May 13, 2014

Katherine Tople
Illinois State Board of Education
100 North First Street, W-380
Springfield, IL 62777

Dear Ms. Tople:

Frank Porter Graham Child Development Institute at the University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill is pleased to a proposal in response to the RFSP: Illinois State Board of Education: QRIS Validation and Child Outcomes Study.

Our proposal focuses on conducting a validation study of center-based programs registered in ExceleRate Illinois and a child outcomes study of preschool-aged children. Our proposal submission seeks to provide solid, policy-relevant information to guide state leaders in strengthening ExceleRate as part of the broader efforts to build a strong early childhood system in Illinois. Our proposed project assembled a knowledgeable and highly qualified team and plans to work collaboratively with ISBE and OECD staff throughout the project period.

The individual who signed the letter is authorized to legally bind the proposer.

Technical questions and general correspondence should be directed to:

Iheoma U. Iruka
Frank Porter Graham Child Development Institute
105 Smith Level Rd., CB 8180,
Chapel Hill, NC 27599-8180.
Email: iruka@unc.edu
Phone: 919-843-8085
Fax: 919-966-7532
Contract and grant negotiations and business correspondence should be directed to:
Office of Sponsored Research
University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill
AOB104 Airport Drive, Suite 2200, CB 1350
Chapel Hill, NC 27599-1350

Sincerely,

Iheoma U. Iruka, Ph.D.
Scientist and Associate Director for Research
919-843-8050
iruka@unc.edu

Barbara Entwistle, Ph.D.
Vice Chancellor for Research
919-966-3411
resadminosr@unc.edu
Illinois QRIS Validation and Child Outcomes Study
#22033176

Iheoma U. Iruka, Ph.D. (Principal Investigator),
Margaret “Peg” Burchinal, Ph.D. (Co-PI) &
Noreen Yazejian, Ph.D. (Co-PI)

Frank Porter Graham Child Development Institute
The University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill

Jana Fleming, J.D., Ph.D. (Co-PI)

Erikson Institute

Grant Proposal Submitted to
Illinois State Board of Education

May 15, 2014

Technical questions and general correspondence should be directed to Iheoma U. Iruka at Frank Porter Graham Child Development Institute, 105 Smith Level Rd., CB 8180, Chapel Hill, NC 27599-8180.
Email: iheoma.iruka@unc.edu
Phone: 919-843-8085
Fax: 919-966-7532

Contract and grant negotiations and business correspondence should be directed to the Office of Sponsored Research, University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill, AOB104 Airport Drive, Suite 2200, CB 1350, Chapel Hill, NC 27599-1350
Section 1. Executive Summary

Frank Porter Graham Child Development Institute (FPG), in collaboration with Erikson Institute, submits this proposal to the Illinois State Board of Education (ISBE) to conduct a validation study of center-based programs registered in ExceleRate Illinois, including a child outcomes study of preschool-aged children. Based on current research linking high quality early care and education (ECE) experiences and children’s school readiness and later success, quality rating and improvement systems (QRIS) have been developed to enhance and ensure that ECE programs are high quality, especially for children most at-risk for school failure (e.g., low income, ethnic minority, dual language learners). As QRISs, including ExceleRate Illinois, have multiple functions, including providing a systematic way to monitor and improve quality and providing clear information to families about quality, there is a need to ensure that the system is foremost valid and reliable, as well as associated with child outcomes. Thus, we propose a validation study that seeks to examine the following questions:

- To what extent does ExceleRate Illinois differentiate levels of quality in programs overall and across each domain?
- To what extent does a program’s score on each domain contribute independently to its overall rating?
- What combination and/or weighting of indicators best discriminate levels of quality?
- Do children who participate in programs rated at higher Circles of Quality overall and across particular domains demonstrate greater gains in child outcomes compared to children who participate in programs rated at lower levels overall and across domains, and do finding differ by pathway through which programs entered ExceleRate Illinois?

To address these questions, we propose a stratified random sample of 175 centers randomly selected from each of the four Circles of Quality and based on region of the state and pathway (for Silver and Gold programs). In addition to conducting classroom observations with 1/3 of the classrooms with a maximum of 5 classrooms per center, we will collect data from 4-6 children per classroom using standardized measures, with selected measure having a Spanish version. In addition to obtaining consent and gathering demographics from families through a survey, we will also conduct interviews with directors and web-based surveys with teachers. Surveys will be available in English and Spanish and bi-lingual data collectors will also be available as needed.

To examine the proposed research questions, appropriate analytical methods will be used ranging from basic examination of means, standard deviations, and correlations, to multi-level modeling. One of the co-PIs (Dr. Peg Burchinal) has extensive expertise and experience conducting these types of analyses, and more specifically has been lead statistician for many state and national studies examining similar questions being proposed in this validation study.

The FPG-Erikson team will work closely with the team designated by ISBE and OECD to finalize the design and methodology for this study. The FPG-Erikson team has planned for in-person meetings as well as teleconference meetings with the ISBE and OECD team. FPG also has the ability to videoconference.

Findings from the study will be finalized and disseminated in collaboration with ISBE and OECD. As requested, we will prepare reports and materials tailored to specific audiences from policy and decision makers, center directors, to parents and community leaders.
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Frank Porter Graham Child Development Institute (FPG), in collaboration with Erikson Institute (EI), submits this proposal to the Illinois State Board of Education (ISBE) to conduct a validation study of center-based programs registered in ExceleRate Illinois, including a child outcomes study of preschool-aged children. Our proposed project approach and study design take advantage of our extensive experience designing and conducting similar validation studies. We have designed a validation study with the overall goal examine whether the tiers of ExceleRate meaningfully differentiate levels of quality that correspond to changes in children’s progress. We have devised a timeline of project activities that will provide answers to critical questions of interest to ISBE and other stakeholders across the state of Illinois. Our approach will be to understand the critical questions of ISBE and other stakeholders, and to provide research-informed responses as the final plans are determined in collaboration with ISBE. We believe this approach will be useful for providing information for system improvement, particularly regarding differences across program types and multiple “pathways” to ExceleRate Illinois and outcomes for high needs children. The FPG-Erikson team assembled for this project has extensive experience evaluating and validating early childhood education programs and systems, including Head Start and pre-kindergarten, early intervention, and quality rating and improvement systems (QRIS). The team assembled for this evaluation has the knowledge, experience, and expertise necessary to ensure that the project is completed in a timely manner, on budget, and at the highest standards of professional quality. Erikson, in particular has a long history of working with the State of Illinois to help address issues facing young children and families, including conducting research and evaluation activities in support of high quality early care and education. Per the Request for Sealed Proposals (RFSP), this proposal is organized as follows: 1) Executive Summary, 2) Study Design, 3) Milestones and Delivery, 4) Qualifications, 5) Subcontractors, and 6) Locations where work will be performed.

Section 2. Study Design

In this section, we outline our view of the nature of the project and the study design based on the scope of the work described in the RFSP. First, we review the most current literature related to early childhood education research, with a specific focus on quality rating and improvement systems (QRISs). Second, we review the background and theoretical underpinnings of ExceleRate Illinois. Third, we outline our conceptual framework and research questions for the project. Finally, we detail our study design, which includes a detailed description of the tasks and timelines associated with the project.

2.1 Current Issues in Early Childhood and QRIS

FPG’s proposed design for the validation of ExceleRate Illinois, including a child outcomes study of preschool-aged children, features innovations that address emerging research trends and knowledge. In this section, we review the literature on early childhood programs and highlight new research findings, issues, and trends.

High-quality early childhood education improves school readiness. Both experimental and observational research evidence accumulated over the past 40 years demonstrates that high quality early care and education (ECE) can enhance preschoolers’ academic and social skills, improving school readiness skills with effects into high school and adulthood in some cases (Burchinal, Magnuson, Powell, & Hong, in press). Some evidence suggests that high quality ECE has larger impacts for children from low-income families (Dearing, Berry, & Zaslow, 2006; Magnuson & Waldfogel, 2005), dual language learners (Gormley, Gayer, Phillips, & Dawson, 2005; Weiland & Yoshikawa, 2013), and children facing multiple familial and social risk factors (e.g., teen or depressed mother, single parent; Burchinal, Roberts, Zeisel, Hennon, & Hooper, 2006).
High-quality ECE is thought to have its impact on school readiness skills through frequent, sensitive adult-child interactions, scaffolded teaching instructional approaches, and language-rich and age-appropriate environments (Burchinal et al., in press; Pianta, Barnett, Burchinal, & Thornburg, 2009). These are labeled process quality, and it is believed that process quality can only be high when programs have structural factors such as low child:staff ratio and educated teaching staff (NICHD Early Child Care Research Network [ECCRN], 2005; Phillipsen, Burchinal, Howes, & Cryer, 1997). In addition, some studies identified other important structural factors such as family engagement (Elicker, Noppe, Noppe, & Fortner-Wood, 1997; Ghazvini & Readdick, 1994; Owen, Ware, & Barfoot, 2000), culturally competent staff and environments (Betancourt, Green, Carrillo, & Park, 2005) and leadership (Culkin, 2000). Continuous quality improvement is believed to be the most effective means for improving ECE process quality (Advisory Committee on Head Start Research and Evaluation, August, 2012), and therefore enhancing program quality and children’s school readiness and optimal development, especially for diverse children.

Motivated in part by ECE research, states have implemented quality rating and improvement systems to enhance ECE program quality. State and local policymakers have utilized research linking high-quality early childhood education and children’s outcomes in developing quality rating and improvement systems (QRISs) to ensure that children, especially disadvantaged children, are attending high-quality education programs during the early years. Nearly all state QRISs include staff training and education and the classroom or learning environment (although the latter is only measured at higher levels of quality in some states). States differ on whether and to what extent they include parent-involvement activities, business practices, child-staff ratios, or national accreditation status. QRISs serve multiple purposes, one of which is to provide a standard way of rating program quality, based on multiple criteria, and making the rating information available to parents. The assumption underlying this function of QRISs is that parents often lack good information about program quality and if such information was available they would be more likely to choose higher-rated settings. As a result, lower-quality providers would be given an incentive to either improve the quality of their program or to leave the market (Zellman & Perlman, 2008). Secondly, QRISs represent a systematic approach to providing a range of technical assistance, resources, and incentives for programs to improve program quality. Such efforts include consultation around quality improvement, increased investments for professional development scholarships, micro grants for other targeted quality improvement efforts, and in some instances higher levels of subsidy payments for more highly rated programs. The goal of these efforts is to foster and support providers’ efforts to improve the quality of care they provide. Thus QRISs attempt to improve quality by affecting both the demand for high-quality care and the supply of such care. Of course, the success of such efforts rests on the ability of rating systems to accurately identify and measure key aspects of quality and the willingness of providers to participate in a rating system (Zellman & Perlman, 2008).

Evaluations of QRISs have yielded mixed findings. Given the relative infancy of most state QRIS programs, conclusions about their effectiveness are premature. To date most research has focused around issues of implementation and has been descriptive in nature. Moreover, the differences in system designs across states makes it difficult to draw any general conclusions from an evaluation of any one state’s system. Studies that involve child outcomes are rare, and so far provide mixed results, which is not surprising given the diversity of rating systems and related policies. A small study in Missouri found that low-income children in higher rated programs learned more than their peers in lower rated programs (Thornburg, Mayfield, Hawks, & Fuger, 2009). However, a large study of Colorado’s rating system did not find that children’s gains in school readiness differed systematically as a function of star rating level (Zellman, Perlman, Le, & Setodji, 2008). The Colorado report highlighted how difficult it is to
study children in a system with such high levels of child mobility (and thus low levels of exposure to a particular program). A reanalysis of extant data using the rating systems from several states reported associations between individual quality variables and both observed quality and child outcomes, but few associations were observed between overall star ratings and either observed quality or child outcomes (Sabol, Hong, Pianta, & Burchinal, 2013). However, a meta-analysis of Head Start, pre-kindergarten, and nationally representative data showed more associations among star ratings, observed quality, and child outcomes (Burchinal, Hong, Sabol, & Forestieri, 2014). These results may provide further evidence that continuous improvement of QRISs based on evaluations are likely to improve their ability to predict child outcomes.

2.2. Background on ExceleRate Illinois

ExceleRate Illinois, the State’s new QRIS for early childhood programs, began phase-in during June 2013. All Illinois licensed child care, Preschool for All, center-based Prevention Initiative programs funded by ISBE, and center-based Head Start and Early Head Start programs will be included in ExceleRate Illinois. The focus of this QRIS is to provide the following:

- A consistent definition of what constitutes high-quality early learning and development programs across a diverse range of settings,
- An accountability framework for programs receiving public funding,
- Pathways and support for continuous improvement, and
- Useful information for parents and families to help them select the program that best meets their needs.

All licensed center-based providers are recognized at the Licensed Circle of Quality, but must apply to be part of the Circle of Quality above this level. Head Start programs are presumed to be at the Silver or Gold Circle of Quality depending on the most recent scores on the Classroom Assessment Scoring System (CLASS; Pianta, La Paro, & Hamre, 2008) and other monitoring results. Preschool for All and Prevention Initiative programs are also presumed to be the Silver or Gold Circle of Quality depending on the most recent Early Childhood Environment Rating Scale-Revised (ECERS-R; T. Harms, Clifford, & Cryer, 1998) scores and other monitoring results. Any licensed, Head Start or Preschool for All program can also apply for the Silver or Gold Circle if they are accredited by the National Association for the Education of Young Children (NAEYC) or National Accreditation Commission (NAC) using current accreditation status and supplemental documentation as required. As a block system, programs cannot attain the next level until they have met the requirements of the previous level. Programs have an option of how they will reach the highest level – assessment or accreditation. Thus, ExceleRate Illinois represents a system that is consistent yet provides flexibility to encourage maximum participation.

2.3 Conceptual Framework and Research Questions

Three key promises of a QRIS are: 1) to ensure that parents and other stakeholders can select the highest quality child care programs for children based on meaningful quality ratings; 2) to promote quality improvement in all child care settings through the provision of important benchmarks of quality measured periodically to examine change over time; and 3) to provide quality that can support children’s optimal development (Zellman & Fiene, 2012). In order to make good on these promises, a QRIS must be validated. Validation is a multi-faceted process that involves demonstrating a high degree of correlation between ratings and important indicators of program quality (construct validity), a high degree of correlation between ratings and important measures of quality not included as indicators in the rating system (convergent validity), a high degree of correlation between quality ratings and desired child outcomes.
(predictive validity), and a significant capacity of the ratings system to distinguish high- and low-quality sites (discriminant validity). In addition, the validation process assumes reliability in quality measures, an assumption that requires indicators and quality ratings to not be biased or flawed in their reflection of quality status. Given these definitions we propose a multi-pronged validation of Excelerate Illinois that is framed by Zellman and Fiene’s (2012) comprehensive approach to validating a quality rating and improvement system, which includes:

- examining the validity of the underlying concepts of the system,
- evaluating the psychometric properties of the elements of the system (e.g., inter-rater reliability, correlation among standards and indicators),
- assessing the outputs of the rating system (e.g., relation with independent measures), and
- examining the association between ratings and child outcomes.

Below we present the proposed research aims and methodology for this project, including sampling strategy, power analyses, data collection methods, and data analyses. Collaboration between the evaluators and the Illinois State Board of Education (ISBE) and the Governor’s Office of Early Childhood Development (OECD) is essential in developing the plans for an evaluation of a major state initiative like the QRIS. Whereas we recognize that all decisions regarding the research questions and plans for sampling, measures, and analysis will be made in conjunction with the ISBE, the following section represents what we suggest to begin that conversation based on the RFSP.

2.4 Research Questions: Validation of ExceleRate Illinois

1. To what extent does ExceleRate Illinois differentiate levels of quality in programs overall and across each domain?
   1.1. To what extent do programs at higher tiers in ExceleRate Illinois demonstrate higher levels of quality overall and within each domain?
   1.2. According to independent measures of process quality, to what extent do the programs at the highest Circle of Quality demonstrate higher quality compared to other participating programs? Do the programs with Gold ratings have higher quality according to independent measures than other participating programs?
   1.3. Do associations among Circle of Quality rating and quality as measured independently vary by program type (e.g., licensed child care setting, Head Start, Preschool for All) or “pathway” to Circle of Quality level?

