

# U.S. Department of Education

Washington, D.C. 20202-5335



## APPLICATION FOR GRANTS UNDER THE

**NATIONAL PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT PROGRAM**

**CFDA # 84.365Z**

**PR/Award # T365Z110147**

**Grants.gov Tracking#: GRANT10865176**

Closing Date: MAY 09, 2011

## Project Abstract

**Name of the IHE:** University of Wisconsin – Milwaukee

**Title of the Program:** Preparing Tomorrow’s Teachers

**Consortium Partners:** Racine Unified School District (LEA), Milwaukee Area Technical College, and the Council for the Spanish Speaking, Inc.

**Project Description:** The five year project proposed herein focuses particularly on Invitational Priority 2 – Improving Preparation of All Teachers to Better Serve English Learners (ELs). In collaboration with the consortium partners, the Early Childhood (ECE) teacher certification program at the University of Wisconsin-Milwaukee seeks to greatly enhance local capacity for teachers of children who are ELs, our major outcome goal.

The cornerstone of the proposal is an overhaul reform of the ECE teacher certification program at UWM – currently a traditional teacher education program constituted in a traditional IHE. Our goal with the redesign is to create a 4-year, early admit program with enhanced and melded coursework and classroom field experiences that will allow candidates to meet the state standards for both ECE teacher certification and for the English as a Second Language (ESL) and/or bilingual education certification – i.e. dual certification. The redesign will focus on specific supports to enhance recruitment and retention of students of color and for teacher candidates whose heritage language is other than English, in the effort to expand the pipeline for ECE teachers who are bilingual. Through this effort we will place and support a larger number of high-quality ECE teachers equipped to effectively work with ALL children, and particularly ELs.

In addition, we propose to engage with RUSD and CSS (above) to develop targeted professional development (PD) opportunities for teachers and paraprofessionals working with ELs in their sites. This aim of the PD is to support enhanced understanding of effective instructional practices with ELs particularly in the content areas of mathematics and science.

Throughout the project we intend to engage in collection of **high-quality data** to evaluate and assess our efforts with the intent of feeding back into the project for review and improvement to provide perspectives on the question of how to prepare and support a diverse cadre of ECE teachers better prepared to serve ELs effectively. The table below summarizes the goals, activities, and outcomes of the proposal.

Project Objectives	Proposed Activities/Outcomes
<b>Goal #1:</b> To prepare teachers ready to work with English learners in early childhood classrooms. [Invitational Priority 2]	1.1 Rewrite program requirements and individual courses so that all students will complete the coursework requirements allowing dual certification in ECE and ESL or Bilingual Education (if language proficiency exists).  1.2 Regularly review the content of program coursework via the project’s planning group, made up of Consortium members

<p><b>Goal #2:</b> To improve the program's ability to recruit and retain a diverse student body, while also strengthening the career ladder for a cadre of Spanish-speaking teachers.</p>	<p>2.1 Revise program requirements so that students are admitted as majors in their first year, or upon transfer or change of major.</p> <p>2.2 Increase the level of support services for struggling students, to enroll graduates from the MATC ECE associate degree program conducted in Spanish who are likely working as paraprofessionals to attain the dual-certification at UWM.</p>
<p><b>Goal #3:</b> To provide professional development opportunities for consortium members, aimed at growth in ability to service English learners and teaching that supports the development of young children's knowledge and skills in the STEM areas [Competitive Preference Priority 3].</p>	<p>3.1 The UWM Faculty and the Project Planning Group will identify professional development needs for practicing teachers focused on quality education for ELs and on the development of STEM skills and knowledge.</p> <p>3.2 The project will deliver and evaluate inservice professional development for the consortium constituency.</p>

**Priorities:** The project addresses Competitive Preference Priorities 2 and 3 with a strong focus on Invitational Priority 2.

**GPRA Measure Targets:**

GPRA Priorities	Year 1 Targets	Year 2 Targets	Year 3 Targets	Year 4 Targets	Year 5 Targets
# of preservice teachers expected to be served	Planning year	425	400	400	400
# of preservice teacher expected to complete program of study	Planning year	80	80	80	80
# of preservice teacher completers expected to be placed in instructional settings serving ELs	Planning Year	40*	40*	40*	40*
# of preservice teachers expected to complete the program of study and be certified in EL instruction	Planning Year	Students move through program	60	60	60
# of paraprofessionals** expected to be served	Planning Year	15	15	15	15
# of paraprofessional completers expected to meet state or local qualifications for ELs	Planning Year	***	***	***	***

# of inservice teachers expected to be served	Planning Year	25	25	25	25
# of inservice teachers expected to complete program of study (PD)	Planning Year	25	25	25	25
# of inservice teachers expected to complete the program of study and be certified in EL instruction****	Planning Year		5	5	5
# of inservice teacher completers (PD) expected to serve EL students	Planning Year	25	25	25	25

\*Note: We have intentionally kept these projections modest given the current volatility of the education employment market in our local area. (i.e. Due to the state budget climate, the local district is projecting a major layoff of over 1,000 positions.) However, regardless of where our students attain education-related employment we anticipate that they will serve ELs, even if small numbers of ELs. And, in the city schools and educational settings (Milwaukee and Racine) many children also will be English-dialect speakers, making a deep understanding of language development and cultural funds of knowledge imperative for all completers.

\*\*Note: In our educational context, paraprofessionals include those with that specific job title in the public school setting, and teaching assistants in pre-school and daycare settings.

\*\*\*Note: The State of Wisconsin does not require special qualifications for paraprofessionals to work with ELs. We do anticipate recruitment of some paraprofessionals who engage in the PD to enter the ECE certification program to attain professional licensure.

\*\*\*\*Note: The professional development will not “certify” teachers in EL instruction. We do anticipate recruitment of inservice teachers to return to UWM via the revamped ECE program and complete ESL/bilingual add-on certification.

