

TRANSFORMING EARLY CHILDHOOD EDUCATION LEAD TEACHER PREPARATION PROGRAM LEARNING COMMUNITY

SESSION 2 NEWSLETTER

What's Inside?



General Overview

A high-level summary of content discussed during the learning sessions, as well as connections made among participants



Spotlight Sessions

Key ideas and suggestions shared during small group discussions



Office Hours

Additional ideas and support for individual teams offered by our guest lecturer, specifically related to project goals with a focus on equity



Resources

Links to further information and support



UPCOMING

• MIDPOINT LISTENING SESSION

Friday, February 11, 2022, 2:00–2:30 p.m. EST

• SESSION 3 PREWORK

February 25–March 10, 2022

- Featuring guest lecturer Miriam Calderón, chief policy officer at Zero to Three

• SESSION 3, POLICY AND SYSTEMS CHANGE

Friday, March 11, 2022, 2:00–3:30 p.m. EST

- University of Colorado at Denver
- Salish Kootenai College

• OPTIONAL NETWORKING

Monday, February 28, and Friday, April 15, 2022, 4 p.m. EST, calendar invite to follow with Zoom link



GENERAL OVERVIEW

In Session 2, our conversations were inspired by guest lecturers Stephanie Bernoteit, the executive deputy director of the Illinois Board of Higher Education, and Christi Chadwick, the project director of the Early Childhood Consortium, Illinois Board of Higher Education. Stephanie and Christi shared their lessons learned from their innovations in improving the early childhood workforce.

LESSONS LEARNED AND LEARNING



GROUND YOUR VISION

- Connect your vision to broader systems change, work around credentialing, pathways, adult learning, technologies for learning, and so on
- Document your work to show how initiatives connect over time to inform and contribute to the vision
- Show alignment to state postsecondary attainment and equity goals



INCUBATE INNOVATION WITHIN EXISTING SYSTEMS AND STRUCTURES

- Cultivate innovation within existing systems and structures, identify champions for change
- Leverage existing committees, councils, and processes
- Codify elements of the vision in statute, rules, and related systems



TRANSFORM THE SYSTEM BY BUILDING NEW STRUCTURES:

- Draw from innovations to create new approaches to dismantle barriers
- Set a new table to include all partners for support and accountability



SPOTLIGHT SESSIONS

THE UNIVERSITY OF CALIFORNIA AT SACRAMENTO

How to strengthen and implement a new state policy framework related to the skills and knowledge base needed for effective education of dual language learners in early care and education?

California’s new state policy framework uses the words “all children.” The use of general language has the potential to not specifically address the diverse needs of California’s children and families and perpetuate inequities. Therefore the University of California at Sacramento is working to ensure that dual language learners are included and their needs are met in all aspects of education as the new state policy framework is implemented.



Key Connections

- To meet the needs of dual language learners (DLLs), teachers must be prepared to:
 - Build relationships with families and understand and apply best practices for dual language learners in multiple settings.
 - Utilize a strength-based approach and strengthen the understanding of the benefits multilingual families and learners bring to communities.
 - Communicate and share the research on using the native language to help teach and transition DLLs to English settings.
 - Break down the myth that parents should stop speaking children’s native language at home.
- Establishing the infrastructure with the Teacher Performance Expectations (TPE) and Teacher Performance Assessments (TPA) is a step forward to improve the quality of instruction across California; however, it could be more explicit about focusing on dual language learners.

Key Considerations

- The new educational requirements have created fear among providers. In order to overcome that fear, it is important to build trust and increase the pathways to maintain and gain the educational credential.
- The Northern Seattle team shared that their courses are offered in native languages whenever possible. In Washington, DLL instruction is K-20; it does not stop after elementary school.
- Developing and using common equitable language is key in the support of meeting the needs of DLLs.

“This is amazing!”

– Participant

“What I find and what I hear consistently is an avoidance of clear language about what inequity is and what contributes to inequity. Important to develop that literacy as well and use language that we have been socialized to avoid like racism, colonization, implicit bias, and have those directly talked about and addressed as part of teacher preparation as well as part of our systemic conversations toward change. There are so many resources available that we need to exercise the courage to directly address that social justice literacy at every stage of our development toward equity.”

– Participant

THE UNIVERSITY OF HAWAI’I AT MĀNOA

How do we overcome the challenges surrounding the lack of workforce data in order to improve policies, qualifications, and compensation?

The Early Childhood Educator Excellence and Equity (ECE 3) project is focused on community and research-based teacher preparation through several interventions that include comprehensive student and induction supports. Hawai’i’s university system spans across several islands, and the community colleges are ranked in the top six in the nation for diversity. The

barriers to higher education for underrepresented students mean that there is a need for higher compensation, supports for English language learners, increased geographic accessibility, and so on. There are several ways connection and integration are happening in Hawai'i, such as the informal consortium of early childhood faculty and the community college's coordinating council, in addition to partnerships with the state agencies. Despite these strengths, challenges remain. There is a lack of policies to improve early childhood jobs in Hawai'i, and there is not adequate workforce data to drive change. Updated and specific workforce data will help illustrate the experiences of early childhood educators and inform policy that will ultimately impact the children and families of Hawai'i. This discussion sparked a conversation about how to get ongoing and relevant workforce data from providers and the importance of cross-agency relationships and higher education to effectively use the data to improve.