2. To what extent does a program’s score on each domain contribute independently to its overall rating?
   2.1. Which quality domains (e.g., Teaching & Learning, Family & Community Engagement) and subdomains (e.g., Learning Environment, Curriculum) best predict ExceleRate Circle of Quality rating? Is the number of standards met within a given domain higher in programs at higher Circles of Quality for each domain?

3. What combination and/or weighting of indicators best discriminate levels of quality?
   3.1. To what extent does each of the indicators contribute to the overall domain rating? Are there indicators that appear to be more strongly related to the overall domain score computed without that indicator or to independent measures of process quality?
3.2. Is there evidence that the indicators might be multidimensional, suggesting that combining them with other indicators within that domain could be problematic in terms of a continuous quality improvement model?

3.3. Do we see evidence that the domains might be multidimensional, suggesting the need for more than one total score (e.g., Family & Community Engagement might be important, but may not be related to classroom structural and process quality)?

3.4. Does weighting the domains and indicators produce total scores that are more strongly related to independent quality measures and child outcomes?

4. Do children who participate in programs rated at higher Circles of Quality overall and across particular domains demonstrate greater gains in child outcomes compared to children who participate in programs rated at lower levels overall and across domains?

   4.1 Adjusting for family characteristics, to what extent are the gains in children’s academic and social skills larger among children who attended programs rated at higher Circle of Quality levels compared to children in programs rated at lower levels?

      4.1a To what extent does each domain predict gains in child outcomes?

      4.1b To what extent does each standard predict gains in child outcomes?

   4.2 When children attend programs rated at higher Circles of Quality, are gains larger for children from low-income families, ethnic minority children (e.g., African American, Latino), from families in which English is a second language, or who have special needs than for other children?

   4.3 Do child gains related to attending programs rated at higher Circles of Quality vary depending on type of program (e.g., licensed child care setting, Head Start, Preschool for All) or “pathway” to Circle of Quality level?

2.5 Evaluation Methodology

This section of the proposal presents detailed information about sampling, data collection procedures, and proposed measures. The FPG-Erikson team will work closely with the team designated by ISBE and OECD to finalize the design and methodology for this study. We propose a sampling and data collection strategy that will allow for important facets of validation research to occur with results that generalize to the population of centers participating in ExceleRate Illinois.

2.5.1 Sampling Strategy

The FPG-Erikson team includes experts in sampling and analysis, and will use this expertise to draw a representative sample that includes programs of different types and in different parts of the state. Only centers currently enrolled in ExceleRate Illinois will be included in the sampling frame. The three types of programs include licensed centers, Head Start (including Early Head Start), and Preschool for All (state pre-kindergarten program). Sampling for the three types of programs will vary because Head Start and Preschool for All programs may enter at the Silver level due to the program standards in place for these programs. In contrast, other programs must enter at the licensed level unless they can demonstrate they have met accreditation standards (e.g., NAEYC accreditation).

We propose that a stratified random sample of 175 centers randomly selected from each of the four Circles of Quality and based on region of the state and pathway (for Silver and Gold programs) will allow for appropriate generalization to the quality levels and provide necessary
power to detect important effects. Centers will be recruited in the fall of 2015. The five regions include Northwestern Illinois (region 1), Northeastern Illinois (region 2), East Central Illinois (region 3), West Central Illinois (region 4), and Southern Illinois (region 5). The four Circles of Quality will be represented. We will sample more programs at the Circles with the most programs. As of December 31, 2013 there were far more ExceleRate Illinois programs at the Licensing Circle (n=2,152) and Gold Circle (n=1,103) than at the Bronze (n=245) or Silver (n=682) Circles. Based on this, we propose to recruit 75 programs at the Gold level (25 licensed, 25 Head Start/Early Head Start (HS/EHS), 25 Preschool for All (PSA), 60 at the Silver level (20 licensed, 20 HS/EHS, 20 PSA), and 20 at the Bronze level and 20 at the License level (total of 175 programs). Thus, we propose a sampling plan that draws strategically from each of the regions and types of programs, and Circles of Quality to the extent possible while ensuring we have adequate representation to examine regional differences and type of program by Circles of Quality differences, especially at the Silver and Gold levels.

Once a program is randomly selected to participate in the validation study, we will select up to 1/3 of the classrooms with a maximum of 5 classrooms per center. At least one classroom from each age range represented at the center will be selected. Once classrooms are selected, we will send information packets home with all preschool children in selected classrooms, including a parental consent form. We will randomly select 2-3 boys and 2-3 girls from the children whose parents returned the parental consents, with a maximum of 12 children in a given center. Selected children will participate in fall and spring assessments for the purpose of examining the relation between program quality and change in pre-academic and social skills.

The sampling design and recruitment at the center, classroom, and child level will be piloted in the first year if it is determined that a pilot is needed, and will be revised and submitted to ISBE and OECD staff for final review and comments by May of the first year.

**Sampling Procedures.** The sampling procedures will progress in stages based on study design and power requirements.

1. In the Spring of 2015, create a list of all currently enrolled centers in ExceleRate Illinois (i.e., create the sampling frame).
2. Randomly select a total of 175 centers stratified by region and type of program from each Circle of Quality tier.
3. Depending on the size of the program randomly select 1/3 or up to 5 classrooms to observe using quality assessment and validation instruments, stratifying by age of children served in classrooms.
4. Randomly select four to six children in each preschool classroom for child assessment measures among children whose parents have consented.

**Power.** We propose a sample size that is both attainable and sufficiently powered to detect even very small effects. Power analyses were conducted that focused on comparing programs at the Gold Circle with other programs. Using the Optimal Design Software (Raudenbush, Spybrook, Liu, & Congdon, 2005), there is good power (80% or more) to detect effect sizes of .40 or larger in analyses of center-level outcomes, .25-.30 or larger in analyses of classroom quality with an average of 2-3 classrooms per center, and .15 to .20 in analyses of child outcomes with an average of 4 children in 2-3 classrooms per center and the use of the fall score as a covariate that accounts for 50% of the within child variability. We assume there are 175 centers included in the analysis, and intra-class correlation ranges between .05 and .10 in these analyses. Thus, it appears the proposed study has good power to detect effects on classroom quality and child outcomes given the recent review of the ECE literature suggests moderate effects on classroom quality (e.g., .3-.8) and modest effects on child outcomes (e.g.,
.15-.30), modest intra-class correlations (e.g., .05-.10) and substantial variance accounted for by fall testing (e.g., .5-.7) (Burchinal et al., 2014).

2.5.2 Data Collection Procedures
The research aims of this project require analyzing a combination of existing ExceleRate Illinois data as well as data from programs and staff collected specifically for this project. Data for this project will be collected primarily through observations, child assessments, and web-based surveys of program staff. Face-to-face and phone interviews will also be considered as needed to ensure a high response rate. A pilot study may be conducted in the Spring of 2015. Primary data collection will occur during the 2015-2016 academic year. The site visits to selected programs to collect observational data and distribute (and conduct) staff surveys (as needed) will be conducted in the Fall of 2015 through Spring of 2016 using trained data collectors. FPG-Erikson will coordinate with ISBE, OECD, and other staff, as needed, to ensure that data collection occurs at the most convenient time for programs. More specific information about data collection procedures is provided below. A timeline for various activities is included later in the Milestones and Deliverables section of the proposal.

**Human Subjects and Confidentiality.** Prior to beginning data collection, an application will be submitted to UNC’s Institutional Review Board to ensure adequate protection against any risks associated with participation in this research and to ensure that confidentiality is maintained. At the time of initial contact, research staff will explain the study to participants. A full explanation of the voluntary nature of participation, study activities, and procedures will be clearly presented to each participant. All of the potential participant’s questions will be answered. If she/he agrees to participate, two copies of the informed consent documents will be provided. The participant will be informed that she/he may elect to skip any portion of the study or curtail participation at any time. The participant will sign both consent documents, retain one, and return the other to the research staff. For the child outcomes portion of the study, both parental permission and child behavioral assent will be obtained. Then, data collection will commence.

Minimal risks are associated with this study. The primary risk is breach of confidentiality. One source of a breach of confidentiality is a research staff member who discloses the identity or data of a participant. The risk of a breach of confidentiality will be minimized through appropriate training for all research staff regarding research ethics surrounding confidentiality. All research staff will complete training and obtain certification in human subjects’ protections and submit a copy to the Principal Investigator. In this way, research staff will agree to abide by the informed consent process and not to divulge, publish, or otherwise reveal to unauthorized persons any information obtained during the study. Each program and participant will be assigned a unique identification number with the master list linking names and ID numbers stored separately from the data. Only research staff with contact with programs will have access to this list. Electronic versions of the data will include the identification numbers and will not include names, addresses, or other sensitive data. As soon as possible after data collection, all personal identifiers will be removed from all non-electronic files and the tracking files will be destroyed to further prevent the possibility of identification of individuals and/or disclosure of confidential data. Access to all forms of study data (electronic and hardcopy) will be restricted to research staff only. All data will be protected in a secure, password-protected database and all hard copies of data will be stored in locked filing cabinets. Information from this study will be provided in aggregate form only. Any oral or written reports drawing on the study data will contain no identifying information that would link individuals to specific programs or data.

**Existing Data.** We will use the data about ratings on each domain for every program participating in ExceleRate Illinois to help finalize research questions and study design, and as part of the validation study. The FPG-Erikson Team will work with ISBE and OECD to construct analysis-ready datasets of relevant data.
Recruitment. Once ISBE staff have been provided program-level contact information (e.g., director or owner name, address, contact information, Circle of Quality level) to the research team for programs in the stratified random sample, FPG and Erikson will be responsible for recruiting programs to participate in the studies. Within participating centers, classrooms will be randomly selected. We will ask program staff to distribute letters and consent forms to families with three- and four-year-old children. We will prioritize the selection of children from low-income families by selecting children after we have received consent and demographic forms from families within a given classroom and program. Incentives will be provided for programs, families, and children participating in the studies. For the one-time program and classroom observations: a) directors will receive a $50 gift card for completing web-based surveys and for facilitating program and classroom observations and data collection with children, and teachers will receive a $25 gift card for allowing their class to be observed. For the fall and spring child assessment data collection: a) children will receive a small book or toy (approximately $5 each) after assessment of their language and school readiness skills, b) parents will receive $15 and $25 gift card in the fall and spring, respectively, as incentive to complete a short survey about their family and child, and c) teachers will receive a $15 gift card for completing information about each individual child who is part of the study.

Erikson will serve as the local coordinating site for data collection. Erikson has extensive experience conducting multiple large-scale assessments of ECE programs in Illinois including: the Chicago Program Evaluation Project (studying the impact, strengths, and weaknesses of Chicago’s largest school- and center-based early care and education programs); the Preschool Inputs and Children’s Outcomes Study (a NIEER project to determine the comparative effectiveness of three program inputs in improving Chicago Public School preschoolers’ academic outcomes through first grade, for which Erikson was contracted to conduct and manage the child assessments); and, most recently, the statewide evaluation of the ISBE Early Childhood Block Grant (ECBG).

Retention Strategies. Retaining participants in the evaluation is critical to maintaining an adequate sample size that is sufficiently powered to answer the research questions of interest. Our strategies for retaining participants in the validation study are derived from years of experience conducting similar evaluations and from research on best practices for recruiting and retaining participants in research and evaluation studies. First, communications involving the validation study will highlight the importance of the evaluation in shaping the future of the QRIS and will stress that participating in the study will be giving them a voice. This will help programs see the importance of the evaluation and a sense for how valuable their participation is to the study team, both of which help with retention. Second, frequent contact is important to participant retention. Throughout the evaluation, we will communicate with participants to keep them informed about study activities and engaged in the process. Third, we will attempt to maintain the same staff throughout the evaluation period. This provides continuity in relationships, which are critical for participant retention. Finally, we will offer incentives for participation in the evaluation, as described above. For example, staff will be compensated for their time spent completing surveys and rating forms and for allowing us access to their classrooms.

Data Collection Staff. Illinois-based field staff will be hired as data collectors and supervised by Erikson. We will use the following guidelines to make hiring decisions: (1) knowledge/experience related to working with young children or early childhood care and education settings; (2) bachelor’s degree in early childhood, education, psychology, or a related field strongly preferred; and (3) experience in data collection involving conducting classroom observation and/or assessing children.
Measures
This section describes the measures proposed to be included in the ExceleRate Illinois validation study. They will be refined after discussion with ISBE and OECD staff, examination of existing data and the state context, and within the confines of available funds. In Table 2-1, we align the standards of ExceleRate Illinois, Circle of Quality Levels, and proposed measure. We propose tools that are research-based, used in other QRISs, and culturally relevant and valid. In some instances, there are no agreed upon tools to assess a particular standard (e.g., cultural competence) or a current tool is under development [e.g., a family engagement measure for QRISs is expected to be released by the Office of Planning, Research, and Evaluation (OPRE) in the summer/fall 2014]. Thus, we propose the best available tool or set of items to independently assess a given standard or domain.
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Standard</th>
<th>Criteria</th>
<th>ExceleRate criteria bronze</th>
<th>ExceleRate criteria silver</th>
<th>ExceleRate criteria gold</th>
<th>Proposed data collection measures</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1A Learning Environment</td>
<td>ERS Total/CLASS ES &amp; CO</td>
<td>Training</td>
<td>Self-assessment</td>
<td>ERS-M=4.5+, min=4.0 CLASS ES and CO M=5.0+, min=4.0</td>
<td>CLASS ES &amp; CO &amp; ITERS-R for infant classrooms</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1B Curriculum</td>
<td>Approved aligned or specific curriculum</td>
<td>Training</td>
<td>Self-assessment</td>
<td>Verification that selected curriculum is aligned and research based OR verification of lesson plans by assessor</td>
<td>Director Interview-list of aligned curricula &amp; PAS #11</td>
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<tr>
<td>1C Instructional Quality</td>
<td>ERS Interactions, Language and Reasoning /CLASS IS</td>
<td>Training</td>
<td>Self-assessment</td>
<td>ERS Interactions, Language and Reasoning M=4.75+, min=4 /CLASS IS M=3+, min=2.5</td>
<td>CLASS IS &amp; ITERS-R Listening &amp; Talking, Interactions subscales for infant classrooms</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1D Child Screening</td>
<td>Approved screening tools</td>
<td>Training</td>
<td>Self-assessment</td>
<td>5+ on PAS #10</td>
<td>PAS #10</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1E Child Assessment</td>
<td>Approved tools</td>
<td>Training</td>
<td>Self-assessment</td>
<td>5+ on PAS #11</td>
<td>PAS #11</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1F Inclusion</td>
<td>Approved practices</td>
<td>Training</td>
<td>Self-assessment</td>
<td>On-site verification</td>
<td>Director Interview-items from DEC Best Practices</td>
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<tr>
<td>2A Family &amp; Community Engagement</td>
<td>Approved practices</td>
<td>Training</td>
<td>Self-assessment</td>
<td>5+ on PAS #16, 17, &amp; 19</td>
<td>PAS #16, 17 &amp; 19</td>
</tr>
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<td>2B Transition</td>
<td>Approved training</td>
<td>Training</td>
<td>Self-assessment</td>
<td>Verification of implementation and communication of implementation plans</td>
<td>Director Interview-items about plans and implementation</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3A Program Administration</td>
<td>Approved tools</td>
<td>Training</td>
<td>Self-assessment</td>
<td>PAS subscale score of 5+ on 4 subscales aside from child assessment or family involvement</td>
<td>PAS</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3B Group Size &amp; Engagement</td>
<td>Verified by Licensing</td>
<td>Licensing</td>
<td>Licensing</td>
<td>6wk-14m 1:4, 8; 15-23m</td>
<td>Classroom observation sheet</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Standard</td>
<td>Criteria</td>
<td>ExceleRate criteria bronze</td>
<td>ExceleRate criteria silver</td>
<td>ExceleRate criteria gold</td>
<td>Proposed data collection measures</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>----------</td>
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<td>---------------------------------</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ratio</td>
<td>onsite assessor</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>1:4, 12; 2-3y 1:6, 12; 3-6y 1:10, 20; 5y 1:20, 20; &gt;5 1:20, 30</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3C Continuous Quality Improvement</td>
<td>Verified by onsite assessor</td>
<td>Training</td>
<td>Self-assessment/quality improvement plan</td>
<td>Demonstrated progress on plan</td>
<td>Director Interview &amp; PAS #14</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3D Culturally &amp; Linguistically Appropriate Practices</td>
<td>Approved tools</td>
<td>Training</td>
<td>Self-assessment/quality improvement plan</td>
<td>ERS score of 6+ on promoting acceptance of diversity and evidence of communication with families in home language</td>
<td>Director Interview-one item from ECERS-R &amp; items from Quality Benchmark for Cultural Competence Project</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4A Director Qualification</td>
<td>Verified by registry</td>
<td>Licensing</td>
<td>Ill director credential Level 1</td>
<td>Ill director credential Level 2</td>
<td>Director Interview &amp; PAS #22</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4B Staff Qualifications</td>
<td>Verified by registry</td>
<td>30% ECE cred level 2</td>
<td>30% ECE cred level 3</td>
<td>20% ECE cred level 5 &amp; 20% ECE cred level 4</td>
<td>Director Interview, Teacher Survey, &amp; PAS #23, #24, and #25</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4C Staff Development</td>
<td>Verified by registry</td>
<td>Training</td>
<td>individual plans for all class staff &amp; 20 hrs PD/yr-w. at least 5 hrs of approved PD/yr</td>
<td>individual plans for all class staff &amp; 20 hrs PD/yr-w. at least 5 hrs of approved PD/yr</td>
<td>Director Interview &amp; PAS #2 and #3</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Note. ERS = Environment Rating Scale, ITERS-R = Infant/Toddler Environment Rating Scale-Revised; CLASS ES = CLASS Emotional Support, CLASS CO = CLASS Classroom Organization, CLASS IS = CLASS Instructional Support; PAS = Program Administration Scale
**Program Observations.** The Program Administration Scale (PAS; Talan & Bloom, 2004) will be used to measure program quality across a variety of constructs corresponding to ExceleRate Illinois, including child assessment, child screening, family & community engagement, program administration, quality improvement, and staff development and qualification. The PAS contains 25 items grouped into 10 subscales that measure leadership, management, and administrative practices of center-based early childhood programs: 1) Human Resources and Development, 2) Personnel Cost and Allocation, 3) Center Operations, 4) Child Assessment, 5) Fiscal Management, 6) Program Planning and Evaluation, 7) Family Partnerships, 8) Marketing and Public Relations, 9) Technology, and 10) Staff Qualifications. The instrument is designed for multiple uses, including program self-improvement, technical assistance and monitoring, pre-service and in-service training, research and evaluation, and public awareness (Talan & Bloom, 2011). The PAS was designed to be a reliable and simple-to-administer tool to measure the overall quality of administrative practices of early care and education programs and as a useful guide to improve programs. The authors indicate correlations between the 10 subscales range from .63-.90 and inter-rater reliability within 1 point of 90%. The PAS displayed moderate correlation of .53 with the ECERS-R, indicating some similarity with the independent measures, but capturing unique aspects of program management. A study based on 30 centers in North Carolina found that program administration and organizational climate were both positively correlated with classroom quality, and that level of education of the director was related to higher quality administrative practices (Lower & Cassidy, 2007). Research has yet to link the PAS measure directly to child outcomes.

