A Snapshot from our Meeting

On May 12, 2011, the Child & Family Policy Center at New York University convened a Forum comprised of early childhood researchers, policy makers, practitioners, and foundation representatives. The overarching aim of this meeting was to identify the challenges and opportunities for improved child-level assessments so that programs can actively monitor and support young children’s educational progress. The meeting provided an opportunity to discuss the importance of aligning the measurement needs of policy professionals, teachers, and researchers.

Our ultimate goal is to provide opportunities to generate clear, actionable recommendations for ways that existing measures could be reduced, integrated, or re-engineered to meet the data and measurement needs of teachers and agency directors in early childhood education settings. To jump-start this, during the Forum, participants were asked to engage in small group discussions focusing on a specific topic. Three main foci emerged: 1) how can the field effectively present assessment information to parents & families? 2) how do child-level assessments influence teacher practice? and 3) how can directors & coaches appropriately choose the best measures to inform practice? At the end of the day, all participants were given the opportunity to sign up for a “working group” (see below) that would meet over the course of the year to generate solutions to address these specific issues. If you did not attend our Forum or would like to get more information about signing up for a working group, please contact Cristina Medellin no later than June 15, 2011, at cm1800@nyu.edu or (212) 998-5885.

We would like to thank everyone who participated in the Forum “Improving Child-Level Assessments in Early Childhood Educational Settings” for making this a successful event! We had a great turnout which generated a lot of interest and exciting ideas for the upcoming year. Stay tuned to hear details about our spring 2012 Forum where we will introduce new policy and program initiatives that could benefit the city’s and state’s children.
THE 5 W’S OF WORKING GROUPS

Improving Child-Level Assessment in Early Childhood Educational Settings

**WHO:** Working groups will consist of about a dozen participants from research, policy, and practice sectors. Groups will be supported by staff from the Child and Family Policy Center who will assist with coordinating meeting arrangements, documenting the groups’ work, and identifying sources of input that would be helpful to the groups’ deliberations.

**WHAT:** Working groups will meet to discuss issues raised in today’s Forum concerning the delivery of high quality assessment of young children from the perspective of parents, teachers, as well as directors/principals and instructional coaches.

**WHEN:** Meetings will occur in the 11 months following today’s Forum. There will be four, two-hour meetings. Proposed dates: June/July 2011, October 2011, February 2012 and April 2012.

**WHERE:** Meetings will take place at NYU and/or other spaces convenient for group members. One or more meetings might be a teleconference.

**WHY:** Working group meetings are designed to provide opportunity for Forum attendees to grapple with issues surrounding child-level assessment. Groups will review existing policies and practices with the aim of drafting design specifications for improved and re-engineered procedures for designing and implementing child assessments in early childhood classroom settings. These recommendations will be showcased at the spring 2012 follow-up Forum meeting.