



## Early Childhood Equity Initiative

### Invitation to Partner to Develop Local Leadership for Culturally Responsive Early Childhood Education

The Teaching for Change Early Childhood Equity Initiative Leaders is a successful approach to developing a cadre of early childhood leaders with expertise in culturally-responsive education. The approach has been developed and field-tested over the last four years in Washington, DC, with support from the Peppercorn Foundation, and national expansion has begun with new pilot sites in New Jersey and Ohio. The early childhood education professionals who make up these ECEIL cohorts have included teachers, directors, graduate students, elementary school librarians, Head Start education coordinators, trainers and consultants. They have become a close-knit network of colleagues committed to designing, implementing, assessing and promoting curriculum, environments, programs, policies and standards that are equitable, culturally-responsive, and linguistically consistent with the diverse communities served by our profession.

Colleges and early childhood organizations in communities throughout the U.S. are invited to partner with the Teaching for Change Early Childhood Equity Initiative to replicate this effective, critically needed, and cutting-edge leadership development program.

During the two-year, Early Childhood Equity Initiative Leaders (ECEIL) training/networking experience, each Early Childhood Equity Initiative Leader is introduced to a wide-variety of research and practice that is consistent with developing their understanding and skills in creating and promoting anti-bias curriculum, bilingual education, and equity and social justice in early childhood programs. Each ECEI Leader learns to use the *ECEI Classroom Assessment* tool and is introduced to new resources and materials while working on their individual ECEIL project designed for their own work environment. Each year, in seven meetings, scheduled between January and November or between September and June, they strategize, give feedback, and support each other in this learning process. Different than a typical course, this experience is about building and sustaining a knowledgeable and influential leadership corp.

ECEI seeks to partner with ECE programs in colleges and universities as well as local ECE organizations that share our common concern for the lack of emphasis on issues of diversity and equity in pre-service teacher education and ECE staff in-service. Together our efforts will enhance participants' abilities to engage fellow staff members, parents and policy-makers in addressing issues such as:

- the impact that positive racial and cultural identity development has on our youngest children,
- respecting and appreciating the backgrounds, lifestyles and other differences that are present in our increasingly diverse communities,
- issues of second-language learning and teaching methodology,
- the effects of institutional oppression and internalized oppression on our ECE workforce,
- effectiveness in influencing curricula, teaching methodology, program policies, and standards in the field, and
- liberatory education

The role of the local partner includes identifying, recruiting and selecting ten, Early Childhood Equity Initiative Leaders and facilitating this training/networking group using the ECEIL curriculum, process and evaluation. This will be accomplished with training and technical assistance by ECEI staff offered during five, local site visits the first year and three the second year and via calls and e-mail throughout the project year. The cost for the first year curriculum and technical assistance to establish and support the ECEIL cohort is \$45,553. If the host institution does not have the resources in hand, the partners will collaborate on identifying local and regional funding entities to support this effort. ECEI and the local host will share development of funding proposals and Teaching for Change can act as the fiscal agent, assuring that all approved plans and requirements are met.

Through this effort, our next generation of leaders will bring a strong social justice and equity perspective and expertise to their work in all arenas of the early childhood field. This is essential to ensure equitable, quality education for all families and children.

*If you would like to partner with ECEI on the development of a local Early Childhood Equity Initiative Leaders and/or would like more information, contact Senior Consultant, Cecelia Alvarado at (540) 752-7551 or at [calvarado@teachingforchange.org](mailto:calvarado@teachingforchange.org).*