PAS will be collected through review of materials provided by program directors, observation of programs, as well as interviews with directors.

The PAS provides direct assessments of the following standards: 1D child screening, 1E child assessment, 2A family and community engagement, 3A program administration, and 4A-C director and staff qualification.

**Classroom Observations.** The Classroom Assessment Scoring System (CLASS; Pianta et al., 2008) and Environment Rating Scale (ERS), (only for programs and classrooms serving infants and toddlers, and one item focused on culture and diversity), will be used in this evaluation project, described further below. During observations of classrooms, number of children and staff will be recorded.

The CLASS Emotional Support and Classroom Organization domains will be used to validate standard 1A, learning environment, and the CLASS Instructional Support domain will be used to validate standard 1C, instructional quality (Infant/Toddler Environment Rating Scale for programs serving infants). In addition, we will include the one item from the ERS and other items from the Quality Benchmark for Cultural Competence Project on promoting and accepting diversity in the classroom to validate standard 3D, culturally and linguistically appropriate practices. In addition, the CLASS scores will be used to determine whether higher tiered programs have higher quality in general (Infant/Toddler Environment Rating Scale for programs serving infants).

**Classroom Assessment Scoring System** (CLASS; Pianta, LaParo.,& Hamre, 2008) is an observational assessment of the quality of teacher-child interactions. Its ten dimensions are organized into three domains. The Emotional Support domain includes positive climate, negative climate, teacher sensitivity, and regard for student perspectives. The Classroom Organization domain includes behavior management, productivity, and instructional learning formats. The Instructional Support domain includes concept development, quality of feedback, and language modeling. Each dimension is rated from 1 to 7 with higher scores indicating
higher quality. Data collectors observe classrooms for 4 to 6 cycles of observation for 20 minutes followed by 10 minutes of scoring. Studies have found a link between CLASS domains and other measures of quality, such as the ERS (Early et al., 2006) and child cognitive and socio-emotional outcomes (Burchinal et al., 2008; Mashburn et al., 2008). A separate version of the measure is available for classrooms serving toddlers (LaParo, Hamre, & Pianta, 2012).

Environment Rating Scales (ERS) are observational measures used to assess the global quality of child care classrooms. The family of ERS consists of three different versions appropriate for early childhood programs. We will use the Infant/Toddler Environment Rating Scale-Revised (ITERS-R; Harms, Clifford, & Cryer, 2007) for center-based classrooms serving infants and toddlers up to 30 months. This measure consists of 39 items organized into 7 subscales: (1) Space and Furnishing, (2) Personal Care Routines, (3) Listening and Talking, (4) Activities, (5) Interaction, and (6) Program Structure (as often done, we will not gather the 7th subscale, Parents and Staff). Scores on the ERS range from 1 to 7 with higher scores indicating higher quality. Studies have shown a relationship between the ERS and other indicators of program quality (Early et al., 2007) and cognitive and socio-emotional outcomes (Burchinal et al., 2009; Burchinal et al., 2000). We acknowledge that recent studies have questioned the link between ERS and child outcomes, especially within QRIS (Gordon, Fujimoto, Kaestner, Korenman, & Abner, 2013; Sabol & Pianta, 2014)); however, there are limited research-based tools to assess infant classrooms. Two tools that may be used for infant classrooms – the Infant CLASS and Quality of Caregiver-Child Interactions for Infants and Toddlers (Q-CCIIT) – are currently not available for use at this time, but should they become available, we will discuss with ISBE and OECD whether to consider them for the study.

Training. To ensure high-quality and reliable data, data collectors will be trained as stipulated by protocols established by observation measure and child assessment developers. For instance, all Classroom Assessment Scoring System (CLASS) observers will be certified as reliable when they demonstrate proficiency of 85 percent or higher (within one point) inter-rater reliability. To minimize drift, inter-rater reliability visits will be conducted for 10% of observations. Training will be provided by a certified trainer on the various quality measures. The PIs will oversee training on child assessments and program quality measures and procedures. This approach to training is very similar to that used in previous and current FPG studies (e.g., NCEDL, Educare Implementation Study, Head Start Designation Renewal System).

The same data collectors who will collect the classroom observations will be trained to collect child assessments. As done with previous large scale-studies at FPG, data collectors will go through a rigorous training. In order to be certified to collect child assessment data, they will either be observed by the trainer or send a videotape of themselves administering the battery with non-study children. Upon review by a gold standard trainer, data collectors will either be certified to collect data or go through retraining. Uncertified data collectors will not be allowed to collect data.

Interview. During the collection of PAS data, directors will be interviewed. As needed, a bilingual staff will be on handed to conduct the interview in English or Spanish. The director’s interview will include questions about the curricula used in the center, any transition plans and their implementation, the ratios and group sizes for each classroom and age of children in that room, the quality improvement plan, the extent to which parents who speak a language other than English have someone who communicates to them in that language, director and classroom staff qualifications in terms of percentages at Illinois credential levels, and staff development plans. In addition, information about teacher turnover and compensation will be gathered, factors that have been found to be associated with program quality (Grissmer & Kirby, 1997; Phillipsen et al., 1997).
Survey. A web-based survey will be administered to teachers in the selected classrooms. The web survey will be available in English and Spanish (based on the Census over 20% of households in Illinois speak a language other than English, predominantly Spanish), and each participant will be offered the option of paper or telephone interview. Presumably this offer will allow individuals with limited literacy skills to comfortably opt out of the on-line survey. The lead teacher survey will include questions about both the teacher/classroom and the selected children in the classroom. Teachers will be asked to report on demographic information, including race/ethnicity, education, experience, and tenure, and to provide information for validation of standards including ratio, group size, curriculum, their qualifications and development plan. In the child outcome portion of the survey, teachers will be asked to provide the date when the child was enrolled in the program as well as attendance data from the current study year. They will also be asked to rate the child’s academic and social skills using the instruments described below. This survey will be available in English and Spanish. Paper copies will be made available as needed.

Family Questionnaire. Basic demographic information will be collected from parents at the same time they consent for their child to participate in the study. We will gather demographic information about the parent (e.g., age, race/ethnicity, education, income range) and the child (age, gender, race/ethnicity), as well as information about the child’s health (see below for more details).

Child Pre-Academic and Social Skills. We propose to use a multi-method, multi-informant approach for assessing children’s learning and development. We will gather data through teacher ratings and direct assessments with standardized and research-based measures (see Table 2-2). The measures proposed below are available in English and Spanish and collectively assess multiple domains of children’s development. Below, we briefly describe the proposed measures. Two methods will be used to determine children’s English-language proficiency for child assessment. Children whose parents indicate that the child’s primary language is Spanish will be routed to a Spanish version of the assessment. Based on children’s performance on an initial set of 15 items from the PreLAS® (Duncan & DeAvilla, 1998), the assessment will proceed in English or the child will be routed out of the English version of the assessment.

Language and Literacy Skills. We propose to administer three assessments of children’s language and literacy skills. First, teachers will be asked to complete the Academic Rating Scale (ARS; α = .95) from the Early Childhood Longitudinal Study. The ARS gathers information about teachers’ perceptions of children’s literacy skills. Teachers rate each child’s skills on 1= “Not yet”— child has not yet demonstrated skill to 5= “Proficient”— child demonstrates skill, knowledge, or behavior competently and consistently.” Second, we will administer two subtests of the Woodcock-Johnson III Tests of Achievement: Letter-Word Identification and Picture Vocabulary (WJ-III; Woodcock, McGrew, & Mather, 2001) for English speaking children and the Batería III Woodcock-Muñoz (Muñoz-Sandoval, Woodcock, McGrew, & Mather, 2005) for Spanish-speaking children. Letter-Word Identification measures the basic pre-reading skills of letter and word recognition. Picture Vocabulary measures expressive (speaking) and receptive (understanding) language skills. Large-scale studies using rigorous methods (i.e., IRT) have equated the English and Spanish WJ-III measures and indicate that they assess the same competencies (Woodcock & Munoz-Sandoval, 1993). Recent findings indicate no significant differences between the English or Spanish versions of the WJ-III (Hindman, Skibbe, Miller, & Zimmerman, 2010). A fourth version of the WJ was just released this year; however, there is not an accompanying Spanish version, so we elect to remain with the WJ III.

Math Skills. Two measures of children’s math skills will be used. Teacher ratings on the ARS (α=.94) will describe the child’s early math skills. The WJ III Applied Problems and Bateria III
Applied Problems subtest measures simple counting, adding, subtracting, and making comparisons for children who speak English and Spanish, respectively.

**Socio-Emotional Skills.** The Social Skills Improvement System Rating Scale (SSISRS; Gresham & Elliott, 2008) is a teacher rating scale of children’s positive interaction behaviors as well as problem behaviors.

**Health Outcomes.** Parents will be asked to complete a one-time 4-item measure assessing the child’s health adapted from the Educare Learning Network Implementation Study. The measure asks parents about the child’s general health from poor to excellent, frequency of child’s illness in the past 6 months, number of hospitalizations and visits to the emergency room, and whether the child has any special health needs (e.g., asthma, allergies, vision problems).

Unless participants indicate that they would prefer a paper form, all data will be collected electronically to increase the integrity and timeliness of data. Direct assessments will be collected using computer-assisted interviews (CAIs). Quality assurance practices such as range checks (e.g., not allowing the entry of out-of-range values), validity checks (e.g., not allowing entry of values that contradict prior entries such as teacher education levels that are inconsistent with credential levels), and direct transfer of data into our statistical package will be conducted. The data from these measures will be scored, using standard procedure such as computing the CLASS domain scores, PAS’ guidelines for calculating the scores, and the scoring software provided by Woodcock-Johnson for the direct assessment of child outcomes. The programmers at FPG have over 30 years of experience with the accurate and timely processing, scoring, and analyzing of early childhood education data such as those proposed for collection for this validation study.

### Table 2-2 Proposed Measures and Frequency of Data Collection

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Type</th>
<th>Tool/Measure</th>
<th>Frequency</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Classroom/Program Observation</td>
<td>CLASS, PAS, ITERS-R, 1 ECERS-R item</td>
<td>Once</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Survey (Administrator &amp; Staff)</td>
<td>Interview</td>
<td>Once</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Family Questionnaire</td>
<td>Demographics/Child health</td>
<td>Once</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Child Pre-Academic and Social Skills</td>
<td>WJ-III/WM, ARS, SSISRS</td>
<td>Fall &amp; Spring</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

### 2.5.3 Data Analysis

The proposed data analysis addresses the full set of validation questions and is described below. We recognize that all aspects of the validation, including the data analysis, will be negotiated, and that the analyses will reflect the thinking of all parties. The technical details of the data analysis plan are provided to facilitate review of our approach. Note, however, we will tailor descriptions of technical details for different audiences. We will disseminate findings using technical and non-technical language, depending on the purpose and audience.

As a first step in validating the ExceleRate Illinois circle of quality, it is critical to examine the validity of the standards and domains.

**Standards.** The first issue that we will address involves the validation of the standards and domains of ExceleRate Illinois. We have proposed data collection that corresponds to the Gold level for each standard. The first set of analyses will test the extent to which our data agrees with the Gold level data for each standard using kappas. The kappa is an index of agreement that accounts for chance agreements. Each of the 15 standards will be examined. For example, we will examine the first standard by computing the proportion of centers at the Gold level in our
data and based on ExeceleRate Illinois onsite evaluation. Using our data, we will determine whether they met Standard 1A based on whether they have mean scores of 5.0 and minimum score of 4.0 on the CLASS Emotional Support and Classroom Organization – the standard applied by the ExeceleRate Illinois onsite evaluation. The rate of agreement about whether centers met Standard 1A in our evaluation and the ExeceleRate Illinois onsite evaluation will be tested with a kappa.

In addition, we will examine the extent to which centers that pass each of the standards at the Gold level in the ExeceleRate Illinois evaluation also have higher scores on independent measures of quality of that indicator. Table 2-1 lists independent measures for some criteria (e.g., CLASS scores for standards 1A and 1C on the learning environment and instructional quality; PAS Curriculum Scale for Standard 1B on curriculum; PAS Staff Qualification items for Standard 13-15 about the director’s and classroom staff’s qualifications). Analyses of variance (ANOVA) will compare the means of centers at each of the four Circles of Quality, and a priori contrasts will compare the centers that met the Gold level for that standard in their ExeceleRate Illinois onsite evaluation and other centers. Sample weights will be applied in these analyses.

The results of the validation of the Standards will be reported in terms of the proportion of centers meeting the Gold standard in the ExeceleRate Illinois onsite evaluation, the percentage with exact agreement and the kappa reflecting the agreement accounting for chance, the means (and standard deviations) at each of the four Circles of Quality on the independent measures of quality, the $F$-test for differences across the four Circles of Quality, the $t$-test for the contrast between the Gold level and other levels, and the effect size for that contrast.

