



APPROVED 04.24.23

**Minutes**

**Early Childhood Access Consortium for Equity Meeting**

**October 11, 2022**

Submitted for: Action

Summary: Minutes of the October 11, 2022, Early Childhood Access Consortium for Equity held at Richland Community College at the Shilling Community Education Center.

Action Requested: ECACE approve the minutes of the October 11, 2022, Consortium meeting.



# EARLY CHILDHOOD ACCESS CONSORTIUM FOR EQUITY

## Consortium Meeting

Agenda  
 October 11, 2022  
 1:00 pm

### Richland Community College

A meeting of the Early Childhood Access Consortium for Equity was called to order at 1:04pm in Salons 1 and 2 at Richland Community College, Shilling Community Education Center, 1 College Park, Decatur, Illinois on October 11, 2022.

The following institutions and their representatives were present:

Institution	Voting Member	Institution	Voting Member
Black Hawk College	Amy Maxeiner	Malcom X College	Absent
Blackburn College	Cindy Rice	McHenry County College	Dawn Katz
Chicago State University	Leslie Roundtree	Moraine Valley Community College	Pam Haney
College of DuPage	Jean Zaar	Morton College	Absent
College of Lake County	Absent	National Louis University	Absent
Danville Area Community College	Penny McConnell	Northeastern Illinois University	Tom Phillion
DePaul University	Marie Donovan	Northern Illinois University	Laura Hedin (delegate, non-voting)
Eastern Illinois University	Absent	Oakton Community College	Marc Battista
Elgin Community College	Peggy Heinrich	Olive Harvey College	Absent
Governors State University	Shannon Dermer	Olivet Nazarene University	Dawn Schwarzkopf
Greenville University	Laura Schaub	Parkland College	Nancy Sutton
Harold Washington College	Aimee Krall-Lanoue	Prairie State College	Janice Kaushal
Harper College	Kathleen Nikolai	Rend Lake College	Absent
Heartland College	Johnna Darragh-Ernst	Richard Daley College	Absent
Highland Community College	Melissa Johnson	Richland Community College	Jessica Pickel
Illinois Central College	Absent	Rock Valley College	Amanda Smith
Illinois Eastern Community College	Absent	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	Christie McIntyre
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	Absent
Kaskaskia College	Alexis Myers (delegate, non-voting)	St. Xavier University	Meg Carroll
Kennedy King College	Patricia Armstrong	Triton College	Susan Campos
Kishwaukee College	Judson Curry	Truman College	Kate Connor
Lake Land College	Tanille Ulm	University of Illinois Chicago	Ty Jiles
Lewis & Clark Community College	Absent	University of Illinois Urbana Champaign	Anne Pradzinski
Lewis University	Kip Kline	Waubensee Community College	Sharon Garcia
Lincoln Land Community College	Kalith Smith	Western Illinois University	Lindsay Meeker (non-voting)

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

Illinois Board of Higher Education: Ginger Ostro, Stephanie Bernoteit, Christi Chadwick, Jennifer Hernandez, Allie Horan, Marsha Hawley

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

## I. Welcome, Housekeeping, and Opening Remarks

Brian Durham opened the meeting at 1:04 and thanked everyone for joining in person. He introduced Jessica Pickel, Dean of Liberal Arts and Consortium representative for Richland Community College.

Pickel introduced herself and welcomed everyone to campus.

Durham led all attendees to introduce themselves by name and institution, and acknowledged the work of IBHE and ICCB, and IDHS staff, and navigators and mentors present.

## II. Consortium After One Year: Where Are We, and Where Are We Headed?

Durham reviewed the agenda and guiding principles, particularly focusing on centering student success. He passed it over to Ginger Ostro.

Ostro expressed appreciation for the group coming together in person. She grounded the group in the IBHE strategic plan as the place where the idea of ECACE began. She acknowledged the progress the Consortium has made, supplying data on the early childhood education workforce and the Consortium's role in addressing barriers and advancing equity at a systems level as a coordinated higher education system.

Ostro reviewed the passage of the Early Childhood Access Consortium for Equity Act, celebrating just over one year since the legislation embodied vision of the Consortium.

Ostro passed it over to Durham, who asked Peggy Heinrich to elevate one Consortium deliverable. Heinrich mentioned guiding principles as one development of the Consortium. Durham reviewed other deliverables achieved by the Consortium, including the framework for the CDA and almost 2,000 scholarships awarded to date. He previewed continuing work in program flexibility, course-sharing systems, stakeholder engagement, prior learning assessment, and leveraging competencies to make a more cohesive higher education system. He turned it over to Ostro.

Ostro led an activity for Consortium members and attendees to share a single word describing something they are excited for the next year of the Consortium. Consortium members shared words like expanding, growth, supporting, opportunity, equity, mentorship, completion, and community. Ostro turned it over to Marcus Brown.

