



# ASPIRE (Cares Plus) Evaluation Report

Program Year 2012 – 13

The ASPIRE program is funded by First 5 LA and First 5 California.



ASPIRE (CARES Plus) Evaluation Report  
Program Year 2012-13

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August, 2013

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# Executive Summary

## Introduction

The Los Angeles Universal Preschool ASPIRE program is the CARES Plus program for Los Angeles County. The ASPIRE program supports the completion of permits, coursework, and degrees, and the increased quality of teaching practices of early childhood education professionals. To reach these outcomes, the ASPIRE program offers one-on-one advisement, on-line CLASS trainings, and financial incentives to participants. In addition, the ASPIRE program collaborates with other organizations and institutions of higher education in Los Angeles County through the Los Angeles County Early Care and Education Workforce Consortium. The collaboration between the ASPIRE program and the Workforce Consortium is focused on developing a more coordinated and effective professional development system for early childhood educators. The anticipated long-term impacts of the ASPIRE program, as well as the larger Workforce Consortium, are that early childhood education professionals in Los Angeles County will be better equipped to deliver high-quality services to children and families, and will experience greater rates of career advancement and retention in the field as a result of their qualifications. The ASPIRE program is funded through grants from First 5 California and First 5 LA.

## Methods

This evaluation summarizes the program and participant outcomes, and poses recommendations for future program implementation based on information gathered during the program year. The evaluation questions are:

1. To what extent is the ASPIRE program meeting its objectives?
2. What are the perceived benefits of participating in ASPIRE?
3. What were the programmatic successes and challenges of the ASPIRE program?
4. What are the recommendations for future program implementation?

A mixed methods design was used to collect data for this evaluation. Data was collected from the ASPIRE program lead using the Workforce Consortium Questionnaire. Data was collected from ASPIRE advisors using the Advisor Training Feedback Form. Data was collected from withdrawn participants using a structured mid-year phone survey. Data was collected from participants using the ASPIRE Application, ASPIRE Employment Verification Form, ASPIRE program database, the Knowledge of Effective Teacher-Child Interactions assessment, Advisement Satisfaction Survey, and Participant Year-End Survey. In addition to these data collection instruments, hard copies of transcripts were requested from ASPIRE participants twice during the program year, once at the beginning of the year, and once at the end of the year. Transcripts were requested from participants in order to assist in advisement and to track program compliance and participant outcomes. Hard copies of permits were requested once at the end of the year. Permits were requested from participants in order to track participant outcomes.

## Findings

Findings from the data collected during the 2012-13 program year are organized according to the joint long-term impact areas shared by the ASPIRE program and the Los Angeles Early Care and Education Workforce Consortium. These impact areas are:

- Expanded ECE workforce
- Better qualified ECE workforce
- Greater retention and advancement of the ECE workforce
- Increased quality of ECE practices and programs
- More effective ECE professional development system in LA County

The ASPIRE program met or exceeded all program objectives aligned with these long-term impact areas.

### *Expanded and Diverse ECE Workforce*

The ASPIRE program recruited 1,755 applicants, and accepted 1,166 participants into the ASPIRE program for the 2012-13 program year. This was an increase over the 1,575 applicants recruited, and the 1,011 participants accepted in the 2011-12 program year. This increase in enrollment occurred despite difficulties related to incomplete applications and difficulties accessing required forms from the new on-line application. In addition to an increase in participants, the ASPIRE program was able to maintain the racial/ethnic diversity of the participant group in the second year of the program. The racial/ethnic breakdown of the 2012-13 ASPIRE participants mirrored that of both the general population and the 0 to 5 population in Los Angeles County. Participants were also geographically diverse, living and working across all five supervisorial districts in Los Angeles County.

### *Better Qualified ECE Workforce*

During the 2012-13 program year, 793 ASPIRE participants passed relevant coursework with a "C" or better, 71 achieved a degree, and 221 received a new or upgraded permit. This was an increase from the number of participants who reached each milestone in 2011-12. However, the percentage of overall participants who achieved these milestones decreased slightly from 2011-12 to 2012-13. A mid-year phone survey conducted with withdrawn participants revealed that participants struggled with finding and registering for appropriate coursework.

ASPIRE participants overwhelmingly attributed their academic and permit progress to the assistance they received from ASPIRE, and the majority reported that the ASPIRE advisor and stipend motivated them to take more coursework and apply for a new or upgraded permit. Participants also reported that the ASPIRE stipend made it possible to afford the classes needed to complete degrees and permit applications.

### *Greater Retention and Advancement of the ECE Workforce*

Participants reported that the ASPIRE program motivated them to stay in the ECE field and made it possible for them to pay their summer living expenses. In addition, participants reported that the ASPIRE program contributed to their professional advancement. Of the participants who received a pay increase at work during the 2012-13 program year, 72% attributed the pay increase to their participation in the ASPIRE program. Of the participants who were promoted during the 2012-13 program year, 59% attributed the promotion to their participation in the ASPIRE program.

### *Increased Quality of ECE Practices and Programs*

Knowledge of effective teacher-child interactions significantly increased for first year ASPIRE participants, who were required to complete CLASS training during the 2012-13 program year. Knowledge of effective teacher-child interactions did not significantly change (increase or decrease) for second year participants. The second year participants completed the CLASS training during the 2011-12 program year. Findings for the second year participants suggest that the knowledge increase they experienced during the first program year was sustained during the second year of the program. Finally, results indicate no significant difference between first and second year participants at the end of the 2012-13 program year. This indicates that first year participants reached the same level of knowledge that second year participants reached after experiencing the on-line CLASS training.

In addition to responding to the “Teachers’ Knowledge of Effective Teacher-Child Interactions” measure, participants were asked if the ASPIRE program, and the completed coursework, had an impact on the quality of their practices. The majority of ASPIRE survey respondents reported that the courses they took helped to increase the quality of their practices (96%). Participants also reported that the ASPIRE program increased their knowledge of CLASS-related classroom strategies (93%) and improved the effectiveness of their teaching (95%). Participants also reported that they intentionally planned to implement a CLASS-related strategy or practice “Daily” or “Multiple Times a Day”.

### *More Effective ECE Professional Development System in LA County*

The ASPIRE program increased the capacity of ASPIRE advisors to provide support with educational advancement, permit attainment, and the implementation of best practices in the classroom. This increase in capacity was a result of the recruitment, training, and coordination of ASPIRE advisors who also work for established training agencies or educational institutions across Los Angeles County. The ASPIRE program staff also worked with other workforce programs and funders through the Los Angeles Early Care and Education Workforce Consortium to align and coordinate efforts and maximize the services provided to ECE professionals. This work included collaborations to implement recruitment strategies across Workforce Consortium partner agencies to attract qualified ASPIRE advisors and participants, co-enrollment of participants across programs as appropriate,

regional meetings for staff networking and collaboration, and coordination of resources in order to offer computer clinics to ASPIRE participants on the Los Angeles County Office of Education campus.

## Recommendations

The evaluation findings resulted in the following recommendations:

- Continue to work with Workforce Consortium partners to recruit ASPIRE participants.
- Continue to implement established recruitment strategies.
- Continue to provide services in multiple languages and across all supervisorial districts to ensure participant diversity.
- Work with community colleges across Los Angeles County to provide contracted courses so that ASPIRE participants have priority enrollment in appropriate coursework.
- Continue the mid-year phone survey with withdrawn participants to determine the barriers to completing academic and professional development milestones.
- Reemphasize the need for services that support coursework identification and enrollment during the advisor orientation and development meetings.
- Continue to send out information on available courses and schools to ASPIRE participants.
- Reduce advisor caseload so that advisors can establish a closer relationship with the participant and provide more support in the areas of coursework and permit completion.
- Increase the number of advisement sessions so that participants receive more support.
- Calculate the percentage income increase experienced by participants who received an ASPIRE stipend.
- Continue to administer stipends and bonuses to participants who achieve academic and professional development milestones through the ASPIRE program.
- Continue to provide on-line CLASS training for ASPIRE participants.
- Provide access to the CLASS on-line video library for returning ASPIRE participants.
- Continue to provide advisement on the CLASS so that participants intentionally implement CLASS-related strategies or practices in the classroom.
- Continue to request CLASS observation scores for ASPIRE participants from First 5 California.
- Continue to recruit new ASPIRE advisors from the existing pool of professionals working for professional development agencies and institutions of higher education.
- Continue to work with Workforce Consortium partners to collaborate and generate ideas for program improvement.
- Continue to develop the capacity of the ASPIRE advisors by providing CLASS training, and permit matrix training.

# Introduction

First 5 California has created the Comprehensive Approaches to Raising Education Standards (CARES) Plus program, which aims to increase the quality of early learning programs by supporting the education and professional development of the early childhood education workforce in California. The Los Angeles Universal Preschool ASPIRE program is the CARES Plus program for Los Angeles County. The ASPIRE program supports the completion of permits, coursework, and degrees, and the increased quality of teaching practices of early childhood education professionals. To reach these outcomes, the ASPIRE program offers one-on-one advisement, on-line CLASS trainings, and financial incentives to participants. In addition, the ASPIRE program collaborates with other organizations and institutions of higher education in Los Angeles County through the Los Angeles County Early Care and Education Workforce Consortium. The collaboration between the ASPIRE program and the Workforce Consortium is focused on developing a more coordinated and effective professional development system for early childhood educators. The anticipated long-term impacts of the ASPIRE program, as well as the larger Workforce Consortium, are that early childhood education professionals in Los Angeles County will be better equipped to deliver high-quality services to children and families, and will experience greater rates of career advancement and retention in the field as a result of their qualifications.

## Program Objectives

The ASPIRE program and the Workforce Consortium work in tandem towards the same long-term impacts. The ASPIRE program objectives align with these long-term impacts.

Long-Term Impact	ASPIRE Objective
Expanded ECE workforce.	Recruit 1000 early educators who represent the diversity of Los Angeles.
Better qualified ECE workforce.	Increase the preparation of the ECE Workforce through the completion of coursework, permit, and degree requirements.
Increased retention and advancement of the ECE workforce.	Increase the incentives for early educators to pursue educational and professional advancement.
Increased quality of ECE practices and programs.	Increased the effectiveness of teaching practices and quality teacher-child interactions.
More effective ECE professional development system in LA County.	Structural change in institutions of higher education and organizations serving the needs of early educators, leading to the development of more seamless educational pathways.

## Evaluation Overview

The primary purpose of the ASPIRE evaluation is to understand the extent to which the ASPIRE program is meeting its objectives. Participant and program outcomes will be examined relative to each ASPIRE program objective. Because this is the second year of the ASPIRE program, evaluation results will be presented across year one (2011-12) and year two (2012-13) for a selection of the analyses. The evaluation will also examine the challenges and barriers that ASPIRE participants faced in completing educational and professional development milestones, participant's perceived benefits of participating in ASPIRE, and satisfaction with the different components of the ASPIRE program. Finally, the evaluation will highlight the successes, challenges, and lessons learned related to program implementation, describe any changes in practice that occurred between year one and year two of the program, and make suggestions for future programmatic changes.

## Program Description

The CARES Plus program has been funded through grants from First 5 California and First 5 LA, and has been administered in counties throughout California since 2000. Los Angeles Universal Preschool responded to the CARES Plus RFA in 2010 and received funds to create and administer the CARES Plus program for Los Angeles County starting in 2011. LAUP renamed the CARES Plus program "ASPIRE" based on input from the LAUP communications staff and the CARES Plus Advisory Group. In addition to serving early care and educational professionals, the ASPIRE program is a non-funded partner of the Los Angeles Early Care and Education Workforce Consortium. The consortium is a larger workforce effort that brings together organizations and leaders in the field of early care and education to improve the educational and professional development system for Early Care and Education professionals in Los Angeles County. ASPIRE is a key project within the consortium, as it provides direct support services to professionals who are working towards education, professional development, and the improvement of teaching practices. Members of the consortium compose the CARES Plus Advisory Group.

At this time, professionals in the field of early care and education experience some of the lowest wages and highest turnover rates in the California workforce. They often work without a degree, permit, or other professional credential, and with no incentive to pursue coursework or other professional development opportunities. In light of recent research establishing a link between quality teaching and child outcomes, this lack of professional preparation and growth has serious implications for young children in Los Angeles County. The research has found that early care and education professionals with a bachelor's degree provide higher quality teacher-child interactions for young children (Barnett, 2011; Bowman, 2011). Research has also found a link between high quality adult-child interactions and children's acquisition of language, social, and academic skills (Burchinal, Howes, Pianta, Bryant, Early, Clifford & Barbarin, 2008; Hamre & Pianta, 2005). The high-quality environment that is provided by a skilled and educated early childhood professional is important for all children engaged in early education settings, and is especially critical for

children living in poverty or experiencing other risk factors for low academic performance (Campbell, et. al., 2002; Hamre & Pianta, 2005; Schweinhart, et. al., 2005).

