



GATEWAYS TO OPPORTUNITY®
Illinois Professional Development System

ILLINOIS DIRECTOR CREDENTIAL

Competency-Based Education Curriculum Design



Table of Contents

Introduction	03
Illinois Director Credential Project: Rationale	03
Competency-Based Education	04
Working Adult Learners	05
Project Overview	06
Adaptations and Lessons Learned	08
Project Timeline, Supports, and Feedback.....	08
Technology Support.....	11
Project Outcomes.....	12
Group A.....	12
Group B	12
Faculty Feedback.....	13
Recommendations	14
Appendix A: Gateways Illinois Director Credential Competencies	16
Appendix B: Higher Education Institutions Offering the Illinois Director Credential.....	16
Appendix C: Project Calendar Process.....	17
Appendix D: Request for Proposal	19
Appendix E: Module Template	26
Appendix F: Faculty Review Questions	28
Appendix G: Scope and Sequence Example	29
Appendix H: Full List of PDG Faculty	32
Appendix I: External Reviewers	32
Appendix J: Level I, II, III Examples	33
Appendix K: Specific Recommendations.....	46

Introduction

This report is being prepared for the early childhood education field, as well as for the funders of this project, specifically the Illinois Governor's Office of Early Childhood Development (GOECD), which allocated federal funding through the Preschool Development Birth to Five (PDG B-5) Renewal Grant to the Illinois Network of Child Care Resource and Referral Agencies (INCCRRA) to design and oversee this work. INCCRRA offered grant opportunities via Request for Proposals (RFPs) to Gateways Illinois Director Credential (IDC) entitled Illinois higher education institutions to participate in the IDC competency-based modularization project.

The Illinois Board of Higher Education (IBHE), the Illinois Community College Board (ICCB), and the Illinois Department of Human Services (IDHS) were partners in this project.

Illinois Director Credential Project: Rationale

A large body of research has proven that the first five years of life are critical to a child's development. Research also indicates that high-quality early learning and development programs can have significant impact in preparing children for optimal outcomes in school and life. Leaders and directors of these programs play a key role in the development and implementation of high quality-programs. In *Transforming the Workforce for Children Birth Through Age 8: A Unifying Foundation* (National Academies Press, 2015), the authors describe the role of child care center and preschool directors in supporting the professionals who work directly with the children and families served by creating a work environment in which those professionals can fully use their knowledge and skills. Center directors often select the curricula and assessments used with the children. They also hire qualified staff, support their professional growth, serve as a link between internal and external stakeholders, and connect the center to resources that can strengthen the quality of the program and positively impact the children's development and learning. Effective early childhood directors utilize a core set of competencies that are rooted in a deep knowledge of child development and developmentally appropriate practices that undergird long- and short-term plans and the policies and procedures that result in high quality programs. Research indicates that there are positive correlations between a director's levels of formal education and special training in early childhood and higher quality learning environments. Specialized training in early childhood administration has shown positive correlations with quality of instructional leadership, including the support and appraisal of teaching staff (McCormick Center for Early Childhood Leadership, 2010).

According to the United States Bureau of Labor Statistics (2022), most states require an early childhood administrator to have a bachelor's degree and coursework in early childhood education, although requirements vary from state to state. In Illinois, state child care center regulations require all new child care directors hired on or after July 1, 2017, to have the minimum of an associate degree in child development or early childhood education, or the equivalent (defined as 64 semester hours in any discipline with a minimum of 21 semester hours of college credit in child development, early childhood education or early childhood special education) and either a Gateways to Opportunity® Level I Illinois Director Credential or 3 semester hours of college credit in administration, leadership or management. These requirements address the issue of level of formal education and background in child development and developmentally appropriate practice that are linked to high quality learning environments, but do not require the specialized training in early childhood administration that has been correlated to higher levels of instructional leadership, including support of staff.

The Illinois Director Credential (IDC) was developed in 1999, by a management committee of 16 early childhood faculty members and child care agency leaders from across Illinois, to address the need for preparation of early childhood center directors who had both knowledge of early childhood development and developmentally appropriate practices. The committee also focused on the complex set of leadership, management and interpersonal skills to administer an early childhood program as they developed the IDC competencies. The IDC was the inaugural Gateways Credential and the first one was awarded in 2000. The Gateways Illinois Director Credential was modeled after the Whole Leadership Framework (<https://mccormickcenter.nl.edu/library/whole-leadership-a-framework-for-early-childhood-programs/>) developed by the McCormick Center for Early Childhood Leadership at National Louis University. The IDC is structured into three domains: 1) leadership essentials, 2) administrative leadership, and 3) pedagogical leadership. The Illinois Director Credential was revised in 2017, to comprise 42 competencies in 10 content areas over three levels that each correspond to a degree equivalency. Specifically, Level I corresponds to an associate's degree, Level II to a baccalaureate degree and Level III to a graduate degree. Master rubrics were also developed for each of the competencies. The IDC is built into the Excelerate® Illinois Silver and Gold Circles of Quality.

