May 19, 2022

Agenda

I. Welcome and Housekeeping

II. Employer Spotlight

III. Addressing EC Workforce Opportunities and Challenges: Work of the Consortium

IV. University Partners' Work to Address AAS Transfer Requirements

V. Awarding Higher Education Credit for the CDA

VI. Meeting Minutes: Review and Approve

VII. Public Comment

VIII. Next Steps

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Ground Rules

We recognize both the value of collaborative and systems change work and the difficulty in engaging in this work. As such, we agree to operate per the ground rules below.

- Keep the early childhood workforce and young children and families at the center.

- Listen fully and thoughtfully.

- Commit to candid discussions of diverse ideas in an atmosphere of mutual respect.

- Suspend predetermined positions to allow the collective intelligence to emerge.

- Monitor your personal technology.

- Share your voice; yet monitor your airtime.

- Be solutions oriented.

- Make effort to reach consensus.

- Respect requests for confidentiality – both implicitly and explicitly stated.

Employer Spotlight
Stephanie Neuman, Owner/Director
Kountry Kids Learning Center

EC Workforce Challenges and Opportunities

Feedback from the Last Meeting

Financial Challenges to Attending

Navigating the System

Higher Education Pathways

Professional Educator License

Compensation of the Workforce

Financial Challenges to Attending

Feedback from Last Meeting

Challenges -
- Tuition costs
- Some scholarships don't fully cover tuition or don't pay for books
- Even if scholarships exist, transportation and child care can be prohibitive costs
- Can't get transcripts or enroll due to past balances

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ECACE Scholarship

What does it Cover: Includes tuition & fees*, and funding for **up to** the full cost of attendance

Status For FY2022 – SOFT LAUNCH YEAR
- 831 applications
- ~578 prequalified (letters were sent to students and names to schools) at **52 of the 63 institutions**
- Payments of ~approximately $2.5m made for ~200 students so far from **29 institutions**

Fall 2022 – Summer 2023 Scholarship: Applications to be released in May

*Tuition capped at highest tuition at a public institution.

Funding for Financial Holds

- $ Provided to each institution to support students to address unpaid expenses that have led to financial holds
- Students will need to work with their institution to access funding

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Navigating the System

Students/workforce often struggles with:

- Finding the best institution to meet their needs

- Finding resources to help them enroll, persist, and complete

    - How do I apply?

    - Where can I attend?

    - Who offers what program?

    - What is the ECACE scholarship?

    - How do I fill out the FAFSA?

    - What class should I take?

    - I am failing – what do I do?

    - How do I talk to someone in the business office?

Navigators

Goal: 36 regionally-based navigators at 16 CCRRs to provide personalized assistance to students to access higher education and provide a warm handoff to institutions

- ~28 on board so far

- Onboarding and training has begun, and mentors are learning about institutions' programs

- Connections have been made with 2-year institutions; connections will be made in the next 2 weeks with 4-year institutions

Mentors

Goal: Mentors at each of the 62 Consortium institutions to support enrollment, persistence and completion

Role: "Guide on the side" within the institution to support things such as:

- Navigating the institutions and its various offices and processes (registrar, business office, financial aid, enrollment)
- Providing intentional and proactive mentoring and coaching
- Helping students fine needed supports, courses, or other services

ISBE Early Childhood Licensure: Opportunities and Challenges

FEEDBACK FROM LAST MEETING:

• Low pass rates for the EC Content Test

• Early childhood workforce has to leave their center to do their student teaching

• Alternative licensure pathways

• Basic skills test

• Licensing for those who support English Learners

ISBE Early Childhood Licensure

- ISBE offers a Professional Educator License (PEL) with an Early Childhood Education (ECE) endorsement

- PEL with the ECE endorsement is valid for teaching assignments from Birth to Grade 2 in public schools and community-based settings supported by Preschool for All grants

- ISBE has been working with stakeholders and consortium partners to remove barriers to licensure, especially for members of the incumbent workforce

