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ECACE
EARLY CHILDHOOD ACCESS
CONSORTIUM FOR EQUITY

Guiding Principles
Working Group Meeting
January 20, 2022
Minutes

A meeting of the Early Childhood Access Consortium for Equity Guiding Principles Working Group was called to order at 3 pm via telephone and video conference as permitted by Public Act 101-0640.

Participating in the meeting were: Christi Chadwick, Illinois Board of Higher Education; Marcus Brown, Illinois Community College Board; Mackenzie Montgomery, Illinois Community College Board; Sue Maes, Consultant; Carol VanNahmen, Consultant; Paul Carlson, Kankakee Community College; Francis Godwyll, Western Illinois University; Julie Obermark, Kaskaskia College; Laura Schaub, Greenville University; Elizabeth Sherwood, Southern Illinois University; and Erin Thomson, Governors State University.

ECACE Project Director Christi Chadwick welcomed everyone and informed attendees how to submit public comment. A quick round of introductions followed. Chadwick said the draft guiding principles, drafted by IBHE, ICCB, and the consultants, were shared with institutional teams and Consortium members. She reported that the feedback was largely positive and specific comments were shared with this group via email (and on the slides). The group proceeded to review each principle and the feedback and make suggested edits/changes/updates.

Carson referenced a specific comment that the principles do not specifically mention quality care for young children. He acknowledged that it is implicit in the principles but wished it to be explicitly stated. Sherwood agreed, suggesting an opening statement or preamble. Chadwick agreed and offered to draft some language.

Chadwick briefly ran through some comments and feedback regarding the principles and then turned to the proposed guiding principles.

Schaub asked for clarification regarding “The Consortium gives priority focus to the incumbent early childhood workforce.” She asked if that means the Consortium is not focused on all early childhood education students. Chadwick clarified that, while all students could benefit from the Consortium’s work, the focus is on adults currently working in the field who want to advance their credentials. Godwyll agreed that this could be particularly beneficial to transfer students. Carson also agreed.

Chadwick asked about a line regarding barriers to completion and licensure, a suggested addition to the principles. Obermark and Godwyll agreed with the addition.

Thompson asked about “Consortium members operate jointly to provide streamlined paths to degrees.” Brown responded that the Consortium aims to provide a seamless (or as seamless as possible) pathway to credential. Maes suggested changing “jointly” to “collaboratively” to better reflect the nature of the Consortium and its members’ work. Thompson asked what the end goal is – an associate’s degree? A bachelor’s degree? Brown and Chadwick replied that the focus is not

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on the degree but rather the process and making it as user friendly as possible. Thompson said her institution's program is geared to licensure and asked if they should have a non-licensure option. Sherwood and Schaub replied that their institutions have both options. The group agreed to modify the language to include advancing credentials and/or degrees.

VanNahmen emphasized that the goal of the guiding principles is to lay a foundation on which each institution can build its own program. Yes, the programs must be consistent with the values, but the specifics can be tailored to each school.

Obermark asked how members of the group and the Consortium will or should respond to questions about the principles and the development process. Chadwick agreed this is a question for the group. Sherwood referenced the NAEYC code of ethical conduct, which functions similarly to the guiding principles, and which has an entire book that explains how the code is/should be implemented. Chadwick asked if a very short narrative, no more than a paragraph or two, that should elaborate each guiding principle. Sherwood and Obermark agreed some elaboration may be necessary. People will want to know the "why" as well as the "what". Schaub related this to the accreditation process. The accreditation standards have to be translated into action.

Thompson asked for clarification on "We recognize and honor the learning and competencies of students." VanNahmen and Brown said it is related to the previous statement, "We value the expertise of faculty teaching at all member institutions." The student statement refers to the assured quality of the faculty providing the education.

The group then briefly discussed the logistics of presenting to the whole Consortium.

There was no public comment.

The meeting adjourned at 3:59 pm.