**Contact:** Dr. Jennifer Mueller, (414)229-5246, [jennjm@uwm.edu](mailto:jennjm@uwm.edu)  
Dr. Raquel Oxford, (414) 229-5994, [roxford@uwm.edu](mailto:roxford@uwm.edu)

## **Preparing Tomorrow's Teachers**

### **Introduction**

The five-year program presented in this proposal is focused on the preparation and support of teachers who are equipped to effectively educate young children who are English learners (ELs), thus enhancing the learning and school achievement of these children. The project will be undertaken by a consortium that includes the Early Childhood Education (ECE) program at the University of Wisconsin-Milwaukee (UWM), the ECE program at Milwaukee Area Technical College (MATC), the Racine Unified School District (RUSD), and the Council for the Spanish Speaking (CSS) which operates the Guadalupe Head Start sites in Milwaukee. This work is founded upon a preliminary assessment of needs developed through discussion with the consortium partners. The identified needs include the following:

- The number of young children who are learning English alongside the natural course of development in their own heritage language is increasing in southeast Wisconsin. For example, within the city of Racine, the Latino population grew 42.8% from 2000 to 2010. Latinos currently make up 21% of the city population (Moore, 2011). In the city of Milwaukee, the Latino population grew nearly 44% in the same time period, and Latinos currently make up 17% of the city population (Pabst & Poston, 2011).
- Few teacher candidates from the UWM ECE program expend the extra credits required to add on a certification in English as a second language. Few are proficient in a second language, which would allow for an additional certification in bilingual education.
- MATC has been conducting their associate's degree program in Early Childhood in a sheltered-language format for cohorts of Spanish-speakers, but those graduates have not often continued on for a bachelor's degree.

- A 2004 report, “Task Force on Educational Excellence” in Wisconsin identified the need to attract and retain high quality teachers and raise the low percentage of teachers of color, but there has been little success in achieving the recruitment and retention of a diverse student body in the UWM ECE program.
- Due to funding and capacity limits, professional development opportunities are not sufficient to increase teachers’ knowledge and skills to work with ELs and to skillfully address learning in the STEM fields with young ELs.

### **Description of Consortium Members**

The UWM ECE program is one of the two largest teacher licensure programs at the university. During the spring 2011 semester, the program is serving 181 students who have been admitted to the School of Education (requiring junior-year status and completion of a number of gatekeepers), and 260 students who are taking coursework prior to program admission, declared as ECE-intended majors. Completion of the undergraduate degree, or the post-baccalaureate professional coursework (for students with a BA/BS in another field seeking initial teacher certification) qualifies students for licensure as teachers of children from birth through age eight (through third grade). Approximately 80 students complete certification every year.

The ECE program at MATC is a vocational preparation program for educators who work in child care and pre-school (non-public school settings). Students in this program earn an Associate’s degree in Early Childhood Education. Within this group is a cohort of heritage-Spanish speakers for whom there is sheltered (bi-lingual) instruction. This cohort has graduated approximately 100 students with the ECE associate’s degree since 2006, in addition to the group of regular AAS seeking students. A letter of commitment from MATC is located in Appendix A.

The Racine Unified School District is an urban Local Educational Agency (LEA) located in Southeastern Wisconsin. RUSD serves 21,000 students (7,300 students in pre-kindergarten – 3<sup>rd</sup> grade) and is the fourth largest school district in the state. The student enrollment currently is 25.7% Hispanic, .5 % American Indian, 1.5% Asian, 27.9% African American, and 44.4% White. As of 2010 there were approximately 2,800 EL students in the district. This represents a 150% increase over the previous decade. The district notes a rapid growth in registration of EL 4-year-olds, and currently has 82 of 219 EL four-year-olds enrolled bilingual classrooms. A letter of commitment from RUSD is located in Appendix A.

The Council for the Spanish Speaking, Inc. is a comprehensive, Latino serving, non-profit, community-based organization in Milwaukee. CSS operates the Guadalupe Head Start in six sites throughout the central city of Milwaukee and serves approximately 600 children. When GHS began operation in 1965 it was the first federally-funded bilingual Head Start in Milwaukee, and one of the first in the nation. The CSS's first GHS center served as a model for bilingual programs nationally, and resulted in a demand for bilingual education to carry into the Milwaukee Public Schools. A letter of commitment from CSS is located in Appendix A.

### **Project Design: Goals, Objectives, and Outcomes**

**Goal #1: To prepare teachers ready to work with English learners in early childhood classrooms. [Invitational Priority 2]**

We recognize the changing demographics of our area, as described above (page 1). Currently only two other IHEs in the southeastern Wisconsin area offer prospective ECE teachers the option of ESL or bilingual certification. Both of these IHEs are small, private institutions, one religiously-affiliated with required religious coursework. Currently at UWM, 18 additional credits (6 courses) and both pre-student teaching and student teaching placements in

ESL or bilingual classrooms are required for an ECE student to earn ESL certification (or bilingual certification if the student has dual-language fluency); only one ECE student sought ESL or bilingual certification during the years 2005-2008, and an additional three students have sought the add-on certification since. Clearly, local capacity is limited in producing teachers who are highly qualified to work with ELs.

Furthermore, in our current coursework in the ECE program, our examination of student exit portfolios and re-examination of our program requirements has pointed to several gaps in topical coverage that must be strengthened. In particular we have found that students who are preparing to be general education teachers are sorely lacking in information and skills for planning and differentiation of instruction that effectively meets the needs of all children, particularly those who are EL. This has suggested the need to ensure that all coursework is reviewed and refined in order to more fully incorporate understanding of and effective curricular planning and instructional strategies for ELs that connect standards to planning and assessment. In addition, there must be further development of effective tools for supervision of students throughout field experience and student teaching. Finally, in recognition of the increasing language diversity in the United States as well as in Southeast Wisconsin, we must ensure that *all* students graduate from the ECE program with the knowledge and skills to work effectively with children who are linguistically diverse.