Multiple Pathways

ISBE offers multiple pathways to obtaining licensure

- **Professional Educator License (PEL)**
  - Illinois educator prep program
  - Out of state approved educator prep program with licensure attainment (Reciprocity)
  - Process for candidates who attained schooling from an out of state educator prep program without license attainment
- **Alternative Routes to Licensure**
  - Illinois Gateway Level 5 Credential / Educator Licenses with Stipulations- Transitional Bilingual Educator
  - Subsequent Teaching Endorsements & Short-Term Approval (STA)

Alternative Routes to Licensure:
Subsequent Teaching Endorsements & Short-Term Approvals (STA)

- **Obtaining an EC endorsement**
  - PEL + Early Childhood endorsement
    - 18 semester hours of coursework specific to or inclusive of Early Childhood Education
    - Pass the Early Childhood Education content test (206)
- **STA**
  - Temporary credentials that allow an educator to immediately begin teaching while working towards full licensure
  - PEL + 9 hours of coursework in Early Childhood + passing score on EC content test
  - Bachelor's degree in an EC field (not related to education) + passing score on EC content test

Alternative Routes to Licensure
Illinois Gateway Level 5 Credential /
Educator Licenses with Stipulations- Transitional Bilingual Educator

Educators holding an Illinois Gateways Level 5 Credential, or an Educator License with Stipulations-Transitional Bilingual Educator (ELS-TBE) can now acquire an ISBE Professional Educator License (PEL) while gaining valuable experience in an ISBE Preschool for All (PFA) program.

- **Public Act 100-0645** makes changes to who can teach in PFA classrooms.

- Between 2017 and 2023, educators who hold one of the two following credentials and are working towards a Professional Educator License can teach in a PFA program:
  - A Gateways ECE Credential Level 5
  - An Educator License with Stipulations with a Transitional Bilingual Educator endorsement and have either passed the ECE content test or have completed at least 9 semester hours of ECE coursework.

  Program Administrators will have to collect evidence of coursework from ELS-TBE candidates.

Removing Barriers - Basic Skills

Last Meeting

- Confusion from members about requirements surround the basic skills test

Already Addressed:

- **Public Act 101-0220** <u>eliminated</u> the requirement that teacher candidates pass a test of basic skills to receive a Professional Educators Licenses

- More information can be found <u>here</u>

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Removing Barriers ISBE Licensure Policies

- **Student Teaching**
  - **Pay:** Student teachers may be compensated for their services per Illinois Administrative Code Section 25.620(f). **Already in effect.**
  - **Grade Range:** For an early childhood education endorsement, individuals may student teach in a setting with children from birth through grade 2. **Already in effect.**
  - **Supervision:** In progress Part 25 rulemaking will allow an educator with a Level 5 Gateways credential (rather than a PEL) to serve as cooperating teacher for candidates seeking early childhood licensure. **Pending JCAR.**
  - **Field Work:** In progress Part 25 rulemaking clarifies field work expectations. **Pending JCAR.**

- **General Education Requirements**
  - In progress Part 25 rulemaking will strike requirements for science and social science coursework for licensure as this content is part of national standards to which programs are already aligned. **Pending JCAR.**

- **EC Licensure Content Test**
  - Question by question response analysis complete
  - Some question removal and bias panel convening to revise questions.

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Higher Education Pathways and Access

Challenges:

- Credit loss when transferring

- Courses offered at night, evenings, weekends

- Programs near me don't offer summer classes; classes taught infrequently

Opportunities:

- Job-Embedded Learning

- Credit for prior learning, competencies, experience

- Online and hybrid models

- Aligning competencies and coursework

- Collaboration – across institutions and with community partners

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Higher Education Pathways and Access

- Innovative redesign to support
  - Accessibility
  - Smooth pathways (like AAS Transfer - more later!)
  - Credit for Prior Learning (like through the CDA - more later!)
  - Competency-based learning