The ASPIRE program provides professional advisement and financial incentives that are meant to minimize the barriers to educational and professional achievement for early childhood educators and assist in the completion of coursework, transfers, degrees, and new or upgraded permits. The ASPIRE program also provides free on-line CLASS (Classroom Assessment Scoring System) training and advisement in support of the implementation of CLASS practices. The CLASS training is a professional development experience that provides early educators with a framework for understanding the importance of emotional support, classroom organization, and instructional support in high quality teaching, and how to implement these skills in their own practice. The CLASS training and supports provided by the ASPIRE program are meant to increase effective teaching practices and quality teacher-child interactions among participants.

During the 2012-13 program year, the ASPIRE program employed 38 advisors to provide in-person support to participants. This was an increase from 32 advisors in 2011-12. The number of Advisors increased because 166 more participants were served in the second year of the program. ASPIRE advisors were strategically recruited from around Los Angeles County in order to provide participants with advisement within a 10 mile radius of their home or workplace. The ASPIRE advisors operated in all 5 supervisorial districts across Los Angeles County during the 2012-13 program year.

In addition to the ASPIRE advisors, the ASPIRE program employs a program supervisor who creates and administers the ASPIRE program, and a program staff made up of professional growth specialists and professional growth analysts who determine eligibility, collect and track program data, and provide technical, programmatic, and professional development support to ASPIRE participants and advisors.

## **Participant Requirements**

ASPIRE participants are early care and education professionals working in Los Angeles County who are interested in advancing their educational or professional qualifications and increasing the quality of their instructional practices. In order to qualify for the ASPIRE program, participants must:

- Work for pay in a licensed Family Child Care Home, licensed Child Care Facility, or public school-based site.
- Work directly with children age 0-5 for at least 15 hours per week OR directly supervise those who do.
- Be ineligible for the Los Angeles County “Investing in Early Educators Stipend Program” (AB212).

- Be working towards a Child Development permit or ECE degree OR be taking professional growth coursework (if they already hold a BA/BS and a Site Supervisor permit or higher).
- Earn less than \$60,000 annually in child care/early childhood education salary.

In order to be considered for the program, ASPIRE participants are required to submit the following:

- ASPIRE application
- Employment information
- Child Development Permits held
- Grade reports or transcripts of previous coursework

After being accepted into the program, ASPIRE participants must submit the following:

- Proof of continuous employment (Employment Verification Form)
- Completed Individualized Professional Development Plan (co-created with Advisor)
- Proof that coursework was completed with a “C” or better during the program
- Proof that non-unit bearing ESL or GED courses were completed during the program

ASPIRE participants are routed to one of two “tracks” depending on the ages of the children they serve: infants and toddlers or preschoolers. Each track has slightly different program requirements as outlined by First 5 California. In order to remain active in the ASPIRE program, all ASPIRE participants must complete the program requirements associated with their track. In addition, the requirements for each track in 2012-13 were slightly different for participants who had been in the program for more than one year.

<b>Preschool Track – First Year Participants</b>	<b>Preschool Track – Second Year Participants</b>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Two Advisement Sessions with an ASPIRE Advisor</li> <li>• <b>3</b> Semester Units of Coursework</li> <li>• On-line training: Second Hand Smoke</li> <li>• On-line training: Introduction to PreK CLASS</li> <li>• On-line training: Looking at PreK CLASSrooms</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Two Advisement Sessions with an ASPIRE Advisor</li> <li>• <b>6</b> Semester Units of Coursework</li> </ul>

<b>Infant/Toddler Track – First Year Participants</b>	<b>Infant/Toddler Track – Second Year Participants</b>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Two Advisement Sessions with an ASPIRE Advisor</li> <li>• <b>3</b> Semester Units of Coursework</li> <li>• On-line training: Second Hand Smoke</li> <li>• On-line training: Introduction to Toddler CLASS</li> <li>• On-line training: Looking at Toddler CLASSrooms</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Two Advisement Sessions with an ASPIRE Advisor</li> <li>• <b>3</b> Semester Units of Coursework</li> <li>• On-line training: Introduction to Toddler CLASS</li> <li>• On-line training: Looking at Toddler CLASSrooms</li> </ul>

## Program Services

The ASPIRE program provides in-person advisement, on-line training, and financial incentives so that participants have the academic, professional, and financial support they need to complete educational and professional development milestones and improve their classroom practices. The ASPIRE program retained 37 advisors during the 2012-13 program year. The ASPIRE advisors were carefully selected professionals from the field of early care and education who had the expertise to guide ASPIRE participants on professional and educational advancement, and the implementation of quality teaching practices. At the beginning of the program year, LAUP provided the ASPIRE advisors with training on the program requirements and the expected content of the advisement sessions. Advisement was offered in English or Spanish. Advisors met with each participant twice during the program year. They provided the following services during the advisement sessions: a) transcript review, b) permit matrix review, c) general information regarding academic counselors, education plans, graduations requirements, and financial aid, d) professional development goal creation, e) CLASS review and discussion, f) classroom practice and strategy goal creation.

Advisement sessions could be one-on-one or small group sessions. The advisor was required to provide personalized support to each participant. Although the participants were required to register for the required coursework on their own, the ASPIRE advisors and ASPIRE program staff were available to help participants identify appropriate coursework in accredited institutions of higher education throughout the county. In addition to the advisement sessions, participants received on-line CLASS training. As mentioned in the section above, the CLASS training is a professional development experience that provides early educators with a framework for understanding the importance of emotional support, classroom organization, and instructional support in high quality teaching, and how to implement these skills in their own practice. Advisors provided participants with guidance in identifying strategies for incorporating CLASS skills into daily practice.

ASPIRE participants who qualified for the program and fulfilled all program requirements received a stipend of \$1,280.00. An additional stipend bonus was given to participants who were accepted into the ASPIRE program for a second year of participation (\$150), applied for a new or upgraded permit (\$300), earned a degree (\$550), or participated in the CLASS observations performed by First 5 California (\$300). Participants were able to receive a permit or degree bonus, but not both. The maximum financial incentive a participant could receive was \$2,280.00 (Stipend + Retention + Degree + CLASS observations).

## Theory of Change

A theory of change is a set of “theories” or interlocking assumptions which serve as the base for the changes expected to occur during the course of a program. Explicitly outlining these assumptions helps evaluators and program staff test and explain the changes that are expected to occur during the course of the program. A theory of change provides the “roadmap” for applying, practicing, or realizing ideas in order to bring about change (Bruner, 2004).

In order to give context for the ASPIRE theory of change, a logic model was created (Appendix A). The logic model links the target populations involved in the ASPIRE program with the activities they participate in. It also outlines the short, intermediate, and long-term outcomes expected of the ASPIRE program, as well as the intended long-term impact of the program. The major assumptions (or theories) associated with the ASPIRE program are:

1. There is a need within the field of Early Care and Education for an educated and skilled workforce that can deliver high-quality services to children ages 0 to 5.
2. The field recognizes and rewards degrees and permits, so that there are financial and professional incentives for professionals to work towards academic and professional achievements.
3. There is a need among Early Care and Education professionals for the services provided through ASPIRE. Without the types of services provided through ASPIRE (Academic, Professional, and Financial Support), professionals would be significantly less likely to achieve transfers, degrees, permits, or improvements in instructional practices.
4. ASPIRE participants are motivated to achieve the academic and professional milestones outlined in the program.
5. Services provided through ASPIRE are provided in an effective and timely manner, and are provided in the appropriate dosage, to bring about the expected improvement in student achievement and knowledge.
6. ASPIRE advisors are willing and prepared to partner with LAUP to administer the program services. They have the materials, space, administrative support, interest, training, and/or authority to support ASPIRE participants within the scope and goals of the ASPIRE program.
7. ASPIRE participants receive the support they need to navigate and successfully engage in the academic and professional development systems in Los Angeles County.
8. ASPIRE participants receive the support they need to increase the quality of their instructional practices and interactions with children.

## Methods

This evaluation addresses the following evaluation questions:

1. To what extent is the ASPIRE program meeting its objectives?
2. What are the perceived benefits of participating in ASPIRE?
3. What were the programmatic successes and challenges of the ASPIRE program?
4. What are the recommendations for future program implementation?

### Data Collection Instruments and Analysis Plan

Data was collected using a variety of data collection instruments. The following table outlines the data collection instruments, timeline, and analyses used for this report.

Data Collection Instrument	Participants Involved	N	Timeline	Analysis
ASPIRE Application	Potential Participants	1,166	April to August, 2012	Descriptive Statistics
Employment Verification Form	Potential Participants	1,166	April to August, 2012	Descriptive Statistics
ASPIRE Program Database	ASPIRE Participants	1,166	Ongoing	Descriptive Statistics
Advisor Training Feedback Form	ASPIRE Advisors	18	August, 2012	Descriptive Statistics
Phone Survey	Withdrawn ASPIRE Participants	72	March, 2013	Thematic Coding
Satisfaction with Advisement Survey	ASPIRE Participants who attended at least one advisement session	987	March, 2013	Descriptive Statistics
Knowledge of Effective Teacher-Child Interactions Assessment	ASPIRE Participants	See Findings Section	June to August 2013	Independent Sample t-test Matched-Sample t-test
Participant Year-End Survey	ASPIRE Participants who completed the program year	793	June to August 2013	Descriptive Statistics for Quantitative Items
Workforce Consortium Questionnaire	Workforce Consortium Project Lead	1	July, 2013	Descriptive Summary

The ASPIRE application and employment verification form were available in English or Spanish. The application collected demographic, employment, education, and professional qualification information for each applicant. The employment verification form provided verified information that the applicant worked at the location documented and served children aged 0 to 5. The ASPIRE program staff collected and kept programmatic data in a program database. They used this database to track the services provided to the ASPIRE participants. This database was updated continuously throughout the year. This database contains all program implementation information, including information from the individual professional development plans, advisement sessions, compliance issues, and support provided by ASPIRE staff.

A short phone survey was used to collect information about ASPIRE participants' perceptions of the reasons they withdrew from the program. Participants withdrawn before February were contacted by phone (n = 212). Of those contacted, 82 responded.

Increased knowledge of quality practices was measured using the Teacher's Knowledge of Effective Teacher-Child Interactions scale (Hamre, Pianta, Burchinal, Field, LoCasale-Crouch, Downer, Howes, LaParo, and Scott-Little, 2012). The scale was included in the Participant Year End Survey during the 2011-12 and 2012-13 program years. It was also administered as a pre-test as part of the 2012-13 ASPIRE application for new applicants.

ASPIRE participants were administered two on-line surveys. The first survey was the Advisement Satisfaction Survey administered in April, 2013. This survey collected information about satisfaction with ASPIRE advisement. The survey response rate for the Advisement Satisfaction Survey was 33% (n = 328 / 987). The second survey was the Participant Year End Survey administered from June through August, 2013. The survey collected information about ASPIRE services, knowledge of teacher-child interactions, challenges, barriers, and satisfaction with the ASPIRE program. The survey response rate for the End of Year Survey was 69% (n = 547 / 793).

Hard copies of transcripts were requested from ASPIRE participants twice during the program year, once at the beginning of the year, and once at the end of the year. Transcripts were requested from participants in order to assist in advisement and to track program compliance and participant outcomes. Hard copies of permits were requested once at the end of the year. Permits were requested from participants in order to track participant outcomes.

# Findings

The findings section of this report is organized by Workforce Consortium impact area:

- Expanded ECE workforce
- Better qualified ECE workforce
- Greater retention and advancement of the ECE workforce
- Increased quality of ECE practices and programs
- More effective ECE professional development system in LA County

The degree to which the ASPIRE program met its objectives under each impact area will be discussed. The results section will also include information about participant perceptions of the benefits of the ASPIRE program, as well as programmatic successes and challenges.

## Expanded ECE Workforce

The ASPIRE program was successful in recruiting and retaining over 1000 early educators who represented the cultural and linguistic diversity of Los Angeles. It is not the objective of the ASPIRE program to attract new professionals to the field, however, the ASPIRE program did serve professionals who reported working in the field for less than 5 years (26.2% of participants).

The ASPIRE program also provides training and advisement in Spanish, and advisement in Mandarin, so that professionals who are at risk of marginalization in the traditional education and professional development system have an opportunity to participate in high quality professional development. This approach encourages ECE teachers from diverse linguistic and cultural communities to be an active part of the mainstream professional development system, and ensures that there are ECE professionals who reflect the linguistic and cultural diversity of children and families in Los Angeles County.