### **Specific Objectives**

- 1.1 UWM's ECE program will rewrite program requirements and individual courses so that all students will complete the coursework requirements allowing dual certification in ECE and ESL or Bilingual Education (if language proficiency exists).**

Currently the ECE certification seeking students must add an additional 18 credits of coursework in order to attain the add-on certification in ESL or bilingual education. [Note that at UWM the coursework required for ESL and bilingual education is identical. There are separate Praxis II testing and field placement requirements.] As part of the program reform we will rewrite program coursework to meld coursework from the ESL/bilingual certification into the ECE program. Post-reform, the required coursework in ECE will overlap with, or meld into the six courses required for ESL /bilingual certification, thus relieving the requirement of 18 extra credits. By student teaching in an ESL or bilingual classroom and achieving a passing score in the appropriate Praxis II test, ECE graduates will be eligible for dual certification in ECE and ESL/bilingual. This will ensure that all teacher candidates in the program can provide instruction that will move young ELs to acquiring language, literacy, and content knowledge. This reform reflects a radical departure from the current program.

Courses will be rewritten and submitted for UWM approval processes during Year One. Details are included in the Management Plan (page 19). By pulling ESL/bilingual course material appropriate to ECE classrooms and adapting our own coursework, we will be able to meet the professional coursework standards of both programs.

**1.2 The early childhood program will regularly review the content of program coursework via the project's planning group, made up of Consortium members.**

A unique aspect of the early childhood education field is the opportunity for post-graduation employment across educational auspices. Our graduates attain employment in Head Start centers and preschools where teacher certification may or may not be required, and in public schools, and in many cases in classrooms serving large pockets of ELs. Given the urban mission of UWM, teacher candidates are expressly prepared for the urban context, and when possible garner

employment in city schools and educational settings. (Of the completers in the 08-09 program year, over 75% of those who were employed took positions in urban areas.)

We have chosen the constituency of the Consortium with this in mind, recognizing the range of expertise required to effectively prepare teachers for these varied educational settings. With a public school district, a Head Start program, and technical college faculty, and a traditional IHE, we believe the Consortium membership provides a unique collaboration. Collecting data about the project's implementation and sharing information regarding what teachers need to be effective in classrooms with ELs will be a focus of the Consortium work. Consultation and connection back to teacher preparation coursework will occur throughout the planning and implementation of the UWM ECE reform effort. The opportunity to involve a larger constituency in enriching the program is a unique reform opportunity. Points of program review are indicated in the Management Plan (pages 19-20).

As an outcome of the Goal 1 work, we expect to see that approximately 80 students will graduate from UWM each year who meet the coursework requirements for both ECE and ESL and/or bilingual education certification. Importantly, this reform can and will be sustained without further funding past the project period.

**Goal #2: To improve the program's ability to recruit and retain a diverse student body, while also strengthening the career ladder for a cadre of Spanish-speaking teachers.**

This initiative reforms the existing Early Childhood teacher certification program so students have a fully-inclusive 4-year experience with a learning-to-teach professional sequence aligned with and tied to liberal arts coursework, opportunities to earn certification in English as a second language or bilingual education, and services to counter current attrition patterns in which

students of color are over-represented. This represents the piece of the proposed reform most unlike the current teacher education landscape at UWM.

The current program framework is one traditionally found in schools/colleges of education. Undergraduate students spend their first two years taking coursework primarily in our School of Letters and Sciences (L&S), along with a small number of courses in the SOE. To be eligible for admission to the SOE, students must meet several requirements, including completion of a minimum of 58 credits with a cumulative gpa of at least 2.50 and passing scores on the Praxis I test (as mandated by the Wisconsin Department of Public Instruction [DPI]). Upon acceptance to the SOE, students take the majority of their professional coursework, which includes the pre-student teaching field experiences and student teaching. Prior to final student teaching they must pass the Praxis II test for Elementary Content (through grade six, again mandated by DPI). For program completion they must post a cumulative gpa of at least 2.75 and pass the program portfolio review.

As an urban institution, we have a considerable number of commuting students, and almost all students are employed. Many students have children. We attempt as much as possible to be responsive to the needs students have to combine their schooling with complex personal lives. In the effort to emphasize flexibility of student access to the current program, we do the following: 1) within the professional courses, students are provided a suggested sequence but are able to take a credit load that fits with their needs; therefore we do not utilize blocks or cohorts; 2) two sections of each of the professional courses are offered each semester, one in the daytime and one in the evening; and, 3) there is a highly active offering of coursework in the summer, for students who want to move faster through their studies. While we enroll many nontraditional

students, we have not been successful at achieving our goals for racial/ethnic diversity among students, or support for potential bilingual teacher candidates.

### **Specific Objectives**

#### **2.1 The early childhood program will revise program requirements so that students are admitted as majors in their first year, or upon transfer or change of major.**

The program faculty has identified challenges with the traditional program structure that we believe contribute to our inability to reach our diversity goals. Students must initially “prove themselves” through satisfactory completion of general education coursework in the School of Letters and Science (L&S). Retention issues arise related to course performance, required Praxis I testing, and lack of connection for the students with the program they desire to eventually complete. The program loses a significant number of ECE-intended students prior to the current point of application to the SOE (i.e. after completion of 58 credits). This retention failure was examined with data from students who had taken the initial course, “Introduction to Teaching” required by all teacher education programs. Data were examined for students who took this course between summer 2004 and fall 2006 (allowing time for them to complete other admission criteria). During this time period, 106 ECE-intended students from those who had taken the introductory course had not been admitted to the SOE; of these students 22% were not White. This reflects an over-representation of students of color, since during the academic year 2006-2007, of all students enrolled in the SOE, 18% were not White. In addition, students of color were over-represented in the group who never took or never passed the Praxis I, at 26%.