- Institutional Supports for Students with things like….(varies by institution)
  - Content Test Preparation
  - Academic Tutoring
  - Enhanced Advising (and Mentors)

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Higher Education Pathways and Access

Institutional Funding

- Nearly **$49m** to two-and four-year Consortium Institutions to support institutional work, including program redesign, supports for student success, etc
- Information about grants released
- Institutions are developing/have developed implementation plans and budgets

Additional funding will be available to institutions through competitive processes, such as graduate scholarships

Work is supported by federal child care stimulus funding through IDHS

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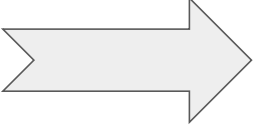EARLY CHILDHOOD ACCESS
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Questions?

Full Transfer of Associate of Applied Science Degree

- Students with an AAS from a Gateways Entitled institution with a 2.0 GPA can transfer into a university with junior level status.

  - May not be required to take a total number of credits greater than those of those first starting a baccalaureate.

  - Institutions must accept credits awarded for prior learning.

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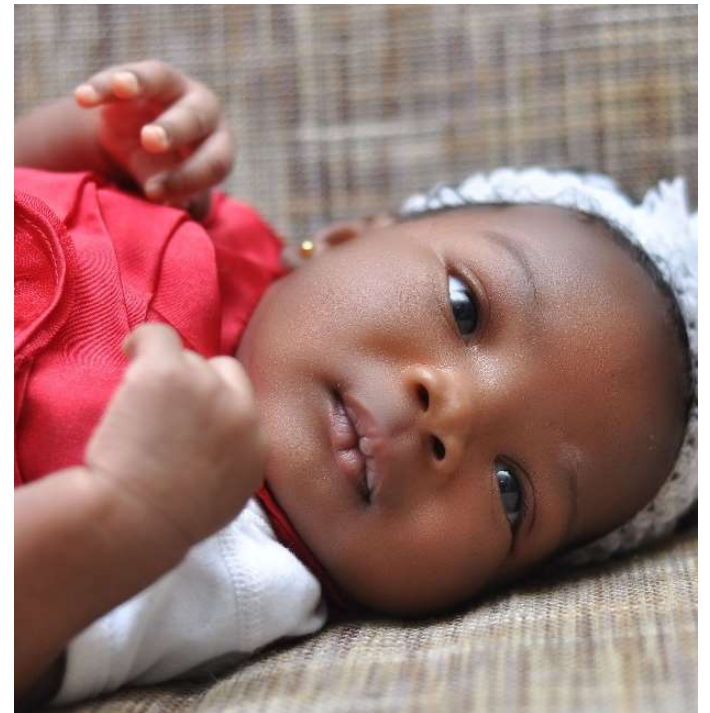
Shifting the Balance:
Reconceptualizing
AAS ➤ BA as the high-quality pathway of choice

Rebecca Pruitt, Ph.D.
Early Childhood Education Program Director

Dual-License PEL
with non-licensure option

Early Childhood (birth-2nd)
Special Education (birth-2nd)
ESL (PreK-12th)

Optional: Bilingual Education (Pre-K - 2nd)

LEWIS UNIVERSITY

1) **BA blended, traditional**

2) **BA 100% online, accelerated**

3) **MA 100% online, accelerated**

The plan of study for the 2 BA programs are identical.

AAS degrees are fully transferable into both #1 & #2 tracks.

Support for our steps

EPPI Grant (2015-2016)

Supported articulation work among Lewis and community college partners:

*identified new AAS transferable courses

*established a smooth pathway for AAS transfer

*infant-toddler content

EC4 Grant (2020-2022)

Supporting 90 members of the EC incumbent workforce in degree and credential completion:

+credit for experience (PLA)

+individualized study plans w/transfer credits

+prioritize teachers of color & bilingual educators

+Professional Learning Communities for support

ECACE (2022-2024)

Facilitating additional changes & supports for:

+removing unnecessary general education courses

+curricular work in infant-toddler content

+curricular work for upward alignment w/workforce needs

+AAS to BA 2+2 plans

+further developing PLA

+mentoring, supporting incumbent workforce

Contact:

Dr. Rebecca Pruitt
Early Childhood Education
Lewis University
pruittre@lewisu.edu

UIUC Early Childhood Professional Education – Our Goals

Move students from associate degree completion to bachelor's degree completion

Commitment over the next three years – 64 students (80% increase in enrollment)

Offer a convenient program for working, adult students

Provide holistic student supports to maintain success, persistence and completion

Create an online community of learners

College of Education
UNIVERSITY OF ILLINOIS URBANA-CHAMPAIGN

UIUC Early Childhood Professional Education – Our Program

Designed for the Working Adult

- Mixture of Online Synchronous and Asynchronous Courses
- 8 and 16-week formats
- Cohorts
- One evening a week
- Possibility to complete clinical fieldwork at their place of work
- Licensure and Non-Licensure option
- Structured learning supports
- Opportunities for community building/peer support

UIUC Early Childhood Professional Education – Successes and Challenges

Challenges

- Timing – program approval

- Convert 16-week face to face courses to 8-week online

- Provide similar experiences for ECPE as our on-campus program

- Recognize "what they know" with wide variety of experiences

- Getting the word out

UIUC Early Childhood Professional Education – Successes and Challenges

Successes

- Program approval (almost)!!!

- Completed full program design/courses

- Starting to enroll students

- Understanding and support of innovation

Panel Discussion and Questions

CDA and Higher Education Credit

Credit for the CDA

Consortium charged with determining how to **assign college credit** for incumbent workforce with the National CDA (current and future)

What is the CDA?

- An assessment of competencies through a portfolio, a standardized test, and 4 hour observation + 120 clock hours of training +480 hours of experience

- A national credential, awarded by the Council for Profession Recognition

- An assessment of a foundational level of competency to work with young children

- In Illinois, with a CDA, someone can serve as a lead teacher, and be alone with children

Process to Date

- Working group of 2/4 year institutions + employers + CCRR reps + advocates meeting weekly/bi-weekly since December

- Looked at cross-walks of CDA competencies to Gateways Competencies

- Interviewed states (OK, MA, PA) and institutions about how they are awarding credit

- Reviewed history of CDA

- Looked across programs for commonalities

- Dug into programs to see where competencies reside IHE courses

- Considered how this might work in different institutions and programs

Initial Agreements

Our first priority is students/workforce, and we respect needs of other stakeholders including employers, etc.

May not be **one** single model that this working group recommends

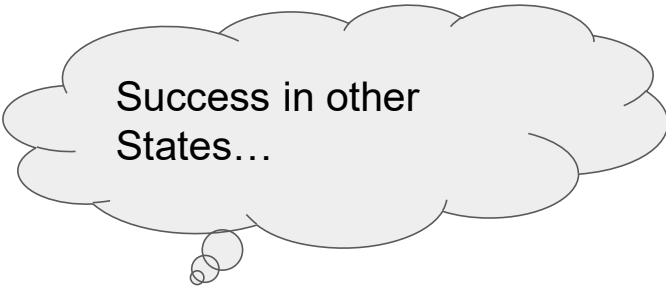   For example, there may be:

   Variation by institution

   Variation by whether student already has a CDA or is seeking a CDA

May be some things that are fundamental and some that are more flexible, optional, agreed upon

All must align to/adhere to our fundamental principles.

Higher Education and Workforce Partnerships…Win!

Success in other States…

Positive launch point for incumbent workforce to go back to school…building on success and valuing their expertise from the field

Data indicates incumbent workforce students stick with it! Ex: 60% AAS, 50% of that…Bachelors!

Found that when credit for the CDA is given early in the students' degree pathway, there is opportunity to cycle skills and concepts back into courses later on to ensure preparedness upon graduation.