**Domains.** The second issue we will address involves validating domain scores: 1. Teaching & Learning, 2. Family & Community Engagement, 3. Leadership & Management, and 4. Qualifications & Continuing Education. First, descriptively, we will compute the number of standards met within each domain based on our validation data and test the extent to which programs at higher Circles of Quality levels have passed more standards based on our independent assessment of each standard. Logistic models will compare the proportion of standards passed based on our data in comparison to whether that standard was deemed to be at the Gold level by ExeceleRate Illinois. Analyses will be weighted to reflect the stratified design.

**Research Questions 1 and 2.** To test Research Questions #1 and #2 regarding the extent to which ExeceleRate Illinois differentiates levels of quality in programs overall and by domain, the next set of analyses will test the extent to which programs passing each domain are viewed as providing higher quality based on the mean CLASS scores. The center-based mean score will be computed using the classroom observation data from each observed classroom. ITERS-R scores will be combined with the CLASS Emotional Support scores in computing center total if an infant classroom was observed because ERS total scores have been shown to be highly correlated and somewhat calibrated to the CLASS Emotional Support domain scores (Howes et al., 2008). Two sets of analyses will be conducted using Analyses of Covariance (ANCOVA) of the center-based mean CLASS domain scores.

First, the four levels of the Circle of Quality will be examined. Analyses will test the extent to which the mean scores across the 4 Circles differ. All analyses will include region and type of program as covariates, and sample weights will be applied. A priori contrasts will specifically test the extent to which there is a linear trend across the 4 levels and whether the programs at the Gold level differ from other programs. “Pathways” will be examined by adding a variable indicating whether the programs at the Gold level were monitored by ExeceleRate Illinois or provided other monitoring data to meet the Gold Standards to see if those programs differed in their overall classroom quality.
In addition, we propose to examine the extent to which centers at higher Circles of Quality show higher levels of structural and process quality based on all classroom and center-level assessments. Hierarchical linear models (HLM) will compare CLASS domain scores for selected classrooms and ANOVAs will compare PAS subscale scores, director and teaching staff education and training levels, and measures of inclusion and transition at the center level. Two-level HLMs will compare classroom scores, taking into account the nesting of classrooms in centers. All analyses will include region and type of program as covariates. The first set of analyses will focus on Circles of Quality as the primary predictor of interest, and follow-up contrasts will compare centers at the Gold levels with other centers and will compare higher and lower level programs with a linear contrast. Interactions with type of program will test whether the difference between programs with and without Gold Circle of Quality ratings varies by type of program (licensed, Head Start, Preschool for All, and center-based Prevention Initiative program). Interactions with “pathway” will also be conducted. Including the “pathway” indicator will test whether there are differences by programs reaching Gold Circle of Quality by being accredited, having the ERS observation or the CLASS observation.

Second, ANCOVAs will test the extent to which higher CLASS scores are observed when programs pass each of the 4 Circle of Quality Domains in their most recent ExceleRate Illinois rating (based on self-assessment for programs at the Silver level and monitoring for programs at the Gold level). Again, region and type of program will be examined.

Reports will provide means and standard deviations by Circle of Quality and by whether the programs progressed in the Circle of Quality in the past year, the results of the statistical comparisons, and the estimated effect sizes for those comparisons.

Research Question 3. To test Research Question #3 regarding combination of indicators that best discriminate levels of quality, the next set of analyses will examine the set of indicators within and across standards. First, we will examine the association among the standards within and across domains descriptively using factor analyses for binary variables (e.g., using measurement model in Mplus® and specifying binary variables or item response theory approaches). We will begin by testing the dimensionality and fit of the standards within domains and across domains. Evidence of multidimensionality within domains will be explored using both exploratory factor analyses (EFA) including all standards and separate confirmatory factor analyses (CFA) within domains. The EFA will be used to determine whether the 4 dimensions emerge as latent domain scores and to determine if some standards may load more strongly on a different domain than is indicated by the ExceleRate Illinois Circles of Quality. Low or non-significant loadings on specified latent domain scores in CFA will help determine whether the distribution of the proportion of centers passing that standard might make it difficult to determine its loading (e.g., very high or low rates of passing). If that does not account for its low loading on the latent domain, then we will examine whether the domain is stronger without that standard. The loadings from the CFA will be examined to determine whether weighting the items appears to substantially increase the strength of the latent domain scores relative to unit weighting.

Recommendations regarding the standards will be summarized based on two types of evidence. Specifically, the report will include information about the proportion of centers that passed that standard, the evidence from the analyses about the relative contribution of each standard to the domain score and whether that standard might load more strongly on a different domain (reporting the loading on the specified domain), and evidence from analyses in which we examined the extent to which higher center-level CLASS scores or residualized child outcomes (see below) were observed when centers passed that standard (reporting means and effect sizes).
**Research Question 4.** The final set of analyses will address Research Question #4 regarding whether children who attend programs rated at higher Circles of Quality show larger gains in child outcomes than do children who attend programs rated at lower Circles of Quality. Value-added multi-level analyses of the child outcomes will be conducted. Data on child outcomes will be collected for preschoolers in the fall and spring, so we can analyze the spring outcomes using value-added analyses that include as covariates the fall scores on that outcome, type of program (licensed, Head Start, Preschool for All), the child's gender, race/ethnicity, and special education status (special needs or not) and the family's home language (English as first or second language), poverty status, maternal education, and marital status of the parents. Three-level random-effects hierarchical linear models will be conducted, with random intercepts for classroom to account for nesting of children in classrooms and for centers to account for nesting of classrooms in centers. Sample weights will be applied in all analyses. Follow-up analyses will examine gain scores (spring score – fall score) to determine the patterns of findings and magnitude of effect sizes when this more rigorous, but less precise, approach is used to examine change over time.

The Circle of Quality level of each center will be the primary predictor of interest. To address Research Question #4.1, the first set of analyses will first enter Circle of Quality as a 4-level categorical predictor with two follow-up contrasts. The first contrast will compare centers at the Gold level with other centers and the second contrast will compute a linear contrast across the 4 levels. Effect sizes for these contrasts will be computed to describe the magnitude of the differences.

To address Research Question #4.1b, the next set of analyses focuses on each of the ExceleRate Illinois domains, using whether the center passed each of the four domains as the primary predictor of interest. The Circle of Quality level will be replaced with variables representing whether that center passed each of the four domains in their ExceleRate Illinois onsite evaluation (if those data are not available, then we will use whether the center passed that domain based on our evaluation). Of particular interest is whether passing each of the domains is related to larger residualized gains in child outcomes. We will examine family poverty, race/ethnicity, home language, and special needs as moderators in these analyses. Sensitivity analyses will be conducted to check the inferences from these analyses. First, we will examine each domain in separate analyses if there are moderate to high levels of correlations among the domains. Second, we will conduct parallel analyses using the data from our evaluation and from the ExceleRate Illinois evaluation to see if the same inference is drawn using the official data and the data from our evaluation.

To address Research Question #4.1c, the analyses focuses on each of the ExceleRate Illinois Standards, using whether the center passed each of the standards within each of four domains as the primary predictor of interest. Analyses will focus on determining whether passing each of the standards within each domain is related to larger residualized gains in child outcomes, and whether family poverty, race/ethnicity, home language, or special needs moderate those associations. Sensitivity analyses will: examine correlations between gains in child outcomes and each of the variables used to evaluate or validate each standard (e.g., CLASS domain scores, PAS subscale scores, director and teaching staff education and training levels, and independent measures of inclusion and transition); examine both the scores on each Standard from the ExceleRate Illinois evaluation, if available, and from our evaluation; and from each Standard examined alone.

To address Research Question #4.2, the next set of analyses will cross Circle of Quality level with the family’s poverty status, child race/ethnicity, family’s home language, and the child’s special education status. Separate analyses will be conducted in which each of these interactions is added to the analysis model, and focus will be on whether the differences
between children at Gold level centers and other centers are larger for children from low-income families, ethnic minority children, families in which English is a second language, and children with special needs. We will compute the effect sizes to describe the difference between attending a Gold and other centers for children that are and are not from low-income families, ethnic minority and White children, families in which English is the first language and English is the second language, and for children with and without special needs.

To address Research Question #4.3, we will include the type of program and the pathway indicator as moderators. First, we will, cross Circle of Quality level with type of program (licensed centers, Head Start and Early Head Start, Preschool for All), with a focus on testing whether the relationship between quality and child gains vary by type of program. Second, we will add the pathway indicator to these analyses to determine whether child outcomes at the Gold Circle of Quality differ depending on whether a program reached Gold by accreditation, ERS observation or CLASS observation.

Sensitivity analyses will be conducted to examine the extent to which the same inferences are drawn when more statistically rigorous methods are used. Propensity score analyses (PSA) using nearest neighbor algorithms will attempt to identify children with similar skill levels on their fall assessment and family demographic characteristics who do and do not attend Gold Circle of Quality programs. The analyses of child outcomes described above would be repeated, using the propensity scores from this PSA as a weight to account for selection bias on observed variables.

Reports on child outcomes will summarize these analyses, providing the means and standard deviations of the fall and spring scores, the overall F-test for the main effect and for each of the tests of moderation, and the contrasts and their effect sizes for comparisons of the centers at the Gold level and at other levels – for overall comparisons and for each of the groups in the tests of moderation. These reports will summarize the findings from the comparisons of outcomes by Circle of Quality, domains, and standards.

**Missing Data.** All efforts will be made to minimize missing data, but it is unlikely that no missing data will occur. We assume that data will be missing at random because few if any of the missing data are likely to be a function of the outcome measures (Schafer & Graham, 2002). Fifty imputation data sets will be created using missing data imputed from regression analyses of the other variables and adding random error to preserve the degree of variability. Analyses will be conducted separately for each data set and then results will be combined across in a manner that will take into account variation within and between imputation data sets (Rubin, 1976, 1987; Schafer & Graham, 2002). We will use the MCMC approach that uses multiple chains and completes at least 200 burn-in iterations before each imputation, and uses the EM algorithm across iterations. The burn-in iterations are used to make the iterations converge to the stationary distribution before the imputation.

**Limitations.** We acknowledge that one goal of the ExceleRate Illinois QRIS is to improve children’s outcomes and increase their likelihood of starting school prepared to succeed, but we caution against assuming that differences in quality or change (or not) in child outcomes is completely attributable to the system (i.e., causal inference). We want to stress that causal inferences cannot be made, although we will employ statistical approaches that reduce bias in analyses of child outcomes related to the fact that more advantaged parents may access higher quality care, and their children may do better because of the advantages provided by the families – not the higher quality child care. We plan to use two approaches to reduce selection bias – value-added approaches that include the child’s skills at the beginning of the year and propensity score approaches that involve contrasting child outcomes across programs among children with similar entry skills and family characteristics.
Section 3. Milestones and Deliverables

We provide tables below (Years 1, 2, and 3) that provide a general timeline for all major milestones, tasks and activities, and deliverables for the study. The organization(s) listed has primary responsibility for the activity, although both organizations (FPG and Erikson) will generally work on all aspects of the study. At FPG, Drs. Iruka, Burchinal, and Yazejian have overall responsibility for the work. At Erikson Institute, Dr. Jana Fleming has overall responsibility for the work.
Table 3-1 Year 1 Timeline: July 1, 2014 – June 30, 2015

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<td>Develop surveys for directors and teachers</td>
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FPG = Frank Porter Graham Child Development Institute; EI = Erikson Institute; ISBE = Illinois State Board of Education
Table 3-2 Year 2 Timeline: July 1, 2015 – June 30, 2016

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FPG = Frank Porter Graham Child Development Institute; EI = Erikson Institute; ISBE = Illinois State Board of Education
### Table 3-3 Year 3 Timeline: July 1, 2016 – December 31, 2016

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<th>ACTIVITIES</th>
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Section 4. Organizational Capacity

The proposed ExceleRate Validation Study would exist within the context of an institutional environment that supports and enhances the project’s mission. The University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill has a strong commitment to research and national leadership. Frank Porter Graham Child Development Institute (FPG) is one of several research institutes supported directly by the university via the allotment of funds for core operations, and indirectly by the availability of libraries, research support, and computer services. The organizational chart on the following page shows where the project and its staff will be placed, including the relationship with the proposed subcontractor. The paragraphs below describe our organizational capacity in detail.

4.1 The University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill

In U.S. News and World Report’s 2014 listing of the best colleges the University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill (UNC-CH) was ranked fifth among the nation’s top public universities and 30th overall among both public and private campuses. In a 2010 report entitled “The Top American Research Universities,” UNC-CH was ranked eighth among public universities, following such institutions as the University of California at Berkeley, University of California, Los Angeles, University of Michigan, Ann Arbor, University of Washington – Seattle. The rankings are based on data covering areas such as research, private support, faculty, and advanced training. Also, UNC-CH is the top public university in the South and one of only two from North Carolina cited in the NIH’s Top 20.

During fiscal year 2013, investigators at UNC-CH received a total of $777.8 million dollars in research grants and contracts from a wide variety of federal and non-federal sources, up from $716 in 2009. At $269.2 million, UNC-CH ranked 8th among all universities in NIH funding for FY 2013.

Human Subjects Protection. The Office of Human Research Ethics (OHRE) is responsible for ethical and regulatory oversight of research that involves human subjects at UNC-CH. The OHRE administers, supports, and guides the work of the Institutional Review Boards (IRBs) and all related activities. Any research involving human subjects proposed by faculty, staff, or students must be reviewed and approved by an IRB before research may begin, and before related grants may be funded. OHRE and the IRBs are critical components of the coordinated Human Research Protection Program, which serves to protect the rights and welfare of human subjects. All components of this program must work together to ensure institutional compliance with ethical principles and regulatory requirements.

UNC-CH has committed to uphold regulatory and ethical standards through a Federal Wide Assurance approved by the federal Office for Human Research Protections (agreement #FWA4801). An Advisory Committee with broad representation across campus also provides counsel to OHRE.

All project employees additionally will be required to undergo background checks, including state and Federal criminal history searches, address and social security traces, Nationwide Sex Offender database search, and state driver’s license checks for those staff who will be required to drive as part of project duties.

Campus Libraries. The library resources available to students, faculty, and staff are unusually extensive. UNC-CH libraries employ over 300 staff and hold over 5,000,000 volumes, 4,000,000 microforms, 2,000,000 printed government publications, 16,000,000 manuscripts, hundreds of thousands of audiovisuals, maps and photographs, and an extensive collection of electronic titles. The University’s Health Sciences Library, one of the largest of its type in the
Figure 1 Organizational Chart

Peter Hans, Board of Governors Chair, University of North Carolina at Chapel

Thomas W. Ross, President

Carol Folt, Chancellor

Barbara Entwisle, Vice Chancellor for Research

Sam Odom, Director, Frank Porter Graham Child Development Institute

Iheoma Iruka, PI
ExceleRate Illinois

Peg Burchinal, Co-PI

Noreen Yazejian, Co-PI

Jana Fleming, PI of Erikson Subcontract

IL-Based Data Collectors (17), TBH

Project Coordinator, TBH

Research Assistant, TBH

Kevin Gunn, Systems Specialist

Jennifer Baucom, Tech Support Specialist

Teresa Williams, Accounting Tech

Jim Peak and Joy Yin, Application Specialists/Programmers

Nina Forestieri, Research Assistant

Gina Walker, Project Assistant

Jim Peak and Joy Yin, Application Specialists/Programmers

Nina Forestieri, Research Assistant

Gina Walker, Project Assistant
United States, has 290,000 volumes, over 4,000 current serial subscriptions, and 8,900 audiovisual and microcomputer software programs.

**Computer Software.** An extensive library of software is available on the UNC campus via site licenses or volume purchase agreements. The collection includes all the common statistical analysis languages and packages (SAS, M-Plus, STATA, MLAB, R, SPSS, etc.); development languages (C++, C, Java, PL/1, Fortran, etc.); and basic software (Microsoft Office).

### 4.2 Frank Porter Graham Child Development Institute (FPG)

Founded in 1966, the Frank Porter Graham Child Development Institute (FPG) at the University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill has a long history of conducting research, technical assistance, and outreach related to children and families. With over 50 Ph.D. investigators and 200 staff, FPG is the administrative home to over 70 funded projects, and total annual expenditures for the organization exceed $25 million. FPG receives the majority of its funding from grants from federal agencies, state agencies, and private sources (e.g., foundations).