A second challenge in our traditional structure is that there is little connection between what happens in coursework the first two years and what happens the second two years. The current separation of where teacher education takes places makes the transfer of information

from L&S courses to SOE courses challenging at best (Darling-Hammond, et al., 2005). We have found that our students have difficulty making the connections between the content-area subject matter they learn in L&S coursework and their professional education and teaching methods coursework, because these are constituted so separately in the traditional program. In other words, students are challenged in connecting the content they learn to what it then means to teach that content to young children (Grossman, Schoenfeld, & Lee, 2005; Zeichner, 2006). Our intention with program reform is that teaching-methods courses will more closely co-occur with content courses. We will tap into developed relationships with L&S faculty to more carefully connect our professional education coursework to the students' experiences in the content courses. Thus, we intend to interweave the coursework in L&S and education throughout the four-year program of studies. In particular we will focus on mathematics and science content and methods courses, addressing two content areas where ECE majors traditionally show weakness (Copple & Bredekamp, 2009). [Competitive Preference Priority 3 – Promoting STEM Education] This change does not require program approval processes, but it does require planning in conjunction with L&S colleagues to affect an appropriate sequence and content in courses. This will be accomplished during Year One. Details are included in the Management Plan (pages 20-21)

**2.2 The early childhood program will increase the level of support services for struggling students and to enroll graduates from the MATC associate degree program conducted in Spanish.**

As we examined data for our struggling students (students who had taken the course, “Introduction to Teaching” between summer 2004 and fall 2006), the following also emerged:

Low gpa during the "Introduction to Teaching semester	Never took Praxis I	Never passed Praxis I
23 of 27 not retained (30% of color)	24 of 43 – low gpa	8 of 25 – low gpa
	19 of 43 – satisfactory gpa	17 of 25 – satisfactory gpa

These data indicate that significant numbers of students experience difficulty with pre-admission to SOE course grades and/or Praxis I testing. These facts point the program toward change that will increase services for retention, including advising, test support and tutoring, and intensive follow-along for students who are identified as struggling, and particularly students for whom English is their second language. Our priorities for student retention will focus on developing more effective support for ESL students and, in turn, building a more diverse cadre of graduates.

Another priority for the project will be to create more supportive and transparent pathways for students in the ECE program at MATC, with a focus on the Spanish-speaking students in the MATC sheltered language instruction program, to transfer to UWM to complete their ECE teacher certification. This will help to achieve the diversity goals of the UWM ECE program, but will also provide a pipeline for preparation of teachers who are themselves bilingual to move into teaching positions with young ELs.

At the present level of support offered, few of the MATC heritage Spanish-speakers attempt to transfer to UWM, and there are several individual and structural barriers that impede the process. Many of the MATC students who earn the AAS degree in ECE are non-traditional students. They likely did not begin attending MATC with the express goal to transfer to a four-year program for a BS degree, which means that they require support in completing both general education and certification requirements. In addition, there is not currently an admit-upon-

transfer agreement in place which means that the MATC students come to UWM still not admitted to the ECE program, and so outside of the relationships with ECE faculty at UWM. They often must complete several general education requirements, which occur outside of the SOE, and are often not as student “friendly” as the MATC courses they are used to. (i.e UWM has large class sections, TA teaching structure, little connection with faculty, no support to understand connections between L&S content courses and education courses.)

To address some of this, we have already begun work to coordinate advising with MATC to maximize the number of credits that can transfer to UWM and also fulfill the requirements of the UWM ECE teacher certification program. As we implement the UWM program reform, we will need to attend to matching the two-year MATC program into the newly formed four-year UWM program. During Year 1, the admit-upon-transfer component will be facilitated by the four-year program design, which eliminates the separate SOE admission process now used. Those students in the AAS who have come gradually to the goal of achieving a bachelor’s degree will need ongoing advising support, and often, test-preparation and academic support for remaining general education coursework. More intensive and personalized services are necessary; we can do much better at easing the transition into the larger and more bureaucratic institution that UWM is, as well as into the ECE program with its many state-dictated requirements.

There is little in the landscape of college/university support in the larger southeastern Wisconsin area for addressing the needs of heritage Spanish speakers who have been educated in their first language. However, they are a natural pool of future bilingual EC educators. With the melding of ESL/bilingual coursework described earlier, and their fluency in Spanish, the Spanish-speaking cohort from MATC can be dually certified in ECE and bilingual education.

However, this group will require resources – both in advising and in academic support – as they transition from the sheltered language instruction model at MATC. One way we will address this is to ensure that students take courses with other MATC students, which we will be able to accomplish via enhanced advising services.

During years two through five of the project, substantial resources will be directed to improving the retention of students and to improving the effectiveness of the transfer for the AAS students from MATC (many of whom are employed as paraprofessionals or teaching assistants). First we have included in our budget request financial assistance via a limited number financial awards for tuition, fees, and books at UWM – a total of \$355,000 over Years 2-4 of the grant funding. Additionally we will include supports such as supplementing our current test preparation and tutoring services. We have included in the budget proposal the hiring of a Spanish-speaking, recruitment/retention specialist who will track students and individually follow-up with those who are struggling in particular. This specialist will work at both MATC and at UWM to facilitate transfer. Specific details can be found in the Management Plan (page 21).

In summary, these program changes are geared toward better retention of students, particularly students of color, and ESL students. We will collect data each year to track student progress, including ongoing enrollment, gpa standing, completion of Praxis testing benchmarks, and utilization of support services. We will also track the students carefully who transfer into the program from MATC to examine their ongoing enrollment, completion of benchmarks, utilization of support services, and issues noted by the support services staff. This information will be used in our ongoing collaboration with MATC faculty/staff for continuous program improvement. The gathering of this data will be facilitated by the four-year program design.

As an outcome, we expect to see better retention rates overall, and a higher percentage of our graduates who are students of color and who are bilingual, who are currently under-represented. One task during the course of the initiative will be to explore options for sustainability of these resources.

**Goal 3: To provide professional development opportunities for consortium members, aimed at growth in ability to service English learners and teaching that supports the development of young children’s knowledge and skills in the STEM areas [Competitive Preference Priority 3].**

### **Specific Objectives**

**3.1 The UWM Faculty and the Project Planning Group will identify professional development needs for practicing teachers focused on quality education for ELs and on the development of STEM skills and knowledge.**

Generally speaking, there are three issues that consistently arise in the ECE literature and the literature on ELs in schools that could be addressed via professional development of inservice teachers. These are: 1) there is a lack of disposition toward and capacity for appropriate math and science teaching and learning amongst ECE teachers and staff (Copples & Bredekamp, 2009); 2) appropriateness of assessment of ELs in the content areas – particularly math and science - is questionable (Goldenberg, 2008) ; and, 3) support for ELs in the attainment of CALP (cognitive and academic language proficiency) so as to support their achievement in math and science is necessary (Cummins, 1991, 2000).