Incumbent Workers indicate…

Getting credit for the CDA created positive energy for them to want to go back to school - Black women specifically noted it was one barrier remover that helped them get "unstuck" or motivated, even in an inequitable system.

Positive, supportive partnerships with their local colleges and universities as well as supportive center directors were crucial in their success

(Blake, 2021; Voller, 2021)

Bonus: Granting a common range of credit for the CDA in a flexible manner allows higher education institutions to elevate equitable access and value what incumbent workers, while also having wiggle room to do what works in their curriculum and processes. It's important for the entire institution to be on board so Early Childhood faculty can apply the legislation and grant credit with agility.

Approved by the Consortium in January 2022

FUNDAMENTAL PRINCIPLES

In Brief

- Meaningful credit that can be applied to the next certificate and AAS

- Students do not have to "re-prove" themselves for the competencies they have; institutions recognize and provide credit for this

- The process is transparent to the student

- Standard range or number of credits

- Timely and affordable

Thinking, Working, Grappling to Find Solution(s) That Work for the State

- How do we value student's prior learning and experience AND make it work in our programs?

- Encountered some 'stickiness'

Framework

- 6 credit hours in "early childhood" or related as a landing place

- Not contingent on other factors

- A few exceptions, like when students have an AAS or BA already

- While implementation is scheduled for January 31, 2022, institutions may choose to implement various CDA in a phased approach, to allow for more time for redesign, if needed

Jamboard

Thinking about the work of the CDA for Credit Working Group

- What are you excited about?
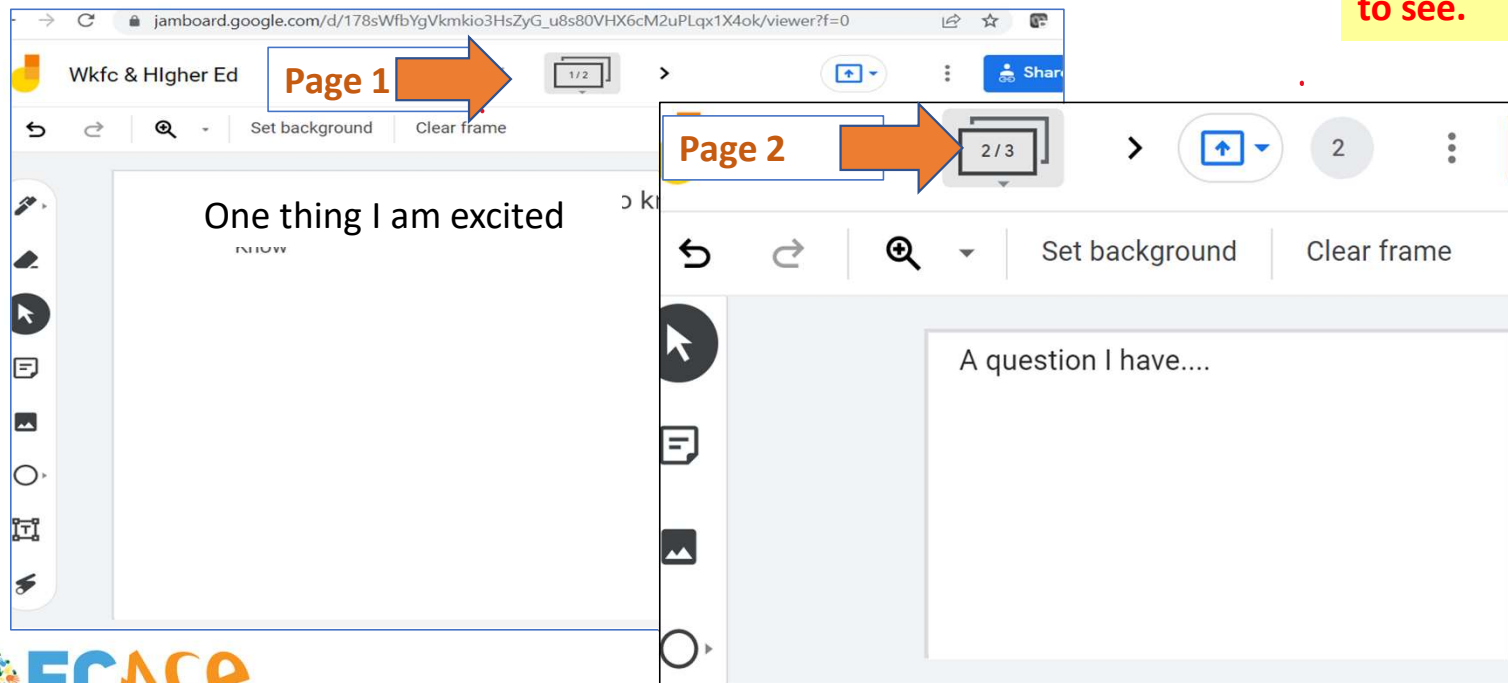- What would you like to know more about? What additional questions do you have?

