



**Advisory Committee**  
February 21, 2023

**Meeting Minutes**

## WELCOME AND HOUSEKEEPING

---

Karen Yarbrough started the meeting by welcoming everyone on behalf of co-chairs and advised that the meeting is being recorded and materials will be available on the Consortium website ([www.ecace.org](http://www.ecace.org)) pursuant to the Open Meetings Act. Yarbrough explained the public comment process and reviewed the Ground Rules and Guiding Principles established by the committee. Yarbrough reviewed the meeting agenda.

Yarbrough acknowledged Dr. Ayala's retirement, and welcomed to the Advisory Dr. Jason Helfer, Deputy Officer of Instructional Education from the Illinois State Board of Education, as a co-chair of the committee. In addition, Yarbrough welcomes a new member to the committee, Dr. Tom Phillion, Dean of the College of Education at Northeastern Illinois University.

Yarbrough acknowledged Governor Pritzker's State of The State and Budget Address, which featured early childhood as a centerpiece of his second term, and she offered each of the co-chair an opportunity to reflect and speak. Co-chairs Jason Helfer, Brian Durham, Jamilah Jor'dan, Ginger Ostro each acknowledged the remarks and recommendations presented at the address.

Yarbrough highlighted Senator Pacione-Zayas, a member of the Advisory Committee, leading a new Senate Early Childhood Committee. The senator was not able to be present at the meeting.

Yarbrough reviewed the agenda for the meeting and turned the meeting over to Ginger Ostro.

## CONSORTIUM REPORTING

---

Ostro shared the importance of the Advisory's role in the critical work of the Consortium, and the reporting process. The full report is expected in April, and Ostro presented some of the early data on enrollment, persistence, and the early work towards goals in the Consortium programs. Ostro highlighted the key areas of the reporting requirements, and the data on the early work towards the goals that were set by the Consortium. Ostro shared the overall data collection plan, the budget for ECACE funds, and the purpose of the funding. Ginger Ostro introduced Christi Chadwick to present some of the key highlights of the data.

Chadwick shared scholarship data as of 12/31/2022 with the total students awarded, demographic information, and funding distribution. She noted the growing number of applications, number of awards, and the many students still in progress who might not be reported at the point in time that the data was captured. The number continues to increase as the final numbers for fall are finalized. Christi Chadwick turned the next section of the meeting to Marcus Brown to highlight changes for the fall.

Brown presented the expanding scholarship eligibility in the fall for the scholarship to reach significant groups of the incumbent workforce. Brown brought attention to the data presentation and growth, the upcoming expanding eligibility, and framed questions for the meeting to divide into small group discussions for all attendees. Five groups entered discussion around the information on the reporting plan, expanding access in the future, overcoming barriers, and partnerships developing within the Consortium.

Brian Durham welcomed the group back and provided an opportunity for each of the groups to share key parts of their discussion. Group 1 shared the positive reaction to the expansion to support greater numbers of the workforce, adding more opportunities for early childhood teacher licensure, and the benefit for faculty to work directly with the workforce. Group 2 shared the benefit of providing support that students need, and the challenges of the pressure of the time limit of the scholarship, and the need to adjust coursework to meet the needs of the incumbent workforce. Group 3 shared the noted increase in enrollment and the success of the partnerships developed within the Consortium with good communication. Group 4 shared the success in the scholarship to upskill the workforce, the need to educate partners to build relationships about barriers, the importance of reaching out directly with employers rather than just email, and highlighted the successful partnerships between 2- and 4-year institutions. Group 5 expressed concern about reaching goals set by institutions, knowing how many have been awarded, wanting to know full-time or part-time work status of the students receiving the scholarship, and desiring more cohorts available to support student persistence.

Durham thanked participants and asked Marcus Brown to talk about institutional/employer partnerships.

#### **EMPLOYER/HIGHER EDUCATION PARTNERSHIPS**

---

Marcus Brown introduced the data highlights on the Consortium, CDA credit, 2- and 4- year institutional support, and navigators' responsiveness to employer needs. Brown described ways that the consortium engages with and respond to employer partners and introduced Jamilah Jor'dan to lead the next part of the meeting.

Jor'dan introduced Darrell Brown, Director of Early Childhood Workforce Programs at It Takes A Village Family of Schools, and Rachel Oppenheimer, Executive Director of Strategic Initiatives at City Colleges of Chicago, to share their collaborative efforts as of the many innovative partnerships between employers and higher education across the state. They described ways their organizations meet the educational needs of the workforce and the power of collaboration to support the success of students.

Jor'dan opened the floor for questions from the committee members and expressed her gratitude for the presentations and discussion. Jor'dan turned the meeting back to Yarbrough.

#### **REVIEW AND APPROVE MEETING MINUTES**

---

Yarbrough called for a motion to approve the minutes from the prior meeting that were distributed to all Advisory Committee members. Helfer made a motion to approve the minutes, and Avis Proctor seconded the motion.

Yarbrough asked to call the vote.

1. Alicia Geddis, Yes

2. Ashley Harms, Yes

3. Avis Proctor, Yes
4. Brian Durham, Yes
5. Jason Helfer, Yes
6. Carolyn Beal, Yes
7. Cristina Pacione-Zayas, unable to attend
8. Dale Fowler, Absent
9. Emmet Ward, Yes
10. Evelyn Osorio, Yes
11. Francis Godwyll, Yes
12. Ginger Ostro, Yes
13. Jamilah Jor'dan, Yes
14. Jennifer Buchter, Yes
15. Jill Andrews, Absent at the time of vote
16. Jim Reed, Absent
17. Joi Patterson, Yes
18. Joni Scritchlow, Yes
19. Karen Yarbrough, Yes
20. Kate Connor, Yes
21. Ken Trzaska, Absent
22. Kimberly Mann, Absent
23. Lauri Morrison-Frichtl, Yes
24. Laurie Elish-Piper, Absent at the time of vote
25. Leslie Mckinily, Absent at the time of vote
26. Lisa Downey, Yes
27. Martina Rocha, Yes
28. Maurice West II, Absent
29. Meredith Palmer, Absent
30. Michael Kim, Yes
31. Michael Marron, Absent
32. Mike Shackelford, Yes
33. Rebecca Vonderlack-Navarro, Yes
34. Rochelle Golliday, Yes
35. Stephanie Neuman, Absent
36. Stephanie Schmitz-Bechtler, Yes
37. Susan Orozco, Yes
38. Tom Phillion, Absent at the time of vote

#### **PUBLIC COMMENT**

---

There was no public comment.

#### **NEXT STEPS**

---

Karen Yarbrough concluded the meeting by thanking everyone for dedicating their time and engaging in a thoughtful discussion. The next meeting will be on May 23, 2023 and a hold should be on calendars.