 - 4:00 EST.
- Website: <http://www.macte.org/>

#### **WECAN: Waldorf Early Childhood Association of North America.**

- Susan Howard, WECAN Coordinator and Chair of the WECAN Early Childhood Teacher Education Committee.
- Coordinator Office: 528 Pine St., Amherst, MA 01002.
- Phone: (413)-549-5930
- WECAN Administrative Office, 285 Hungry Hollow Road, Spring Valley, New York 10977
- Administrative Office: (845)-352-1690
- Fax: (845) 362-1695
- Email Registry/Policy related inquires to [showard@waldorfearlychildhood.org](mailto:showard@waldorfearlychildhood.org)
- Website: [www.waldorfearlychildhood.org](http://www.waldorfearlychildhood.org)

#### **LifeWays North America**

- ✦ Cynthia Aldinger, Executive Director
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- ✦ Phone: (405) 579 - 0999
- ✦ Email Registry/Policy Related inquires to: [CynthiaA@LifeWaysNorthamerica.org](mailto:CynthiaA@LifeWaysNorthamerica.org)
- ✦ Website: <http://www.LifeWaysnorthamerica.org/training-programs/overview>

#### **Webster University Pedagogista Graduate Certificate**

- ❖ Dr. Brenda Fyfe, Dean of the School of Education , Webster University- St. Louis
- ❖ Email: [deansoe@webster.edu](mailto:deansoe@webster.edu)
- ❖ Dr. Cheryl Breig-Allen, Coordinator of the ECE Department, Webster University- St. Louis
- ❖ Email: [allencb@webster.edu](mailto:allencb@webster.edu) Phone: (314) - 246-7652
- ❖ Website: <http://www.webster.edu/certificates/pedagogical-coordination.html>
- ❖ Website: <http://www.reggiochildren.it/corso/pedagogista-dei-servizi-educativi-per-linfanzia/?lang=en>

#### **NAREA: North American Reggio Emilia Association.**

- Laruren Dap, Administrative Coordinator for NAREA.
- Email: [lauren@reggioalliance.org](mailto:lauren@reggioalliance.org)
- NAREA, 1131 Canton St., Roswell, GA 30075
- Phone: 770-552-0179 Fax: 770-552-0767
- Email: [NAREA@reggioalliance.org](mailto:NAREA@reggioalliance.org) Website: <http://reggioalliance.org/narea/>

## KIMBERLEE BELCHER

### PROFESSIONAL EXPERIENCE

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#### **April/2015- Montessori Accreditation Council for Teacher Education**

##### *Vice President of State Relations*

-Implement nationwide articulation of Montessori Credentials in State Registries, build nationwide policy database, build policy section in website, consult, advise, inform, report, track, update, represent.

#### **Jan/2014-Aug/2014 Montessori Public Policy Initiative**

##### *Public Policy Special Projects Consultant*

-Provide weekly updates on Federal policy activity in Early Learning related to CCDBG, Head Start, Early Head Start, Preschool Development Grants, Race to the Top – Early Learning Challenge, etc. Creation of Federal Policy Brief and Definitions Map for internal organizational advocacy use, organizational development, inter-agency relationship development. Reported to Executive Council.

#### **July/2006-May/2009 Indiana University – School Of Education**

##### *Associate Instructor/Graduate Research Assistant*

-Taught undergraduate Elementary Social Studies Methods (Section E325) and supervised 25 students placed in elementary schools for student teaching (Section M401). Provided research support for use in grants and professional articles. Guest lecturer in undergraduate courses related to working with under-served and under-privileged communities.

#### **Feb/2005-July/2006 T.E.A.C.H. Early Childhood® NEVADA**

##### *Program Director (Statewide Scholarship Program for Early Education Providers)*

-Responsible for statewide program operation and management. Carried program from conceptual stages through statewide implementation in community colleges and universities. Responsible for program development, including record keeping systems for application processing, tracking tuition payments, grades, and reimbursements of tuition/books/stipends. Independently counseled more than 75 individuals on academic responsibilities. Created, marketed, executed major events, with attendance over 150 per event. Responsible for 23 community-wide briefings. Worked closely with community agencies and legislative representatives on adult education in early childhood. Responsible for increased state-wide collaboration on continuing education initiatives and programs. Maintained accurate standards to comply with national licensing office.

#### **Feb/2004-Feb/2005 Nevada Child Care Apprenticeship Program**

##### *Program Coordinator (Apprenticeship Training Program for Early Care Providers)*

-Responsible for program operations and management in Las Vegas and surrounding areas. Processed scholarships, stipend requests, and paperwork required for Department of Labor and Economic Opportunity Board. Assisted participants in enrolling, courses, and program completion to mentorship positions. Created reports on program progression and statistics, created documents for distributing information to funding sources.