The IDC builds on the early childhood education (ECE) and School-Age and Youth Development (SAYD) Credentials, both of which can be used as a prerequisite for attaining the IDC. The ECE and SAYD can be earned through completing a program at an entitled two or four year college. In Illinois, approximately one out of every three Higher Education Institutions have aligned their early childhood administrative coursework and programs with the Gateways Illinois Director Credential competencies (See list in Appendix A). Since 2000, 4,565 Illinois Director Credentials have been awarded, 62% at Level I, corresponding to an associate's degree, 32% at Level II, corresponding to a baccalaureate degree and 6% at Level III. Just over 25% of center directors now hold a Gateways Illinois Director Credential (IDC), compared to 5% in 2015 (Workforce Report, 2020).

Competency-Based Education

Competency-Based Education (CBE), specifically in the field of education, is a growing trend nationally. This trend supports the fact that schools, P-12, are focusing not only on college readiness but also on career readiness. There is also strong, research-based evidence for the growth of competency-based education in a report released in 2019 by the Lumina Foundation. Specifically, out of the 601 higher education institutions surveyed in the Lumina Foundation study, 62% have or are adopting competency-based approaches and 23% are interested, with only 15% not interested. These research results speak to the rising need for clear, measurable, and career-aligned competencies.

Furthermore, CBE specifically supports diversity and access to learning. From the same Lumina Foundation report mentioned above, it was found that "CBE offers learners clear and transparent credentialing pathways within a flexible and personalized format" (Krass, 2017, p. 5) [<https://www.luminafoundation.org/wp-content/uploads/2018/01/how-cbe-may-reduce-inequities-1.pdf>]. It was found that, "By making competence a necessary component of completion, learners engage in deeper learning and graduate prepared for future education or employment opportunities. At scale, this type of teaching and learning could help close equity gaps while raising college completion rates and improving graduates' lifetime outcomes and earnings" (p. 5).

At a national level, the National Association for the Education of Young Children (NAEYC), through the Power to the Profession project, has published a Unifying Framework for the Early Childhood Profession (March, 2020: [---

4](https://powertotheprofession.org/wp-content/uploads/2020/03/Power-to-Profession-</p></div><div data-bbox=)

[Framework-03312020-web.pdf](#)) that incorporates standards and competencies for the preparation of early childhood educators at three levels (ECE I, II, and III). These levels align with the different roles and responsibilities of those working directly with young children (birth to age eight) in a variety of settings, and with academic degree attainment at the associates and baccalaureate levels. The standards and competencies “represent these core domains of knowledge and practice, provide a baseline of expectations for mastery and are designed to drive accountability for the profession that is influenced by and responsive to the expertise of the profession”. NAEYC identifies six standards in which leveled competencies aligned with the ECE I, II, and III designations are embedded. These standards and embedded competencies are to be the basis for preparing and credentialing early childhood educators, and for nationally accrediting early childhood educator preparation programs and have been incorporated into the Gateways ECE Credential (<https://www.ilgateways.com/docman-docs/professional-development/higher-education-programs/ece-toolbox/2189-gateways-ece-credential-and-naeyc-competency-alignment>).

In Illinois, this trend towards competency-based teacher preparation is also present, and the early childhood field is arguably leading the way. Early childhood teacher preparation at both associate and baccalaureate levels is aligned with the Gateways competencies through the statewide development and implementation of a competency-based assessment model and is moving, through the ECE and ITC competency modularization project, towards institutional implementation of competency-based learning and competency-based education models. This project, the development of competency-based curriculum modules leading to the Illinois Director Credential (IDC), is the next step in that work. This report lays out the process and outcomes of the Illinois Director Credential competency-based curriculum module development work at the state-level for early childhood education programs, who are the leaders in transitioning from standards-based to competency-based educator preparation.

The goal of this project was to create individual modules for each IDC competency in order to increase access and provide additional avenues for the director workforce to achieve the Illinois Director Credential. The goal of the individualization of competencies into discrete modules is to reduce the barriers for learners and provide a way for colleges and universities to provide individualized and learner-centered approaches to showing attainment of the director competencies.

Working Adult Learners

The concept behind modularizing the competencies was predicated on the fact that adult learners need flexibility in completing coursework and/or attaining specific skills and knowledge. The development of the modules is just one way higher education can decrease access barriers for the early childhood workforce. It was found that there is a need to support higher education programs in being responsive to the needs of working adult learners. Conventional higher education programs are not typically designed to support an individual who needs to fill in a ‘gap’ in attained competencies. Generally, students who need to expand a specific skill set, undergirded by relevant education and learning, must complete an entire course which may include content duplicative to what the learner already knows and can demonstrate. Traditional higher education programs are based on seat time and may not be as inviting or accessible for adult learners (the incumbent workforce) who have evidenced skill sets and knowledge. Additionally, adult learners often have the capacity to move more quickly through course content that relates directly to their work experiences and knowledge. They also benefit when more time can be spent when needed to gain new skills, knowledge, and to evidence newly gained competence.