Key Connections

- There is a lack of policies to support the improvement of the early childhood workforce. The workforce data on licensed, registered providers and non-exempt providers is not adequate for programs serving children 0–5. This impacts primarily women of color and more specifically Indigenous women in Hawai'i.
- It is important to have legislation that supports the early childhood field. Hawai'i has a few bills that will begin the conversation and build a bridge to support the need for current early childhood workforce data. Washington State also has a bill to elevate the care professions that will be focused on research trends in employment, attrition, and licensing requirements, to improve mobility across fields. Nebraska is making strides toward more accurate workforce data.
- There is robust governmental attention in some places that value data in ways that impact early childhood leaders.

Key Considerations

- Financing the innovative transformations needed in teacher preparation programs is a barrier that many teams face.
- There are opportunities to consider the changing political contexts in states and new opportunities to pass bills and legislation aimed at improving the workforce.
- Building relationships with state agencies, policy makers, and advocates who elevate the importance of the early childhood workforce for the greater good is key to passing legislation and will in turn help with financing.

“Looking at [this issue] through the lens of the state [beyond early childhood] and thinking it through as the bigger picture was mind-blowing. I have copied a bunch of links to the state legislature and I’m dying to get through our Montana state legislature.”

– Participant

- There is a need to understand and work to resolve the unspoken tension between higher education institutions and community-based professional development.



OFFICE HOURS

The team from the University of Hawai'i at Mānoa participated in a rich dialogue with Christi Chadwick and Stephanie Bernoteit. The conversation focused on how to get legislation passed, how to finance compensation advancement in the early childhood field, and how assessments in competency-based education programs are working. The following are key takeaways from the conversation.

How to pass legislation?

- In fall 2020 through spring 2021, the Illinois Board of Higher Education launched a strategic planning process. In Illinois, there was a need for clear direction for higher education in the state. The strategic planning process and the plan, Thriving Illinois, became the backdrop for the legislation. Thriving Illinois was focused on three areas: closing equity gaps, building sustainable systems for individuals and institutions, and growth strategies for credential attainment.
- Throughout the strategic planning process, conversations were also happening with the state Board of Education, where the educator shortage became a focus and working groups were convened. This identified issue helped elevate the importance of early childhood workforce development—in particular, the need for stronger transfer pathways and supports for members of the incumbent workforce to access degree programs, in both associate and bachelor degrees.
- The Black Caucus wanted to move forward with equity issues and was pushed to think beyond K–12 education and focus on early childhood. This helped get a resolution passed to look specifically at the early childhood workforce.

Overall, having more voices advocating for the early childhood workforce makes a difference. Bringing state agencies together to focus on resolving the educator shortage created the opportunity to elevate the solution and focus on transforming the early childhood workforce.

How to finance compensation advancement?

- In Illinois, the support from the governor's office was key. The first deputy of education was an advocate for early childhood. Money was coming into the state, and \$200 million was repurposed to fund the consortium initiatives, the early childhood workforce, and significant money for scholarships.

“Whenever we can stand this work up as an example of good practices in workforce development at large, when credentials support progression [from] associate’s degree to bachelor’s and beyond, opportunities to talk about how we can better serve working adults who make it possible for every other working adult to go to work, situating the value and importance of this work, what we all understand about high-quality early learning and the long-term impact on children and families, all of a sudden it becomes an important lever for other things we are trying to solve in our education systems. We try to lift this up in conversations with advocates, stakeholders, and policy makers.”

– Stephanie



How are assessments in competency-based education programs working?

- The Professional Development Advisory Council (PDAC) has driven some of the work in Illinois. The PDAC is a very useful tool to engage stakeholders in ongoing thinking and conversations about how we implement the career lattice in Illinois. From the conversations in the council, we have a system for stackable credits and competency-based language. The PDAC is also a cross-sector group, bringing state agencies and philanthropic organizations together to support initiatives.
- Assessments of students using a competency-based approach is a work in progress. Some institutions are unbundling from credit and seat hours and tracking progress at a very granular level. Most institutions are leveraging these concepts within core structures that already exist.
- The suite of assessment tasks elicit evidence of competency attainment aligned with competency rubrics. The use of the assessments is voluntary. Some are using them with students who have a lot of professional development hours, leveraging assessments to ensure a smooth pathway through the program.



RESOURCES

[A Guide to Culturally Sensitive Care](#)

Washington State Department of Children, Youth, and Families

- [Early Childhood Education Stackable Certificates](#)
- [Strategic and Racial Equity Plan](#)
- [PACE—Provider Access to a Community Equivalent](#)

[EdChange Free Handouts—Equity Literacy Institute](#)

[Building Knowledge in Colorado’s New Department of Early Childhood](#)

[Preparing a Profession: Perspectives of Higher Education Leaders on the Future of the Early Childhood Education Workforce](#)

[Quality Framework for Competency-Based Education Programs](#)