Preliminary needs assessment among the consortium members falls in line with these issues. For RUSD, there is a need for overall attention to helping early childhood classroom teachers to supplement their curriculum, improve their instruction, and address assessment for ELs, thus improving learning and achievement outcomes for these students. For RUSD and GHS, there is the need to support teachers in more effective instruction and assessment in content areas for ELs, particularly math and science.

In Year One of the project in consultation with the Project Planning Group, data and information will be gathered from GHS and RUSD to prioritize professional development (PD) needs and to develop targeted offerings. During Years 1 and 2, an expert consultant in early childhood math and science (Dr. Maria Hamlin) will work with the UWM faculty to design PD modules based in the NCELA (Ballantyne & Sanderman, 2008) recommendations for quality professional development of mainstream teachers of ELs. Details are contained in the Management Plan (page 23).

### **3.2 The project will deliver and evaluate inservice professional development for the consortium.**

In Years 2-5, the UWM Project Manager in conjunction with the faculty will deliver PD to groups of teachers at RUSD and CSS, as determined by the Project Planning Group. Beginning in Year 2, two in-person modules will be delivered that build upon one another, one to be presented early in the school year, and one later. The PD design will facilitate the development of teacher learning communities that support enhancement of instructional skills of teachers in math and science for ELs. These teachers will work together to practice and enhance their teaching with the support of the UWM Project Manager, who will check in regularly with these teacher learning communities between formal PD sessions. The learning communities will

gain focus from the participants' emphases in applying information from the modules in their classrooms.

New participants from RUSC and CSS will be recruited each project year to engage in the PD. We propose to involve 15 participants (teachers and paraprofessionals) from RUSD and 25 participants (teachers and assistants) from CSS each year. As we anticipate developing close relationships with these educators, we will also focus on recruitment of paraprofessionals to later enter the enhanced-support UWM ECE program to complete bachelor's degrees and ECE dual-certification. And, we will additionally work to recruit already-licensed ECE teachers to return to complete ESL or bilingual education add-on certification. The additional supports of the revamped ECE program enhance our capacity for and our assurance toward this recruitment.

In order to evaluate the PD, we will administer surveys at the completion of each in-person module. In addition we will administer a follow-up survey to each participating teacher in the year following the PD experience to determine how the information from the PD has affected/enhanced classroom practice. We will seek to learn how the teachers took up and implemented the PD information. We will also use this survey data as a feedback loop to further develop subsequent PD modules. Further details are contained in the Evaluation Plan (pages 29-30).

To further evaluate and assess the PD, we will solicit two subgroups of volunteers, one group in each from RUSD and CSS. These teachers will engage in a process of participatory action research with the UWM faculty, where teachers and faculty together will "dig deeper" to learn how teachers apply the strategies from the PD, what further and ongoing supports teachers need in implementing effective-for-EL instructional strategies, and to gauge improvement in EL engagement and achievement. A project staff member will observe in the volunteer's classrooms

using the Classroom Assessment Scoring System (CLASS) (Pianta, LaParo, & Hamre, 2008) and the SIOP (Echevarria, Short, & Peterson, 2011) tools. The teacher study subgroups will convene regularly and use the data from these observations to guide further enhancements in classroom practice. The information will be used to not only guide further development and enhancement of subsequent PD offerings, but will also be used in guiding revisions in the UWM coursework sequence.

In summary, UWM proposes to radically alter the ECE program framework and our ongoing relationships with students via a four-year model. A major reform is the melding of ESL/bilingual education certification coursework into the ECE requirements. These changes involve an intensity of new content and a change in the quality of the program, as experienced by students. Accordingly, we expect the changes to result in improved retention of students as ECE majors, better student preparation for teaching ELs, and better teaching practice post-graduation. We expect that at the end of Year One, the ECE program will be fundamentally different in its nature and scope. Students admitted in Year Two and beyond will participate in this reformed program, whether from the freshman point on, or for students already enrolled, in the new professional coursework. The impact of these changes, as well as the impact of the PD efforts, will be evaluated through several research initiatives, described on pages 25 – 31.

### **Project Personnel**

Personnel for this project consist of UWM faculty and to-be-hired positions. All hiring processes will encourage applications from individuals who are members of traditionally underrepresented groups, and where indicated, below will require bilingual individuals. Following are existing faculty who will be responsible for project activities. They have a long history of working together on collaborative projects.

**Jennifer Mueller**, Ph.D. (PI) is an associate professor and Program Director of ECE. Her research has focused on qualitative analyses of individuals' experiences and identity (relating the frames of race, class, culture, language, sexuality, etc.) during both preservice and the early inservice years of their teaching careers. Her most recent work has been conducted with program graduates, examining their work in urban classrooms in the early career years.

**Raquel Oxford**, Ph.D. (PI) is an associate professor in the languages program. Her research interests include the preparation of second language teachers, and she has taught in the early childhood program. Recently she worked in collaboration with Dr. Debora Wisneski on creating, teaching, and evaluating an inservice model designed to provide function Spanish skills to monolingual-English teachers of children whose first language was Spanish.

**Debora Wisneski**, Ph.D. (co-PI) is an associate professor in ECE. Her research has focused on qualitative analyses of early childhood classroom, particularly in relation to the concept of classroom community. She is currently the President of the Association for Childhood Education International, a professional association for educators.

**Nancy File**, Ph.D. (co-PI) is an associate professor in ECE. She served as co-PI on a U.S. Department of Education grant in the Preschool Curriculum Evaluation Research project. She is experienced in the collection and analysis of data in large-scale quantitative projects, including using classroom observation methodology.

Key members from the Consortium who will participate in the project as advisors include **Wilma Bonaparte**, Ph.D., the Associate Dean of Liberal Arts and Sciences/Health Science at Milwaukee Area Technical College; **Robert Conrad**, Director of CSS's Bruce Guadalupe Head Start, and **Jose Martinez**, Interim Director of English Language Learner Programs at RUSD. In addition a UWM faculty member will participate in an advisory role. **Javier Tapia**, Ph.D. is an

associate professor in the Department of Educational Policy and Community Studies. He has a degree in bilingual education and has experience working with Latino populations in various U.S. cities. He is currently working on partnership projects in education and health between Wisconsin and Mexico.