Adult learners need courses that offer the ability to move more quickly when the subject matter is familiar and offer 24/7 access to course assignments, materials and technology support. Adult learners may also prefer online, site-based learning, and/or flexible learning modalities, and benefit directly from well-constructed assessment of prior learning that provides course credit and supports Credential and degree attainment. For Illinois to expand the early educator pipeline, there is a need to maximize technology to increase coursework access, and to build in opportunities for the existing workforce to demonstrate competence based on an assessment of prior learning through carefully calibrated and thoughtfully designed assessments, which is referred to as Prior Learning Assessments (PLA). “Research results are promising, showing that adult students who earn credit for prior learning have better academic outcomes compared with their peers who do not earn such credit” (Gateways to Opportunity® Illinois Director’s Credential (IDC) Competency RFP, 2022). The implementation of a competency-based, modularized curriculum allows individualized learning based on assessed prior learning or PLAs, which will strengthen the early educator pipeline. This process will make higher education and Credentials more accessible to those both new to and currently serving in the early childhood workforce. National attention will be focused on Illinois higher education institutions who undertake this project.

Through this Illinois Director Credential Competency project, GOECD and INCCRRA seek to increase the early childhood workforce access to virtual administrative competency based modules, and to expand the future potential for assessment of prior learning.

Project Overview

This project is situated within the work already completed at the state level focused on early childhood competencies. In Illinois, 100% of all Higher Education Institutions have aligned their early childhood coursework and programs with the Gateways ECE Credential competencies. The Gateways ECE Credential is offered at 44 two-year and 32 four-year early childhood and child development programs. The Infant Toddler Credential is offered at 33 two-year and 10 four-year early childhood and child development programs, usually in conjunction with the ECE Credential. The Illinois Director Credential (IDC) is offered at 29 institutions (See Appendix B for a listing of higher education institutions offering the IDC.) Of the 29 IDC institutions, 24 are entitled to offer the Credential at Level 1; two at Levels I and II and three at Levels I, II and III.

For the early childhood workforce, the process to attain Gateways Credentials can be a combination of stacking high-quality approved training and college credit with supervised practicum(s) and/or accumulated work experience. The Credential attainment can be an end point within itself, and is combined with a degree at various levels. The Gateways Credentials are awarded by the Illinois Department of Human Services’ (IDHS) Division of Early Childhood, administered through the Illinois Network of Child Care Resource and Referral Agency (INCCRRA), and are in legislative rule. While there are core Credentials spanning from early childhood to technical assistance, the work completed in this portion of the larger modularization project focused solely on the Illinois Director Credential.

Beginning with the ECE Credential, between 2016-2017, all Illinois Gateways Credentials moved from standards and benchmarks to competencies. The IDC was converted to competencies in 2017. It consists of 10 content areas and encompasses 42 competencies across Levels I, II, and III (associate’s through master’s degrees). The IDC builds on the ECE Credential. Successful attainment of the ECE Credential is a prerequisite for the Illinois Director Credential.

To further support the move to competency-based learning and education, in 2018, the McCormick Foundation funded a one-year planning grant to develop 3-5-year Strategic and Operational plans focused on expanding the use of the Gateways competencies, creating assessments and rubrics, and fostering

innovative competency-based learning practices for all Credential areas. A State-Level Competency Leadership team was convened to develop a strategic plan and next steps for higher education institutions implementing the competencies across all Gateways Credentials. This group was drawn from state agencies, funders, and members of higher education. Three areas of work emerged from the plans, specifically 1) support for higher education implementation of competencies, 2) implementation of competencies in professional development, and 3) technology support.

Next in the process was the Faculty Fellow Assessment Project, where exemplar assessments were created for all Gateways Credential competencies and put into toolboxes for programs to utilize in their own planning and implementation of the competencies. The exemplar assessments developed as part of the Faculty Fellow Assessment Project did not focus on individual competencies, but created assessments that combined multiple competencies at one or more levels into one assessment.

Once the assessments for each Credential competency were created and placed in the toolbox, the next focus for implementation of a competency-based model was to modularize all 56 ECE competencies in 2020 and 54 Infant-Toddler Credential (ITC) competencies in 2021. Both of these projects were funded through the Governor's Office of Early Childhood Development (GOECD). Modularization involved the development of curriculum and assessments that would address individually each of the ECE and ITC competencies, further allowing for focused and stackable individualized learning trajectories.

Mirroring the ECE and ITC Competency modularization projects, this project focused on modularizing the 42 Illinois Director Credential (IDC) competencies. With funding from the Governor's Office of Early Childhood Education, INCCRRA's overarching goals for this project included:

- Build the degrees and Credentials of the incumbent workforce so that they might increase their knowledge, skills, advance their employment and compensation opportunities, and increase the quality of the education and care the children and families in their programs receive.
- Expanding opportunities for program/center directors to earn or advance their Illinois Director Credential.
- Following ECE and ITC curriculum, the Illinois Director Credential will follow suit as the third Credential advancing through the competency-based module development.
- Foster innovation at Illinois higher education institutions through incentivizing the development of modularized, competency-based, online accessible mini-course sequences.
- Support higher education institutions in developing opportunities for the incumbent early childhood workforce to build upon or receive credit for prior learning and acquired competencies.
- Promote workforce advancement using the state-recognized Gateways Illinois Director Credential competency structure.
- Address workforce demands for greater leadership Credentials.
- Provide opportunities to develop innovative and comprehensive assessments of prior learning which research shows supports diverse student success, thereby supporting institutional success through student completion.
- Promote equitable opportunities to access Credential advancement and honor and increase the rich diversity of child care directors.
- Develop competency-based curriculum models using federal funding that may accelerate degree and Credential completion to support student success.