## EDUCATION

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2006-2015      Indiana University      Bloomington, IN

**Ph.D. Curriculum & Instruction**

***Minor Education Leadership & Policy Studies***

Research interests: Application of “Standards” in ECE, American Indian & Social Justice Education

Highlight of Graduate Coursework includes: (*transcripts attached*)

- *ED 671 Social & Cultural Change*
- *PSY 741 Community Counseling*
- *ED J500 Instruction in Context of Curriculum History*
- *ED H620 Education Policy Studies*
- *ED A630 Economic Dimensions in Education Policy*
- *ED 664 Contemporary Curriculum and Instruction Issues*
- *ED J760 Curriculum and Instruction Issues: Race, Class, & Multiple Literacy*
- *ED J762 History of Teachers, Teaching, and Teacher Education*
- *ED 622 Issues in Education Policy*
- *ANTH 604 Participatory Research Methods in Indigenous Communities*
- *ED675 Learning Styles & Learning Theories*

1997-2003      Chaminade University      Honolulu, HI

**2003 Masters of Education, specializing in Culture in Education**

**2001 Bachelors of Science in Early Childhood Education/Minor in Psychology**

***Montessori Credential through a MACTE accredited teacher education program***

-National Center for Educational Statistics (NCES) “NELS:88” Training, 2003; Arlington, VA.

-Research interests and study focused on cultures and how they enhance learning and teaching in educational curriculums; focus areas included Minority, Low-Income, and Native Hawaiian/American Indian, and Dual Language Learners.

-International Art Therapy (certificate), 2001; Engelscholm, Denmark.

-American Montessori Society Consultant Training, 2001, 2008; Maui, HI.

-Graduated Master’s Program with 4.0, awarded “Outstanding Graduate Student,” invited to represent department as speaker for graduation; Chaminade University, 2003.

-Grant writing courses through Truckee Meadows Community College, 2005.

## REFERENCES

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Available on Request

## **SUMMARY OF QUALIFICATIONS**

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### **1992-2015**

Executive Committee Member for the National Workforce Registry Alliance, 2015.

Grant Reader for Office of Head Start's "Partnership Grants," 2014, Washington, DC.

Grant Consulting for Private/Non-Profit Indian Language Restoration Agency, 2013, N.D.

Grant Reader for Office of Indian Education, 2012, Washington, DC.

Extensive work with application of nationwide educational standards in ECE and DOE.

Experienced at setting program objectives, milestones, and evaluation (for funding).

Excellent track record for successful program development and working on planning teams.

Responsible for addition/recognition of Montessori Certification in Nevada Registry, 2006.  
Awarded *2007 Policy Maker of the Year* by High Desert Montessori School, Reno Nevada.  
(A Public Charter School)

ECE Professional Development Panelist, ECE Public Policy Forum Panelist, 2006, NEVAEYC.

One of five in Nevada to participate in the NAEYC Public Policy Forum in Washington DC, 2006. Organized and implemented the Montessori Directors of Nevada Advisory Committee, 2005. Held community workshops and performed school consultations at no charge. Initiated Montessori Education Week statewide in Nevada, 2006. Collaborated with Health Smart to bring Dr. Bruce Perry to Reno for a conference, 2006. Created Legislative Kits for community use, initiated state-wide participation for Worthy Wage Day, 2006.

Highly involved in presenting adult ECE education through college classes, 40+ workshops, and 10+ conferences. Taught undergraduate courses for two community colleges and two universities. Attended the ECE Professional Development Institute in Baltimore, 2004 and NAEYC Conference in Anaheim, 2004.

Assisted with state ECE licensing, created/maintained school database systems, and dealt with application/registration of new students. Responsible for bringing school staff into compliance with State Registry Systems. Led staff workshops, staff meetings, worked with families who had concerns for children with developmental delay (using the Early Screening Profile), created a school/classroom newsletter (70+ issues), and carried out additional supervisory responsibilities. Co-organized an event sponsoring Dr. Silvana Montanaro from Rome to Hawaii for a statewide seminar, underwritten by the school for its 25<sup>th</sup> anniversary, in addition to coordination of additional events. Coordinated AMI-USA Accreditation for the school.



## **PUBLICATIONS**

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- Montessori 3-6 Art, Science, Gross Motor Curriculums (1999)
- Record Keeping in Montessori 3-6 (2001)
- “Arts participation in Hawaii’s schools in comparison to the nation” (Master’s Thesis, 2003)
- “Fast Nevada Facts” (2005), provided to DHHS Office of Child Care
- Wrote proclamation issued by the governor for “Montessori Education Week” (2005/2006)
- “Nevada Early Childhood Advocacy, a new direction for public support” (draft, 2006) NV DHHS
- ECE Policy Landscape, a thematic policy overview created for the Montessori Public Policy Initiative (MPPI), (2014)
- Policy Maker’s Guide to Montessori Teacher Recognition created for the Montessori Accreditation Council for Teacher Education (MACTE), (2015)

