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# SRCD State Policy Fellow Portfolio Abstracts: Melanie Fish

2017-2018 State Policy Pre-doctoral Fellow at the Washington State Department of Early Learning (DEL)/Department of Children, Youth, and Families (DCYF)

Melanie Fish

**AUTHOR**

**Portfolio Entry 1: Department of Early Learning (DEL) and Office of Superintendent of Public Instruction (OSPI) Joint Statement on Early Learning and Dual Language Learners**

## **Project Overview:**

*Background:* Two state agencies began a collaboration around addressing dual language learners (DLLs) including a focus on cognitive, linguistic, and sociocultural benefits of bilingualism, family and community engagement, instructional approaches, assessment and professional development for early childhood professionals who serve DLLs.

*Goal:* To develop a joint position statement between the state agencies that proposes their unified vision for dual language learners (DLLs) in Pre-K through kindergarten.

**Contributions of Fellow:**

- Drafted the joint position statement and coordinated ongoing editing of the document.
- Co-presented content from the joint position statement at a local conference.

**Activity Focus Keywords:** Written Report, Cross-Agency Collaboration

**Policy Area Keywords:** Dual Language Learners (DLLs), Pre-kindergarten to Kindergarten Transition

**Portfolio Entry 2: Dual Language Training for Early Childhood Educators**

**Project Overview:**

*Background:* State legislation mandates the development of a strategic vision around improving outcomes for dual language learners (DLLs) from Pre-K through kindergarten. The legislation was created by the state agency in partnership with a university-based research institute and a main deliverable of the legislation is a training curriculum. Training objectives include: participants' ability to demonstrate an understanding of how language, culture, and identity relate in early childhood; gaining skills for supporting DLLs in English as they continue to develop their home language; supporting children's language skills in all daily activities; learning simple, direct strategies for engaging families of DLLs, particularly in the absence of a common language; and developing a deeper understanding of how to ensure equity and culturally responsive practices in their care environments.

*Goal:* To support the development and refinement of an introductory-level early childhood training curriculum intended to provide early childhood educators and staff with foundational knowledge about DLLs and supportive classroom practices.

**Contributions of Fellow:**

- Facilitated the partnership between the state agency and university-based research institute.
- Led focus groups in the early stages of training development.

- Compiled and synthesized feedback from community stakeholder meetings to incorporate into the training curriculum.
- Assisted in editing the training curriculum throughout its development.

**Activity Focus Keywords:** Professional Development, Curriculum Development, Conduct Interviews

**Policy Area Keywords:** Dual Language Learners (DLLs), Professional Development

### **Portfolio Entry 3: State-Level Universal Pre-K: Comparison Chart and Program Effect Sizes**

#### **Project Overview:**

*Background:* The Universal Pre-Kindergarten (UPK) Comparison Chart provides a summary of state-level Pre-K programs that are open to all children regardless of family income (i.e., “universal”) and that serve more than 50% of four-year-olds in the state.

*Goal:* To create a comparison chart that provides information on key quality indicators and examine effect sizes of programs listed in the universal Pre-K outcome reports for a subset of states profiled in the comparison chart.

#### **Contributions of Fellow:**

- Conducted a literature review and online search of key quality and performance information on state universal pre-kindergarten programs.
- Developed the universal pre-kindergarten comparison chart and outcomes report, which includes effect sizes.

**Activity Focus Keywords:** Data Analysis, Literature Review

**Policy Area Keywords:** Pre-kindergarten (Pre-K)

### **Portfolio Entry 4: Early Care and Education as a Protective Factor Against Child Maltreatment and Welfare Involvement: Literature Review and Presentation**

#### **Project Overview:**

*Background:* Key research stakeholders of the state's early learning and child welfare agency are interested in the role that early care and education may have as a protective factor for children and families who are at risk for entering the child welfare system.

*Goal:* To investigate if/how early care and education can serve as a protective factor against child maltreatment and welfare involvement and foster care placement.

**Contributions of Fellow:**

- Conducted literature review.
- Created annotated bibliography.
- Presented findings at the agency research planning meeting.

**Activity Focus Keywords:** Literature Review, Annotated Bibliography, Presentation

**Policy Area Keywords:** Child Maltreatment, Child Welfare