

First 5 Alameda Every Child Counts: Corps AA Degree Program

Preliminary Findings 2006-2010

June 2010

Presented by: Jara Dean-Coffey and Jill Casey

integrating information for change



jdcPartnerships

Overview

2

- Background
- Study
- Core Findings
- Questions

Program Evolution

3

- In 2000, First 5 Alameda County launched the Child Development Corps to:
 - Increase professional development and retention of the ECE workforce
 - “Jump start” long range systems change

Program Evolution

4

- In 2005-06 an intensive review of the previous five years was conducted.
- The following issues were identified as priorities for program re-design:
 - Declining enrollment in Corps; Low % of Family Child Care in Corps; Higher drop out rate of entry and lower level members
 - Graduates did not reflect diversity of population
 - Students were not attaining AA degree
 - Barriers to completing course work: basic skills, tutoring, class times, lack of intentionality in student course selection
 - Lack of community college commitment to early childhood degree programs

In 2006 the Corps AA Degree Program was developed to:

5

Program Re-design

- increase the number of ECE professionals with an AA degree, particularly family child care providers
- increase the diversity of Corps graduates to reflect the population
- increase community college commitment to early childhood degree programs

Corps AA Degree Program

6

Components

- Student stipends tied to progress toward AA degree
- Full-time AA Professional Development Coordinators (AA PDCs) – one at each of the 4 colleges – to provide educational and professional advising to Corps participants
- Full-time Systems PDCs – one at each of the 4 colleges - to integrate Corps program into college systems
- Full-time Career Advocates – one at each of the 3 Child Care Resource & Referral Agencies

Financial Investment to Date

7

2000 to 2005: \$22 million in stipends
(does not include community college contracts, admin,
and other program expenses)

2006 to Spring 2010: \$8,399,396 total investment

The Study

8

Questions

1. Is Corps AA increasing AA degree attainment of ECE practitioners?
2. What are the most successful components of Corps AA?
3. What are the barriers/challenges to attaining AA degrees among Corps AA members?
4. What are the barriers/challenges to systems-level institutionalization of support?

Data Sources

- Enrollment Data (2006-2010)
- PDC TA Logs (2009-2010)
- Corps AA Participant Surveys & Focus Group Summaries (2010)
- Merritt Cohort Survey & Interviews Focus Group Summaries (2006-2010)
- Mid-Year and Annual Contract Reports (2008-2010)
- PDC Interviews (2006)

Program Factors & Data

9

Factor to be Addressed

- Declining student enrollment in program and high drop out rate
- Low percent of Family Child Care participants

Note: 1,140 have been in the Corps program for 5 years or more

Results 2006-2010

- Enrollment remained flat
- 40% dropped out
- 55% of 989 participants participated for more than one year
- 15% of participants were Family Child Care providers

Program Factors & Data

10

Factor to be Addressed

- Graduating ECE providers do not reflect diversity of population

Results 2006-2010

- Race/ethnicity of graduates
 - 18% Latino
 - 19% Asian
 - 39% White
 - 14% African American/Black
 - 10% Other

*Note R.E of children 0 to 5 in Alameda County:
Latino 32%, White 25%, Asian 24%, Afr. American/Black 13%, Other 7%*

Program Factors & Data

11

Factor to be Addressed

- Focus on students who do not have AA degrees

Results 2006-2010

- 79% of graduates entered the program with an AA degree or higher in an unrelated field
- 39% of all Corps AA participants entered the program with an AA degree or higher in an unrelated field

Program Factors & Data

12

Factors to be Addressed

- Lack of AA degree attainment

Results 2006-2010

- 6% attained AA degrees (57 of 989)

Note: National comparisons -

✓ Less than 1/3 of students who enroll in community college with intention of degree attain AA. (NYTimes, May 3, 2010)

✓ Only 11% of community college students graduate with a degree in 3 years across country (Achieving the Dream, 2007)

Program Factors & Data

13

Factor to be Addressed

- Barriers to completing course work:
 - basic skills,
 - tutoring,
 - class times,
 - lack of intentionality in student course selection

Results 2006-2010

- 100% of participants completed a Student Education Plan
- PDCs & students report that participants received support for
 - developing career goals
 - financial assistance
 - ESL support
 - tutoring

Program Factors & Data

14

Factor to be Addressed

- Lack of community college commitment to college degree programs

Results 2006-2010

- Advances in articulation across college systems
- Chabot college added ECE Spanish Cohort to course catalogue

15

The Cohort Model

Cohort Focus/Features

16

- Intense, customized support with peer learning
- Dedicated counseling
- Weekend courses
- Tutoring
- Learning and support groups

AA Degree Attainment Among Merritt College Cohort Participants

17

- Emerging Teacher Program is designed to assist students to complete General Education classes.
 - 62% (46 of 74) attained AA degrees
 - 75% of ETP Cohort graduates participated in Corps AA Degree Program for at least one year
 - 57% were Corps AA participants in their graduation year
 - 55% are Head Start providers who are required to earn an AA degree for continued employment

18

Analysis and Conclusions

Is Corps AA increasing AA attainment of ECE practitioners?

19

- 6% of participants obtained AA degree
- Most of these graduates already possessed an AA degree in an unrelated field.
- Most of these graduates were center-based teachers.
- Non-White providers were disproportionately under-represented in the graduate pool.

What are the most successful components of the Corps AA program?

20

- Cohort models, which are correlated with significantly higher graduation rates than 6%, appear to be the most promising approach to the Corps AA Degree Program's primary goal.
- Students report that stipends, dedicated college staff, bilingual college staff, tutoring and R&R career advising are helpful.

Secondary Impacts of Corps AA Degree Program

21

- Among 538 students participating in Corps AA for more than one year:
 - 48 obtained their Child Development Permit for the first time
 - 30% (148 of 488) who already had a Child Development Permit moved to a higher Permit level
- Increased student intentional course planning through mandatory Student Education Plans (SEPs)

What are the barriers/challenges to obtaining AA degrees?

22

- Students identify the same barriers and challenges that were identified in 2005
- Although students report that monetary stipends are helpful, stipends are not strongly linked to degree attainment
- Policies such as Head Start employment requirements may ultimately be linked to degree attainment
- Low rate of Family Child Care provider participation, along with disparate demographics between successful and unsuccessful students need to be explored

What are the barriers/challenges to *systems level* institutionalization of support?

23

Community College System

- Reduced student services teams
- Reduced course availability
- Community partners impacted by the state and local fiscal environment → limiting the availability of external supports for students.
- Increased demand → fewer overall resources.

Early Care and Education

- Compensation
- Range of course offerings
- Definition and standardization of quality

Findings

24

- Structural and systemic issues continue
- Although students report that monetary stipends are helpful, stipends are not strongly linked to degree attainment
- Policies such as Head Start employment requirements may ultimately be more linked to degree attainment
- Cohort models are a promising strategy
- Low rate of Family Child Care participation and disparate demographics between successful and unsuccessful students need to be explored