Minutes

Early Childhood Access Consortium for Equity Meeting

June 14, 2022

Submitted for: Action

Summary: Minutes of the June 14, 2022 Early Childhood Access Consortium for Equity held via video conference and telephone, as permitted by Public Act 101-0640.

Action Requested: ECACE approve the minutes of the June 14, 2022 Consortium meeting.

Minutes

Early Childhood Access Consortium for Equity Meeting

June 14, 2022

A meeting of the Early Childhood Access Consortium for Equity (ECACE) was conducted via telephone and video conference as permitted by public Act 101-0640. Ginger Ostro and Brian Durham determined that an in-person meeting was not practical nor prudent due to the disaster. The IBHE's Executive Deputy Director was physically present at the IBHE offices. The audio of the meeting was recorded and may be found on the ECACE website.

The following institutions and their representatives were present.

Institution	Voting Member	Institution	Voting Member
Black Hawk College	Absent	Malcom X College	Katonja K. Webb
Blackburn College	Cindy Rice	McHenry County College	Lisha Linder (non-voting)
Chicago State University	Ty Jiles	Moraine Valley Community College	Pam Haney
College of DuPage	Jean Zaar	Morton College	Michael Rose
College of Lake County	Sonya Williams	National Louis University	Lisa Downey
Danville Area Community College	Absent	Northeastern Illinois University	Absent
DePaul University	Marie Donovan	Northern Illinois University	Laurie Elish-Piper
Eastern Illinois University	Christy Hooser (non-voting)	Oakton Community College	Marc Battista
Elgin Community College	Peggy Heinrich	Olive Harvey College	Brandon Nichols
Governors State University	Shannon Dermer	Olivet Nazarene University	Absent
Greenville University	Laura Schaub	Parkland College	Nancy Sutton
Harold Washington College	Absent	Prairie State College	Janice Kaushal
Harper College	Kathleen Nikolai	Rend Lake College	Kim Wilkerson
Heartland College	Johnna Darragh-Ernst	Richard Daley College	George Kinlaw
Highland Community College	Absent	Richland Community College	Absent
Illinois Central College	Andrianna Smyrniotis	Rock Valley College	Absent
Illinois Eastern Community College	Robert Conn	Rockford University	Kimberlee Wagner
Illinois State University	Amy Hurd	Roosevelt University	Absent
Illinois Valley Community College	Tammy Landgraf	Sauk Valley Community College	Jon Mandrell

John A Logan College	Melanie Pecord	South Suburban College	Anna Helwig
John Wood Community College	April Darringer	Southern Illinois University Carbondale	Absent
Joliet Junior College	Melissa Szymczak	Southern Illinois University Edwardsville	Natasha Flowers
Judson University	Absent	Southwestern Illinois College	Carolyn Beal
Kankakee Community College	Paul Carlson	St. Augustine College	Antuanette Mester
Kaskaskia College	Julie Obermark	St. Xavier University	Natalie Phillips
Kennedy King College	Patricia Armstrong	Triton College	Susan Campos
Kishwaukee College	Judson Curry	Truman College	Kate Connor
Lake Land College	Absent	University of Illinois Chicago	Kathryn Bouchard Chval
Lewis & Clark Community College	Ken Trzaska	University of Illinois Urbana Champaign	Anne Pradzinski (non-voting)
Lewis University	Kip Kline	Waubonsee Community College	Sharon Garcia
Lincoln Land Community College	Kalith Smith	Western Illinois University	Eric Sheffield

Conveners: Others present include the following from the convening agencies.

Illinois Board of Higher Education: Ginger Ostro, Stephanie Bernoteit, Sophia Gehlhausen, Christi Chadwick, Jennifer Hernandez

Illinois Community College Board: Brian Durham, Marcus Brown, Allison Decker, Amanda Lemanski, Mackenzie Montgomery, Nyssa Westermeyer

I.   Call to Order, Welcome and Housekeeping

Brian Durham called the meeting to order at 9:00 am. He reviewed the Open Meetings Act guidelines and the instructions to leave a question in the Q&A section.

Durham reviewed the technical requirements for the meeting and provided an overview of the agenda.

Ginger Ostro revisited the Guiding Principles of the consortium and provided a summary of those items and how they align to the work of the consortium.