## **CONFERENCE PRESENTATIONS**

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- Belcher, K. (March, 2004). *Developmental Art Progression for Young Children*. Presented at the Nevada Association for the Education of Young Children Annual Conference. Reno, NV.
- Belcher, K. (March, 2005). *Professional Development in Early Care & Education*. Presented at the Nevada Association for the Education of Young Children Annual Conference. Las Vegas, NV.
- Belcher, K. (April, 2006). *Leadership in Action, How Effective Directors Get Things Done*. Presented at the Nevada Association for the Education of Young Children Conference. Las Vegas, NV.
- Belcher, K. (April, 2006). *Worthy Wages and the Early Care Workforce: A Policy Agenda for Nevada*. Presented at the NV Association for the Education of Young Children Conference. Las Vegas, NV.
- Belcher, K. and Schonleber, S., Ph.D. (October, 2007). *Montessori Education in a Native American and Hawaiian Context: What Works, What Doesn’t and Why*. Presented at the 38<sup>th</sup> National Conference of the National Indian Education Association. Honolulu, HI.
- Belcher, K., Vargas, F., and Warren, D., Ph.D. (March, 2008). *Silenced Curricula: The Case of American Indians*. Presented at the Society for the Study of Curriculum History Annual Meeting. New York, NY.
- Belcher-Badal, K. (December, 2014). *Montessori Teacher Education Programs: Do They Count*. Montessori Accreditation Council on Teacher Education 3<sup>rd</sup> Annual Symposium. Alexandria, VA.
- Anderson, Belcher-Badal, Howard, O’Connell, Pelton. (September, 2015). *At the intersection of State Registries and Alternative Pedagogies: Stories of success and opportunity for Montessori, LifeWays, and Waldorf programs in State Registries*. National Workforce Registry Alliance Annual Conference. Orlando, FL.

## PROFESSIONAL MEMBERSHIPS

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National Indian Education Association	2009-2008
National Council for Social Studies	2008-2007
National Association for the Education of Young Children	2004-2006
American Montessori Society	2008-1998
Pi Lambda Theta	2008-2004
National Honors Scholar Society	2008-2004

<b><u>Boards</u></b>	<i>National Workforce Registry Alliance (NWRA) Board Member</i>	2015-2016
<b><u>Served:</u></b>	<i>Montessori Public Policy Initiative Charter Board Consultant</i>	2014
	<i>Community College of Southern Nevada ECE Advisory Committee</i>	2005-2006
	<i>NV Head Start Collaboration Advisory Committee</i>	2005-2006
	<i>NevAEYC Guest Board Member</i>	2005-2006
	<i>NevAEYC Conference Planning Committee, Public Policy Co-Chair</i>	2005/2006
	<i>Nevada Registry Advisory Board Member</i>	2005/2006
	<i>SNAEYC Board Member/RAEYC Member at Large</i>	2004/2005, 2005/2006
	<i>NV Joint Technical Skills Committee</i>	2004-2006

**Kimberlee Belcher** Program of Doctoral Studies: (transcripts available on request)

Dissertation Study topic focusing on Alternative Pedagogy Teacher Preparation Programs and their interaction with ECE Policy Makers in the ECE Professional Development System/Movement.

Curriculum & Instruction Major:

ED670	Issues in Peace & Education
ED660	Intro. To Exceptional Children
ED675	Learning Styles & Learning Theories
ED652	Multicultural Education & Diversity
ED671	Social & Cultural Change
J664	Seminar Curriculum Discourse
J762	Seminar History of Teachers & Teaching
J650	Independent Study: Montessori & American Indian Educational Compatibility
J760	Seminar Race, Class, History
J500	Instruction in Context of Curriculum
J670	History of Curriculum Thought in US
J605	Master's Thesis "Arts Participation in Hawaii's Schools Compared to the Nation"
J705	Seminar in Inquiry Curriculum & Instruction

Policy Studies Minor:

A630	Economic Dimensions of Education Policy
H637	Democracy & Citizenship Education
H620	Seminar in Education Policy Issues
H622	Policy Research Studies

Second Minor/Electives:

ED699	Independent Study: Arts & Culture in Education
ED699	Independent Study: Native American Learning Styles
PSY741	Community Counseling
Z550	Seminar Using Art to Deal with Difficult Issues in the Classroom
H637	Seminar American Indian Education in the Formation of the United States

Inquiry Core:

ED702	Introduction to Research
ED704	Quantitative Methods
Y502	Intermediate Statistics
P604	Participatory Community Based Research Methods in Indigenous Communities

**Courses Taught:**

- Professional Development in Early Childhood Education (Community College Southern Nevada)
- Social Studies Methods for Elementary Teachers (Indiana University)
- Student Teaching/Field Placement Seminars (Chaminade & Indiana Universities)