During the 2012-13 program year, the ASPIRE program received 1,755 applications, and enrolled 1,166 qualified participants. One of the participants was recruited to serve as an ASPIRE advisor at the start of the program year, leaving 1,165 participants. Of these participants, 793 successfully completed the ASPIRE program and received a stipend. The applicant, enrollment, and completion rates increased between the first and second year of the ASPIRE program. During the 2011-12 program year, the ASPIRE program received 1,575 applications, enrolled 1,011 qualified applicants, and 723 participants successfully completed the program and received a stipend. This increase in enrollment between 2011-12 and 2012-13 occurred despite difficulties related to incomplete applications and difficulties accessing required forms from the new on-line application. The ASPIRE program changed the online application for 2013-14 to help reduce the rate of incomplete applications and the need for ASPIRE staff to follow up with applicants regarding missing application materials.

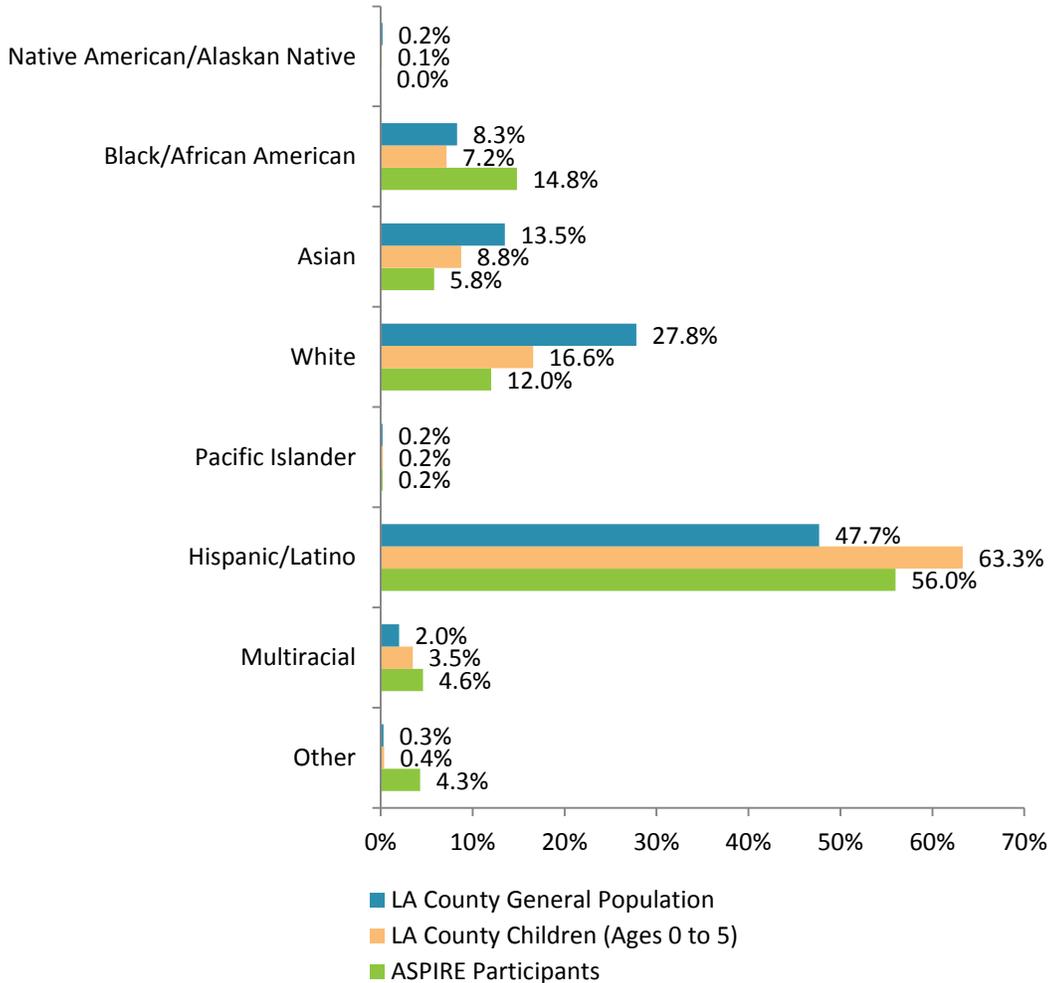
The ASPIRE staff worked with other professional development programs and agencies to recruit professionals who lived and worked across all five supervisorial districts in Los Angeles County.

<b>ASPIRE Participant Address Distribution Across Supervisorial District</b>		
<b>Supervisorial District</b>	<b>Work Addresses</b>	<b>Home Addresses</b>
1	25%	24%
2	25%	25%
3	17%	12%
4	15%	18%
5	17%	19%
Incomplete Address	1%	0%
Out of County Address	0%	2%

In order to qualify for the ASPIRE program, participants must be working with children 0 to 5 years old, or directly supervise those who do. Out of the total 1,165 participants who took part in the ASPIRE program, the majority of participants identified “Teacher” (28%) or “Assistant Teacher” (26%) as their primary job title. The remainder of participants identified as Family Child Care Owners (17%), Master/Lead Teachers (14%), Administrators (8%), or “Other” (6%). The majority of ASPIRE participants worked in a center setting (69%), while less than one-fourth (23%) worked in family child care homes.

The majority of ASPIRE participants were women (95%) who reported working in the ECE field for an average of 10.2 years (range = 1 to 43 years) and speak English (64%) or Spanish (29%) as their primary language. The race/ethnicity breakdown of ASPIRE participants mirrors that of the general population in Los Angeles County and the population of children aged 0 to 5 in Los Angeles County.

## Race/Ethnicity Breakdown



## Better Qualified ECE Workforce

The ASPIRE program met the objective to increase the preparation of the ECE Workforce through the completion of coursework, permit, and degree requirements. ASPIRE participants completed coursework, permit, and degree requirements, and attributed these increases in education and professional development to the support they received through the ASPIRE program. The number of ASPIRE participants who achieved each of these qualification milestones increased from 2011-12 to 2012-13, although the percentage of the overall ASPIRE participant population that reached each milestone slightly decreased. A phone survey of withdrawn participants revealed that many participants were not able to

find or enroll in appropriate coursework during the 2012-13 program year. This may have contributed to the slight decrease in the proportion of ASPIRE participants who completed coursework or degree milestones. A sub-set of ASPIRE participants were required to complete 6 units of coursework instead of 3 units of coursework, a requirement which many found difficult to comply with. The program completion rate for participants who had to complete 6 units of coursework was lower than the completion rate for participants who had to complete 3 units of coursework (65% vs. 71%). Finally, many ASPIRE participants who achieved a permit or degree milestone in 2011-12 returned to the ASPIRE program in 2012-13 (n = 189), which may have decreased the proportion of ASPIRE participants working towards a degree or permit during the 2012-13 program year.

<b>Milestone Achievement Rates, 2011-12 and 2012-13 Program years</b>				
<b>Milestone</b>	<b>2011-12</b>		<b>2012-13</b>	
	<b>N</b>	<b>%</b>	<b>N</b>	<b>%</b>
Completed Required Coursework with "C" or Better	756	74.8%	793	68.1%
Earned Degree	69	6.8%	71	6.1%
Achieved Permit (First Time or Upgraded Permit)	217	21.5%	221	19.0%

The majority of participants who completed the end of year survey indicated that the ASPIRE program helped them enroll in college courses or English as a Second Language (ESL) courses (67%). These survey respondents also indicated that their ASPIRE *advisor* motivated them to take more coursework than they would have otherwise taken (68%), and that the ASPIRE *stipend* motivated them to take more coursework than they would have otherwise taken (86%). Participants also reported that the ASPIRE stipend made it possible for them to afford courses (84%).

While 27% of survey respondents reported that they were "very familiar" with the Child Development Permit Matrix before participating in the ASPIRE program, 79% reported that they were "very familiar" with the Child Development Permit Matrix after completing the ASPIRE program. The majority of respondents reported that the ASPIRE program helped them increase their understanding of the Child Development Permit Matrix (87%) and helped them achieve a new or upgraded permit (68%). Survey respondents also indicated that their ASPIRE advisor (75%) and the ASPIRE stipend (74%) motivated them to apply for a new or upgraded permit.

### **Greater Retention and Advancement of ECE Workforce**

The ASPIRE program increased the incentives for early educators to pursue educational and professional advancement and remain in the field. One of the largest incentives offered by the ASPIRE program is the stipend that is awarded upon completion of the program requirements each program year. A total of 793 participants met all program requirements in 2012-13 and received the ASPIRE stipend. Additional participants qualified for each available bonus. The CLASS observation bonus was awarded to participants who successfully participated in the First 5 CA observation study by videotaping their own instruction and mailing their video tape to First 5 CA. The degree bonus was awarded to participants who achieved their degree during the program year. The permit bonus was awarded to participants who received a new or upgraded permit during the program year. The retention bonus was awarded to participants who successfully completed the ASPIRE program two years in a row (2011-12 and 2012-13). Participants could not receive both a degree and a permit bonus. The maximum financial incentive a participant could receive was \$2,280.00 (ASPIRE Stipend + Retention + Degree + CLASS observation).

<b>Stipend Awards in 2012-13 Program Year</b>		
<b>Stipend / Bonus Type</b>	<b>Stipend / Bonus Amount</b>	<b>Number of Recipients</b>
ASPIRE Stipend	\$1,280.00	793
CLASS Observation Bonus	\$300.00	53
Degree Bonus	\$550.00	71
Permit Bonus	\$300.00	221
Retention Bonus	\$150.00	419

As discussed in the previous section, the number of participants who completed educational and permit milestones increased from the first year of the program, and the majority of survey respondents reported that the ASPIRE program provided assistance and motivation to reach those milestones. In addition, the majority of survey respondents reported that the ASPIRE stipend encouraged them to stay in the field of early care and education (84%), and made it possible for them to pay for summer living expenses (66%).

Participants were asked if they had been promoted since they began participating in the ASPIRE program, and if so, if they attributed that promotion to their participation in ASPIRE. Ninety-two survey respondents reported a promotion, and 59% (55 / 92) of the participants who reported a promotion attributed that promotion to their participation in the ASPIRE program. Participants were also asked if they had received a pay increase since they began participating in the ASPIRE program, and if so, if they attributed that pay

increase to their participation in ASPIRE. Eighty-seven survey respondents reported a pay increase, and 72% (63 / 87) of the participants who reported a pay increase attributed that pay increase to their participation in the ASPIRE program.

## **Increased Quality of ECE Practices and Programs**

First year ASPIRE participants demonstrated a significant increase in measured knowledge of high quality teacher-child interactions, and second year ASPIRE participants maintained the knowledge gains they experienced in their first year of participation. The majority of participants reported an increase in knowledge and practice of effective teaching practices, including high quality teacher-child interactions. The observation and measurement of actual classroom practices were out of the scope of this program evaluation for 2012-13.

The ASPIRE program provides free on-line CLASS (Classroom Assessment Scoring System) training and advisement in support of the implementation of CLASS practices. The CLASS training is a professional development experience that provides early educators with a framework for understanding the importance of emotional support, classroom organization, and instructional support in high quality teaching, and how to implement these skills in their own practice. The CLASS training and supports provided by the ASPIRE program are meant to increase effective teaching practices and quality teacher-child interactions among participants and the children they serve. Although the CLASS is used with increasing frequency to train and evaluate early care and education programs throughout the state, many ASPIRE participants reported that they had never heard of the CLASS observation tool (68%) or participated in a CLASS training or activity (75%) before the ASPIRE program.

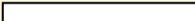
In order to measure increases in participant's knowledge of effective teacher-child interactions, the "Teachers' Knowledge of Effective Teacher-Child Interactions" measure was administered at the beginning (pretest) and end (posttest) of the program year. This measure was created to measure increases in knowledge as a result of the CLASS trainings (Hamre, Pianta, Burchinal, Field, Locasale-Crouch, Downer, Howes, LaParo, Scott-Little, 2012). This measure consists of 14 multiple-choice items that require a response to a short vignette. Correct answers reflect the CLASS definitions and measures of high quality teacher-child interactions. The measure has been found to have adequate face validity and discrimination ability (Hamre, et. al., 2012). One sample item from this measure is: "A child who is always complaining comes to you and says, "Alexa won't share with me." The best thing to do is: a. Tell her to stop find something else to do, b. Ignore her, c. Ask her how you can help her, d. Tell Alexa to start sharing." In this case, the correct answer is "c".

Pre and post scores on the "Teacher's Knowledge of Effective Teacher-Child Interactions" measure were compared for first year participants. These participants were required to complete CLASS training during the 2012-13 program year. Results for these participants show a significant increase in scores from the beginning to the end of the program year.

<b>First Year Participants' Knowledge Scores from Pretest to Posttest, Matched Pairs (n = 180)</b>			
	<b>Pretest Mean (SD)</b>	<b>Posttest Mean (SD)</b>	<b>Significant Change</b>
Knowledge of Effective Teacher-Child Interactions	10.94 (1.89)	11.33 (1.95)	

Note. \* $p < .01$

Using the same measure, pre and post scores were compared for second year participants who were required to complete the CLASS training during the 2011-12 program year, but not the 2012-13 program year. Results for these participants show no change in scores from the beginning to the end of the program year, suggesting that the knowledge increase they experienced during the first program year (2011-12) was sustained during the second year of the program.