II.   AAS Transfer Requirements

Ostro provided updates regarding the AAS transfer requirements and introduced the University of Illinois Urbana-Champaign and Lewis University to start the panel discussions as participants in the AAS Transfer Community of Practice.

Ostro introduced Rebecca Pruitt with Lewis University as the first presenter. Pruitt provided an overview of Lewis's early childhood program and how they have worked to support students and streamline processes surrounding the transfer of the AAS degree as it relates to the legislation. She also mentioned support from IBHE which included the EPPI Grant, EC4 Grant, and the ECACE grant. Building on progress they have made using other grants, ECACE has allowed them to further develop PLA, mentor and support the incumbent workforce, remove unnecessary general education courses, and look at innovated curricular work.

Ostro introduced Anne Pradzinski with UIUC as the second presenter. Pradzinski provided a background of UIUC's early childhood programs and explained the changes that took place once the legislation was introduced. Pradzinski advised the challenges encountered when implementing programmatic changes and explained how they worked through those. The successes noted include increased enrollment in the program, completed full program/course design, and working towards program approval.

Ostro asked the presenters to explain the changes implemented and specific challenges they encountered. Pruitt was asked to share about the process for accepting the AAS transfer and the relationship with the 2-year institution(s). This also involved an intentional review of the general education requirements. Pruitt also advised that the 8-week format seemed to be working best for these students. The process for students is individualized based on each student and their educational and professional background. Pruitt advised that UIUC also tried multiple models, but the needs of the students pushed them to limit the number of courses to two at a time. The institution tried other methods, but the two courses per semester has worked best. Pradzinski also explained that the college is still working through how to award credit for prior learning. The sharing of ideas across the state has been helpful as the institutions navigate these issues. Both presenters also provided an update on how they have been working with the community college partners and how that has helped with this process.

There was a question from Cindy Rice regarding communication with ISBE and program design. Pradzinski advised that UIUC designed this as a concentration within the already established ECE program. They are still waiting on program approval, but it was submitted as a revision instead of a new program.

Kim Wagner asked the presenters about the general education requirements and licensure pathways. How are the general education requirements satisfying the ISBE requirements? Pradzinski advised that there are changes to be made within ISBE surrounding the language on general education and she also explained that is more focused on content and competencies as opposed to courses. Pruitt advise that they are still requiring the students to take the core general education courses but trying to leave them room where necessary. Jen Kirmes advised that for the purposes of licensure regulations there are no specific general education requirements. Changes to Part 25 administrative rules will include clarifying language to this effect. The courses do not need to be standalone courses for each of the content areas listed; only the content within the program standards must be covered.

III.   CDA Updates

Durham provided updates regarding the CDA for credit beginning with the legislative requirements. The CDA working group has been meeting and working through the recommendations that will advance this matter forward.

Marcus Brown discussed the work that has been done so far and introduced Ashley Nazarak with the Carol Robertson Center for Learning. Nazarak reiterated the idea of centering the workforce and focusing work on families and children in the state. She provided updates from the employer/workforce perspective. She said that the CDA is important for employers because it allows for a pathway to upskill people quickly. It is also a pipeline to support staff members who want to advance in the field of early childhood. Many of these individuals have different backgrounds and experiences which makes the individualized approach critical to success. Employers can benefit from this because it increases the number of educators in the field, increases retention for existing teachers, increases skills and knowledge, and provides opportunity for pay as an employee. On a larger scale, it creates better ECE infrastructure of children and families throughout the state.

Christi Chadwick asked Nazarak about staffing and preparing staff as they worked through the CDA process. She advised that they have implemented a temporary fix which involved asking current qualified staff to work a time and a half schedule. During this process, the launched an initiative which brought in parents and community members interested in early childhood and working to obtain their CDA so they can work in the classroom.

Chadwick provided an overview and history of what the CDA is and what the working group has been working on since the last consortium meeting. There does not have to be a single model, but a common framework to adhere to the legislation and fundamental principles. The group has looked at competencies and alignment.

Chadwick also provided an overview of what other states are doing regarding the CDA. The states that provided updates advised which courses were used and how credit was awarded. The states also provided benefits to doing this work and the opportunities that it creates for individuals. Chadwick also advised that there are over 5,000 individuals with a CDA in Illinois.