The leadership team for this project included GOECD (input and direction) and Joni Scritchlow and Stephanie Hellmer from INCCRRA (project vision, oversight and management). The project leadership team also included three lead consultants: Dr. Anni Reinking, who is an early childhood consultant and former professor; Dr. Antonia Potenza, professor emerita from Roosevelt University; and Dr. Martha Cheney of the Competency-Based Education Network (CBEN) and also a Program Director at Walden University. Drs. Reinking and Potenza provided Illinois context and support to the faculty as they developed the modules. Dr. Cheney provided the leadership team with the national expertise in competency-based curricular design and implementation.

Adaptations and Lessons Learned

The IDC modularization project is the third time going through the process of creating modules aligned to competencies for wider use around the state. The processes from the ECE project were also implemented during the ITC project. Lessons learned from the ITC work sparked adaptations to the IDC process. The ECE and ITC adaptations and lessons learned can be seen in the previous reports for each of those projects.

One adaptation made from the ITC project for the IDC process was the restructuring of the review cycle. In the ITC project, there were different reviewers for each of the drafts of the modules (mentors at the first draft and state and national consultants at the second draft). In the IDC project, reviewers intentionally remained the same (tri-lead state and national consultants), giving feedback to the authors for each of the various drafts before the penultimate was provided to the external and peer reviewers. Additionally, experts in the ECE administrator preparation field participated in the external review portion of the project, as well as having the faculty module authors serve as peer reviewers. This resulted in having to provide more guidance to the external review groups since many of the reviewers did not have a background in the module creation or competency language specific to this project. Review groups each met twice with the consultants over the external review cycle, to discuss their impressions of the modules, and to clarify the process.

A successful strategy kept from the ECE process was the development of a scope and sequence prior to writing the modules; then creating a finalized scope and sequence after the modules were completed. From the ITC process, biweekly group meetings were held to clarify the focus of the competency and ensure that the essential content and skills of each competency were addressed. Finally, instead of providing a module outline with multiple tables and boxes, during the IDC project the module template was reformatted to provide a plan work document to decrease stress and frustration for the faculty authors regarding formatting during their writing process.

Outside of the adaptations that were influenced by the work that was done on the ECE and ITC modularization project as outlined above, there were lessons learned from the IDC project itself. While there were adaptations based on previous modularization projects, as with any new group of faculty working towards a common goal there are unseen barriers. The project work plan for the IDC project, that was used to help guide faculty on due dates, was less frequently followed due to scheduling issues. This created a backlog of modules for review and project work plans had to be edited quite frequently. The external review process was modified due to low response from the Faculty Fellows who had written the IDC toolbox assessments. State experts in early childhood administration reviewed the curriculum modules while the original module authors completed a peer review of their colleagues' work. This process resulted in reviews that were thorough and thoughtful with detailed recommendations for revisions where needed. This was a plus as the possibility of obtaining feedback on the effectiveness and utility of the modules through a pilot in 2023 is uncertain at this time.

Project Timeline, Supports, and Feedback

The overall project calendar process is located in Appendix C, and will also be outlined in this section. The project was launched on March 3, 2022, when the Request for Proposals (Appendix D) was sent out to 29 Illinois higher education institutions currently entitled for the Gateways Illinois Director Credential. Institutions were selected because they were 1) IDC entitled, 2) currently offering a program of study that included use of technology in instruction and/or assessment, and 3) willing to implement Prior Learning Assessments (PLA) aligned to the competencies. Applicants were advised that they would be working collaboratively with faculty from other institutions to design the modules. The application deadline was April

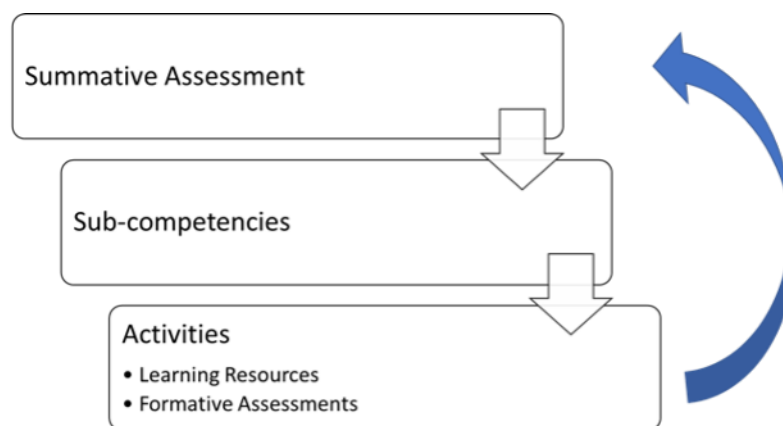
22, 2022. Once the applications were submitted, members of the State Competency Leadership team served as reviewers and scored the applications resulting in the selection of four institutions. Of the four institutions selected, two were two-year or at the associate's level and two were four-year or baccalaureate/graduate level. All institutions were notified of their application's status by May 10, 2022.