<b>Second Year Participants' Knowledge Scores from Pretest to Posttest, Matched Pairs (n = 176)</b>			
	<b>Pretest Mean (SD)</b>	<b>Posttest Mean (SD)</b>	<b>No Change</b>
Knowledge of Effective Teacher-Child Interactions	11.94 (1.62)	11.70 (1.70)	

Finally, posttest scores on the "Teacher's Knowledge of Effective Teacher-Child Interactions" measure were compared for first and second year participants at the end of the 2012-13 program year. Results indicate no significant difference between first and second year participants at the end of the 2012-13 program year.

<b>First versus Second Year Participants' Knowledge Scores on Posttest, Independent Samples</b>			
	<b>First Year Participant Mean (SD)</b>	<b>Second Year Participant Mean (SD)</b>	<b>No Difference</b>
Knowledge of Effective Teacher-Child Interactions	11.27 (2.18)	11.42 (1.97)	

Note. First year participant sample = 244. Second year participant sample = 302.

In addition to responding to the “Teachers’ Knowledge of Effective Teacher-Child Interactions” measure, participants were asked if the ASPIRE program, and the coursework they completed, had an impact on the quality of their practices. The majority of ASPIRE survey respondents reported that the courses they took helped to increase the quality of their practices (96%). Participants also reported that the ASPIRE program increased their knowledge of CLASS-related classroom strategies (93%) and improved the effectiveness of their teaching (95%).

For each of the nine dimensions covered in the CLASS training, the majority of survey respondents reported that they intentionally planned to implement a CLASS-related strategy or practice “Daily” or “Multiple Times a Day”.

<b>Planned Implementation of CLASS-Related Strategies</b>		
<b>CLASS Dimension</b>	<b>Implement “Daily”</b>	<b>Implement “Multiple Times a Day”</b>
Positive Climate	39.5%	50.4%
Teacher Sensitivity	38.0%	52.1%
Regard for Student Perspectives	41.3%	48.2%
Behavior Management	35.0%	54.7%
Productivity	44.6%	42.6%
Instructional Learning Formats	45.0%	37.3%
Concept Development	47.2%	35.7%
Quality of Feedback	43.7%	39.5%
Language Modeling	34.0%	58.1%

### **More Effective ECE Professional Development System in LA County**

The ASPIRE program increased the capacity of professional and academic advisors to provide support with educational advancement, permit attainment, and the implementation of best practices in the classroom. This increase in capacity is a result of the recruitment, training, and coordination of ASPIRE advisors who also work for established training agencies or educational institutions across Los Angeles County. The majority of advisors who provided feedback through the Advisor Feedback Form reported that the ASPIRE advisor preparation trainings were “effective” or “very effective” in preparing them to provide advisement to ASPIRE participants (95%). The advisors felt that the trainings they attended through the ASPIRE program boosted their skills so that they

were able to review participant transcripts (86%) and provide support for participants who wanted to apply for a new or upgraded permit (95%).

In addition to increasing the capacity of professional and academic advisors throughout Los Angeles County, the ASPIRE program collaborates with other organizations and institutions of higher education in Los Angeles County through the Los Angeles County Early Care and Education Workforce Consortium. The collaboration between the ASPIRE program and the Workforce Consortium is focused on developing a more coordinated and effective professional development system for early childhood educators. The ASPIRE program is represented in the Workforce Consortium Advisory Committee, which drives the focus of the Workforce Consortium work. The ASPIRE program is also involved in PEACH (Partnerships for Education, Articulation and Coordination through Higher Education), which is a Workforce Consortium-funded effort to change the ECE professional development infrastructure in Los Angeles County.

This year, the major successes of the Workforce Consortium as reported through the Workforce Consortium Questionnaire responses included increased coordination and collaboration among funded partners, assessing the state of articulation and alignment practices between community colleges and California State Universities in Southern California, campus visits with five CSUs to gauge interest in creating a new BA in early childhood education, development of a written statement supporting the development and approval of an ECE credential in California, testimony on behalf of a new ECE credential to the California Commission on Teacher Credentialing (CTC), and the development of an ECE trainer competency matrix that outlines professional preparation and experience standards for trainers who work with ECE professionals.

At the programmatic level, the ASPIRE program worked with other workforce programs and funders to align and coordinate efforts, and maximize the services provided to ECE professionals. This work included:

- Collaboration with other agencies and institutions across LA County to recruit ASPIRE advisors from existing professional development programs. During the 2012-13 program year, ASPIRE advisors were also coaches, mentors, trainers, college faculty, and advisors at resource and referral agencies, community colleges, Child Development Workforce Initiative programs, Head Start programs, the Steps to Excellence program, and the Program for Infant and Toddler Care.
- Collaboration with Workforce Consortium partners to recruit ASPIRE participants.
- Coordinated with Workforce Consortium programs so that ASPIRE participants were granted access to services at those programs. These services included trainings on ECE best practices, technical assistance related to applying for and maintaining a family child care home license, permit workshops, financial aid workshops, and information regarding BA program requirements, transfer requirements, and course enrollment information.

- Delivery of CLASS training and Child Development Permit Matrix training to ASPIRE advisors.
- Meetings with each Workforce Consortium Program lead to discuss the benefits and feasibility of co-enrollment of participants across programs.
- Regional ASPIRE advisor meetings that provided the time for ASPIRE advisors to meet the support staff from other Workforce Consortium programs and discuss potential opportunities for collaboration.
- Collaboration with the Los Angeles County Office of Education (LACOE) to offer computer clinics to ASPIRE participants on the LACOE campus.
- Input into state and local meetings to plan and develop the ECE Workforce Registry Pilot.

### **Perceived Benefits of Participating in ASPIRE**

ASPIRE participants report a variety of challenges and barriers that prevent them from reaching their professional and educational goals. The top three most frequent challenges are lack of money to pay tuition or other school expenses (31%), lack of time (20%), and lack of money to pay for a child development permit or other professional accreditation (11%). ASPIRE participants also report a lack of knowledge about the CLASS observation tool (71%) and the Child Development Permit Matrix (71%) before participating the ASPIRE program.

After receiving services through the ASPIRE program for one year or more, participants reported that the ASPIRE program helped them overcome challenges and barriers and achieve professional and educational milestones. Participants reported that the ASPIRE program helped them increase their understanding of the Child Development Permit Matrix (87%), achieve a new or upgraded permit (68%), enroll in college coursework (61%), increase their knowledge of CLASS-related practices and strategies (93%), improve the effectiveness of their teaching (95%), and stay in the field of early childhood education (89%).

Participants also reported that the ASPIRE advisor and the ASPIRE stipend motivated them to achieve professional and educational milestones. For example, the majority of participants reported that the ASPIRE advisor (68%) and the stipend (86%) motivated them to take more coursework than they would have otherwise taken and that the ASPIRE advisor (75%) and the stipend (74%) motivated them to apply for a new or upgraded permit. The participant survey respondents also reported that the stipend made it possible for them to afford classes (84%), made it possible for them to pay for summer living expenses (66%), and encouraged them to stay in the field of early care and education (84%). The fact that many participants depended on the ASPIRE stipend to cover living expenses highlights the need for a living wage among ECE professionals.

Overall, ASPIRE participants reported that they were “satisfied” or “very satisfied” with the ASPIRE program (97%). The majority of survey respondents reported that they would recommend the ASPIRE program to other ECE providers (96%).

## Programmatic Successes and Challenges

The ASPIRE program staff and participants experienced significant success during the 2012-13 program year. Each of the five ASPIRE program objectives were met or exceeded during the program year, which contributed to the intended long-term impacts of the Los Angeles County Early Care and Education Workforce Consortium. Through the efforts of the ASPIRE program staff and participants, the ASPIRE program was able to:

**Objective 1:** Recruit over 1000 early educators who represent the diversity of Los Angeles.

**Objective 2:** Increase the completion of coursework, permits, and degree requirements.

**Objective 3:** Increase incentives for early educators to pursue educational and professional advancement.

**Objective 4:** Increase the knowledge and self-reported implementation of high quality teaching practices, including high quality teacher-child interactions.

**Objective 5:** Increase the effectiveness of the ECE professional development system in LA County through capacity development of the ASPIRE advisors, which included CLASS training, permit training, ASPIRE program requirement training, and increased opportunities to collaborate regionally with other professional development professionals.

In addition to meeting or exceeding the program objectives for 2012-13, the ASPIRE program received positive feedback from ASPIRE participants regarding the services that were provided through the program. The majority of ASPIRE participants reported that the ASPIRE program helped them achieve specific professional and academic milestones, and the ASPIRE advisors and stipends motivated them to achieve these milestones despite personal challenges, continuous work obligations, and rigorous program requirements.

One unintended success of the ASPIRE program that emerged from the qualitative data is that ASPIRE participants have been able to “lead by example”, improving classroom practices across entire centers, not just in their own classrooms, and attracting additional professionals to the ASPIRE program. One example documented by ASPIRE staff follows:

*The case of Toddler Teacher Rosie demonstrates just how powerful the ASPIRE program has been to many ECE professionals. She recently expressed that due to the CLASS training, the course that she took on Toddlers at Santa Monica College, and her ASPIRE advisor, she has dramatically changed her toddler classroom environment and greatly improved her interactions with the children. The differences in her classroom caught the eye of her Program Director who also became an enthusiastic partner. The director has made positive changes at the school based on the CLASS tool and brought other teachers into the conversation. In addition to improving her practice, Rosie has been inspired by ASPIRE to increase her level of professionalism. This year she applied for a Child Development Permit at the Associate Teacher level, her first permit after seventeen years in the field. Rosie is now recruiting other staff to join ASPIRE, and will participate next year in the MyTeachingPartner component.*

Three major programmatic challenges emerged during the 2012-13 program year. The first challenge was maintaining a high participant retention rate. The participant retention rate was slightly lower in 2012-13 (69%) as compared to 2011-12 (72%). A phone survey was conducted with participants who were withdrawn from the program to understand the issues that contributed to participants' withdrawal from the program. The phone survey revealed that the most frequent reason for withdrawal was an inability to register for coursework. Participants reported that they could not find appropriate coursework, could not register for coursework due to course over-crowding, could not find a course that fit their work schedule, missed the enrollment period for the course they needed, misunderstood the 6-unit requirement for second year ASPIRE participants, or were not able to afford the fees associated with enrollment. As a result, the ASPIRE program staff are identifying ways to increase access to appropriate coursework completion for the 2013-14 program year, including contracting coursework that covers appropriate course material and is offered at convenient times and locations for ASPIRE participants, as well as additional advisement sessions for participants who need assistance registering for coursework.

Another frequent reason for withdrawal from the program was a lack of computer skills, which are needed to access the CLASS on-line training and second hand smoke training required by the ASPIRE program. Participants reported that they were not familiar with computers, did not know how to navigate the internet, had to rely on teaching assistants or family members to help them access the on-line program components, or became frustrated with the lack of computer assistance available after work hours. The ASPIRE program staff anticipated this need for the 2012-13 program year based on experience with participants in 2011-12. The program staff provided computer clinics and targeted assistance. These efforts reduced the number of withdrawals due to non-completion of the on-line ASPIRE components (CLASS training and second hand smoke training) from 141

participants in 2011-12 to 70 participants in 2012-13, but the need for support in this area still exists. The ASPIRE program is working with the Workforce Consortium partners in 2013-14 to provide regional computer clinics and raise awareness of the need for support with computer use among ECE professionals who access the ASPIRE program.

The second major programmatic challenge was ensuring that new ASPIRE advisors were responsive to ASPIRE participants and provided the necessary level of service to ASPIRE participants. There were 12 new advisors added to the ASPIRE program in the 2012-13 program year. Unfortunately, the ASPIRE program staff received complaints that two of these advisors were hard to reach. Because these two advisors were not responsive to their participants, the ASPIRE program staff took on the participant caseloads for these two advisors, making it possible for the participants to complete their program requirements. Because the ASPIRE program staff could take over the caseloads, the quality of the program was maintained for all participants. The Satisfaction with Advisement Survey administered in March revealed extremely low performance ratings for these two advisors, and so they were not asked to serve as advisors during the 2013-14 program year. In the 2013-14 year, the program plans to administer a participant advisement satisfaction survey earlier in the year in order to identify low performing Advisors early on.

The third major programmatic challenge was ensuring that data was collected, cleaned and uploaded to the PROOF system in order to meet all deadlines for data submission. This was a challenge for two reasons. First, substantial changes in the data requirements for the 2013-14 program year meant that the ASPIRE database had to be revised for 2013-14 at the same time data was being entered, cleaned and extracted for the 2012-13 evaluation and data submission to the PROOF system, causing a major strain on the time and resources of the program and research staff. Second, in order to meet the September 16<sup>th</sup> deadline for data submission of the 2013-14 participants, recruitment and application analyses had to occur at the same time that end of year documents were being verified and entered for the 2012-13 participants. This also caused a strain on the time and resources of the program staff. Because deadlines for data submission are out of the control of the local ASPIRE staff, and because the recruitment and database revision processes cannot occur earlier in the year, there are no possible solutions to this challenge at this time. The ASPIRE program and research staff will continue to work diligently to meet all deadlines.