Jamboard Directions
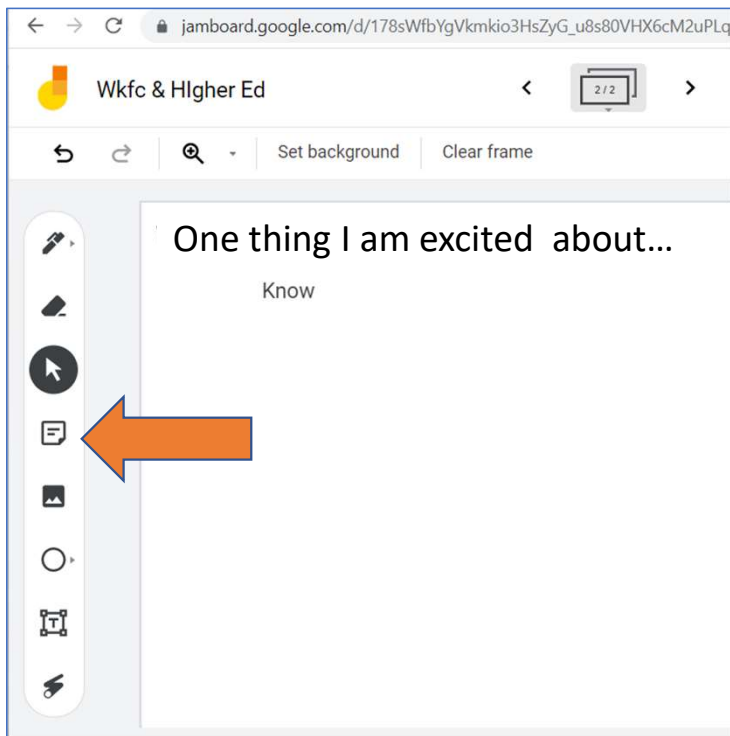
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One thing I am excited
Know

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A question I have....