Lindsay Meeker with WIU provided a 4-year institutional perspective for the group. This creates a pathway for students and gets them into a teacher preparation pipeline and/or bachelor's program. She also noted the benefit of awarding credit for prior learning. This removes barriers for many individuals.

Kate Connor from Truman College discussed the process of awarding meaningful credit. The process is clear to students and prior experience is valued. It was important to align the goals of the consortium with the learning outcomes at the institutional level. Maintaining the academic rigor within the program was important while keeping students at the center of the work. This did require flexibility and intentional review and revision of existing programs.

Brown noted the key elements of the framework which does provide some flexibility. The framework includes 6 semester hours for an active CDA, and implementation may vary from institution to institution. The credit must also be in early childhood or related coursework. Implementation must occur no later than January 31, 2023 for the preschool CDA and January 31, 2024 for the Infant/Toddler CDA. Institutions must also consistently document the award of this

credit on the students' transcript. Some institutions have redesigned the curriculum to align six semester hours to the CDA and some are granting credit upon enrollment based on the best fit for the student. There were also a few agency policies upon prior learning assessment and removing barriers surrounding those policies. Jen Kirmes also noted the difference between a program change and a program approval regarding the CDA credit process.

Brown also updated the consortium on the role of the ECACE Advisory Committee including the purpose and current membership. He shared some of the notable responses regarding the CDA recommendations that were discussed in the ECACE Advisory Committee.

Durham asked if there were questions for the presenters in this section. Judson Curry had a question about prior learning assessment and how that was documented. If the CDA credits were documented as courses, this could present an issue. Is there guidance regarding the mechanics of how these courses will appear on the transcripts? Meeker advised that they are looking at course outcomes and alignment much like other PLA situations. Connor also explained that PLA documentation is listed like PLA/transfer work, but there needs to be a label for CDA to eliminate confusion. There is a way to transcribe on the transcript without a grade to make sure that it is clear it was a CDA award. This will require work from the registrars to figure out how to record this.

April Darringer had a question regarding the Infant/Toddler and Preschool CDA. Will these be 2 separate sets of CDA credit? Connor advised that its typically the same competencies so it would not be duplicated. It would count for the same courses since these are broad introductory courses.

Pradzinski asked if we were limited to just 6 credit hours. Meeker advised that 6 is the minimum at their institution and if it were more than 6 there may be other items required to award more than the minimum about of credit.

Durham acknowledged the work of the working groups and consortium members who completed the survey. There are still items to work through and the groups will continue to discuss those issues.

Durham asked for a motion to vote on the recommended framework for the child development associate and awarding 6 semester hours of credit aligned with the guiding principles and outlined in the recommendations document. Marie Donovan moved to approve the framework. Peggy Heinrich seconded. Andrianna Smyrniotis noted that the CDA is a foundational credit, and the 6 semester hours is what DHS requires to be a lead teacher, recommending that we should try to speak with DHS to see how to best proceed if this is approved. Tonya Williams with CLC asked if each school would have flexibility in assigning CDA credit. Brown advised that there will be flexibility in how that credit is assigned if it falls within the scope of the recommendation. Amy Hurd with ISU thanked the committee for working to find a solution that is a "best fit model" for each of the institutions. Melissa Szymczak acknowledged the challenges related to program redesigns and approval processes within the institutions that can take time to update.

Sophia Gehlhausen called roll for the group. The motion carried. Consortium members unanimously approved the recommendations. The voting record is appended to the minutes.

IV.   Institutional Partnerships

Ostro advised that we would be hearing two presentations discussing institutional teams and partnerships. She introduced Amy Hurd and Kelli Appel, Illinois State University, to discuss their university-wide team efforts to approach this initiative. There are individuals from across campus in various roles that have been involved in the discussions. Appel advised that the admissions team was critical to bring in to modify the application process, interest form, and other processes to identify these students effectively. They also added 2 faculty lead roles which has helped with communication/outreach and are directly working on this project. Carolyn Beal advised that they started with the CAO, marketing, Registrar, financial aid, and research staff initially, but brought in records and enrollment staff, business office, workforce development, and the success center were brought in as the project progressed. Services were identified and instructional technology also played a role in course development and access. Each of the institutions advised that there was a core working group that handled the primary requirements of the legislation, but it was necessary to create sub-groups as well to better handle items such as grants, student supports, enrollment, etc. These groups meet on an as needed basis, but the goal is to engage staff and faculty across campus in this initiative. Appel advised that the steering committee idea is to make sure everyone understands what is involved with this project.