FPG has the infrastructure needed to successfully manage and support large projects such as this. The work of FPG is supported by six administrative or core support units.

- **The Behavioral Measurement and Audiovisual Center** helps researchers gather and analyze observational data on behavior and assists projects with developing audio or video products.
- **The Business Office** provides pre- and post-award grant support, financial services, and human resource support for FPG projects.
- **The Data Management and Analysis Center (DMAC)** provides data management and statistical services to a broad range of research projects within the FPG community as well as other university departments. DMAC specializes in research database management and longitudinal study design and data analysis. Statisticians work closely with researchers in all stages of analyses, from designing the analysis plan to conducting the analyses and documenting the results.
- **The Qualitative/Ethnographic Methods and Analysis Core (QMAC)** assists researchers in all aspects of qualitative/ethnographic research including research design, training, implementation, data management, collection, and analysis. QMAC can also assist in establishing reliability and validity procedures, writing data reports, and integrating qualitative and quantitative methods and analyses.
- **Information Technology Services** provides complete file and print services, internet connectivity, electronic mail, web mail, and web publishing support to FPG. They work closely with UNC-CH IT to ensure the security of electronically stored information.
- **Outreach** helps the FPG community fulfill its mission of “cultivating and sharing the knowledge necessary to enhance child development and family well-being.” The Outreach unit creates products (e.g., podcasts, reports, blogs, press releases, videos) that are accessible and relevant to a diverse range of audiences and helps develop and implement communication strategies to meet Institute and project goals.


### 4.3 Organizational Capacity and Experience

Principal Investigators and other researchers at FPG have over 40 years of experience and knowledge of the current research base and best practices in early childhood development and theoretical frameworks for policy development. In fact, the North Carolina Abecedarian project was seminal in establishing evidence for the value of high quality early care and education.
especially for disadvantaged children. Dr. Burchinal, co-PI of this project has served as a researcher on the Abecedarian project for over 20 years. FPG continues to be a leader in early care and education research by being the primary or one or the primary sites for many of the large early care and education research projects, including the Cost, Quality, and Outcomes Study, NICHD Study of Early Child Care and Youth Development, National Center for Early Learning and Development’s 11-state pre-kindergarten study, evaluation of Educare, the evaluation of North Carolina’s Smart Start program, and evaluations of state pre-kindergarten programs. Furthermore, researchers at FPG are leading the effort to redesign and validate North Carolina’s Quality Rating System, one of the oldest quality rating systems in the country. Currently, the PIs are engaged in multiple projects focused on early care and education, including helping guide states and localities in the validation, evaluation, and design of their QRISs.

Below we provide a sample of projects that demonstrate FPG’s extensive experience, expertise, and capacity related to the content and goals of the project.

Validating North Carolina’s 5-Star Child Care Licensing System
In 1999, FPG conducted a validation study of North Carolina’s new 5-star child care licensing system. The purpose of this study was to determine if these new ratings reflected child care quality differences when measured by independent data collectors. The study included measures of observed quality of classroom practices on 84 randomly selected child care centers, as well as information on three characteristics of centers related to better quality – higher teacher education, higher teacher wages, and lower teacher turnover— which were gathered through interviews with the director. Using data collected as part of the Smart Start evaluation, a significant relationship was found between the star rating level of a center and several other indicators of program quality. This study provided information to parents and policymakers that centers with higher star ratings were providing higher quality care for young children.

In 2013, FPG was selected to help re-design and validate North Carolina’s QRIS. The first phase of the 2-phase project is to develop alternate models for North Carolina’s QRIS by collecting data through web surveys, focus groups, and interviews, as well as analyses of existing data. Based on the model selected in Phase I, Phase II will focus on validating the quality levels with independent measures of program quality and child outcomes based on approximately 300 center-based and family child care programs and approximately 1,000 4-year old children.

Evaluation of Miami-Dade Quality Rating and Improvement System
Quality Counts is a 5-star quality rating and improvement system (QRIS) in Miami-Dade, Florida. In 2008, FPG was awarded a 3-year contract (continued into a 4th year) to conduct a formative and summative evaluation of Quality Counts through a multi-method, multi-informant approach. The formative portion of the evaluation relied on data available from the Quality Counts Management Information Systems (MIS); document reviews; interviews with key stakeholders; focus groups with directors; and director, teacher, and parent surveys. The formative evaluation focused primarily on the following: (1) implementation and design of Quality Counts, (2) the adequacy of the components that made up the 5-star quality standards, (3) the availability and accessibility of resources and supports for program participants, (4) consumer awareness of the rating system, and (5) involvement of the wider Miami-Dade early childhood and education system in the QRIS.

The summative, longitudinal portion of the evaluation analyzed existing data focused on the following: (1) the proportion of programs at each star-level and the extent to which programs progressed over time from low to high star levels; (2) whether provided supports were linked to increased professionalism of staff, improved staff retention, and improved quality as indicated
by the star rating; and (3) a small-scale examination of the association between quality (i.e., star level) and gains in children’s language and socio-emotional development.

Through this evaluation, FPG supported Quality Counts administrators in examining multiple issues involved in their QRIS system. We used their Quality Counts database and information we gathered independently from Miami-Dade stakeholders and providers and produced many evaluation reports and made several presentations to Miami-Dade QRIS administrators and stakeholders that have been the basis for programmatic and policy shifts. Our evaluation provided extensive information to further strengthen and improve their QRIS initiative, including helping administrators develop a plan to revise their system and conduct a validation study for their revised system.

QDOT Report
FPG led secondary data analyses to examine the association between school readiness skills and both child care quality and dosage. These analyses were designed to address the following questions:

1. Are there thresholds in the quality-outcomes association such that the relationship between quality and school readiness outcomes is stronger in higher quality classrooms?
2. Are more specific quality measures better predictors of school readiness outcomes than more global quality measures?
3. Do children enter school with higher levels of school readiness skills when they receive higher dosages of care?
4. Is there a quantity x quality interaction such that children do especially well when they spend more time in higher quality programs and especially less well when they spend more time in lower quality programs?

The general strategy involved conducting parallel analyses of data from as many large child care projects as possible that included both baseline and endpoint assessments of children in their preschool years and direct assessments of classroom quality. A series of analyses tested whether thresholds could be detected. Overall, results suggested that there were thresholds for measures of instructional quality such that improvements in children’s academic skills related to increases in quality were apparent only in classrooms with moderate or high quality instruction. The findings were presented and implications for QRIS were discussed at the 2011 Biennial Meeting of the Society for Research in Child Development and at the Secretary’s Advisory Committee for Research and Evaluation in Head Start.

Educare
The Educare Learning Network (ELN) is a consortium of programs implementing the core features of the Educare early education model, which was developed in Chicago by the Ounce of Prevention Fund. Researchers at FPG are conducting two studies involving the Educare model. First, since 2005, FPG has led the Educare Implementation Study, which is designed to document the features of Educare and how implementation of the model contributes to program quality and links to child and family outcomes. FPG provides training and conducts reliability visits with partner evaluators at the 19 (and counting) Educare schools, with measures including the ERS, CLASS, and assessments of children’s language and social-emotional skills. Cross-site results of the Implementation Study allow the ELN to describe and better understand the progress children and families are making in Educare programs. Second, FPG launched the Educare Randomized Clinical Trial (RCT) in 2010 with five Educare schools. The RCT is designed to test whether children who are randomly assigned to an Educare school as infants/toddlers show greater gains than comparable peers who are not selected to attend an Educare school. Current funding supports child assessments (language, literacy, math, social-
emotional skills) and parent-child interaction video observations with the children through age 3, as well as preschool classroom observations (ERS, CLASS).

Quality Interventions for Early Care and Education (QUINCE)

QUINCE was a research evaluation project funded in 2003 by the Child Care Bureau of the US Department of Health and Human Services, led by researchers at the University of North Carolina, and colleagues in four other states. The study tested the Partnerships for Inclusion (PFI) model of assessment-based, individualized, on-site consultation. PFI consists of two main components, both developed at FPG — the assessment tool and the consultation model. The assessment tool used to index quality was the Environment Rating Scales; and the on-site consultation was a theory-based, collaborative, problem-solving model of consultation developed by Pat Wesley to improve quality. Twenty-four agencies in five states (California, Iowa, Minnesota, Nebraska, and North Carolina) participated in the study. Random assignment was used at two levels: 101 consultants were assigned to PFI or control groups, and 108 child care classrooms and 263 family child care (FCC) homes were assigned to PFI or control consultants. Teachers and FCC providers were assessed using questionnaires and observations before and after the PFI or control intervention and 6 months later. In the year after the intervention, 710 children in these classrooms and FCC homes were assessed at two time points with measures of cognitive, language and socio-emotional development. (We have included the executive summary and final report in the appendix.)

4.4 Proposed Research Team

The research team has extensive experience and expertise regarding early care and education environments and processes, including quality rating and improvement systems (QRIS) (see CVs in appendix).

Iheoma U. Iruka, Ph.D., is a Scientist and Associate Director of Research at FPG and Research Associate Professor in the Department of Psychology at UNC-Chapel Hill. Her research centers on low-income and ethnic minority children’s school readiness, including their academic and social success, physical health, and the role of the family and early care and education environments and systems in this process. Dr. Iruka is involved in several projects focused on examining how systems can improve the success of disadvantaged children during their early years. In addition to her past work co-leading the implementation of Miami-Dade County, Florida’s Tiered Quality Rating and Improvement System (TQRIS), she is currently the Principal Investigator (PI) for validating North Carolina’s TQRIS. Dr. Iruka is also co-PI of a team evaluating Head Start’s Designation Renewal System. She directed a project examining the effectiveness of the Arkansas Part C system for infants and toddlers with disabilities. Furthermore, she is also part of INQUIRE, the Quality Initiatives Research and Evaluation Consortium, funded by the Office of Planning Research and Evaluation (OPRE) that aims to inform and support the research and influence and assist state implementation and evaluation efforts focused on early care and education systems, namely TQRIS.

Dr. Iruka will serve as the Project Director, overseeing all staff, ensuring the timely and high quality completion of all tasks, and monitoring budgets for appropriate expenditures. In addition, she will assume full responsibility for meeting all aspects of the project. She will also ensure that the subcontractor is fully integrated into the project team and is thoroughly responsive to project requirements. She will regularly contact the designated subcontractor to review staff assignments, project execution, client satisfaction, and financial performance.

Margaret “Peg” Burchinal, Ph.D., is a Senior Scientist and the Director of the Data Management and Statistics Core at the FPG Child Development Institute at UNC and Adjunct Professor of Psychology at UNC and of Education at the University of California-Irvine. She is currently an associate editor for Early Childhood Research Quarterly and the associate editor for Child Development responsible for reviewing ECE manuscripts. She served as the primary
statistician for many landmark early care and education studies, including: the Abecedarian project; Cost, Quality and Outcomes Study; National Center for Early Learning and Development’s 11-state pre-kindergarten study; and the NICHD Study of Early Child Care and Youth Development. Currently, she is a statistician for: the Educare studies, Center for Early Care and Education Research on Dual Language Learners, Child Care and Early Education Quality Features, Thresholds and Dosage and Child Outcomes (Q-DOT), In the Running Study, and INQUIRE. She also serves as a member on the Secretary’s Advisory Committee for Research and Evaluation for Head Start, Head Start’s Family and Child Experiences Survey (FACES), LA First Five Preschool Initiative, National Research Council’s Workshops on Measuring Families and on Identifying Leading Indicators in Education. As an applied methodologist, she helped to demonstrate that sophisticated methods such as meta-analysis, fixed-effect modeling, hierarchical linear modeling, piecewise regression, and generalized estimating equations provide educational researchers with advanced techniques to address important issues for research and policy. In addition, she has pursued her substantive interest in early education as a means to improve school readiness for at-risk children, and is a leading contributor to this literature.

Noreen Yazejian, Ph.D., is a Scientist at FPG. She has extensive experience conducting large-scale, multi-site research and evaluation studies and assessing the quality of practices in early education settings and the effects of variation in quality on children. Specifically, she previously served as Principal Investigator on an evaluation of Quality Counts, Miami-Dade County’s (FL) TQRIS. She also currently serves as co-PI on the validation study of North Carolina’s TQRIS. She leads other large-scale systems evaluations, including serving as the Principal Investigator of the Educare Implementation Study, which involves designing and overseeing an implementation evaluation of a consortium of high quality early education programs called Educare. She also is PI of the Randomized Clinical Trial of Educare, which is examining the efficacy of Educare in 5 communities. She is the PI of two systems evaluations of statewide Maternal, Infant, and Early Childhood Home Visiting (MIECHV) projects, one in North Carolina and one in Montana. She also is a member of INQUIRE and participates regularly in the Validation Working Group to benefit from the learning community of other researchers conducting statewide validation studies of TQRIS.

4.5 Proposer References

Shown in Table 4-1, we provide contact information, project name, and dates from previous and current clients. We also provide letters of reference in the Appendix.

Table 4-1 References

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Name &amp; Contact</th>
<th>Project</th>
<th>Dates</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Jennifer Johnson</td>
<td>North Carolina Tiered Quality Rating &amp; Improvement System: Validation Study</td>
<td>January 2013 – Present</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Project Description: This is a two-phase project. The first phase is to develop alternate models for North Carolina’s tiered quality rating and improvement system (TQRIS) by collecting data through web surveys, focus groups, and interviews, as well as use of existing data. Based on the model selected in Phase I, Phase II focuses on validating the quality levels with independent measures of program quality and child outcomes.
**Section 5. Subcontractor**

**5.1 Organizational Capacity and Project Management Experience**

Erikson Institute, an accredited non-profit, independent institute of higher learning is recognized locally and nationally as a leader in the field of early childhood. Erikson Institute is the nation’s premier graduate school in the field of early childhood development. Founded in Chicago in 1966, Erikson was developed in response to the critical need for early childhood professionals to staff Head Start and other emerging programs for young children at-risk. It was among the first to recognize the pivotal importance that culture plays in areas such as school performance. Since its founding, Erikson courses have been taught with a self-reflective, multidisciplinary approach, ensuring that its 1,900 alumni throughout the world conduct their work with an understanding of the whole child, within the context of his or her family and culture and
environment. The mission of Erikson is to continually bring the newest scientific knowledge and theories of children's development and learning into its classrooms and out to the community so that professionals serving children and families are informed, inspired, and responsive.

Erikson has a long history of working with the State of Illinois to help address issues facing young children and families, including conducting research and evaluation activities in support of high quality early care and education. Most relevant to this proposal is Erikson's experience in conducting a statewide evaluation of the ISBE Early Childhood Block Grant program. In addition, Erikson faculty and staff have worked closely with ISBE, the Early Learning Council (ELC), the Kindergarten Individual Development Survey (KIDS) Advisory Committee, the ELC Data, Research, and Evaluation Committee, the P-20 Council, and other workgroups and forums, to provide expertise on critical aspects of early childhood program development and implementation and to support the development of early learning standards and guidelines. Erikson faculty and staff have also provided research, scholarship, training, and consultation—locally and nationally—on many different early childhood service delivery systems and models, including center- and home-based programs, state-funded prekindergarten, and Head Start.

5.2 Demonstrated record of effectiveness in evaluating early childhood programs

This project will be housed in Erikson’s Herr Research Center for Children and Social Policy. Within Erikson, the Herr Research Center serves as the hub for applied policy research and evaluation. The Herr Research Center’s mission is to inform, support, and encourage effective early childhood policy related to the healthy development of young children from birth to age five and their families. The center’s researchers seek to answer important questions about the optimal organization and quality of early childhood programs and services.

The Herr Research Center has engaged in multiple large-scale assessments of early care and education programs in Illinois including: the Chicago Program Evaluation Project (studying the impact, strengths, and weaknesses of Chicago’s largest school- and center-based early care and education programs); the Preschool Inputs and Children’s Outcomes Study (a NIEER project to determine the comparative effectiveness of three program inputs in improving Chicago Public School preschoolers’ academic outcomes through first grade, for which Erikson was contracted to conduct and manage the child assessments); and, most recently, the statewide evaluation of the ISBE Early Childhood Block Grant (ECBG). The ECBG evaluation spanned five years (2007-2012) and included assessing the classroom quality and child outcomes for center-based Preschool for All (PFA) programs for children ages three to five years and the program quality of PI birth-to-three home visiting programs throughout the state.