## Limitations

The chief limitations of this study are as follows.

Participants have the option to skip any question on the end of year survey and the satisfaction with advisor survey. Because of this, not all participants were included in the analyses of survey data. In addition, the sample for the independent and matched sample t-tests did not include participants who skipped items on the "Knowledge of Effective Teacher-Child Interactions" measure, which was included in the end of year survey.

The findings in this report cannot be generalized to other Cares Plus programs or other stipend programs in Southern California (e.g. the AB212 program). Each of these programs has a unique program design.

Measurement of teacher-child interactions and other classroom practices using direct observation continue to be outside the scope of the evaluation for the ASPIRE program. Although First 5 California collects direct observation data from a small sample of ASPIRE participants, the local ASPIRE program and evaluation staff do not have access to the data.

## Conclusions & Recommendations

During the 2012-13 program year, the ASPIRE program met or exceeded all program objectives. The ASPIRE program contributed to the advancement of the ECE workforce, supported participants in achieving academic and professional development milestones, contributed to increases in knowledge of high quality classroom practices, and increased the capacity of the professionals who coach and advise ECE professionals through workforce development programs. A discussion of the conclusions and recommendations are presented within the framework of the Workforce Consortium impact areas.

### Expanded ECE Workforce

The ASPIRE program was able to recruit 1,755 applicants, and accept 1,166 participants into the ASPIRE program for the 2012-13 program year. This was an increase over the 1,575 applicants recruited, and the 1,011 participants accepted in the 2011-12 program year. These increases were affirming for the ASPIRE staff, who intentionally worked with other Workforce Consortium partners to advertise the ASPIRE program and co-enroll participants who were already participating in other Workforce Consortium programs.

In addition to an increase in participants, the ASPIRE program was able to maintain the racial/ethnic diversity of the participant group. The racial/ethnic breakdown of the 2012-13 ASPIRE participants mirrored that of both the general population and the 0 to 5 population in Los Angeles County. Participants were also geographically diverse, living and working across all five supervisorial districts in Los Angeles County.

Although recruiting new ECE professionals to the field is not one of the program objectives for ASPIRE, the program did serve a significant number of ECE professionals who were new to the field. Over one-fourth of ASPIRE participants (26%) reported working in the field of ECE for less than five years.

### RECOMMENDATIONS

- Continue to work with Workforce Consortium partners to recruit ASPIRE participants.
- Continue to implement established recruitment strategies.
- Continue to provide services in multiple languages and across all supervisorial districts to ensure participant diversity.

## Better Qualified ECE Workforce

Increased numbers of participants completed coursework with a “C” or better, received a new or upgraded permit, and completed their degree during the 2012-13 program year. However, the percentage of overall participants who achieved these milestones decreased slightly as compared to the first year of the program. A mid-year phone survey conducted with withdrawn participants revealed that participants struggled with finding and registering for appropriate coursework. This trend is not surprising, given the current struggle of California colleges to offer an adequate number of courses to students.

ASPIRE participants overwhelmingly attributed their academic and permit progress to the assistance they received from ASPIRE, and the majority reported that the ASPIRE advisor and stipend motivated them to take more coursework and apply for a new or upgraded permit. Participants also reported that the ASPIRE stipend made it possible to afford the classes needed to complete degrees and permit applications. The ECE professionals served by the ASPIRE program report low wages and salaries. It is not surprising that the stipend was reported as a motivating factor in completing coursework and permit applications, which can be costly for individuals who do not make a living wage.

### RECCOMENDATIONS

- Work with community colleges across Los Angeles County to provide contracted courses so that ASPIRE participants have priority enrollment in appropriate coursework.
- Continue the mid-year phone survey with withdrawn participants to determine the barriers to completing academic and professional development milestones.
- Reemphasize the need for services that support coursework identification and enrollment during the advisor orientation and development meetings.
- Continue to send out information on available courses and schools to ASPIRE participants.
- Reduce advisor caseload so that advisors can establish a closer relationship with the participant and provide more support in the areas of coursework and permit completion.
- Increase the number of advisement sessions so that participant receive more support.

## Greater Retention and Advancement of the ECE Workforce

Participants reported that the ASPIRE program motivated them to stay in the ECE field and made it possible for them to pay their summer living expenses. In addition, participants reported that the ASPIRE program contributed to their professional advancement. Of the participants who received a pay increase at work during the 2012-13 program year, 72% attributed the pay increase to their participation in the ASPIRE program. Of the participants who were promoted during the 2012-13 program year, 59% attributed the promotion to their participation in the ASPIRE program.

## RECOMMENDATIONS

- Calculate the percentage income increase experienced by participants who received an ASPIRE stipend.
- Continue to administer stipends and bonuses to participants who achieve academic and professional development milestones through the ASPIRE program.

### **Increased Quality of ECE Practices and Programs**

Knowledge of effective teacher-child interactions significantly increased for first year ASPIRE participants, who were required to complete CLASS training during the 2012-13 program year. Knowledge of effective teacher-child interactions did not significantly change (increase or decrease) for second year participants. The second year participants completed the CLASS training during the 2011-12 program year. Findings for the second year participants suggest that the knowledge increase they experienced during the first program year was sustained during the second year of the program. Finally, results indicate no significant difference between first and second year participants at the end of the 2012-13 program year. This indicates that first year participants reached the same level of knowledge that second year participants reached after experiencing the on-line CLASS training.

In addition to responding to the “Teachers’ Knowledge of Effective Teacher-Child Interactions” measure, participants were asked if the ASPIRE program, and the completed coursework, had an impact on the quality of their practices. The majority of ASPIRE survey respondents reported that the courses they took helped to increase the quality of their practices (96%). Participants also reported that the ASPIRE program increased their knowledge of CLASS-related classroom strategies (93%) and improved the effectiveness of their teaching (95%). Participants also reported that they intentionally planned to implement a CLASS-related strategy or practice “Daily” or “Multiple Times a Day”.

## RECOMMENDATIONS

- Continue to provide on-line CLASS training for ASPIRE participants.
- Provide access to the CLASS on-line video library for returning ASPIRE participants.
- Continue to provide advisement on the CLASS so that participants intentionally implement CLASS-related strategies or practices in the classroom.
- Continue to request CLASS observation scores for ASPIRE participants from First 5 California.

### **More Effective ECE Professional Development System in LA County**

The ASPIRE program contributed to a more effective ECE professional development system on two levels. First, the ASPIRE program increased the capacity of professional and academic advisors to provide support with educational advancement, permit attainment, and the implementation of best practices in the classroom. This increase in capacity is a result of the recruitment, training, and coordination of ASPIRE advisors who also work for established training agencies or educational institutions across Los Angeles County.

Second, the ASPIRE program worked with other workforce programs and funders through the Los Angeles Early Care and Education Workforce Consortium to align and coordinate efforts and maximize the services provided to ECE professionals. This work included collaborations to implement recruitment strategies across Workforce Consortium partner agencies to attract qualified ASPIRE advisors and participants, co-enrollment of participants across programs as appropriate, regional meetings for staff networking and collaboration, and coordination of resources in order to offer computer clinics to ASPIRE participants on the LACOE campus.

#### RECOMMENDATIONS

- Continue to recruit new ASPIRE advisors from the existing pool of professionals working for professional development agencies and institutions of higher education.
- Continue to work with Workforce Consortium partners to collaborate and generate ideas for program improvement.
- Continue to develop the capacity of the ASPIRE advisors by providing CLASS training, and permit matrix training.

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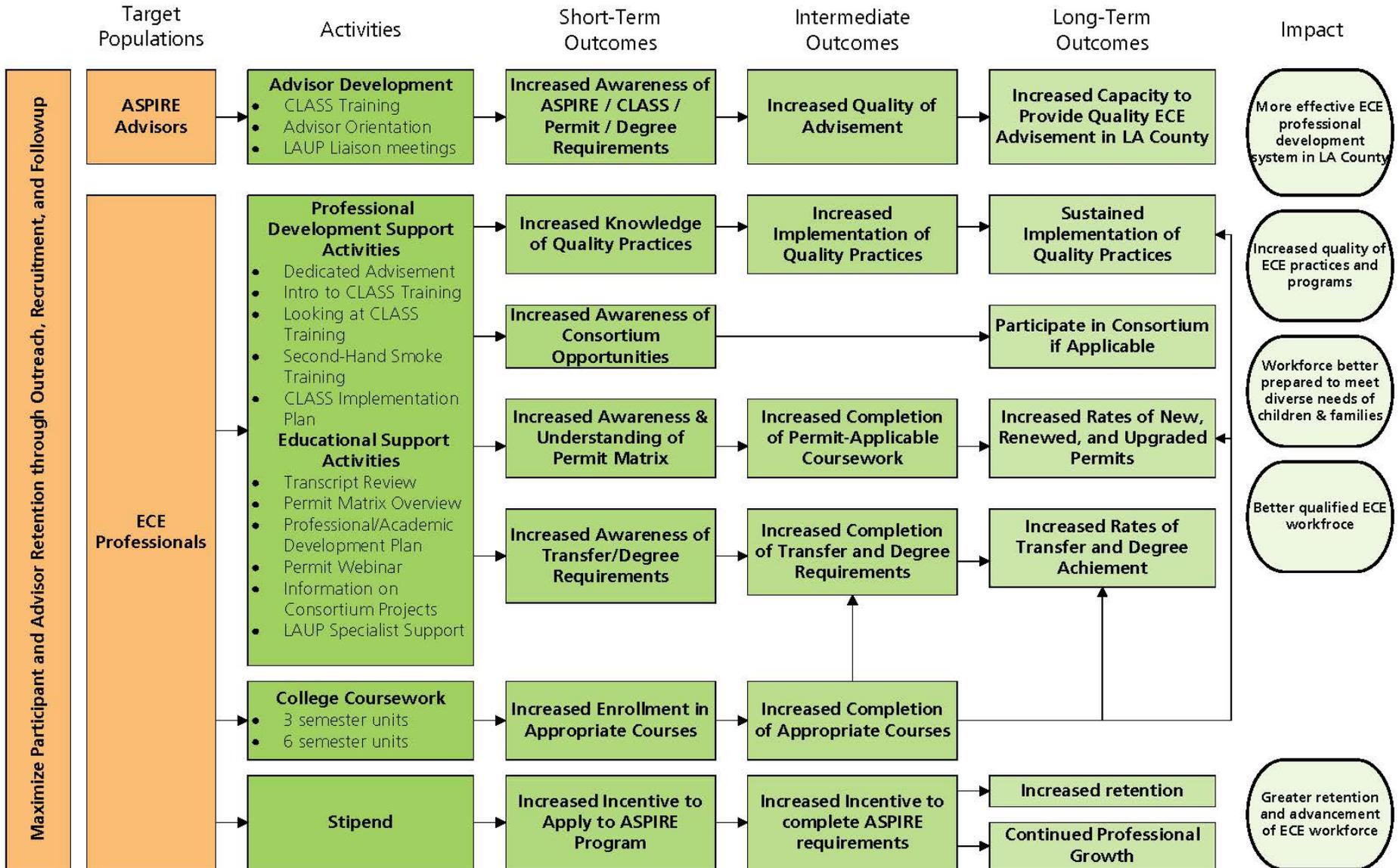
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## **APPENDICES A - G**



## Appendix A: ASPIRE (CARES-Plus) Logic Model 12-13



## Appendix B: ASPIRE Application

### ASPIRE 2012-13 Application

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#### APPLICANT INFORMATION

**1) Did you apply for and complete the 2011-12 ASPIRE Stipend Program?\***

Yes

No

#### **2) Personal Information**

Last Name\*: \_\_\_\_\_

Previous Last Name (if applicable): \_\_\_\_\_

First Name\*: \_\_\_\_\_

Middle Initial (if applicable): \_\_\_\_\_

Home Address\*: \_\_\_\_\_

City\*: \_\_\_\_\_

State\*: \_\_\_\_\_

Zip Code\*: \_\_\_\_\_

County\*: \_\_\_\_\_

#### **3) Ex: 323-456-7890 (no spaces)\***

Home Phone: \_\_\_\_\_

Work Phone: \_\_\_\_\_

Mobile Phone: \_\_\_\_\_

#### **4) Email address\***

A personal email account is **required** to qualify for and participate in the program.