The leadership team, which consisted of the state and national consultants and INCCRRA staff, met on May 18, 2022 to discuss the project plan and schedule. At this meeting, processes and timelines for the work plan were established that would ensure all work would be completed by the December 30, 2022 deadline. Additionally, the leadership team divided institutions between two groups to level workload and ensure a balance of 2-year and 4-year voices on each of the module development groups.

After that initial leadership meeting, the state and national consultants, along with INCCRRA, met with the faculty of each institution who were assigned to the project. The goals of these individualized institution meetings were to 1) begin to build working relationships, 2) determine workload and faculty time that was provided for their institution through the grant, and 3) learn the goals of the faculty from the specific institutions in developing and piloting the modules. After the virtual individual institution meetings, a virtual kick-off meeting was the next step. (It should be noted that all meetings for this project were conducted virtually due to the geographic spread of individuals on the project.)

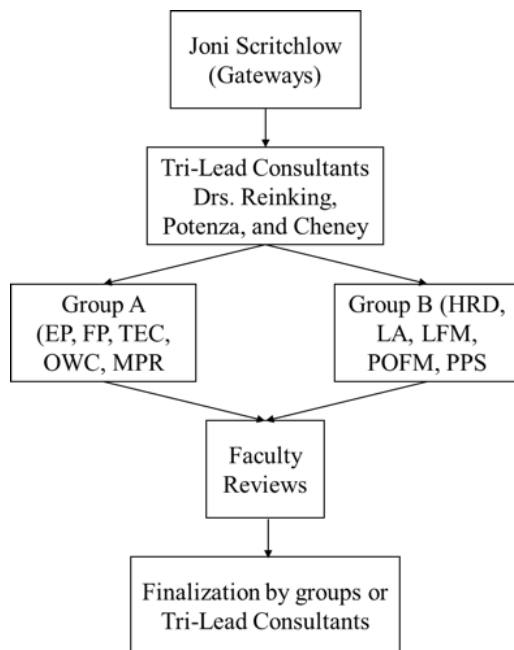
The project launch or kick-off meeting took place on June 1, 2022. The end date for the project was slated for December 30, 2022 with the deliverables of completed modules for each of the 42 IDC competencies in final format and ready to pilot pending funding. At the launch meeting, faculty from each of the four institutions (Oakton Community College: 2-year; College of Lake County: 2-year; National Louis University: 4-year; Northern Illinois University: 4-year) were provided guidance, an overview, and the projected work plan for competency module completion and contracts were executed. They were also informed of their assigned module writing groups (described below) for the project and were provided an adapted module template originally created by national expert Dr. Lisa McIntyre-Hite and adapted by Dr. Anni Reinking and Dr. Antonia Potenza after previous iterations and feedback from faculty in the ECE and ITC module development groups.

The module template was designed with backwards planning in mind. The module template asks the authors, and eventually the students who will complete the modules, to begin with the end in mind, or the summative assessment. Once the summative assessment is described, the module moves into sub-competencies, or smaller pieces that will help guide learners to proficiency in the competency. The sub-competencies are then broken down even further into learning activities, including learning resources and formative assessments, that are all scaffolded with the goal of successful completion of the summative assessment.



In developing the modules, the faculty/authors were given the expectation to include only open-sourced materials as learning resources to reduce accessibility barriers. As part of the template, questions to guide the review process were also built in (Appendix E).

The faculty were divided into two workgroups (A and B). Faculty from both 2 and 4 year institutions were assigned to each group in order to give voice to both types of institutions during the competency learning-module development. As indicated in the graphic below, each group was assigned to complete the full sequence of five complete competency areas.



Faculty met in their small groups via Zoom on a biweekly basis with the consultants and mentors to share their ongoing work and give and receive feedback. Monthly large group meetings for all faculty working on the project were also scheduled on Zoom. The overall work plan for both groups is included in Appendix C.

The leadership team planned for three review cycles for each of the modules. The review cycles included: cycles one and two: the national and state consultants reviewed the modules; cycle three: a group of external reviewers from across the state did a final review of the modules. During the ITC review cycles there had been a mentor review step in the module development. However, based on that experience it was decided that the tri-lead consultants would review at all revision cycles to keep consistency in the feedback provided. The consultants reviewed the modules independently and then met as a group to develop one voice for the feedback and any edits that were needed to the modules.