Section 6. Locations Where Work Performed

All data collection activities will occur in Illinois. The exact locations will be determined based on which programs are sampled for inclusion in the validation study. Data analyses will be performed in North Carolina. Study design and planning will be shared between FPG and Erikson and therefore will occur in both places. Our estimate of the distribution of work performed in Illinois/North Carolina is 70% in IL, 30% in NC.
Cited References


April 21, 2014

Katherine Tople  
Illinois State Board of Education  
100 North First Street, W-380  
Springfield, IL 62777

Dear Ms. Tople,

I am pleased to provide this letter of reference for the team from the Frank Porter Graham Child Development Institute (FPG) at the University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill, which I understand is submitting a proposal to validate the Illinois Quality Rating and Improvement System (QRIS). Drs. Iheoma Iruka and Noreen Yazejian are leading a 2-phase validation study for North Carolina’s rated license system (i.e., North Carolina’s tiered quality rating and improvement system), which began January 1, 2013 and is expected to run through December 31, 2015. The first phase of this validation study involves the refinement of the current system and includes secondary analysis with existing data, stakeholder interviews, focused surveys, and a small purposeful data collection. The second phase of the project involves the validation of the system through conducting program and classroom observations and child assessments. Preliminary results from Phase I have been helpful in determining how to refine the system, such as revising the standards and areas of specializations. The results of this study will help us improve the quality of the young children’s early education experiences.

Drs. Iruka and Yazejian have been flexible and responsive to our requests and needs. They are always proactive in providing information that will be helpful in moving the project forward within the context of our agency. They are timely in submitting progress reports and performing the contract work within budget. They have been able to explain all data collected in clear terms. We enjoy working with the team.

Please feel free to contact me if you need additional information about FPG’s North Carolina Tiered Quality Rating & Improvement System: Validation Study project.

Sincerely,

Jennifer M. Johnson  
Education and Quality Initiatives Section Chief  
Jennifer.m.johnson@dhhs.nc.gov  
919-527-6532
THE BUFFETT EARLY CHILDHOOD FUND

Katherine Tople
Illinois State Board of Education
100 North First Street, W-380
Springfield, IL 62777

Dear Ms. Tople,

I am pleased to provide this letter of reference for the team from the Frank Porter Graham Child Development Institute (FPG) at the University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill, which I understand is submitting a proposal to validate the Illinois Quality Rating and Improvement System (QRIS). Drs. Noreen Yazejian and Iheoma Iruka, along with Dr. Donna Bryant, have led an implementation evaluation of the Educare Learning Network since 2006. Dr. Peg Burchinal serves as the primary statistician for the project.

The Educare Learning Network is a collaborative of high-quality early education schools. The Educare model was developed by the Ounce of Prevention Fund (Ounce), with the first Educare school located on the South Side of Chicago. The Buffett Early Childhood Fund (BECF) initiated the replication of Educare which has now grown to a national network of 19 schools. BECF supports the Educare Implementation Study, which involves coordinating local evaluator teams and amassing classroom observation, staff questionnaire, parent interview, and child assessment data from 19 schools and approximately 170 classrooms, 610 staff members, and 1800 children and their families. The FPG team has been responsible for maintaining reliability standards for the data collection teams across the 19 sites and compiling and analyzing the cross-site data. The data gathered include Environment Rating Scales and Classroom Assessment Scoring System for classrooms and the Peabody Picture Vocabulary Test, Preschool Language Scale, Bracken School Readiness Assessment, and Devereux Early Childhood Assessment for child outcomes. The analyses conducted by FPG have linked classroom quality to staff characteristics, and family engagement and classroom quality to child outcomes. A paper on dosage in Educare is currently under review in Early Childhood Research Quarterly.

Drs. Yazejian and Iruka have been thoughtful, flexible, and responsive partners and have consistently performed high-quality work. They often respond to short-notice requests from our partners at the Ounce for data analyses or summaries of findings. They have been thought partners with us as the Network has grown from 5 schools in 2006 to 19 schools today and the evaluation has had to be adapted to meet the practice and policy needs of various stakeholders. They clearly have the expertise and experience to successfully manage large evaluation projects.

Please feel free to contact me if you need additional information about FPG’s implementation evaluation of Educare.

Sincerely,

Jessie Rasmussen
May 2, 2014

Ms. Katherine Tople
Illinois State Board of Education
100 North First Street, W-380
Springfield, IL 62777

Re: QRIS Validation and Child Outcomes Study - #22033176

Dear Ms. Tople,

I am pleased to provide this letter of reference for the team from the Frank Porter Graham Child Development Institute (FPG) at the University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill, which I understand is submitting a proposal to validate the Illinois Quality Rating and Improvement System (QRIS).

The Children’s Trust is the primary designer and funder of Quality Counts, Miami-Dade County’s QRIS, working in partnership with the Early Learning Coalition of Miami-Dade/Monroe. Drs. Noreen Yazejian and Iheoma Iruka successfully responded to our competitive solicitation to conduct a process evaluation of Quality Counts from 2008 to 2012.

The purpose of the evaluation was to examine initial roll-out of the system and systems-building throughout the 4-year period. It involved stakeholder interviews, surveys and focus groups with providers and parents, and analyses of Quality Counts data. Though not a traditional validation study, the data analyses included the examination of the relationship of programs’ characteristics to quality points and Star ratings, how the points and ratings related to each other across components of the system, and how potential changes to the system would affect point and rating distributions. The evaluators also performed a limited analysis of correlations between ratings and child outcome scores by linking data from a related research study. Their findings and recommendations informed revisions to Quality Counts which are currently being implemented.

Throughout Quality Counts’ evaluation and revision processes The Trust and its partners worked closely with Drs. Yazejian and Iruka. We found them to be informed experts and willing collaborators,
flexible and responsive to our needs. They performed high-quality work and, as part of FPG, could access a wealth of topic-specific experts if needed. They were timely in submitting progress reports and performed the contract work within budget. Their analyses and presentations to our partners were clear and thorough, generating informed discussions and decisions. We and our partners enjoyed working with the team.

I am happy to recommend FPG and Drs. Yazejian and Iruka for Illinois’ QRIS validation and child outcomes study. Please let me know if you would like any additional information about this team’s abilities or performance on the evaluation of Miami-Dade County’s Quality Counts.

Sincerely,

K. Lori Hanson, Ph.D.
Director of Research and Evaluation
April 30, 2014

Katherine Tople
Illinois State Board of Education
100 North First Street, W-380
Springfield, IL 62777

Dear Ms. Tople,

I am pleased to provide this letter of reference for the team from the Frank Porter Graham Child Development Institute (FPG) at the University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill, which I understand is submitting a proposal to validate the Illinois Quality Rating and Improvement System (QRIS). Drs. Iheoma Iruka, Margaret Burchinal, and I are collaborators on the Evaluation of the Head Start Designation Renewal System Project which began September 2012 and is expected to run through September 2015. The purpose of this OPRE-funded project is to understand if the Head Start Designation Renewal System (DRS) is working as intended, as a valid, reliable, and transparent method for identifying high-quality grantees that can receive continuing five-year grants without competition (versus those that are not high-quality and have to compete for renewed funding) and as a system that encourages overall quality improvement. The results of this study will help to improve the process by which Head Start programs are evaluated.

Drs. Iruka and Burchinal serve as co-Principal Investigators on the project overall, and as the lead in one of the research questions focused on examining how effective the DRS is in identifying higher and lower quality Head Start programs. They have been flexible and responsive to requests and needs from the federal funders and our organization (we are the Prime). They are proactive in providing information that will be helpful in moving the project forward. They are timely in submitting progress reports and performing the contract work within budget. We enjoy working with the team.

Please feel free to contact me if you need additional information about FPG’s role in the Evaluation of the Head Start Designation Renewal System Project.

Sincerely,

[Signature]

Teresa Derrick-Mills
Senior Research Associate and Project Director
EDUCATION

Ph.D. University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill, School of Education, 1996
J.D. Duke University School of Law, 1985
B.A. Cornell University, College of Arts & Sciences, 1981

PROFESSIONAL EXPERIENCE

Erikson Institute
Director, Herr Research Center for Children and Social Policy 2009-present

Responsible for defining, leading, and managing all aspects of the Herr Research Center’s work and strategic vision, specifically as it relates to the following areas:

**Strategic Direction**
Conceives strategies and drives new initiatives to position the Herr Center as a leader in bringing together perspectives from policy and research to promote the well-being of young children from birth to age eight, with a focus on children living in poverty. Forges partnerships with public agencies, program administrators, educators, researchers, advocates, foundation officers, and other stakeholders to advance the center’s mission.

**Research**
Directs research and evaluation to inform and support effective early childhood policy development and implementation. Principal investigator on several research projects including: an evaluation of Illinois’s Early Childhood Block Grant (including universal pre-kindergarten and programs for children birth to age three); an examination of the policies and educational supports provided dual language prekindergarten students in Chicago Public Schools; and an examination of the effects of half-day versus full-day prekindergarten programs. Senior investigator on an examination of how well higher education policies and practices support the development of a culturally responsive early childhood workforce.

**Programs and Training**
Identifies opportunities to create and implement new programs to promote the healthy development and learning of all young children. Directs two policy-focused leadership development programs for professionals from diverse backgrounds: Illinois Early Childhood Fellows and Illinois Early Childhood Senior Leaders.

**Policy and Communications**
Informs public policy development through sharing research with policymakers and other stakeholders. Directed statewide effort to establish a kindergarten readiness assessment process in Illinois. Leading a statewide task force to develop strategies aimed at reducing achievement gaps in Illinois. Regularly represents Erikson locally and nationally acting as a spokesperson on early childhood development and education, teacher preparation, program evaluation, and assessment with the aim of improving the overall effectiveness of programs and policies for young children and their families. Serves on local and national boards and commissions.

**Internal Service and Accountability**
Ensures the Herr Center mission and activity are aligned with Erikson’s goals and objectives. Manages and oversees all center operations. Responsible for securing financial resources. Serves on several Erikson committees: strategic planning, institutional compliance, library, and the Higher Learning Commission Reaccreditation Steering Committee.
City Colleges of Chicago

Executive Director, Child Development Studies

2003-2009

Managed a multi-dimensional initiative to update and enhance associate degree programs in child development within the nation’s largest urban community college system. Created a vision, identified goals, and established faculty buy-in. Managed multi-million dollar budget.

- Led five community colleges towards national accreditation, making them the first in Illinois and among the first in the country to earn NAEYC Early Childhood Associate Degree Accreditation.
- Restructured academic degree requirements and course content. Directed the development of new curricula.
- Created culture of shared governance by building trust and open communication between faculty and administration.
- Established Faculty Development Institute. Increased faculty professionalism through education and mentoring.
- Transformed five campus-based child care centers into functioning laboratory preschools.
- Secured funding to carry out a complex strategic vision.
- Supervised ten staff members. Oversaw work of 60 faculty and five preschool program directors.
- Secured funding to carry out a complex strategic vision.

The Joyce Foundation

Education Program Consultant

2005-2008

Directed and managed the foundation’s early childhood grant portfolio. Developed and refined a grant-making strategy. Established relationships with policymakers and grantees. Served as the foundation’s early education representative locally and nationally.

Erikson Institute

Senior Research Associate

2003-2005

Conducted policy-relevant research aimed at developing strategies to improve educational experiences and academic outcomes for community college students. Designed seminar series for community college faculty.

University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill

Held various positions of increasing responsibility at the Frank Porter Graham Child Development Institute (FPG), as well as in the School of Education. Secured funding from private and public sources.

Principal Investigator, Frank Porter Graham Child Development Institute, 1994-2003

Research scientist and senior project administrator. Conceptualized, developed, and directed research to shape educational policy at the national, state, and local levels. Worked closely with policymakers and advocates. Particular focus on the financing of programs and services for children and families, and the provision of appropriate learning environments for young children. Key responsibilities included proposal writing, managing interdisciplinary research and evaluation projects, developing assessment instruments, analyzing data, and writing reports. Oversaw the creation and management of budgets, and the recruitment, training, and supervision of staff.

- Researched and analyzed the cost of education and other human services at both the state and local levels. Developed models for more effective use of public dollars.
• Conducted extensive research on the relationship between child care quality and cost. Results were used repeatedly to effectively advocate for higher state licensing standards and increased public expenditures to raise child care program quality.
• Conducted extensive research on early childhood education program quality, with an emphasis on the role of the teacher as a facilitator of learning.
• Assessed the impact of various community-based early childhood initiatives in North Carolina. Developed recommendations to guide planning and development.
• Provided guidance on program development and budgeting to government agencies responsible for health and human services, as well as to nonprofits offering services and programs for children and families.
• Developed intervention strategies for programs serving children at risk for poor academic performance.
• Served on numerous University committees and advisory councils.

Co-Director, Early Childhood Leadership Development Program, 1994-2002
School of Education & Frank Porter Graham Child Development Institute

Co-directed North Carolina’s first leadership development program created exclusively for professionals working with young children and their families. Program’s primary objectives were to build the leadership and advocacy skills of senior managers in community-based nonprofits and human service agencies, and to teach executives how to develop and manage high quality programs and services. Seminar topics included child and family development, program development and evaluation, effective leadership, and operational and fiscal management. Secured funding from public and private sources. Developed revenue-generating activities. Oversaw all aspects of program operations: curriculum development, hiring faculty, marketing, recruitment, and fiscal management.

Research Associate, Research Assistant, 1987-1992
Frank Porter Graham Child Development Institute

Managed numerous research and evaluation projects aimed at informing early childhood policymaking. Developed evaluation tools, assessment instruments, and training videos. Conducted extensive research on public expenditures for education and other human services.

Instructor, School of Education, 1989-1990

Taught undergraduate courses in the social foundations of education.

North Carolina Department of Human Resources, Division of Child Development
Policy & Planning Analyst

Advised senior management during the launch of North Carolina’s Smart Start Early Childhood Initiative. Developed policies and procedures. Worked closely with state agencies, lawyers, and legislators to ensure coordination of laws, policies, and program development. Guided county officials in strategic planning process to develop a coordinated system of programs and services for children and families.

North Carolina State University, College of Education & Psychology
Visiting Assistant Professor

Taught graduate courses in school law—for public school superintendents and principals—and undergraduate courses in the social foundations of education.