Additionally, several staff will be hired to work on the project. All new staff will be expected to have the professional characteristics of a strengths-based orientation, a high level of initiative and follow-through, and cultural awareness/responsiveness. We will seek applications from persons who are members of traditionally underrepresented groups. The positions include:

- The **Project Manager** will assume major responsibility for professional development activities. This person will be involved in planning and review responsibilities as well. The position will require a master's degree in early childhood or a related field and classroom experience teaching ELs.
- The **Academic Teaching Staff** will be hired to provide continuity in instruction for revised courses that integrate ESL-related material. This person will teach four course sections per semester. The position will require a master's degree in early childhood or a highly related field and classroom experience teaching ELs.
- The **Recruitment/Retention Specialist** will be hired to provide additional support services to students enrolled in the early childhood program and those moving toward transfer from MATC. The position will require a bachelor's degree and Spanish fluency, allowing for intensive support of the Spanish-speaking cohort members from MATC.
- The **graduate assistant** will be hired from the doctoral student population at UWM. This person is responsible for research assistance, and we will seek an individual who has strengths in detail work.

### **Description of Available Resources and Management Plan**

The management plan for meeting the goals of the project is described below. Overall, the persons responsible for ensuring program goals and activities are met in a timely manner are Jennifer Mueller and Raquel Oxford, PIs.

Staff time allocations are as follows. The PIs, Mueller and Oxford, are each allotted .125 fte of their time during the academic year, each year of the project. The Co-PIs, File and Wisneski, are allotted .125 fte of their time during Year 1. Additionally, these four faculty members are allotted one month of time during the summer in Year 1 and two weeks of summer time each of the following years. The Project Manager and Recruitment/Retention Specialist positions are full-time, full-year. The Academic Teaching Staff position is full-time, academic year. The graduate assistant is employed at .33 fte during the academic year.

Following is the workplan for each of the project goals and for project management and evaluation. The activities of Year 1 focus on planning and approval of program changes for teacher preparation. In following years, professional development, program implementation/review, and evaluation activities are central. Names or positions are used throughout to denote UWM staff. The Project Planning Group will consist of members from each partnering organization in the Consortium.

**Goal 1: To prepare teachers ready to work with ELs in early childhood classrooms.**

Objective 1.1: The early childhood program will rewrite program requirements and individual courses so that all students will complete the coursework requirements for certification in English as a Second Language concurrently with ECE program requirements.

Measureable activity & benchmark	Timeline	Responsible person
a. Rewrite 6 ESL courses to meet standards of both programs.	a. Yr 1, Qtrs 1 & 2	a. Mueller, Oxford, Wisneski, File
b. Gain full university level approval of course changes.	b. Yr 1, Qtrs 2 & 3	b. Mueller, Oxford
Measureable activity & benchmark	Timeline	Responsible person
c. Develop new course resources and prepare for teaching.	c. Yr 1, Qtrs 3 & 4	c. Oxford, Mueller, Wisneski, File
d. New courses available for all students admitted under new framework in fall 2012.	d. Start of Yr 2	d. Mueller oversees ongoing implementation as program chair
e. Adjunct faculty and student teacher supervisors attend training on ELL skills/knowledge.	e. Yr 2 & 4, Qtr 1	e. Project Manager, Mueller, Oxford, File, Wisneski

Objective 1.2. The early childhood program will regularly review the content of program coursework via the project's planning group, made up of consortium members.

Measureable activity & benchmark	Timeline	Responsible person
a. Identify key knowledge and skills to include in coursework.	a. Yr 1, Qtr 1	a. Project planning group (UWM PIs, Co-PIs and representatives from MATC, RUSD, and CSS)
b. Review program plans.	b. Yr 1, Qtr 2	b. Project planning group with external consultant
c. Review course materials.	c. Yr 1, Qtr 3	c. Project planning group with external consultant
d. Annual review of program functioning.	d. Yrs 2, 3, 4,& 5, Qtr 4	d. Project planning group

**Goal 2: To improve the program's ability to recruit and retain a diverse student body, while also strengthening the career ladder for Spanish-speaking teacher candidates.**

Objective 2.1: The early childhood program will rewrite program requirements so that students are admitted as majors in their first year, or upon transfer or change of major.

Measureable activity & benchmark	Timeline	Responsible person
a. Redesign course sequencing.	b. Yr 1, Qtr 1 & 2	a. Mueller, Oxford, File, Wisneski
b. Identify student benchmarks and policies for requirements.	b. Yr 1, Qtr 1 & 2	b. Mueller, Oxford, File, Wisneski
c. Develop plan with MATC staff for transfer students.	c. Yr 1, Qtr 1 & 2	c. Mueller, Oxford, File, Wisneski with MATC staff

d. Gain full university approval for program changes.	d. Yr 1, Qtr 2 & 3	d. Mueller & Oxford
e. Plan for shift from old to new program requirements.	e. Yr 1, Qtr 4	e. Mueller & Oxford with UWM advising staff
f. New program framework operational for students being admitted to UWM.	f. Start of Yr 2	

Objective 2.2. The early childhood program will increase the level of support services for struggling students and to enroll graduates from the MATC associate degree program conducted in Spanish.

Measureable activity & benchmark	Timeline	Responsible person
a. Prioritize barriers and solutions particular to Spanish-speaking students.	a. Yr 1, Qtr 3 & 4	a. Oxford, Mueller, MATC staff, Recruitment/Retention Specialist, Project Manager
b. Offer test-taking support, tutoring connections, transfer assistance, and intensive follow-through with struggling students.	b. Yr 2, 3, 4, & 5	b. Project Manager coordinates and tracks services; Recruitment/Retention Specialist does follow-through
c. Offer advising, language supports, and cohort models to ease transfer for Spanish-speaking students.	c. Yr 2, 3, 4, & 5	c. Recruitment/Retention Specialist offers or coordinates and tracks services

d. Create stipend award process.	d. Yr 1, Qtr 3	d. Project planning group
e. Award stipends to students in conjunction with other Federal aid.	e. Yr 1, 2, 3, & 4, Qtr 4	e. Project manager in consultation with PIs and co-PIs

**Goal 3: To provide professional development opportunities for consortium members, aimed at growth in ability to serve ELs and teaching that supports the development of children’s knowledge and skills in the STEM areas.**

Objective 3.1: The UWM faculty and consortium members will identify inservice professional development needs focused on quality education for ELs and on the development of STEM skills and knowledge.