At an IDC faculty meeting on September 27, 2022, five external reviewers and the six peer reviewers were oriented to the external review process and the questionnaire used to guide the review process. A copy of the questionnaire is included in Appendix F. When the competencies within a content area were complete, they were sent to the external and peer reviewers. Reviewers were assigned to one of four review groups each working on 10 to 12 modules. The revisions recommended were then completed by the original authors or the consultants on the project.

Most of the modules during the IDC process had two drafts and a final. However, at the beginning of the project, when the faculty members writing the modules were getting used to the process, there were additional revision cycles. Between each review cycle it was planned to have enough time for edits and a new draft provided to the next group of people reviewing. This process and review cycle occurred through three rounds starting in June 2022 and ending in December 2022. The cycle through these rounds were known as the write-review-revise iterative process.

A lesson learned from the ECE modularization process that was implemented during the ITC and IDC modularization processes, was the need to develop a scope and sequence chart for each of the competency areas before the modules for that area were developed. The scope and sequence charts ensured that the big concepts and skills addressed in each of the competency areas were identified, aligned to competencies and sub competencies, sequenced and articulated in the module assessments and learning activities. The scope and sequence charts were developed by the faculty in each competency area before beginning the development of the modules and were included in the review cycle, with the addition of a review by a faculty expert at the end of the review cycle. Then at the conclusion of writing all of the modules, a graduate student from one of the included 4-year institutions completed a finalized scope and sequence for each of the competency groups. This was managed by Dr. Susan Bowers, who also completed the scope and sequences for the ITC modules. An example of a final scope and sequence is located in Appendix G.

After launching the work, and completing the initial draft of the scope and sequences, teams met biweekly and worked on their modules meeting the work plan assigned dates through the write-review-revise process. All writing was completed on Google Docs, which allowed for storage of the work as it progressed through the review cycles and offered easy access for review and feedback. Once the modules were ready as draft one, the consultants reviewed as a team and provided cohesive feedback for the next draft. The authors then had time to revise before submitting a second draft to the consultants.

After the final drafts were completed, the modules were formatted so each of the modules had a similar appearance and flow within the template provided for the project. Once the formatting and final scope and sequence were complete, an external review of the modules began. Faculty Fellows, especially those who had developed the IDC assessments in 2018, were invited to be reviewers of the penultimate drafts of the modules, bringing their expertise and a wider, overarching view of the IDC competencies to the review process. However, only two Faculty Fellows signed on to review. These numbers were supplemented by three early childhood higher education faculty members with expertise in the content and skills included in the IDC. In addition, the six authors of the modules also did a peer review of the modules they had not written. A list of the external reviewers is included in Appendix I.

Technology Support

Due to geographic distance, the teams worked using Google Drive applications, specifically the Excel and Word formats to process and review modules asynchronously. Modules were developed, shared, edited, and reviewed using Google Docs. There were also many emails sent out for due dates, check-ins, and assistance when needed in conceptualizing the modularization of specific competencies.

There were three types of meetings to support the faculty developing the modules: 1) biweekly group meetings with the consultants, 2) individual, upon-request meetings for individual faculty, and 3) monthly meetings with the whole group, including INCCRRA staff, faculty, and consultants. At the biweekly group meetings, the faculty authors shared their work, got feedback from the consultants and other group members, suggestions for resources and asked questions about the process. Discussions often included clarification of a competency's intent as a prerequisite for developing the summative assessment and learning activities. The goal of the monthly meetings was to discuss and resolve common concerns, get updates on the project, and share highlights of the work. Although funding has not been allocated for a pilot implementation of the modules, there was discussion of how the modules could be implemented at individual institutions. Aside from the meetings to support the faculty developing the modules, leadership and consultants also met at least once per month via Zoom to review progress, address issues, and consider next steps.

Project Outcomes

In this section, the work of each group will be outlined that was completed through the seven draft-review-draft rounds of the project. For a full list of project faculty, please see Appendix H.

Group A

The faculty who were assigned to Group A were Diane Schael (College of Lake County), Ann Gadzikowski (Oakton Community College), Wendy Connell (McCormick Center/National Louis University) and Lisa Dickey (National Louis University). Throughout the seven rounds they were charged with developing and revising all of the modules in the following content areas, for a total of 23 modules:

- Educational Programming (EP 1-10)
- Family Partnership (FP 1-2)
- Technology (TEC 1-3)
- Oral and Written Communication (OWC 1-5)
- Marketing and Public Relations (MPR 1-3)

Group B

The faculty who were assigned to Group B were Gina Schuyler (College of Lake County), Kamilah Wilson (National Louis University) and Susan Bowers (Northern Illinois University). One faculty member assigned to this group stepped out of the project in September due to family obligations. Four of the modules that were assigned to her were written by another faculty author and the consultants completed the modules that were unfinished. Throughout the seven rounds Group B was charged with developing and revising all of the modules in the following content areas, for a total of 19 modules:

- Human Resource Development (HRD 1-4)
- Leadership and Advocacy (LA 1-4)
- Legal and Fiscal Management (LFM 1-4)
- Program Operations and Facility Management (POFM 1-3)
- Personal and Professional Self-Awareness (PPS 1-4)