Carolina Friends School (Durham, NC), First Grade Teacher
Montessori Day School (Chapel Hill, NC), Assistant Preschool Teacher
**SELECT RESEARCH & TRAINING GRANTS**


Envisioning Change: Improving the Educational & Developmental Outcomes of Young African-American Students in Illinois. McCormick Foundation. June 2012-May 2014. *An examination of research and promising practices regarding early childhood as a critical period for improving the academic outcomes of African American students. A broad group of stakeholders will work to identify a set of strategies, practices, and policies aimed at reducing achievement gaps in Illinois starting in the early elementary years.*

Altgeld Gardens Early Childhood Needs Assessment. Business and Professional People for the Public Interest. February 2012-December 2012. *Worked closely with a community organization to assess the early education needs and resources in one of Chicago’s most underserved communities to inform the development of a school-based intervention to enhance teaching and learning in the early years.*


Educating Dual language Learners in Chicago Public Schools: An Examination of School Policies, Educational Supports and Related Services. McCormick Foundation. June 2010-May 2012. *A study designed to examine policies and practices supporting dual language prekindergarten students and to identify strategies to strengthen the educational experiences for children who arrive at school with limited English proficiency.*


Child Development Studies Initiative. McCormick Foundation. May 2003-May 2010 (multiple grants). *Conducted various activities to enhance the child development degree programs in the City Colleges of Chicago.*


SELECT PRESENTATIONS


SELECT LEADERSHIP & PROFESSIONAL SERVICE

Member, Institute of Medicine Committee on the Science of Children Birth to 8, 2013-present
Chair-elect, NAEYC Commission on Early Childhood Associate Degree Accreditation, 2012-present
Chair, Illinois KIDS Advisory Council Kindergarten Readiness Research Sub-Committee, 2012-present
Member, Technical Advisory Board, Illinois Early Childhood Asset Map, 2009-present
Member, PreK-3rd Grade National Work Group, 2009-present
Member, Illinois Early Learning Council Data, Research, and Evaluation Committee, 2008-present
Member, Illinois Early Learning Council (appointed by the Governor), 2007-present
Governance Board Nominating Panel, Nat’l Assoc. for the Education of Young Children, 2008-2011
Member, Educare (Bounce) Learning Network Technical Advisory Group, 2005-2011
Vice-President, Board of Directors, Child Care Services Association (Chapel Hill, NC), 1998-2008
President, Governance Board, IL Network of Child Care Resource & Referral Agencies, 2003-2005
Co-Chair, Workforce Development Committee, IL Department of Human Services, 2003-2005
Member, Advisory Board, Center for Early Childhood Leadership, National-Louis Univ., 2003-2005

PROFESSIONAL MEMBERSHIPS

American Education Research Association
National Association for the Education of Young Children
National Black Child Development Institute
Society for Research in Child Development
CURRICULUM VITAE
Margaret Ruth Burchinal

Personal Information

Address:
FPG Child Development Institute
216 Sheryl Mar Building
CB# 8185
University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill
Chapel Hill, NC 27599-8185
phone: (919) 966-5059
fax: (919) 962-5771

Birth Information:
Date: 
Place:

Educational Background

Ph.D. 1986 University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill
Quantitative Psychology, December, 1986
Dissertation: Methods for Estimating Individual Developmental Functions

M.A. 1978 University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill
Special Education, December, 1978
Thesis: The Contingent Relationship of Mother and Infant Behaviors in Dyadic Interactions

B.S. 1976 Iowa State University
Psychology, June, 1976
Summa Cum Laude

Professional Experience

September 2007-present Professor
Department of Education
University of California at Irvine

November 2002-present Senior Scientist
Frank Porter Graham Child Development Institute
University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill

May 2002-present Research Professor
Developmental Division
Department of Psychology
University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill

September 1999-present Adjunct Professor
Department of Biostatistics
University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill
May 1996-May 2002  Research Associate Professor
Developmental Division
Department of Psychology
University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill

February 1992-present  Director of the Design and Statistical Computing Unit
Frank Porter Graham Child Development Institute
University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill

January 1990-May 1996  Research Assistant Professor
L.L. Thurstone Psychometric Laboratory
Department of Psychology
University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill

November 1989-present  Investigator
Frank Porter Graham Child Development Institute
University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill

Sept. 1986-April 1987  Visiting Scholar
Developmental Psychology Department
Leiden University, Leiden, the Netherlands

Other Professional Activities

Associate Editor for:
- Early Childhood Research Quarterly (July 2006 -)
- Child Development (July 2007 – June 2013)

Past or Present Reviewer for:
- Child Development
- Early Childhood Research Quarterly
- Monographs of the Society for Research in Child Development
- Psychological Methods

Guest Reviewer for:
- Demography
- Developmental Psychology
- Journal of Abnormal Child Psychology
- Journal of American Statistical Association
- Journal of Autism and Developmental Disorders
- Journal of Early Intervention
- Journal of Family Psychology

Special Panel Reviewer for:
- Maternal and Child Health Bureau (November 1993; June 1998)
- National Institute of Child Health and Human Development (September 1999; April 2001; August 2001; October 2001; March 2002; October 2002; April 2003; November 2003; March 2005; July 2005; March 2006)
- Department of Education (April 2002; September 2002; April 2004; January 2005)
Panel Reviewer for:
- Maternal and Child Health Bureau (June 1999-November 2004)
- NIH Biobehavioral and Behavioral Sciences Subcommittee (July 2006-July 2010)

Member of Advisory Board:
- Advisory Board for Research Bureau of the Maternal and Child Health Bureau (June 2003)
- Research Advisory Council for Head Start (February 2002-2006)
- Advisory Board for the Puerto Rico Comprehensive Center for the Study of HIV Disparities (July 2004-July 2010)
- Technical Work Group for Early Reading First Evaluation (February 2004-March 2007)
- Advisory Board for the Los Angeles Universal Pre-Kindergarten Program (June 2005-ongoing)
- Technical Work Group for the Family and Child Experiences Survey (FACES) (January 2006-ongoing)
- Governing Board for the Appalachian Regional Educational Laboratory (August 2006-June 2009)
- National Research Council: Committee on Developmental Outcomes and Assessment for Young Children (April 2007-June 2009)
- Advisory Board for the Head Start Migrant Study (January 2008-ongoing)
- Advisory Board for the Baby FACES (January 2008-ongoing)
- National Research Council: Early Care and Education Workshop (March 2011)
- Secretary’s Advisory Council for Head Start Evaluation and Research (January 2011-ongoing)
- National Research Council: Leading Educational Indicators Workshop (December 2011- April 2012)

Professional Organizations
- National Association for the Education of Young Children
- Society for Research in Child Development, current chairman of the Publication Committee
- Society for Educational Evaluation

Publications in Peer-Reviewed Journals
In Press


Publications In 2013


Publications In 2012


Publications In 2011


Publications In 2010


Publications in 2009


**Publications in 2008**


*Publications in 2007*


*Publications in 2006*

neighborhood quality, and socioeconomic resources to early competence. 


Publications in 2005


Publications in 2004


Publications in 2003


Publications in 2002


Publications in 2001


*Publications in 2000*


*Publications in 1999 and before*


Publications in Peer-Reviewed Journals (corporate authorship) – Member of the Early Child Care Research Network


Burchinal CV


Publications - Peer-Reviewed Books and Chapters


Burchinal CV 19


longitudinal data. Invited Pre-Conference for the 19th Biennial Meeting of the International Society for the Study of Behavioural Development, Melbourne, Australia.


Vandell, D., Burchinal, M., Belsky J., Own, M. T., Friedman, S., Clarke-Stewart, K. A., McCartney, K., & Weinraub, M. (April, 2005). *Early child care and children’s development in the primary grades: Follow-up results from the NICHD Study of Early Child Care*. In M. Burchinal (chair). Early child care and children’s development in the primary grades: Results from four large longitudinal projects. Symposium presented at the Biennial Meeting of the Society for Research in Child Development, Atlanta, GA.


presented at the Biennial Meeting of the Society for Research in Child Development, Minneapolis, MN.


Poster presented at the biennial meeting of the International Conference for Infant Studies, Providence, RI.


Burchinal, M., Bailey, D., & Snyder, P. (September, 1992). *Using growth curve analysis to evaluate the effects of longitudinal interventions: Rationale and an example.* Paper presented at the Sixth International Conference on Children at Risk, Santa Fe, NM.


Burchinal CV 29


**Current Funded Research Projects (Principal Investigator, Co-Investigator, or Statistician)**

*Child Care and Early Education Quality Features, Thresholds and Dosage and Child Outcomes: Study Design*
Principle Investigator: Margaret Burchinal
Funded by US Department of Health and Human Services, Administration for Children and Families
This study assesses the state of the research on relationships between features, thresholds and dosages of child care and child outcomes for children from birth to age five, and uses this assessment to design a study to develop stronger child care quality for children in center care.

*In the Running for Successful Outcomes: Early Education, Care and Comprehensive Services*
Principle Investigator: Tamara Halle
Role: Expert Advisor and PI of UNC Subcontract
Funded by US Department of Health and Human Services, Administration for Children and Families
This study seeks to identify school readiness factors and how they predict later school success for low-income children, through review of the literature and secondary data analysis of extant datasets.

*North Carolina Mental Retardation and Developmental Disability Center*
Principal Investigator: Joseph Piven
Role: Core Director of Data Management and Statistics Core
Funded by NICHD
This NICHD Mental Retardation Research Center grant represents a diverse and coordinated programmatic endeavor to advance knowledge concerning etiologic factors and treatment strategies in mental retardation, and utilizes scientific core units to facilitate interdisciplinary and longitudinal inquiry of development.

*Data Acquisition and Analysis Center for the NICHD Early Child Care Study*
Principal Investigator: Vijaya Rao
Role: Senior Statistician and PI of UNC Subcontract
Funded by NICHD
This NICHD collaborative multi-site study examines the relationships between child development and child care during infancy and early childhood.

*School Competence of African American High School Youth*
Principal Investigator: Margaret Burchinal
Funded by MCHB
This study examines how youth, peer, family, and school factors serve as risk and protective factors for African American youth’s school competence during the transition to high school.

*Early Childhood Education: Effects on Adult Adaptation*
Principal Investigator: Frances Campbell
Role: Senior Statistician
Funded by NICHD
Major goals of this project: Examine the developmental course of individuals born into low income African American families and to identify factors associated with successful adult outcomes.

*Rural Children Living in Poverty*
Principal Investigator: Lynne Vernon-Feagans
Role: Senior Statistician & Director of Data Management and Analysis Core
Funded by NICHD
Major goals of this program project: Examine the developmental course of individuals born into low- and middle-income African American and white families.

*Neurobiological behavioral consequences of cocaine use in mother-infant dyads*
Principal Investigator: Josephine Johns
Role: Senior Statistician & Director of Data Measurement and Analysis Core
Funded by NICHD
Major goals of this program project: Examine the impact of cocaine exposure on parenting and on infant development in rats and humans.
IHEOMA U. IRUKA

ADDRESS
Office:
Frank Porter Graham Child Development Institute (FPG)
University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill (UNC-CH)
Campus Box 8180
Chapel Hill, NC 27599-8180
Tel: (919) 843-8085
Fax: (919) 966-7532
iruka@unc.edu

EDUCATION
M.S., Applied Developmental Psychology, University of Miami, Coral Gables, Florida, 2003
M.A., Psychology, Boston University, Boston, Massachusetts, 2000
B.A., Psychology, Temple University, Philadelphia, Pennsylvania, 1999

PROFESSIONAL EMPLOYMENT
2014-Present  Research Associate Professor, Department of Psychology, UNC-CH, North Carolina
2013-Present  Associate Director, FPG, UNC-CH, North Carolina (Promotion)
20012-Present Scientist, FPG, UNC-CH, North Carolina (Promotion)
2012-Present  Affiliate Faculty, Global Studies, UNC-CH, North Carolina
2008-2012  Investigator, FPG, UNC-CH, North Carolina
2010-2011  Research Assistant Professor, Department of Psychology, UNC-CH, North Carolina
2010-2011  Research Fellow, Institute of African American Research, UNC-CH, North Carolina
2010-2011  Adjunct Faculty, Department of Human Services, Peace College
2006-2008  IES Postdoctoral Fellow, FPG, UNC-CH, North Carolina
2005-2006  Senior Research Associate, Westat, Maryland
2002-2005  Adjunct Faculty, Department of Social and Behavioral Science
            Miami-Dade College, Florida
2001-2005  Graduate Research Associate, Department of Psychology, University of Miami, Florida
2001-2002  Graduate Teaching Assistant, Department of Psychology, University of Miami, Florida

PRINCIPAL FIELDS OF INTEREST
  o Optimal development of low-income, ethnic minority, and international children 0-8 years old
  o Early care and education systems and environments, such as quality rating improvement system
  o Family engagement, parenting, home-school partnership
  o Using data to improve instruction, family support, and systems change
GRANT AWARDS AND FUNDED PROJECTS

2014-2015  North Carolina Race to the Top – Early Learning Challenge Grant Transformation Zone (TZ) Evaluation. The purpose of this evaluation is to examine the extent to which the TZ communities have been able to enhance their capacity to improve the quality of their early childhood systems, including policy, practice, and infrastructure changes to support successful implementation of evidence-informed practice.  (Co-Principal Investigator)

2013-2015  North Carolina Tiered Quality Rating and Improvement System, Validation Study. The purpose of this project is to conduct a two-phase study for the validation of North Carolina’s tiered quality rating and improvement system (TQRIS). Phase I involves collection of web surveys, focus groups, and interviews, as well as use of existing data to develop alternative models to guide Phase II. Phase II involves the validation of the system through conducting program and classroom observation and child assessments.  (Principal Investigator)

2012-2015  Head Start Designation Renewal System. The purpose of this project is to evaluate the validity and reliability of the Head Start Designation Renewal System (DRS) using independent sources of data including classroom and program observations. In addition, this study will examine whether the DRS incentivizes quality improvement.  (Principal Investigator)

2009-2014  National Evaluation Partner for the Bounce Learning Network Implementation Study. The purpose of this grant is to examine the Bounce Learning Network, a consortium of 8 Educare centers across the country whose focus is to build, develop, and implement high quality early education programs for at-risk children, from birth to age five.  (Investigator)

2012-2014  Process Evaluation of NC’s Maternal, Infant, and Early Childhood Home Visiting Program. The purpose of this project is to track the progress of sites toward the overall goal of integrating home visiting with other early childhood programs at the local level so that referrals, communication, triage, and planning are improved.  (Co-Principal Investigator)

2006-2013  Promoting Academic Success for Boys of Color (PAS). The goal of the project is to build and support the partnership between families, schools, and communities to improve the academic achievement and socio-emotional development of boys of color. A secondary goal is to provide family-, teacher-, and community-based interventions that have shown some evidence of improving the learning and development of boys of color.  (Investigator)

2012  Wake County Home-Based Services Integration. The purpose of this project is to provide consultation to Wake County Smart Start to develop a plan for a county-wide service integration of home-based services for young children and their families.  (Co-Principal Investigator)

2008-2012  Evaluation of the Miami-Dade Quality Counts System. A three year evaluation funded by The Children’s Trust to evaluate Miami-Dade County’s Quality Rating System for child care programs. The county has a five-star, voluntary system. This evaluation will study how the quality system is being implemented and examine how it is impacting children, programs, and the wider early education system.  (Co-Principal Investigator)

2010-2012  FirstSchool. FirstSchool is a pre-K–grade 3 initiative to promote public school efforts to become more responsive to the needs of an increasingly younger, more diverse population. FirstSchool creates a seamless transition for children in pre-kindergarten
through third grade schools by uniting the best of early childhood, elementary and special education. (Investigator)

2011-2012 **Evaluation of Smart Start's Organizational Capacity Building Initiatives.** The purpose of this evaluation is to inform Smart Start about the effects of three initiatives on local communities and the broader Smart Start network and to make future decisions about activities. The three initiatives are Leaders' Collaborative and Leading for Equity, Organizational Consultation, and Interactive Website. (Principal Investigator)

2010-2011 **Wake County Child Care Subsidy System Study.** The purpose of this project is to assist Wake County Smart Start (WCSS) and Wake County Human Services (WCHS) to gather and analyze information to determine the strengths and needs of the current child care subsidy system and to facilitate the development of strategic recommendations. (Principal Investigator)

2010-2011 **Development of ChildFund Program Offer for Model International Early Childhood Development Programming.** The purpose of this project is to collaborate with ChildFund, a community-based organization, to develop a unique early childhood development program for use in low-wealth and low-resources countries. (Principal Investigator)

2010-2011 **Arkansas' DDS Children's Services Part C Program Evaluation.** The goal of this project is to evaluate the quality of services children receive, timely and comprehensive child evaluation and monitoring, development of quality IFSPs, and timely and quality services and service coordination for children and families in Arkansas' early intervention program. (Project Director)

2009-2010 **Ready Schools Technical Assistance Project.** The purpose of this grant is to provide technical assistance to school and communities in North Carolina to develop a strategic plan to enhance seamless education for young children. (Co-Principal Investigator)

2007-2009 **Evaluation of the Smart Start Family Support and Health Grant Options.** The purpose of this grant is to evaluate the implementation of three evidence-based program models that address targeted school readiness issues in selected Smart Start partnerships across the state in the area of childhood obesity, pre-reading skills, and parenting skills that address children’s challenging behaviors. (Principal Investigator)

2006-2007 **Lourie Center Early Head Start Teen Parent Support Program.** The purpose of this evaluation was to examine the impact of parenting classes for teen parents in their children's cognitive and social and emotional development. (Evaluator)

2003-2005 **The Impact of Family Involvement on Head Start Children's School Readiness.** The purpose of this Head Start Graduate Student Research grant was to develop a measure of parent involvement and efficacy aligned with children's school readiness. The eventual goal is to examine the role of self-efficacy in parents' involvement and children's school readiness. (Principal Investigator)

**OTHER FEDERAL GRANTS**

2008-2012 **Loan Repayment Program, Health Disparities,** National Institutes of Health. This competitive program repays student loans for investigators who commit at least 2 years conducting health-focused research on children/families from disadvantaged backgrounds.