\_\_\_\_\_

---

## APPLICANT INFORMATION

### 5) Gender\*

- Female
- Male
- Decline to state

### 6) Place of Birth\*

City: \_\_\_\_\_

Country: \_\_\_\_\_

### 7) Please indicate your level of computer knowledge\*

- I am very familiar with computers and use email and the internet on a regular basis
- I am somewhat familiar with computers, email and the internet. Sometimes I have to seek out help from others.
- I don't know much about computers, email, or the internet. I frequently need help.
- I don't currently use computers, email or the internet at all.

### 8) Ethnicity\*

*(check all that apply)*

- American Indian/Alaskan Native
- Hispanic/Latino
- White
- Asian
- Black/African American
- Pacific Islander
- Other (please specify)
- Decline to Answer

### 9) What is your primary language (the language you speak most fluently)?\*

*(check only one)*

- English
- Spanish
- Chinese (Mandarin or Cantonese)
- Japanese
- Korean

- Tagalog
- Vietnamese
- Other (please specify)

**10) What other languages do you speak fluently?\***  
*(check all that apply)*

- Not Applicable
- English
- Spanish
- Chinese (Mandarin or Cantonese)
- Japanese
- Korean
- Tagalog
- Vietnamese
- Other (please specify)

**11) In which language would you prefer to receive communication and advisement from the ASPIRE Stipend Program?\***

*(If you check "Other," ASPIRE will attempt to match you with an Advisor who speaks your language. However, program communication will be in English.)*

- English
- Spanish
- Other (please specify)

---

**APPLICANT INFORMATION**

**12) What is the best address to use when assigning you to an Advisor?\***

- My home address: I am most available on evenings and weekends when I'm close to home.
- My work address: I am most available during my breaks or immediately after work.
- My work and home address are one in the same (Family Child Care Owners, for example)

**13) If you know an ASPIRE advisor and would like to be assigned to him/her, please write their name here**

---

**14) Which Program Track are you applying to participate in? Requirements listed below.\***

**[ ] PRESCHOOL TRACK**

- Introduction to the Pre-K CLASS on-line training (2 hours)
- Pre-K Looking At CLASSrooms on-line training (20 hours)
- 3 semester/4.5quarter units of eligible coursework (or 54 hours of ESL/GED classes)
- Second-Hand Smoke Training (45 minutes)
- 2 ASPIRE Advisement sessions

**[ ] INFANT/TODDLER TRACK**

- Introduction to the Toddler CLASS on-line training (2 hours)
- Toddler Looking At CLASSrooms on-line training (20 hours)
- 3 semester/4.5 quarter units of eligible coursework (or 54 hours of ESL/GED classes)
- Second-Hand Smoke Training (45 minutes)
- 2 ASPIRE Advisement sessions

---

**APPLICANT INFORMATION**

**15) Do you receive services and/or support from any of the following agencies  
(check all that apply)**

- [ ] Los Angeles Universal Preschool (LAUP)
- [ ] R&R agency
- [ ] STEP Program - County Office of Child Care
- [ ] ECE Professional Learning Communities - LACOE
- [ ] Workforce Initiative Project

---

**APPLICANT INFORMATION**

**16) Please select the R&R agency you receive services and/or support from (if applicable)**

- [ ] Child Care Resource Center (CCRC)
- [ ] Options - Pasadena/Child Care Information Service (CCIS)
- [ ] Connections for Children (CFC)
- [ ] Crystal Stairs
- [ ] Mexican American Opportunity Foundation
- [ ] Pomona Unified Resource and Referral
- [ ] Options Resource and Referral
- [ ] Pathways

**17) Please select the Workforce Initiative (WFI) Project you receive services and/or support from (if applicable)**

- CAST - LAVC
- ESP Program - SMC
- Project RISE - LBCC
- PECE Program - Pierce
- AA2BA Program - LACC
- Project LINKS - ELAC
- CPPEER - Cal Poly Pomona/Mt. SAC

---

## APPLICANT INFORMATION

**18) Please indicate your goal in participating in the ASPIRE Stipend Program. Which of the following permits or degrees do you plan to work on during this program year (July 1, 2012 - June 30, 2013)? If major is undeclared, please write "undecided"\***

*(check all that apply)*

- Obtain my Child Development Permit for the first time? What permit level are you working towards?
- Move up on the Child Development Permit Matrix. What permit level are you working towards?
- Complete English as a Second Language classes, or Math, or English pre-requisites to allow me to pursue a college degree.
- Obtain a college degree (AA/AS) in ECE or a closely related field. Major:
- Complete the transfer requirements for a 4-year college/university. Major:
- Obtain a 4-year college/university degree (BA/BS) in ECE or a closely related field. Major:
- Obtain a post-graduate degree (MA/MS) in ECE or a closely related field. Major:
- Obtain a Multiple Subject or Early Childhood Special Education Teaching Credential. Credential Program:
- I already hold a BA/BS or higher in ECE and a Site Supervisor permit or higher. My goal is to complete coursework for professional growth. Specify topic:

**19) What school are you planning to attend?\***

- Antelope Valley College
- Argosy University
- Ashford University
- Azusa Pacific University

- California Baptist University
- California State Polytechnic University
- California State University Bakersfield
- California State University Dominguez Hills
- California State University Fullerton
- California State University Long Beach
- California State University Los Angeles
- California State University Northridge
- Cambridge College
- Cerritos College
- Cerro Coso Community College
- Citrus College
- College of the Canyons
- East Los Angeles College
- El Camino College
- El Camino College - Compton Campus
- Fullerton College
- Glendale Community College
- Long Beach City College
- Los Angeles City College
- Los Angeles Harbor College
- Los Angeles Mission College
- Los Angeles Southwest College
- Los Angeles Trade-Technical College
- Los Angeles Valley College
- Loyola Marymount College
- Mission College
- Moorpark College
- Mt. San Antonio College
- National University
- Pacific Oaks College
- Pasadena City College
- Pepperdine University
- Pierce College
- Rio Hondo College
- Saddleback Community College

- Santa Monica College
  - UC Davis Extension
  - UC San Diego Extension
  - UCLA Extension
  - Union Institute & University
  - University of California Los Angeles
  - University of California Riverside
  - University of La Verne
  - University of Phoenix
  - University of Southern California
  - Vanguard University
  - Ventura College
  - West Los Angeles College
  - I haven't decided
  - Other
- 

## APPLICANT INFORMATION

**20) Please indicate which school you are planning to attend\***

---

---

## EDUCATION AND PERMIT LEVELS

**21) Indicate the highest level of education you completed to date.\***

*(Please select only one.)*

- Less than a high school diploma or GED
- High school diploma or GED
- Some college (Only select if completed a High school diploma or GED)
- 2-year college degree (AA/AS) in ECE. Please specify the major:
- 2-year college degree (AA/AS) in other field. Please specify the major:
- 4-year college degree (BA/BS) in ECE. Please specify the major:
- 4-year college degree (BA/BS) in other field. Please specify the major:
- Graduate degree (MA/MS) in ECE. Please specify the major:
- Graduate degree (MA/MS) in other field. Please specify the major:

**22) If you received a BA or higher, did you receive your degree from another country?\***

Yes

No

Not Applicable

**23) How many Child Development or ECE units have you completed as of June 2012?\***

*(Please write a number, for example: "5." If none have been completed, write "0")*

Semester Units

Quarter Units

**24) Have you been enrolled in and taking college coursework during the past academic year, 2011-12?\***

No

Yes

**25) How many Professional Growth hours have you completed in the past 5 years?\***

*(Please write a number, for example: "5." If none have been completed, write "0")*

---

**26) Have you completed certified pediatric CPR training?\***

No

Yes

**27) Have you completed certified pediatric First Aid training? \***

No

Yes

---

## **EDUCATION AND PERMIT LEVELS**

**28) Please indicate the type of Child Development Permit most recently issued to you by the CA Commission on Teacher Credentialing (CTC) that you hold.\***

*Please enter MM/DD/YYYY (e.g. 06/15/2012)*

I do not currently hold a Child Development Permit issued by the CTC

Assistant Teacher: Date Permit was issued:

Associate Teacher: Date Permit was issued:

Teacher: Date Permit was issued:

Master Teacher: Date Permit was issued:

Site Supervisor: Date Permit was issued:

Program Director: Date Permit was issued:

---

## EDUCATION AND PERMIT LEVELS

***29) If you do not yet hold a Child Development Permit issued by the CTC, have you applied for, but not yet received one?\****

No

Yes

---

## EDUCATION AND PERMIT LEVELS

***30) Please indicate the type of permit you applied for and the application date\****

*Please enter MM/DD/YYYY (e.g. 06/15/2012)*

Assistant Teacher: Application Date:

Associate Teacher: Application Date:

Teacher: Application Date:

Master Teacher: Application Date:

Site Supervisor: Application Date:

Program Director: Application Date:

---

## EDUCATION AND PERMIT LEVELS

***31) Do you hold a Teaching Credential issued by the CA Commission on Teacher Credentialing (CTC)?\****

No

Yes, from California

Yes, from out of state/country

**32) If you hold a Teaching Credential please indicate the type and expiration date\***  
*Please enter MM/DD/YYYY (e.g. 06/12/2012)*

- I do not currently hold a Teaching Credential
- Single Subject: Expiration date:
- Multi-Subject: Expiration date:
- Education Specialist: Expiration date:
- Early Childhood Special Ed: Expiration date:
- Reading Specialist: Expiration date:
- Administrative: Expiration date:
- Pupil Personnel Services: Expiration date:
- Clinical/Rehabilitative Services: Expiration date:
- School Nurse: Expiration date:
- Library Media Services: Expiration date:
- Other Health Services: Expiration date:
- Bilingual Specialist, Expiration date:
- Reading Certificate: Expiration date:
- Other:

---

## **EMPLOYMENT INFORMATION**

**33) Job Title (Check all that apply)\***

*Please be aware that positions that do not work directly with children 0-5 in an early care and education setting, or directly supervise those who do, are not eligible for the stipend program.*

- Assistant
- Teacher
- Lead Teacher/Master Teacher
- Administrator
- Family Child Care (FCC) Licensed Owner
- Center Owner
- Other: please specify

**34) How many years have you worked in your current ECE position?\***

*(Please write a number in the box, for example: "5." If the answer is less than one year, write "1")*

---

**35) Current Position Start Date\***

*Please enter MM/DD/YYYY (e.g. 06/15/2012)*

---

**36) How many years have you been working in the field of Early Care and Education (ECE)?\***

*(Please write a number in the box, for example: "5." If the answer is less than one year, write "1")*

---

**37) Please write the number of years you have worked in each setting\***

*Please write a number in the box, for example: "5." If the answer is less than one year, write "1" in the box. If you have no years in that setting, write "0"*

Child Care Center: \_\_\_\_\_

Family Child Care Home: \_\_\_\_\_

License-exempt setting: \_\_\_\_\_

**38) What is the average number of hours that you work per week in your current ECE position?\***

*You must work at least 15 hours per week in an ECE setting in order to qualify for ASPIRE*

*(Please write a number in the box, for example: "5.")*

---

**39) What hours of child care are offered by your place of work?\***

*(check all that apply)*

M - F between 7am and 6pm

Before 7am

After 6pm

Between midnight and 5am

Weekends

**40)**

**How many of the past 12 months did you work in your current ECE position?**

\*

*(Write a number from 1 to 12)*

---

**41) How many months out of the year does your work place operate?\***

*(Write a number from 1 to 12)*

---

**42) Do you make less than \$60,000 a year?\***

*(This information is required in order to process your application. You must earn less than \$60,000 a year in order to be eligible for ASPRE.)*

No

Yes

**43) What was the date of your last salary or wage increase? (if applicable)**

*Please enter MM/DD/YYYY (e.g. 06/15/2012)*

---

**44) What benefits do you currently receive from your current ECE position?\***

*(check all that apply)*

None

Health

Vision

Dental

Paid Vacation

Paid Personal Leave

Paid Holidays

Paid Sick Time

Paid Release for Training

Training Registration Fees

Conference Registration Fees

College Tuition

Retirement

Other: Please specify

---

## INFORMATION REGARDING THE CHILDREN YOU CURRENTLY SERVE

**45) How many children do you serve in the following age groups? You must work with at least one child age 0-5 who has not yet entered into Kindergarten to qualify for ASPIRE or directly supervise those who do.\***

*(Please write a number, for example: "5." If you have no children in that age group, write "0")*

Birth to 23 months: \_\_\_\_\_

2 years to 2 years, 11 months: \_\_\_\_\_

3 years to 5 years: \_\_\_\_\_

Kindergarten & School-age (5 years & older): \_\_\_\_\_

**46) For those working in a Family Child Care Home Only: How many of the children you serve are related to you?**

*(Please write a number, for example: "3")*

\_\_\_\_\_

**47)**

**Of the children age 0-5 that you serve, how many have a special need?**

***Children with a special need are those who have an IEP (Individualized Education Plan), an IFSP (Individualized Family Service Plan), OR who have behavioral, developmental, or health issues that impact their family's ability to receive child care services.***

