October 2025

FACULTY FINDS

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New Personas to Support Your Work

For those of you who use personas in your work, I am delighted to share access to a set of new personas. These were co-created in San Diego with faculty members, educators, and families. I am pleased to share that I led the co-creation process with support and collaboration from the PIPELINES project at SDSU. Please note that several of the personas are available in English and Spanish. I encourage you to explore these new children/families with an eye toward how you might use them to even more effectively prepare future EC educators.

A set of personas from North Carolina will be appearing soon. They also emerge from a co-creation process with faculty, educators, and families. To give you a sneak preview, here's Ben. Please consider how he might enhance your work.

Ben



Five-year old Ben has grown up surrounded by family: his parents and older siblings in the same house, his grandparents in a house on the same lot, and his aunt, uncle, and cousins across the street. Ben and his family are members of the Lumbee Tribe and have grown up listening to the stories of his grandparents and other tribal elders and participating in tribal celebrations.

Ben was born with spina bifida, which has impacted his mobility. Ben and his family have always viewed his disability as part of who he is, but not the definition of who he is. As a young child he got around in a stroller and he got his first wheelchair when he started school. The chair has small wheels in the front that light up when he moves, a feature that has made Ben very popular.

Science is Ben's favorite subject and he especially loves hands on learning. He enjoys participating in Indian Education programs offered by the Lumbee tribe that offer opportunities to learning about traditional housing, dances, and other tribal traditions. Reading is not a priority because it doesn't connect to topics he's interested in.

Ben's aunt Kim describes him as a very sociable child. Since he was an infant, he has participated in family gatherings and in a faith community that has provided weekly opportunities to interacting with lots of different people. Many members of Ben's family are educators, and the priority for learning and pursuing advanced degrees is strong. They have high expectations for Ben and push back when teachers alter expectations because of his disability.

At school, Ben wants to participate exactly as his classmates do. On the playground, he wants to go outside and play. During story time, he wants to sit on a carpet square just like his friends do. And on a field trip, he wants to sit on a regular bus seat with his friends instead of being forced to go to the back of the bus where he can be bolted down. Lately Ben's been frustrated that his chair won't allow him to go into the housekeeping area.

PIPELINES Personas
https://education.sdsu.edu/research-innovation/pipelines/personas

Want to know more about how to create place-based personas? Contact me at
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Promising Models to Support and Expand the Early Childhood Educator Workforce

A new brief from the Center for American Progress addresses a top challenge in early childhood policy: recruiting and retaining high-quality, qualified educators. The report looks at apprenticeship programs, scholarships, wage supplements, worker protections, comprehensive supports and benefits, and pathways to credentials that recognize prior learning and experience. Specific examples from Alabama, California, Delaware, Washington, Washington DC, and Wisconsin are cited.

Promising Models to Support and Expand the Early Childhood Educator Workforce
https://www.americanprogress.org/article/promising-models-to-support-and-expand-the-early-childhood-educator-workforce/

High Quality Pre-K Starts with Supported Teachers: Results from a National Survey of Pre-K Teachers

In April 2024, the National Academies of Sciences, Engineering, and Medicine released *A New Vision for High-Quality Preschool Curriculum*, which examined pre-K curriculum quality for children from ages three to five. This excellent publication offered early childhood faculty members evidence on how to strengthen their programs to better prepare future teachers. A follow-on report based on a nationally representative survey of pre-K teachers in public schools has recently been released. ***Instructional Resources in Public School–Based Pre-K: Findings from the Spring 2024 American Pre-K Teacher Survey*** shares findings related to structural characteristics of pre-K programs, such as the curriculum and assessment materials that pre-K teachers used most frequently in their classrooms, perceptions of the quality of these materials, access to planning time and dedicated time for coordination across grades, and professional learning activities.

A New Vision for High-Quality Preschool Curriculum
https://nap.nationalacademies.org/catalog/27429/a-new-vision-for-high-quality-preschool-curriculum#resources

Instructional Resources in Public School–Based Pre-K: Findings from the Spring 2024 American Pre-K Teacher Survey
https://www.rand.org/pubs/research_reports/RRA3279-3.html (full report and 1-page overview)

Supporting Advancement for the Early Care and Education Workforce

Several states are looking to revise their early care and education (ECE) career pathways to make them more accessible and competency based. Field experience is one route for educators to gain competence, but few states include experience as a qualification for career advancement. The National ECE Workforce Center's 2025 research-to-practice brief, ***Incorporating Early Educators' Experience into Career Pathways***, explores options for better recognizing the value of experience. For the latest on credit for prior learning or evidence-based equivalencies, take a look.

Incorporating Early Educators' Experience into Career Pathways
https://www.nationalecewo rkforcecenter.org/publicatio ns/incorporating-early-educators-experience-into-career-pathways/

Getting Community-Engaged Research Right

Do your students design, implement, participate in, contribute to, or share community-based research? If yes, this new resource may be of interest to you and them. The **Community-Engaged Research Library** has an array of resources that can be filtered by stage to help researchers, no matter what step of the research process they're entering. Ideas for designing studies, collecting data, or sharing results with the community abound. And, if your students don't participate in community-based research, what about an assignment in which they might, for example, design a research project to learn about the communication priorities and preferences of families?

Community-Engaged Research Library
https://www.childtrends.org/publications/a-comprehensive-library-of-community-engaged-research-resources-implement

Resources from Cultivate Learning/EarlyEdU

Helping Educators Navigate Stress

EarlyEdU courses work! University of Washington researchers recently analyzed data on our EarlyEdU course "Resilience and Wellness for Educators." They found the course helps early childhood educators cope better with stress, which improves their interactions with children. Read their study: Supporting our Early Childhood Education Teachers: Stress, Self-Efficacy, and Stress Coping Strategies, published online in the Early Childhood Education Journal.

Crediting Competence and Prior Learning

Time is running out to register for the October 30 EarlyEdU Credit for Prior Learning virtual conference. EarlyEdU proudly partners with the National Association for the Education of Young Children (NAEYC) to offer this online conference. Share strategies on providing college credit for experience, practice, and competence. You'll also hear stories from students about the impact of that credit on their careers and education. Register now for this exciting half-day event.

Celebrate Bilingual Children

October is Celebrating the Bilingual Child Month. Research repeatedly suggests that learning multiple languages helps children develop more fully. The EarlyEdU Alliance places a strong emphasis on multilingual learning. Two free video modules include Dual Language Learners: Program and Family Support and Building Skills in Two Languages. Each video comes with notes and activities to deepen your learning.

Apply for Policy Fellowship

The Bank Street Education Center is recruiting its fourth cohort for the Early Childhood Policy Fellowship. This 12-month leadership program, beginning January 2026, welcomes early childhood systems leaders at the federal, state, and local levels who are working to build equitable, high-quality early care and education systems across the country.

Applicants must propose a capstone project to improve the early education system from their current role. Fellows will meet with coaches monthly to help them apply what they learn to their capstone project.

Apply by October 31.

A Few Words About Faculty Finds

Faculty Finds is distributed six times per year. Each issue focuses on early childhood content resources, instructional resources, and information about the effective preparation of early childhood and early childhood special education professionals. All resources are free. Sign up to receive Faculty Finds every other month at **EarlyEdU Alliance®**

Faculty Finds is compiled by Camille Catlett with support from the EarlyEdU Alliance. All or part of Faculty Finds may be freely shared or copied. Past issues of **Faculty Finds** are archived at **Discover Resources - EarlyEdU Alliance** To suggest resources/topics or provide feedback, please contact Camille (**camille.catlett@unc.edu**).