**Additional documentation for SMC ECE Two-Year Report**

Email from James Nagle, SMC Education Department Chair, answering the initial questions from the AOE ROPA Coordinator (questions are in purple):

**From:** Nagle, James <jnagle2@smcvt.edu>
**Sent:** Wednesday, October 20, 2021 10:29 AM
**To:** Cairns, Ellen <Ellen.Cairns@vermont.gov>
**Cc:** Saks Pavese, Amy E <asakspavese@smcvt.edu>; Stearns, Janet J <jstearns@smcvt.edu>
**Subject:** Re: SMC ECE Two-Year ROPA Report

Hi Ellen,

Please see our responses to your questions below. If you have any questions, please let us know.

James

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On Oct 18, 2021, at 2:21 PM, Cairns, Ellen <Ellen.Cairns@vermont.gov> wrote:

**⚠ External Sender ⚠**

Hi Amy, Jenny, and James,

Your report looks good. I just have a few questions/items:

1. Concern: Ensure students and graduates have an opportunity to provide feedback on the program and that feedback is used to inform program improvements going forward. I didn’t see anything about getting feedback from graduates. I do think the chart showing how feedback was used for program improvements is great evidence.

 Currently, the chair of the Education Department and director of Graduate Education review evaluations of courses in all programs to provide instructors with semi-annual feedback. Further, end of program surveys are reviewed and inform program improvement. The Education Department surveys graduates in one and three year follow-up surveys to inform program improvement.

1. Concern: Develop a system to use data from assessments to inform programmatic improvements. To me, the evidence presented does not show that you have a system to use data to inform program improvements. It looks like this *could* happen in the monthly meetings, but not that there is a system to ensure that it *does* happen.

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1. Reading this concern: Follow up on plan to build up ECE resources for the program as indicated in 4.2., it now seems rather vague to me. Jenny- do you feel the program has adequate resources? Do you have copies of the ECE assessments you would want to share with your students? Are there things you feel you need that you don’t yet have? It is hard for me to tell if this concern has been met since it is vague. I think an attestation from Jenny and possibly other faculty and/or students re: ECE resources available would be helpful.

 Jenny Sterns has copies of ECE assessments to share with students (e.g. exemplars), and the Education Department can confirm that the program is adequately resourced.

1. Regarding the final concern about adequate faculty – what is the current impact, if any, of having the PreK-8 STEM and Literacy positions not-yet filled?

Both positions are covered at the moment and the Education Department is currently searching for a full time STEM education instructor position and a tenure track Literacy position.

Email from Jenny Stearns, SMC ECE Program Director:

**From:** Stearns, Janet J <jstearns@smcvt.edu>
**Sent:** Wednesday, October 27, 2021 1:05 PM
**To:** Cairns, Ellen <Ellen.Cairns@vermont.gov>
**Subject:** Re: SMC ECE Two-Year ROPA Report

**EXTERNAL SENDER: Do not open attachments or click on links unless you recognize and trust the sender.**

Hi Ellen,

I really appreciate your email, thank you for your honesty.

I do feel that the ECE program at SMC is well supported and resourced, (and I would tell you if I didn't think this).

For example:

i) the library recently purchased a range of new, multi-cultural children's books (PK specific), to add to our already substantial collection

ii) we also have access to a wide range of online publications, research papers and policy documents, along with the support of a designated, Education Department librarian

iii) last semester, I was allocated several hundred dollars to purchase play materials, including sand, musical instruments, small world play items and consumables (paint, playdough etc.)

iv) we have an excellent IT department and they have been very helpful in supporting my students with their research projects involving assistive technology for young children's learning

v) I am personally supported in my work with the P2P Task Force, which not only helps me keep at the forefront of the current ECE agenda, but also helps my students see the importance of advocacy in the sector. I am presenting to the Task Force again, with Susan Titterton, on 11/5.

I really feel we have come a long way over the past 2 years. The ECE program has added SO much to our provision in the Education Department and to our students' overall experience. Testimonies from several of our students attest to the fact that, even if they do not pursue ECE as a career, their experience in the program expands their experience so much and makes them much more inspirational teachers overall, particularly understanding the importance of play and the outdoor environment for children's learning.

It has also expanded the understanding of several of our faculty.

I really appreciate the opportunity to respond to you personally. Thank you very much for your consideration.

Jenny