### III. Supporting Students With Mentors and Navigators

Brown introduced the panel, which highlights the collaboration between navigators and mentors, and the purpose of navigators to go into the field to recruit working students, particularly women, with a variety of backgrounds and educational experiences. He also highlighted the mentors as continued support once a student is admitted and needs guidance within the institution.

He introduced panelists: Hannah Howell and Sara Seitz, navigators from SDA 14, and Yvette Schultz, mentor, and Carolyn Beal, institutional representative at Southwestern Illinois College.

Panelists spoke on their partnership in assisting students and moving ECACE work forward. Their discussion included the following topics:

- Achieving a “warm handoff” from navigator to institution via a standardized email from the navigator introducing the mentor tailored with information relevant to each student, followed by the mentor confirming receipt and scheduling a meeting with the student.
- Beal and Schultz emphasized their developing relationships across the institution with various offices, to accomplish the administrative aspects of ECACE (for the representative) and to find and rely on points of contact to connect students with (for the mentor).
- Seitz said building relationships with centers has been important to address apprehension over letting navigators in the door to meet with staff.
- Howell discussed the importance of developing a familiarity with both higher education and early childhood workforce as navigator.
- Schultz described the clearly defined roles between navigators and internal staff, so that navigators know what to expect from Schultz once a student is handed off, and that Schultz will also hand students back to the navigators for some processes like FAFSA.

Brown emphasized the role of institutional teams and thanked the panelists for their work and for sharing with the Consortium. Brown introduced breakout groups as the next activity and directed attendees where to go.

#### Break out activity:

Consortium members divided into breakout groups to discuss how institutional representatives and institutions can support mentors. Following this activity, Brown led the group in sharing out.

Representatives shared about the following topics:

- the importance of communication across the institution and with students,
- training for mentors and other involved staff, especially those hired from outside the institution,
- having an interventionist mindset and proactive mentoring/advising,
- structural supports for mentors such a campus-wide team but also within-department supports,

- emotional supports for students,
- using clear, shared language when doing this work,
- connecting mentors at the community colleges and at universities to support transfer,
- knowledge of institutional processes that a student goes through, learning the grant requirements,
- having a one-stop information on the ECACE website for mentors and navigators,
- making sure all players are continually informed,
- building relationships and pipelines,
- variations of the structures and roles at each institutions,
- a need for mentor-to-mentor support groups,
- emphasizing recruitment initiative-wide, not just campus specific,
- and sending out a note from ECACE to suggest to institutions the roles of different internal team members.

Representatives also mentioned the following topics: how to approach planning post-grant, as well as increases in enrollment, the diverse course sequences in AAS degree programs, articulation agreements and adjustments to bachelor's degree programs, and institutions having limited trained personnel to do this work.

#### IV. Updates

Chadwick confirmed ECACE is pronounced ee-see-ace and encouraged everyone to standardize pronunciation. She proposed a small working group with 1-2 meetings to put together a guide for mentors for onboarding. She will send an email out for volunteers. An opportunity to support navigators and their training may come later.

Chadwick provided updates on scholarship and recipient demographics.

Chadwick reminded the group of the timeline to implement awarding credit for the CDA: preschool CDA to be implemented by Jan 31, 2023 and infant toddler CDA by Jan 31, 2024. A webinar is forthcoming. A community of practice is also forthcoming.

Chadwick discussed ECACE reporting required via legislation. A webinar on enrollment, persistence, and completion is forthcoming in the next month. Other reporting will be collected via grant reporting/surveys. IBHE will host a webinar for four-year institutions regarding the periodic program report (PPR) on October 12, 2022.

IBHE's faculty preparation grants webinar will also be held October 12, 2022.

#### V. Institutional Successes

Chadwick introduced the next activity: each institution has prepared a one-page document sharing an institutional success around their ECACE work. In small groups, Consortium representatives shared one-page document that states their institutional successes. Chadwick opened the room for sharing.

Lindsay Meeker commented on how important collaboration is with the mentors. Kathy Nikolai commented on DACA students not being eligible for the scholarship. Meg Carroll commented on needing living wages for the ECE workforce. Meeker commented again on how knowing more about work being done on increasing wages would be helpful to pass on to students. Chadwick commented that wages have gone up since the pandemic and noted that in future, a presentation could be given about wage related efforts at the state level. Dawn Schwarzkopf commented on how some institutions do not have mentors yet, suggesting that for the ECACE grant, the current year should have been Year 1.

#### VI. Minutes: Review and Approve

Brown submitted the minutes from the June 14 meeting for approval. Members reviewed the minutes in their packet. Dawn Katz moved to approve, seconded by Marie Donovan. All in favor. None opposed. Motion carried.

**VII. Public Comment**

There was no public comment.

**VIII. Next Steps and Adjourn**

Brown suggested everyone take 60 seconds to consider what everyone can take back to their institution to share. He asked everyone to complete the exit survey via the QR code.

Meeting concluded at 3:57 pm.