\*

*(Please write a number, for example: "3." If you do not serve any children with a special need, write "0.")*

\_\_\_\_\_

**48) Of the children age 0-5 that you serve, how many speak mostly a language other than English at home?\***

*(Please write a number, for example: "3." If you do not serve any children who speak mostly a language other than English at home, write "0.")*

\_\_\_\_\_

**49) What language(s) do you speak with the children and families in your workplace?\***

*(check all that apply)*

English

Spanish

Chinese (Mandarin or Cantonese)

- Japanese
- Korean
- Tagalog
- Vietnamese
- Other (please specify)

## CLASS TRAINING & PRACTICES

**50) Have you ever heard of the CLASS observation tool?\***

- Yes
- No
- Not Sure

## CLASS TRAINING AND PRACTICES

**51) Have you ever participated in a CLASS training or activity?\***

*(Please check all that apply)*

- Yes - I have received training on the CLASS tool.
- Yes - I have been trained as a reliable CLASS observer.
- Yes - I have used the CLASS tool at my place of work.
- No - I have never participated in a CLASS training or activity.
- Other - Please explain

## CLASS TRAINING AND PRACTICES

**52) For each CLASS dimension, how often do you intentionally plan to implement a CLASS strategy or practice as part of your lesson plan or daily routine?\***

	Never	Rarely	Once a Week	A Few Times a	Daily	Multiple Times a Day

				Week		
Positive Climate	<input type="checkbox"/>					
Teacher Sensitivity	<input type="checkbox"/>					
Regard for Student Perspectives	<input type="checkbox"/>					
Behavior Management	<input type="checkbox"/>					
Productivity	<input type="checkbox"/>					
Instructional Learning Formats	<input type="checkbox"/>					
Concept Development	<input type="checkbox"/>					
Quality of Feedback	<input type="checkbox"/>					
Language Modeling	<input type="checkbox"/>					

---

## TEACHER-CHILD INTERACTIONS

**We would like to learn more about your understanding of effective teacher-child interactions. In the following section, you will read brief classroom scenarios. Please imagine that the scenarios take place in a preschool classroom. Read each scenario carefully and choose the BEST response for each situation.**

**53) The best way to build a positive relationship with a child is to:\***

- Get to know the child's parents
- Give the child stickers for positive behavior
- Regularly spend time talking to the child about his or her life outside of school
- Make sure the child has many friends in the classroom

**54) Based on how he was leaning into the group and opening his mouth to say something, the teacher thought a child wanted to make a comment during book reading. A responsive teacher would:\***

- Pause before continuing and ask the child if he would like to share
- Talk with the child after circle and encourage him to speak up next time
- Recognize that not all children need to talk in groups and respect his silence
- Consider placing the child next to a talkative peer next time to encourage his involvement

**55) A child who is always complaining comes to the teacher and says, "Alexa won't share with me." The best thing for the teacher to do is:\***

- Tell her to find something else to do
- Ignore her
- Ask her how you can help her
- Tell Alexa to start sharing

**56) The teacher asks her helper to pass out letter cards. She says, "Just pass them out." However, as the child is passing out the cards, the teacher notices that he is giving his classmate the letter that begins his classmate's name. By following the student's lead and commenting on what he is doing:\***

- Learning time will be lost since it will take him a long time to pass out the cards
- The teacher will create a rich learning opportunity for everyone
- There will be some behavior problems because there is no activity happening
- The teacher will help build peer relationships

---

## TEACHER-CHILD INTERACTIONS

**57) A small group of children is painting on paper at a table. One child asks if they can paint some rocks they collected earlier in the day. The best thing for the teacher to do is:\***

- Get the rocks and let the children paint them
- Tell them rocks are not for painting
- Tell them it would make too much of a mess
- Tell the child that is something they can do at home, not at school

**58) At lunch, a teacher is talking with a child about what she did over the weekend. This builds all of the following except:\***

- Relationships
- Literacy skills
- Social skills
- Social language

**59) A child is crying at drop-off because she misses her mom. Which of the following is most likely to help the child in that moment:\***

- Let the child sit alone for a while until she calms down
- Talk with the parent to figure out what happened

Encourage the child's friends to try to distract her

Spend time with her until the child feels better

**60) *The teacher wants to be as efficient as possible in providing learning opportunities for her children throughout the day. To do so, she should:\****

Allow children to move between centers until they find an activity that engages them

Allow time between the end of circle and beginning of a transition to let the children think about what they have learned during circle

Have all of her lesson materials and transition ideas ready before she begins the day

Permit children to engage in discussions about student-initiated topics during circle time

**61) *The teacher has difficulty getting her students to do what she wants at circle time. Her children tend to be highly active, don't consistently listen to the lesson, and frequently interrupt. Which of the following would most effectively help her improve the children's behavior?\****

Ignore all misbehavior to prevent reinforcing the wrong thing

Restate classroom expectations for circle time and model the behavior before beginning the activity

Redirect children when they make comments or fidget

Post clear and positively stated classrooms rules

---

## TEACHER-CHILD INTERACTIONS

**62) *A child hits another child. The most effective response is to:\****

Separate the children by moving the child who was hit into another center

Remind the child that hands are not for hitting, then help re-engage him in an activity

Ignore the behavior

Tell the child's parents about the misbehavior

**63) *The children are not paying attention to a book the teacher is reading to them right after coming in from the playground. They are wiggling around on the rug and talking to one another. The best thing for the teacher to do is:\****

Switch to doing another activity, since they aren't interested in the book

Stop reading and wait until every child is listening

Tell them they need to listen or else they won't get free time later in the day

Try changing her tone of voice and adding movements for the children to do to help get them more interested in the story

**64) The most productive use of a teacher's time while children are eating snack is to:\***

- Take a quick break to check e-mail or talk to another teacher
- Get ready for the next activity
- Pass out snack and help the children clean up
- Sit, eat and talk with the children

**65) A child is trying to put together a puzzle that is too difficult for her. The best thing for the teacher to do is: \***

- Sit with her and give her hints that help her complete the puzzle
- Provide her a puzzle that is easier for her to complete
- Encourage her to keep trying it on her own
- Complete the puzzle for her as a demonstration

**66) Which of the following strategies is least likely to facilitate preschoolers' language development?\***

- Repeating and extending or expanding what they say
- Having them sing the alphabet song every day
- Having frequent conversations with them
- Narrating (putting words to actions) what they are doing while playing

---

**THANK YOU!**

**CONFIRMATION OF ONLINE SUBMISSION OF THE 2012-13 ASPIRE STIPEND PROGRAM APPLICATION**

**Thank you, [question("value"), id="45"] [question("value"), id="44"], at [question("value"), id="70"], for submitting your 2012-13 ASPIRE Stipend Program Application. You must print this page as proof of completion.**

**Almost Done**

**Please refer to the packet recently emailed to you entitled: "2012-13 ASPIRE Application." Once we receive the documents listed in the checklist you will have successfully submitted your 2012-13 ASPIRE Stipend Program Application.**

# Appendix C: Employment Verification Form



Staple here



## Employment Verification Form

Please have your Supervisor, or other individual authorized to verify employment, complete this information. If you are a Family Child Care Owner, you should complete the information yourself.

All fields are required unless otherwise indicated. Applications with missing information will not move through the review process and may result in the applicant becoming ineligible.

Call 213-416-1943 or email us at [workforcedevelopment@laup.net](mailto:workforcedevelopment@laup.net) if you have questions.

### Stipend Applicant Information:

First Name: \_\_\_\_\_ Last Name: \_\_\_\_\_

Previous Last Name (if applicable). \_\_\_\_\_

I certify that the above named Stipend Applicant is currently employed as an early childhood educator working directly with children ages 0-5 on a consistent and continual basis at least 15 hours per week; OR directly supervises those who do. **(initial)** \_\_\_\_\_

I understand that the stipend he/she receives is in addition to his/her salary (or wage), and that I certify that current salary and salary advancement will not be negatively affected by this incentive. **(initial)** \_\_\_\_\_

*I declare under penalty of perjury that the above statements are true and correct to the best of my knowledge and belief.*

\_\_\_\_\_  
Signature of Supervisor (or other authorized individual)

--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--

Date [MM/DD/YYYY]

Printed Supervisor/Authorized Individual Name: \_\_\_\_\_

Title: \_\_\_\_\_

Phone#: 

--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--

 \_\_\_\_\_ Email: \_\_\_\_\_

LAUP reserves the right to verify that the information provided in this application is true.

For Office Use Only  
DO NOT WRITE BELOW THIS LINE

--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--

Participant ID

1 of 4 pages

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Date Rec'd

## Appendix D: Advisor Training Feedback Form

NAME (Please Print) \_\_\_\_\_

I feel prepared to support ASPIRE participants in completing the following tasks:	Disagree	Somewhat Disagree	Somewhat Agree	Agree
1. Identifying a CLASS domain and dimension to work on	<b>1</b>	<b>2</b>	<b>3</b>	<b>4</b>
2. Identifying at least one CLASS indicator to work on	<b>1</b>	<b>2</b>	<b>3</b>	<b>4</b>
3. Identifying strategies to implement in order to increase alignment between real-world practices and the CLASS	<b>1</b>	<b>2</b>	<b>3</b>	<b>4</b>
4. Creating a Professional Development Plan of Action	<b>1</b>	<b>2</b>	<b>3</b>	<b>4</b>

5. In addition to the ASPIRE orientation power point, I need resources in the following advisement areas: (check all that apply)	
<input type="checkbox"/> ESL Courses	<input type="checkbox"/> Transfer Requirements
<input type="checkbox"/> Child Development Permits	<input type="checkbox"/> ECE Majors
<input type="checkbox"/> Importance of Visiting an Academic Counselor	<input type="checkbox"/> School Selection
<input type="checkbox"/> General Education Requirements	<input type="checkbox"/> Financial Resources

Please respond to the following statements:	Yes	No
6. The ASPIRE procedures and guidelines are clear	<b>1</b>	<b>2</b>
7. I will be able to follow the ASPIRE procedures and guidelines	<b>1</b>	<b>2</b>
8. I will be able to identify ASPIRE-eligible coursework	<b>1</b>	<b>2</b>
9. I will be able to categorize ASPIRE-eligible coursework	<b>1</b>	<b>2</b>
10. I understand the goals of ASPIRE advisement	<b>1</b>	<b>2</b>
11. I understand the role of the ASPIRE advisor	<b>1</b>	<b>2</b>

12. Do you have questions or concerns? Please list them here:

---



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## Appendix E: Phone Survey Script

Hi! My name is \_\_\_\_\_, and I am calling on behalf of the ASPIRE program at LAUP. We are conducting follow-up calls to gather information in order to improve our ASPIRE program. Would you be willing to spend two minutes right now to answer our follow up questions? (If the answer is "no") – Is there a better time when I could call you?

1. Why were you not able to complete the ASPIRE program this year?
  
2. When you applied for the ASPIRE program, were you aware that coursework was a requirement of the program?
  
3. Did you enroll in at least one class this academic year (between last summer 2012 and now)?  
If "no" – Why not?  
If "yes" – What prevented you from meeting the ASPIRE program deadline?
  
4. Where did you try to enroll for coursework?
  
5. If you were not able to enroll, was it because:
  - a. You had trouble enrolling in the college or university?
  - b. You missed the registration deadline?
  - c. The course you wanted was already full?
  - d. The course you wanted was not offered?
  
6. Was there any other reason or issue that prevented you from enrolling in a course or otherwise meeting the requirements of the ASPIRE program?

# Appendix F: Advisement Satisfaction Survey

## Satisfaction with ASPIRE Advisement

---

Page 1

You have been asked to complete this survey because you are a participant in the ASPIRE Program. We would like to know about your experience with ASPIRE advisement. This information will help us improve our services. Your name will never be linked to your responses or shared with the ASPIRE advisors. Please be as open and candid as possible with your responses.

### 1) Personal Information

Last Name\*: \_\_\_\_\_

First Name\*: \_\_\_\_\_

Middle Initial: \_\_\_\_\_

Previous Last Name (if applicable): \_\_\_\_\_

### 2) Email Address\*

Please use the same email address you provided on the ASPIRE application

\_\_\_\_\_

### 3) Date of Birth\*

mm/dd/yyyy

\_\_\_\_\_

**Next**

---

4) Please Indicate how satisfied you are with the support you received from your ASPIRE advisor in the following areas:\*

	Very Satisfied	Satisfied	Dissatisfied	Very Dissatisfied	Did not receive this support
One-on-one support	<input type="radio"/>				
Group support	<input type="radio"/>				
Professional development information (e.g. permit)	<input type="radio"/>				
Educational information (e.g. degree requirements)	<input type="radio"/>				
Feedback on CLASS implementation in my classroom or family child care	<input type="radio"/>				

**Back**

**Next**

---

5) Did you have difficulty scheduling a time to meet with your ASPIRE advisor?\*

Yes

No

**IF:** The answer to Question #5 is exactly equal to No | **THEN:** Jump to page 5

**Back**

**Next**

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*Page 4*

**6) If you experienced difficulty scheduling a time to meet with your advisor, what made it difficult?\***  
(check all that apply)

- I had a busy schedule
- My advisor was non-responsive
- I did not have reliable transportation to and from the advisement sessions
- Other

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*Page 5*

**7) Overall, how satisfied are you with your experience with your ASPIRE advisor?\***

- Very Satisfied
- Satisfied
- Dissatisfied
- Very Dissatisfied

**8) On a scale from one to ten, one being poor and ten being excellent, how would you rate the overall performance of your ASPIRE advisor?\***

1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10
(poor)									(excellent)
<input type="radio"/>									

**9) How could your advisor have served you better?\***

Please be specific (e.g. more time reviewing the permit matrix, more meeting times available on evening or weekends, etc.)