**HONORS AND AWARDS**

2009 Service and Leadership Award, Office of Postdoctoral Affairs, University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill
2009-2011  Senior Mentor, Frances Degen Horowitz Millennium Scholars Program, Society for Research in Child Development

2007-2009  Junior Mentor, Frances Degen Horowitz Millennium Scholars Program, Society for Research in Child Development

SPECIALIZED TRAINING

2012  What Works Clearinghouse Reviewer Training, Northwestern University, Evanston, IL
2008  National Institute of Mental Health Public Reviewer Training, Washington, D.C.
2008  Classroom Assessment Scoring System (CLASS) Training, Chapel Hill, North Carolina
2008  Biomedical Research Ethics Training Seminar, Chapel Hill, North Carolina
2007  National Center for Education Statistics, Institute of Education Sciences, Early Childhood Longitudinal Study, Birth Cohort Database Training Seminar, Washington, DC

PUBLICATIONS


**SUBMITTED MANUSCRIPTS**


1 Doctoral student
2 Doctoral student

**TEXTBOOKS**


**BOOKS**


**REPORTS/BRMIFS**


**INVITED TALKS**

Iruka, I. U. (February 2014). *Quality early care and education system: Implications for children’s school readiness*. Presentation at the North Carolina Institute of Medicine, Morrisville, NC.


Iruka, I. U. (October 2011). Solving the persistent challenge: How to promote and support diverse leadership. Presentation at the Evelyn K. Moore Early Childhood Leadership Institute, National Black Child Development Institute Annual Conference, Nashville, TN.

Iruka, I. U. (September, 2011). SES and language development. Seminar presentation at Speech & Pathology course, University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill.


Iruka, I. U. (November 2010). Early education issue forum: A framework that works - Implementing successful pre-K through third grade strategies. NBCDI Issues Forum at the National Association for the Education of Young Children 2010 Annual Conference & Expo in collaboration with the National Black Child Development Institute, Anaheim, CA.

Iruka, I. U. (November 2010). Ready Schools and preK-3: Strengthening the foundation for success. Keynote presenter for Yadkin County Inaugural Ready Schools Conference, Yadkinville, NC.

Iruka, I. U. (June 2010). Use and selection of standardized tools for child and family outcomes. Wake County Smart Start, Raleigh, NC.


Iruka, I. U., & Howard, L. (April 2009). The achievement gap: What have we done lately? Seminar presentation at Shaw University Department of Education & Meredith College Department of Human Environmental Science, Meredith College, NC.

Iruka, I. U. (March 2009). Transition, connection, and relationship: Research in early childhood. Seminar presentation at Institute of Education Sciences Seminar, Department of Psychology, University of Miami, FL.


Iruka, I. U. (February 2009). Academic growth during pre-kindergarten: Do associations vary with ethnicity, gender, and income? Seminar presentation at FPG Child Development Institute, University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill.


Winn, D., & **Iruka, I. U.** (June 2008). *Boys into men: Raising our African American teenage sons.* Invited talk at the African American Healthy Marriage Initiative: Building strong and healthy families connecting marriage research-to-practice conference, Friday Center at the University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill.

**Iruka, I. U.** (January 2007). *Home and school environment: Impact on children’s achievement and behavior as mediated by learning behaviors and moderated by cumulative risks.* Seminar presentation at FPG Child Development Institute, University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill.

**Iruka, I. U.** (January 2007). *Parents and approaches to learning: What have you taught your child lately?* Seminar presentation at University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill, Department of Psychology.

**SELECTED PRESENTATIONS**


**Iruka, I. U., & Stringfellow, C.** (February 2013). *Parent engagement of low-income & minority families: Guiding principles from Educare schools.* Region IV Head Start Association Annual Conference, Atlanta, GA.

**Iruka, I. U., & Winn, D.** (October 2012). *Promoting academic success for young boys of color: Preliminary findings.* Presentation at the National Black Child Development Institute Annual Conference, Ft. Lauderdale, FL.

**Iruka, I. U., & Stringfellow, C.** (October 2012). *Profiles of parent engagement and links to school readiness: Findings from Educare schools.* Presentation at the National Black Child Development Institute Annual Conference, Ft. Lauderdale, FL.


**Iruka, I. U.** (October 2011). *FirstSchool across the world -- preK-3rd grade in Zambia, Africa.* Presentation at the National Black Child Development Institute Annual Conference, Nashville, TN.


**PROFESSIONAL MEMBERSHIPS**

2003-Present  
Society for Research in Child Development (SRCD)

2008-Present  
Society for Research in Child Development Black Caucus

2008-Present  
American Psychological Association (APA)

2008-Present  
National Black Child Development Institute (NBCDI)

2009-Present  
Black Faculty and Staff Caucus – UNC-CH

2010-Present  
National Association for the Education of Young Children (NAEYC)

**PROFESSIONAL SERVICES**

**Co-Editor**

2012-Present  
*Social Policy Report*

**Consulting Editor**

2012-Present  
*American Journal of Orthopsychiatry*

2010-Present  
*Early Childhood Research Quarterly*

**Ad Hoc Journal Peer Reviewer**

2013-Present  
*American Journal of Speech-Language Pathology*

2012-Present  
*Journal of Early Intervention*

2012-Present  
*Education Researcher*

2011-Present  
*American Journal of Orthopsychiatry*

2011-Present  
*Journal of Marriage and Family*

2011-Present  
*American Educational Research Journal: Teaching, Learning, and Human Development*

2011-Present  
*Journal of African American Studies*

2010-Present  
*Educational Assessment*

2010-Present  
*Journal of Family Issues*

2009-Present  
*Child Development Perspectives*

2009-Present  
*International Journal for Education Research*

2009-Present  
*Social Science Research*

2008-Present  
*Child Development*

2008-Present  
*NHSA Dialog: A Research-to-Practice Journal for Early Intervention Field*

2008-2009  
*Early Childhood Research Quality*

**Conference Peer Reviewer**

2011  
2012 Head Start National Research Conference Biennial Meeting

2010  
2011 Society for Research in Child Development Biennial Meeting

2009  
2010 Head Start National Research Conference Biennial Meeting

2008  
2009 Society for Research in Child Development Biennial Meeting

2007  
2008 Head Start National Research Conference Biennial Meeting

**Grant Reviewer**
2013  Panel Chair, U.S. Department of Health and Human Services, Office of Planning, Research and Evaluation in the Administrations for Children and Families, Head Start Graduate Student Research Grant

2012-Present  Principal Member, U.S. Department of Education, Institute of Education Science, Early Intervention and Early Childhood Education Review Panel


2010  Reviewer, U.S. Department of Education, Office of Innovation and Improvement, Full-Service Community Schools

2010  Reviewer, U.S. Department of Health and Human Services, Office of Planning, Research and Evaluation in the Administrations for Children and Families, Head Start Graduate Student Research Grant

2009  Reviewer, National Science Foundation, Developmental and Learning Sciences

2009  Reviewer, U.S. Department of Health and Human Services, Administration for Children and Families, Child Care Bureau, Child Care Scholars Grant

2009  Reviewer, North Carolina Partnership for Children, Inc., Ready Schools Technical Assistance Grant


NATIONAL SERVICE

2014-Present  Expert Workgroup Member, Study of Early Head Start-Child Care Partnerships, Washington, DC

2014-Present  Steering Committee Member, Quality Initiatives Research and Evaluation Consortium (INQUIRE), Washington, DC

2010-Present  Committee Member, Quality Initiatives Research and Evaluation Consortium (INQUIRE), Washington, DC

2012-2014  Co-Chair, University-based Child and Family Policy Consortium, Early Childhood Initiative

2008-2013  Steering Committee Member, Child Care Policy Research Conference, Washington, DC

STATE AND LOCAL SERVICE

2013-Present  Board Member, Child Care Services Association, North Carolina

2013-Present  Committee Member, MDC Made in Durham Policy Working Group, Durham, NC

2013  National Reviewer, K-3 Assessment Think Tank, NC Department of Public Instruction, Raleigh, NC

2012-Present  Mayor-appointed Board Member and Youth Council Chair, Durham County Workforce Development Board, Durham, North Carolina

2008-2012  Board Member, Durham County Workforce Development Board, Durham, North Carolina

2012-2014  Board Member and Public Policy Committee Co-Chair, NC Covenant

2010-Present  Scholar Panel, Global Scholar's Academy (GSA), Durham, North Carolina

2011-2012  Task Force Member, Durham’s Alliance for Child Care Access (DACCA)
2011-2012  **Youth Council Member**, Durham County Workforce Development Board, Durham, North Carolina

2009-Present  **Board Member**, Institutional Review Board, 3-C Institute for Social Development

2008-2010  **Committee Member**, Ready School Task Force, Raleigh, North Carolina

2008-2009  **Steering Committee Member**, Women of Color in the Academy, University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill

2008-2010  **Board Member**, Durham County Women’s Commission, Durham, North Carolina

2008-2009  **Committee Member**, North Carolina Smart Start Family Support Task Force, Raleigh, North Carolina

2005-2006  **Board Member**, Victims’ Advisory Board, Montgomery County, Maryland

**UNIVERSITY SERVICE**

2014-Present  **Dissertation Committee Chair**, Sandra García (UNC-CH)

2013-Present  **Independent Study Advisor**, Meredith Jones (UNC-CH)

2013-Present  **Dissertation Committee Member**, Jan Esteraich (University of Nebraska - Lincoln)

2013-Present  **Dissertation Committee Member**, Melissa Van Dyke (University of South Florida)

2012-Present  **Graduate and Dissertation Committee Member**, Katrina Cummings (University of North Carolina at Greensboro)

2010-Present  **Dissertation Committee Member**, Yannie Orthodoxou (UNC-CH)

2011-2013  **Dissertation Committee Member**, Dari Jigjidsuren (UNC-CH)

2011-2012  **Honor Thesis Committee Member**, Hannah Kibort-Crocker (UNC-CH)

2010-2012  **Dissertation Committee Member**, Amanda Clincy (UNC-CH)

2009-2011  **Dissertation Committee Member**, Cindy Bagwell (UNC-CH)

2007-2009  **Board Member**, Post Doctoral Association Board, North Carolina

**FPG SERVICE**

2011-Present  **Co-Leader**, International Initiative Committee, FPG, UNC-CH, North Carolina

2010-2012  **Co-Leader**, Race and Ethnicity Committee, FPG, UNC-CH, North Carolina

2007-2008  **Management Team Member**, FPG, UNC-CH, North Carolina
CURRICULUM VITAE

NOREEN YAZEJIAN, PH.D.

Work address: Frank Porter Graham Child Development Institute
The University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill
CB #8180, 105 Smith Level Road
Chapel Hill, NC 27599-8180
Phone 919-962-7361 / Fax 919-966-7532
Email noreen.yazejian@unc.edu

Home address: [Redacted]

I. EDUCATION

1995-1998 Ph.D. in Educational Psychology
The University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill

1992-1995 M.A. in Educational Psychology
The University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill

1984-1987 B.A. in Psychology
The University of Michigan, Ann Arbor

II. RESEARCH EXPERIENCE

2010-present Scientist, Frank Porter Graham (FPG) Child Development Institute, the University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill.

2000-2010 Investigator, FPG Child Development Institute, the University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill.

1998-2000 Post-Doctoral Research Fellow, Frank Porter Graham Child Development Center, the University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill.

1994-1998 Project Coordinator, Frank Porter Graham Child Development Center, the University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill.

1996-1999 Research Assistant, Professional Development Schools Program, McDougle Middle School, Chapel Hill-Carrboro City Schools.

1992-1994 Research Assistant, School of Education and the Center for Mathematics and Science Education, the University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill.
1988-1991 Writer/Editor and Research Assistant, National Black Child Development Institute, Washington, DC.

II. RESEARCH EXPERIENCE (CONTINUED)

1987-1988 Research Assistant, Psychology Department, the University of Michigan, Ann Arbor.

III. RESEARCH GRANTS


2014 Educare Learning Network’s Data Utilization Study. Buffett Early Childhood Fund, $89,621 (Principal Investigator)


2013-2015 Evaluation of North Carolina’s Tiered Quality Rating and Improvement System. (Co-Principal Investigator)

2011-2016 A Study of Child Care Settings in Multiple Communities: Educare RCT. George Kaiser Family Foundation, $596,326 (Principal Investigator).

2011-2015 A Study of Child Care Settings in Multiple Communities: Educare RCT. Brady Education Foundation, $350,000 (Principal Investigator)

2011-2014 A Study of Child Care Settings in Multiple Communities: Educare RCT. Ounce of Prevention Fund, $266,994 (Principal Investigator).

2011-2014 A Study of Child Care Settings in Multiple Communities: Educare RCT. Buffett Early Childhood Fund, $1,007,692 (Principal Investigator).


2010  Educare Randomized Clinical Trial Start-Up. Bill & Melinda Gates Foundation, $149,982 (Principal Investigator).

III. RESEARCH GRANTS (CONTINUED)

2010  Educare Randomized Clinical Trial Start-Up. George Kaiser Family Foundation, $150,000 (Principal Investigator).

2007-2010  Evaluation of Project CLICK (Cradling Literacy in Children in Kentucky). US Department of Education (Early Childhood Educator Professional Development Program), under subcontract from ZERO TO THREE, $1,181,928 (Principal Investigator).


2005-2008  Enhancing and Evaluating the Partners for a Healthy Baby Home Visiting Curricula for Early Head Start. (Co-Principal Investigator).

2003-2006  Evaluation of TLC: The Literacy Connection. US Department of Education (Early Reading First), under subcontract from Wake County Public School System, $344,519 (Principal Investigator).

2003-2004  Tracking the Educational Paths of Non-Traditional Students in Chicago. McCormick Tribune Foundation, $290,000 (Principal Investigator).

2003-2004  Evaluation of a Music and Movement Intervention for Preschool Classrooms. International Foundation for Music Research, $80,000 (Principal Investigator).

2002-2004  Evaluation of PARITY: A Program for At-Risk Infants, Toddlers, and Young Children. US Department of Education (Early Childhood Educator Professional Development), under subcontract from Nova Southeastern University, $523,449 (Principal Investigator).


2001-2003  Continuity of Caregiver for Infants and Toddlers (Co-Principal Investigator).

2000-2003  Variations in Child Care and Children’s School Success: Longitudinal Follow-up of the Cost, Quality, and Outcomes Study (Investigator).
2000-2001  The Cost of High Quality Child Care in Chicago (Investigator).


IV. TEACHING EXPERIENCE

1996  Teaching Assistant, Introductory Statistics, Summer School, the University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill.

1993-1994  Teaching Assistant, Adolescent Development, School of Education, the University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill.

V. VOLUNTEER AND OTHER EXPERIENCE

2004-present  Volunteer Assistant Site Manager and Volunteer Reader at Seawell Elementary, School Reading Partners, Chapel Hill-Carrboro City Schools.

1995  Volunteer, Basic Plus Program, Chapel Hill-Carrboro City Schools.

1993  Graduate Assistant, School of Education, the University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill.


VI. PROFESSIONAL MEMBERSHIPS AND SERVICE

2012-present  Member, Evaluation Committee of the Durham Partnership for Children

2012-present  Member, Society for Research in Child Development

2011-present  Editorial Advisory Board Member, NHSA Dialog

2007  Judge, ET Gaston Writing Competition, American Music Therapy Association

1995-present  Member, American Educational Research Association

Service to the department

2013-present  Member, FPG Promotions Committee

2013  Member, FPG Associate Director Search Committee

2004-present  Member, FPG Pre-IRB Review Committee
2005-09  Member, FPG Child Care Program Infant Admissions Committee
2003-09  Member, FPG Facilities Committee
2006-08  Member, FirstSchool Evaluation and Research Committee

VII. AWARDS AND HONORS

1998      UNC-CH On-Campus Dissertation Fellowship
1986      Psi Chi (Psychology Honorary)

VIII. PUBLICATIONS


IX. RECENT CONFERENCE PRESENTATIONS