Carolyn Beal advised that they have not encountered any major challenges or push-back within the institution, and they are doing what is necessary to accomplish the goals. Things do move quickly, and the timelines can be challenging, but the overall institutional support has been positive. Appel also advised that timelines are an issue for ISU as well, and Hurd advised that the AAS transfer process has also been challenging to navigate. Beal noted that communication has played an important role in making this work and sharing out information from the consortium. Appel explained that seeking buy-in and working as a team has worked well at ISU. Stressing the timeline and requirements has also helped move things along quickly and effectively.

V.   Updates

Brown and Chadwick provided updates on the scholarships. Academic year 2022 has wrapped up and June 29th is last date to request payment. There have been 764 prequalified apps and the application for fall is open with a priority deadline of July 15th. ISAC will open a school view in July and prequalification will start in late July with payments beginning in August.

IBHE sent out template for payment requests and financial reporting for the grant. Those are due back by July 15th for colleges reporting to IBHE. They will be sending out an abbreviated program reporting item later this week. There will also be an optional webinar later this week to answer questions and provide updates.

Brown advised implementation plans were due on June 3rd for the community colleges. Questions will be directed to the grant lead listed on the application. The fiscal year 2023 budget is due by the end of June.

Durham advised that a copy of the meeting minutes was sent and sought a motion to approve the minutes. Kate Connor moved to approve. Marie Donovan seconded. The motion carried.

V. Public Comment

APPROVED 10.11.22

There was a comment from Vanessa Pena with the Latino Policy Forum regarding the CDA credential. The Forum values the voice of the Latino population and seeks to provide linguistically diverse students and families with services and ensure accessibility. The CDA credential is an important entry point for those looking to upskill in the field. They support the 6-credit hour recommendation brought forth from the working group. The bilingual incumbent workforce would benefit from the Gateways approved associate degree. They would also ask that the consortium prioritize access for members of the incumbent workforce who speak languages other than English.

Ostro thanked the group for their work and partnership and provided next steps and meeting dates.

Meeting adjourned.

Consortium Member Votes for the Framework for the Credit for the Child Development Associate

Member	CDA Vote
Black Hawk College	Absent
Blackburn College	Yes
Chicago State University	Yes
College of DuPage	Yes
College of Lake County	Yes
Danville Area Community College	Absent
DePaul University	Yes
Eastern Illinois University	Absent voting member
Elgin Community College	Yes
Governors State University	Yes
Greenville University	Yes
Harold Washington College	Absent
Harper College	Yes
Heartland College	Yes
Highland Community College	Absent
Illinois Central College	Yes
Illinois Eastern Community College	Yes
Illinois State University	Yes
Illinois Valley Community College	Yes
John A. Logan College	Yes
John Wood Community College	Yes
Joilet Junior College	Yes
Judson University	Absent
Kankakee Community College	Yes
Kaskaskia College	Yes
Kennedy King College	Yes
Kishwaukee College	Yes
Lake Land College	Absent
Lewis & Clark Community College	Yes
Lewis University	Absent voting member
Lincoln Land Community College	Yes
Malcom X College	Absent at time of vote
McHenry County College	Absent voting member
Moraine Valley Community College	Yes
Morton College	Yes
National Louis University	Yes
Northeastern Illinois University	Absent
Northern Illinois University	Yes
Oakton Community College	Yes
Olive Harvey College	Absent at time of vote
Olivet Nazarene University	Absent
Parkland College	Yes

APPROVED 10.11.22

Prairie State College	Yes
Rend Lake College	Yes
Richard Daley College	Absent at time of vote
Richland Community College	Absent
Rock Valley College	Absent voting member
Rockford University	Yes
Roosevelt University	Absent
Sauk Valley Community College	Yes
South Suburban College	Yes
Southern Illinois University Carbondale	Absent
Southern Illinois University Edwardsville	Yes
Southwestern Illinois College	Yes
St. Augustine College	Yes
St. Xavier University	Yes
Triton College	Yes
Truman College	Yes
University of Illinois Chicago	Yes
University of Illinois Urbana Champaign	Absent voting member
Waubonsee Community College	Yes
Western Illinois University	Absent at time of vote