Measurable activity	Timeline	Responsible person
a. Conduct detailed needs assessment with RUSD and CSS.	a. Yr 1, Qtr 3	a. Project Manager
b. Prioritize and plan for needs relevant to ELs.	b. Yr 1, Qtr 4	b. Project Manager with Project Planning Group
c. Prioritize and plan for needs relevant to STEM.	c. Yr 1, Qtr 4	c. Hamlin, Project Manager, and Project Planning Group
d. Review professional development efforts and agency needs and prioritize for coming years.	c. Yrs 2, 3, 4, Qtr 4	d. Project Manager, Hamlin (Yrs 2 & 3), Project Planning Group

Objective 3.2: The project will deliver and evaluate inservice professional development for the consortium.

Measureable activity	Timeline	Responsible person
a. Create evaluation plan and finalize measures.	a. Yrs 1, 2, 3, & 4, Qtr 4	a. Project Planning Group & Project Manager
b. Deliver and evaluate inservice professional development with staff at RUSD and CSS.	b. Yrs 2, 3, 4, & 5	b. Project Manager and Graduate Assistant

**Following is the plan for project management and evaluation.**

Measureable activity & benchmark	Timeline	Responsible person
a. Hire Project Manager.	a. Yr 1, Qtr 1	a. Mueller & Oxford
b. Hire Academic Teaching Staff and Recruitment/Retention Specialist.	b. Yr 1, Qtr 2	b. Mueller & Oxford
c. Hire/rehire as necessary, graduate assistant.	c. Yr 1, 2, 3, 4, Qtr 4	c. File
d. Supervise staff.	d. Yrs 1, 2, 3, 4, & 5	d. Mueller & Oxford
e. Assure performance is on-target and grant requirements are met. Prepare annual reports.	e. Yrs 1, 2, 3, 4, & 5	e. Mueller & Oxford

f. Plan to meet evaluation questions through participatory action research model.	f. Yr 1, Qtr 4	f. Project Planning Group
g. Finalization of project evaluation timelines; File trained on CLASS measure.	g. Yr 1, Qtr 4	g. Mueller, Oxford, File & Wisneski
h. IRB approval gained.	h. Yr 2, Qtr 1, and renewed annually	h. File & Wisneski
i. Coordination of data collection and analysis.	i. Yrs 2, 3, 4, & 5	i. File for quantitative data; Wisneski for qualitative data; with graduate assistant

### **Description of Evaluation Plan**

Our goal with this project is to prepare a diverse cadre of ECE teachers and to meet the inservice needs of practicing educators, all toward the purpose of better enabling them to work with children who are ELs. In this section we describe the project evaluation plan. We are responding as well to Competitive Preference Priority #2. Our evaluation plan includes high quality and timely data, collected through various means that will be utilized to understand the impact of the program on improving instructional practices.

We will evaluate progress toward this work as follows. Several measures will be used to collect data that informs the project on program effectiveness. These data will be shared with the Project Planning Group. Drawing upon the database capabilities at UWM, we will extract the following information on an annual basis:

- Number of ECE teacher preparation program completers, and the number who are certified in ESL/bilingual, leading to a percentage calculation (GPRA performance measure 1.1); and
- Number of program completers in the ESL certification add-on program, who hold an initial certification in ECE [Note: Bilingual certification is not available as an add-on] (GPRA performance measure 1.5).

In conjunction with procedures followed annually by the Council for Professional Education at UWM [Note: the CPE is the coordinating body for assessment activities for all UWM teacher certification programs], we will collect the following information:

- Number of ECE teacher preparation program completers who are serving EL children in their positions at one year post-completion, with a percentage calculation of this group compared to the entire number (GPRA performance measure 1.2); and
- Similarly, the number of completers serving EL children at three years post-completion (GPRA performance measure 1.3).

The tracking responsibilities assigned to the Project Manager (See Management Plan) will include compiling the following data:

- Number of participants in preservice and inservice opportunities who are employed full-time as paraprofessionals or classroom teaching assistants/aides and their completion of coursework or inservice professional development modules [Note: The state does not have a qualification process for paraprofessionals who work with EL students. However, many students from MATC and a small number from UWM hold paraprofessional positions] (GPRA performance measure 1.4); and

- Job site descriptions for all inservice professional development participants that identifies the percentage of children in each classroom who are ELs. (GPRA performance measure 1.6).

These data will provide a measure of the program effectiveness in providing services, but still leaves unanswered questions about the professional work of the involved educators and specific questions relevant to project goals. Our evaluation here will focus upon the preservice and inservice teachers served by the project. We will collect and analyze data relevant to instructional practices. Understanding the outcomes for young children is a more complex process and requires sensitive assessment processes. The project budget does not allow for individualized child assessment, a costly process that is the only means possible to gain a valid understanding of the abilities of children as young as four years of age. Both RUSD and CSS have procedures in place to assess their children, but the assessments at these age levels are considered to be formative. They are not standardized to the degree necessary for research purposes. Therefore, we will limit our research component to teacher practices.

The first project goal focuses on the preservice preparation of teachers who can work effectively with EL children. We will evaluate this goal through several research foci. First, we will track the Praxis II scores for both the Elementary Content and English as a Second Language tests (the former is required for ECE certification, the latter for ESL certification), to examine program effectiveness in student pass rates. The Elementary Content test contains separate mathematics and science sections. We will conduct further analyses by drilldown into the scores in these sections to examine program effectiveness for STEM teaching. These data sources are available in anonymous form for the project's use.