**10) What were you able to achieve with help from an advisor, that you would not have been able to achieve otherwise?\***

**11) Do you have any other comments or suggestions?**

## Appendix G: ASPIRE Participant Year End Survey

### ASPIRE Participant Survey 2012-2013

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Welcome! You have been asked to complete this survey because you are a participant in the ASPIRE program. This survey will help us understand how you have benefited from the program, and ways that the program can be improved. The information you provide is CONFIDENTIAL. Your name and other personal information will never be reported. Please be as open and candid as possible with your responses.

#### 1) Personal Information

Last Name\*: \_\_\_\_\_

First Name\*: \_\_\_\_\_

Middle Initial: \_\_\_\_\_

Previous Last Name (if applicable): \_\_\_\_\_

#### 2) Email Address

*Please use the same email address you provided on the verification and re-enrollment packet.*

\_\_\_\_\_

#### 3) Date of Birth

\_\_\_\_\_

#### 4) What year did you first enter the field of Early Childhood Education?

*Please enter YYYY (e.g. 1987)*

\_\_\_\_\_

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#### CLASS Training and Practices

5) Before participating in the ASPIRE program, had you ever heard of the CLASS observation tool?

Yes

No

Not Sure

**6) Before participating in the ASPIRE program, had you ever participated in a CLASS training or activity? Please check all that apply.**

- Yes - I received training on the CLASS tool before participating in the ASPIRE program.
- Yes - I was trained as a reliable CLASS observer before participating in the ASPIRE program.
- Yes - I used the CLASS tool at my place of work before participating in the ASPIRE program.
- No - I did not participate in a CLASS training or activity before the ASPIRE program.
- Other - Please explain

**7) For each CLASS dimension, how often do you intentionally plan to implement a CLASS strategy or practice as part of your lesson plan or daily routine?**

	Never	Rarely	Once a Week	A Few Times a Week	Daily	Multiple Times a Day
Positive Climate						
Teacher Sensitivity						
Regard for Student Perspectives						
Behavior Management						
Productivity						
Instructional Learning Formats						
Concept Development						
Quality of Feedback						
Language Modeling						

**8) Is your workplace (Family Child Care or Child Care Center) evaluated using the CLASS?**

- Yes
- No
- I don't know

9) Do you face any challenges or barriers that make it difficult to implement CLASS strategies or practices? If so, please describe.

10) How is your classroom or day care different after watching the CLASS on-line training?

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### Teacher-Child Interactions

We would like to learn more about your understanding of effective teacher-child interactions. In the following section, you will read brief classroom scenarios. Please imagine that the scenarios take place in a preschool classroom. Read each scenario carefully and choose the BEST response for each situation.

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### Teacher-Child Interactions

**11) The best way to build a positive relationship with a child is to:**

- Get to know the child's parents
- Give the child stickers for positive behavior
- Regularly spend time talking to the child about his or her life outside of school
- Make sure the child has many friends in the classroom

**12) Based on how he was leaning into the group and opening his mouth to say something, the teacher thought a child wanted to make a comment during book reading. A responsive teacher would:**

- Pause before continuing and ask the child if he would like to share
- Talk with the child after circle and encourage him to speak up next time
- Recognize that not all children need to talk in groups and respect his silence
- Consider placing the child next to a talkative peer next time to encourage his involvement

**13) A child who is always complaining comes to the teacher and says, "Alexa won't share with me." The best thing for the teacher to do is:**

- Tell her to find something else to do
- Ignore her
- Ask her how you can help her
- Tell Alexa to start sharing

**14) The teacher asks her helper to pass out letter cards. She says, "Just pass them out." However, as the child is passing out the cards, the teacher notices that he is giving his classmate the letter that begins his classmate's name. By following the student's lead and commenting on what he is doing:**

- Learning time will be lost since it will take him a long time to pass out the cards
- The teacher will create a rich learning opportunity for everyone
- There will be some behavior problems because there is no activity happening
- The teacher will help build peer relationships

**15) A small group of children is painting on paper at a table. One child asks if they can paint some rocks they collected earlier in the day. The best thing for the teacher to do is:**

- Get the rocks and let the children paint them
- Tell them rocks are not for painting
- Tell them it would make too much of a mess
- Tell the child that is something they can do at home, not at school

**16) At lunch, a teacher is talking with a child about what she did over the weekend. This builds all of the following except:**

- Relationships
- Literacy skills
- Social skills
- Social language

**17) A child is crying at drop-off because she misses her mom. Which of the following is most likely to help the child in that moment:**

- Let the child sit alone for a while until she calms down
- Talk with the parent to figure out what happened
- Encourage the child's friends to try to distract her
- Spend time with her until the child feels better

**18) The teacher wants to be as efficient as possible in providing learning opportunities for her children throughout the day. To do so, she should:**

- Allow children to move between centers until they find an activity that engages them
- Allow time between the end of circle and beginning of a transition to let the children think about what they have learned during circle
- Have all of her lesson materials and transition ideas ready before she begins the day
- Permit children to engage in discussions about student-initiated topics during circle time

**19) The teacher has difficulty getting her students to do what she wants at circle time. Her children tend to be highly active, don't consistently listen to the lesson, and frequently interrupt. Which of the following would most effectively help her improve the children's behavior?**

- Ignore all misbehavior to prevent reinforcing the wrong thing
- Restate classroom expectations for circle time and model the behavior before beginning the activity
- Redirect children when they make comments or fidget
- Post clear and positively stated classroom rules

**20) A child hits another child. The most effective response is to:**

- Separate the children by moving the child who was hit into another center
- Remind the child that hands are not for hitting, then help re-engage him in an activity
- Ignore the behavior
- Tell the child's parents about the misbehavior

**21) The children are not paying attention to a book the teacher is reading to them right after coming in from the playground. They are wiggling around on the rug and talking to one another. The best thing for the teacher to do is:**

- Switch to doing another activity, since they aren't interested in the book
- Stop reading and wait until every child is listening
- Tell them they need to listen or else they won't get free time later in the day
- Try changing her tone of voice and adding movements for the children to do to help get them more interested in the story

**22) The most productive use of a teacher's time while children are eating snack is to:**

- Take a quick break to check e-mail or talk to another teacher
- Get ready for the next activity
- Pass out snack and help the children clean up
- Sit, eat, and talk with the children

**23) A child is trying to put together a puzzle that is too difficult for her. The best thing for the teacher to do is:**

- Sit with her and give her hints that help her complete the puzzle
- Provide her a puzzle that is easier for her to complete
- Encourage her to keep trying it on her own
- Complete the puzzle for her as a demonstration

**24) Which of the following strategies is least likely to facilitate preschoolers' language development?**

- Repeating and extending or expanding what they say
- Having them sing the alphabet song every day
- Having frequent conversations with them
- Narrating (putting words to actions) what they are doing while playing

**Professional and Academic Success**

**25) We would like to know your opinions about what you are achieving through your participation in ASPIRE. Please respond to the following statements. If the statement does not apply to you, please check "not applicable".**

**THE ASPIRE PROGRAM HELPED ME...**

	<b>Strongly Agree</b>	<b>Agree</b>	<b>Disagree</b>	<b>Strongly Disagree</b>	<b>Not Applicable</b>
Clarify my professional goals					
Clarify my educational goals					
Increase my understanding of the Child Development Permit Matrix					
Achieve a new or upgraded permit					
Enroll in college coursework / ESL coursework					
Increase my understanding of the transfer requirements at my college/university					
Increase my understanding of the degree requirements at my college/university					
Complete my degree this year					

Complete and submit a transfer application this year					
Increase my awareness of financial aid options					
Increase my knowledge of CLASS practices and strategies					
Improve the effectiveness of my teaching in my classroom / family child care					
Stay in the field of Early Childhood					

*26) We would like to know how helpful the following ASPIRE services have been in helping you achieve the professional and educational milestones you indicated above. Please check if the service has been very helpful, somewhat helpful, or not helpful. If you did not need the service, please check "service not needed". If the service was not provided, please check "service not provided".*

	<b>Very Helpful</b>	<b>Somewhat Helpful</b>	<b>Not Helpful</b>	<b>Service not Needed</b>	<b>Service Needed, but not Provided</b>
Advisement Sessions					
Access to LAUP ASPIRE staff other than your advisor					
Permit Application Assistance					
Assistance in Selecting Coursework					
School Selection Information					
Intro to CLASS on-line training					
Looking at					

CLASSrooms on-line training					
CLASS video library					
CLASS dimensions guide					
Stipend					
Stipend bonus					
ASPIRE Computer Clinic					
Phone support for computer or internet issues					
Professional Development Plan / Plan of Action					

**27) What support service offered through the ASPIRE program was most valuable in helping you achieve your professional and/or educational goals? Why?**

**28) Please indicate how much you agree with each of the following statements.**

	<b>Strongly Agree</b>	<b>Agree</b>	<b>Disagree</b>	<b>Strongly Disagree</b>	<b>Not Applicable</b>
My ASPIRE ADVISOR motivated me to take more coursework than I would have otherwise taken					
The STIPEND I will receive motivated me to take more					

coursework than I would have otherwise taken					
My ASPIRE ADVISOR motivated me to apply for a new or upgraded permit					
The STIPEND I will receive motivated me to apply for a new or upgraded permit					
My ASPIRE ADVISOR motivated me to apply for transfer to a 4-year university					
The STIPEND I will receive motivated me to apply for transfer to a 4-year university					
The STIPEND I will receive made it possible for me to afford classes					
The STIPEND I					

will receive made it possible for me to pay for summer living expenses					
The STIPEND I will receive encouraged me to stay in the field of Early Care and Education					
I would recommend the ASPIRE program to other ECE providers					

**29) Did you visit an academic counselor and complete an education plan at your college/university during your time in the ASPIRE program?**

- Yes
- No

**30) Do you believe that the courses you took helped to increase the quality of your practices?**

- Yes
- No

**31) Before participating in the ASPIRE program, how familiar were you with the Child Development Permit Matrix?**

- Not at all familiar
- Somewhat familiar
- Very familiar

**32) Now that you have completed the ASPIRE program, how familiar are you with the Child Development Permit Matrix?**

- Not at all familiar

Somewhat familiar

Very familiar

***33) Have you been promoted (either at your current job or by changing your job) since you began participating in the ASPIRE program?***

No

Yes, because of my participation in the ASPIRE program

Yes, but unrelated to my participation in the ASPIRE program

Decline to state

***34) Have you received a pay increase (either at your current job or by changing your job) since you began participating in the ASPIRE program?***

No

Yes, because of my participation in the ASPIRE program

Yes, but unrelated to my participation in the ASPIRE program

Decline to state

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## **Challenges and Barriers**

***35) What are the barriers that prevent you from reaching your professional or educational goals? Please check all that apply.***

I don't have enough time

I don't have enough money for tuition or other school expenses

I don't have enough money to pay for my permit or other professional accreditations

I don't have support from my employer

I don't have support from my family

I don't have reliable transportation

I don't have access to a reliable computer or internet connection

I don't understand the courses I need to graduate or transfer

I am not able to get into the classes I need

I don't have the math skills I need to pass my classes

I don't have the reading/writing skills I need to pass my classes

I don't have the English Language Skills I need to pass my classes

Other (Please Describe)

**36) What are the challenges you faced when participating in the ASPIRE program? Please check all that apply.**

- I did not have enough time to complete the program requirements
  - I did not have access to a reliable computer or internet connection
  - I did not understand how to access the on-line trainings
  - I did not understand the program requirements
  - I had trouble finding appropriate coursework
  - I had trouble registering for coursework
  - Other (Please Describe)
- 

### **Satisfaction**

**37) Overall, how satisfied are you with your experience in the ASPIRE program?**

- Very Satisfied
- Satisfied
- Dissatisfied
- Very Dissatisfied

**38) What suggestions do you have for improving the ASPIRE program?**

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**THANK YOU!**

**Thank you for taking the time to complete this survey.**