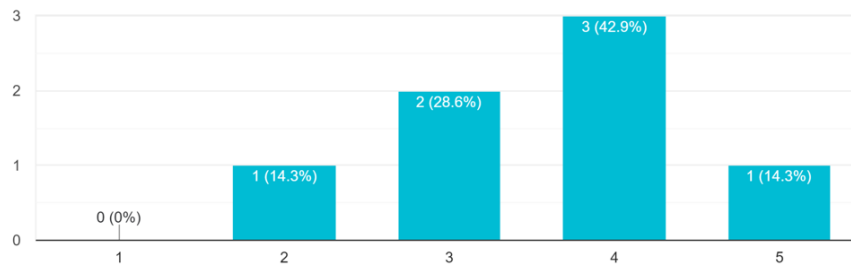
Levels I, II, III examples are in Appendix J.

Faculty Feedback

As the work was being completed, the faculty module authors were surveyed at the end of the project in November 2022. The faculty were asked to respond to questions in relation to this project and the impact on their professional growth.

On a scale of 1-5, how do you foresee participating in this project will change your professional practice in course development?

7 responses



(5 being the highest)

Eighty-five percent of the faculty members who wrote the modules indicated that this project will change their professional practice in course development. For the individuals who stated that this project did change their professional practice, some shared the following quotes:

"Thinking about "working backward" and making sure there are clear links between the formative and summative assessments without excess material or gaps in learning. Also, ensuring that instructions are clear and detailed. This process has also caused me to think a lot about how information can be used practically in the centers - how it is relevant to the learner."

"I am thinking more deeply about objectives and aligning resources and activities."

In another question, faculty were asked to describe their feedback on the overall process. Many stated they had personal struggles during the time of development, such as family illnesses. However, other struggles centered on finding open access resources that were adequate and the amount of information that is built into the IDC competency statements. As one faculty member stated, "It was difficult to condense into a manageable, realistic unit."

In response to a question about the impact of this work over the next five years, another faculty member responded:

"I hope we have opened up a dialogue for future Credential completers in terms of professional development, best practice, networking, DEI (Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion). Nearly all modules have a reflective piece which should be a transferable skill. Five and ten years out, we will need these leaders to carry the torch. In addition, it would be great to continue the faculty dialogue generated by this and the other competency projects. It seems we never have time to do this, even within a single department. Finally, it would be great to take what is scalable/informative from this project and apply elsewhere, in or out of Illinois."

Finally, as in other modularization work, the faculty enjoyed working with other faculty from around the state and collaborating in a way that is often not experienced in higher education. Specifically, one faculty stated, "I loved the collaboration, especially in the last few months of the project, and making the connections with other educators."

Recommendations

Overall, all of the competency modularization projects (ECE, ITC, and IDC) have followed the same process. The adaptations that were made to each iteration have been described in the project reports for the ECE Credential modularization (2020), the ITC modularization (2021) and the IDC, as noted above. Going through a process three times makes certain issues and considerations stand out, especially if they are not unique to each Credential. This section of the report will discuss three of those considerations: 1) piloting the IDC modules, 2) rubric language and alignment to competency, and 3) availability and use of open access resources. The focus will be on the Illinois Director's Credential and examples will come from that body of work.

1. Pilot the IDC Modules

A final recommendation is to pilot the IDC modules. The ECE modules and the ITC modules were piloted. Through the piloting process the modules were vetted by faculty and student users and feedback from those users resulted in updates when needed. Specifically, website links, descriptions, and some assessments were revised through the piloting process. If IDC is not piloted, the final check in the check and balances will be a missing piece. Overall, the pilots of the ECE and ITC modules have been the best tests of their utility and the data received from the users, both students and faculty, has been instrumental in improving the quality, clarity and coherence of the modules. In order to prepare early childhood directors to lead high quality programs, they need to be grounded in best practices and prepared effectively. Piloting the IDC modules is essential to achieving that outcome.

2. Rubric Language and Alignment to Competency

Through the process of developing the modules, faculty members were able to read the rubrics through a different lens. When faculty engaged in this process, they identified some discrepancies between the rubric language and the competency statement on a few of the competencies. The discrepancies focused on the usefulness of measuring the attainment of the associated competency. In the modularization work for ECE and ITC, the rubrics were most often the basis for the module sub-competencies, with the language at the competent level describing outcome behaviors in ways that built to and addressed all aspects of the competency. This was not the case for all of the IDC competencies, which created hurdles to overcome in the modularization process. Specifically, the rubric language at the competent level often reiterated the competency statement with no breakdown into sub tasks or skills that could guide both development of the module or its assessment. An example of this was identified in OWC2:

OWC2 Competency Statement: Demonstrate formal presentation skills in professional forums

Rubric statement at the competent level: Exhibits formal presentation skills in a variety of professional forums

Based on this example, there is not much information within the rubric about what is being measured, specifically, what is meant by "formal presentation skills" and what is meant by "professional forums". Based on this example, a recommendation would be to include concrete descriptions of what the desired behavior would look like in the rubric.