Second, we will evaluate the portfolios students are required to submit (state licensing requirements) using newly-created rubrics that will reflect the blending of ECE and ESL knowledge and skills in the new program. ECE program faculty will evaluate all students' portfolios prior to student teaching and at program completion, as per licensing requirements. These data are routinely collected as part of teacher certification requirements, and they will be available to the project with all student names removed. This will provide information about the program's effectiveness via identified strengths and gaps in student work. Data from these two sources of information will be shared with the Project Planning Group in annual review and planning meetings. They will be used for program improvement.

Finally, we will conduct more intensive research with a smaller subgroup of program students. This research will require IRB approval; it will be open for enrollment to up to 15 students per each of two cohorts. Several activities will be conducted with this group. We will request that they submit copies of major course assignments (e.g., planned units, implemented lessons). These will be analyzed using qualitative methods to understand how students apply course information in their work. The driving research question will be, "How do students address EL issues and needs, and where are there gaps or misunderstandings in their work?" Coding of the assignments will be done to identify themes and patterns. Second, we will collect quantitative data that reflects the preservice students' performance in the classroom. Beginning in the third year of the project, as the first students move closer to completion in the new program, we will use the Classroom Assessment Scoring System (CLASS, Pianta, LaParo, & Hamre, 2008) and the SIOP model Observation Protocol (Echevarria, Short & Peterson, 2011) to record data about the students' work in the classroom. With the CLASS we will obtain data that describe the students' emotional support of children (e.g., positive climate, negative climate,

teacher sensitivity), classroom organization (e.g., behavior management, instructional learning formats), and instructional support (e.g., quality of feedback, language modeling). We consider the last domain particularly pertinent to the research. With the SIOP we will obtain data that describe the students' ability to provide comprehensible input, building children's background material, and interaction/teaching strategies. We will observe this subgroup of students in their final field experience (project year 3), student teaching placement (project year 4) and first year on-the-job (project year 5). A second cohort subgroup will be observed in the same sequence beginning in project year 4.

With the qualitative and quantitative data from this subgroup analysis, we will be able to feed back more detailed information and understanding into the project. The Project Planning Group will be given summaries of the data that keep students' identities anonymous.

The second project goal focuses on the recruitment and retention of a diverse student body, with particular attention given to supporting Spanish-speaking students from MATC. The evaluation for this component of the project includes both quantitative and qualitative data. First, there will be careful tracking (see Project Management) of the services provided to students from the Recruitment/Retention Specialist. Second, from the database services at UWM, we are able to request non-identified data for students. On an annual basis we will examine the program progress of students of color, looking for patterns in achievement levels or benchmark attainment. Through this examination of the data, we can identify trouble spots. These data will be provided to the Project Planning Group for review and problem-solving.

Second, we will conduct two focus groups annually, one with a volunteer group of students of color from UWM and one with a volunteer group of students from MATC (this activity also requires IRB approval). These focus groups will be conducted by the graduate

assistant to facilitate students' willingness to be frank. We will be probing for their perceptions of barriers and effective components of the programs, and descriptions of their experiences. These group interviews will be audio-taped and transcribed, preserving student anonymity, before being given to the Project Planning Group for review and problem-solving.

The third project goal focuses on planning and provision of effective professional development at RUSD and CSS. The following sources of information will allow us to examine the effectiveness of the professional development. Surveys particular to each professional development module will be constructed and given to participants at completion of the module. We will gather information about the participants' understanding of the material and perspective about its application in their work. Another survey relative to the participants' ongoing understanding and use of the information will be collected two months after each module. Surveys will be confidential, being linked by a number assigned and known only by the graduate assistant. The graduate assistant will also observe the implementation of each professional development module, taking field notes on how participants responded to the information and activities. These data will be submitted in anonymous, grouped formats to the Project Planning Group for review and discussion of project improvements.

In addition, we will conduct deeper analyses with a subgroup of participants at RUSD and at CSS. This will allow for a more thorough understanding of how the participants take up and act upon information delivered via the modules. Generally, we are using learning communities as an ongoing process for participants following delivery of a professional development model. To collect more detailed data, we utilize an additional process with the volunteer subgroups.

We will use a model of participatory action research for one group at RUSD and one group at CSS. In this model (McIntyre, 2008) the researcher is collaboratively involved with the participants, educators in this case, in designing the inquiry processes. With the assistance of Debora Wisneski, UWM faculty member, as a group, the teachers will reflect upon the professional development information and plan for processes of investigation in their own classrooms as they apply and use the information. They will design action research projects around their questions and concerns relative to providing more effective instruction, generally and in the STEM fields, to ELs. The participants will present their action research projects to the Project Planning Group. While this information can then be used for review and improvement efforts, the presentations also allow for the Consortium members to understand how teachers have been using the professional development efforts.

In sum, our evaluation efforts will consist of thorough tracking of preservice students' program completion and knowledge as assessed through the portfolio and required professional tests, and thorough tracking of inservice training opportunities and teachers' perceptions of their learning. In addition, more detailed information will be generated with subgroups of preservice and inservice professionals as we implement plans for qualitative and quantitative data collection and analysis. All data will be fed back to the Project Planning Group and used for project review and improvement efforts. Throughout the project period, data will be examined to provide perspectives on the question of how to prepare and support a diverse cadre of ECE teachers better prepared to serve ELs effectively.

### **Conclusion**

Consortium members will collaborate to inform program reform at UWM. The reform effort will result in better preparation of the 80 students graduating each year to serve young ELs

in classrooms. With greater attention to recruitment and retention efforts, the cadre of students graduating from UWM will become more diverse. A particular target for these efforts will be the bilingual individuals who are graduating from the MATC sheltered-instruction ECE program. Assisting individuals from MATC to obtain a bachelor's degree and teacher certification will allow these individuals to move up the career ladder. Consortium members will also collaborate to plan professional development at RUSD and CSS, enabling teaching staff to work effectively with ELs and address STEM learning. Finally, given the research expertise at UWM, extensive efforts will be taken to collect qualitative and quantitative data that help us to understand the impact of these efforts.

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