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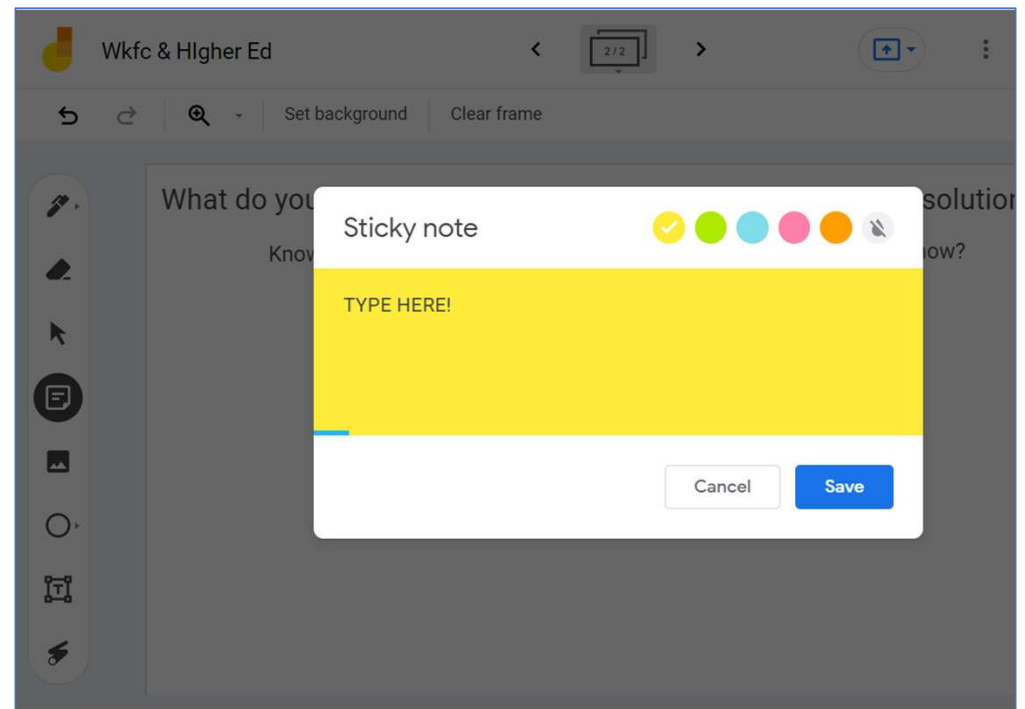EARLY CHILDHOOD ACCESS
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Jamboard Directions

3. Find the Sticky Notes

4. Create a response

Jamboard

Thinking about the work of the CDA for Credit Working Group

- What are you excited about?
- What would you like to know more about? What additional questions do you have?

Set background Clear frame

One thing I'm excited about...

A majority of Head Start and Early Head Start programs utilize the CDA to support development of entry level staff, including a majority of parents. Head Start/Early Head Start have a large percentage of staff who were former

I'm excited about the recognizing the CDA prior knowledge accelerates students to completing their programs.

the ability for staff to see how their efforts to obtain a CDA translates to collegiate achievement

An awesome stepping stone in an individuals career development.

Tickled pink that this work is seriously moving forward in a collaborative way and that we are deliberately pushing for greater inclusion and equity.

Giving incumbent workforce members an opportunity to gain credit for their work experience - a great way to begin the educational process for workers that might not have engaged in higher education before.

I'm excited about the possibilities of alignment with all of the ways the workforce can obtain licensure/certification and how we will communicate this information in a cohesive, systemic and systematic way.

I am excited for those older workforce members to receive 6 hours of higher education credit. This will be a great source of encouragement to continue their education.

I love seeing all of the different options for those in the workforce. I am excited about the CDA credit as well and the prior learning credit options.

Love the adult focus and recognizing learning versus seat time. Adult learners can structure use of their time for learning as it fits their lives and still stay on track to completing their credentials.

Excited about this serving as a model for other professions as well: a possible win-win for other careers?

If, indeed, the CDA is available in multiple languages, it also serves as a positive launch point for multilingual staff. We all know the ECE system is in tremendous need of multilingual staff to support our young

Excited to see how this helps recruit and retain additional teachers for the workforce.

Glad to see that we're removing barriers as students navigate institutions...

Set background   Clear frame

A question I have....

How are the institutions embracing this option? Are there concerns on their end?

Will college credit only apply for the time that the CDA is valid (2-3 years)?

Will it be possible to cohesively, systemically and systematically have an EC workforce pathway that is easily accessible and attainable?

This is being addressed for both Infant Toddler and Preschool CDA, correct?

Will there be a campaign to contact those who have completed a CDA to inform them about the 6 hours of EC and encourage them to continue their education?

Are there any barriers for CDA holders who are bilingual and how are we addressing them?

What will the outreach look like to the incumbent workforce that would benefit from the CDA?

Is there more we can do to support this work?

How are we building an intentional structured support mechanism to support technology challenges prior to students enrolling in programs?

The CDA also offers a credential for home visitors.