A second significant issue with rubric language is when the rubric language at the competent level does not include all of the content, such as actions, priorities, dispositions, background knowledge and skills, that is included in the competency statement. Best practice assumes that if the learner is considered competent, the criteria included in the rubric competent level should match the criteria listed in the competency. An example of this discrepancy was identified in Family Partnerships (FP)1.

FP1: Create processes, procedures, and program plans that support and enhance family functioning, cultivate respectful, responsive relationships, foster family engagement, and facilitate bidirectional communication

Rubric statement at the competent level: Establishes processes, procedures, and program plans that support and enhance family functioning.

Based on this example, cultivating respectful, responsive relationships, fostering family engagement and facilitating bidirectional communication are not included at the competent level, however they do appear at the distinguished level. If those concepts are within the competency statement, it is best practice within competency-based education to have those same knowledge and skills at the competent level, which is the goal for all students. A recommendation would be to revise the rubric language at the competent level to ensure that all criteria of the competency are included.

This was a concern with 15 out of 42 rubrics. The rubrics were revised to add language which aligned the rubric at the competent level as closely as possible to the competency statement. This strengthened the rubric at all levels (unacceptable, developing, competent and distinguished) measuring attainment of the competency.

3. Open Educational Resources (OER)

Throughout this entire project (ECE, ITC, and IDC) it has been a requirement that all resources are open (OER), that is publicly available on the internet to all users without requiring membership, a subscription or fees for access. When completing the ECE and ITC modularization project, faculty were able to find high quality OER to include within the modules. However, the faculty completing the IDC modules had a more difficult time finding high quality, advertisement free OER. Based on this feedback, it is a recommendation to invest in, through partnerships or subscriptions (Early Investigations, EC Exchange or Edflicks), or create OER material that is specific to directors in early childhood settings.

The project described was supported by the Preschool Development Grant Birth through Five Initiative (PDG B-5), Grant Number 90TP0001-01-00, from the Office of Child Care, Administration for Children and Families, U.S. Department of Health and Human Services. Its contents are solely the responsibility of the authors and do not necessarily represent the official views of the Office of Child Care, the Administration for Children and Families, or the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services.

Appendix A: Gateways Illinois Director Credential Competencies

<https://www.ilgateways.com/professional-development/higher-education-programs/idc-toolbox>

Appendix B: Higher Education Institutions Offering the Illinois Director Credential

College of DuPage	Moraine Valley Community College	Morton College
College of Lake County	National Louis University	
Elgin Community College	Oakton Community College	
Erikson Institute	Olive Harvey College (City Colleges of Chicago)	
Harold Washington College (City Colleges of Chicago)	Prairie State College	
Harper College	Rasmussen University	
Harry S. Truman College (City Colleges of Chicago)	Richard J. Daley College (City Colleges of Chicago)	
Highland Community College	Southern Illinois University at Carbondale	
Illinois Valley Community College	Southwestern Illinois College	
John A. Logan College	St. Augustine College	
Kennedy-King College (City Colleges of Chicago)	Triton College	
Lewis & Clark Community College	University of Illinois at Chicago	
Lincoln Land Community College	Waubonsee Community College	
Malcolm X. College (City Colleges of Chicago)	Western Illinois University	

Appendix C: Project Calendar

March 3, 2022: RFP sent to 29 Illinois IHEs entitled for IDC
April 22, 2022: Application for funding due
May 10, 2022: Funded IHEs notified
May 18, 2022: Leadership team meets to discuss project plan and schedule
May 19-26, 2022: Consultants - participating IHEs meetings
June 1, 2022: Project launch meeting
June - September 2022: Rough Draft #1 due
July - September 2022: Rough Draft #1 feedback
June 8, 10, 2022: Group A and B biweekly meetings
June 22, 2022: Leadership team meeting
June 22, 24, 2022: Group A and B biweekly meetings
June 28, 2022: Monthly IDC Faculty meeting
July 6, 8, 2022: Group A and B biweekly meetings
July 7, 2022: Consultants modules review meeting
July - September, 2022: Rough Draft #2 due
July - October, 2022: Rough Draft #2 feedback
July 20, 22, 2022: Group A and B biweekly meetings
July 20, 2022: Leadership team meeting
July 26, 2022: Monthly IDC Faculty meeting
July 27, 29, 2022: Group A and B biweekly meetings
August, 2022: Rough Draft #3 Due (if needed)
August, 2022: Rough Draft #3 Feedback (if needed)
August 5, 2022: Consultants modules review meeting
August 10, 12, 2022: Group A and B biweekly meetings
August 12, 2022: Consultants modules review meeting
August 17, 2022: Leadership Team meeting
August 19, 2022: Consultants modules review meeting
August 24, 26, 2022: Group A and B biweekly meetings
August 26, 2022: Consultants modules review meeting
August 30, 2022: Monthly IDC faculty meeting
August - October, 2022: Final Draft Due
August - October, 2022: Consultant Finalize for External Review Group
September 2, 2022: Consultants modules review meeting
September 7, 9, 2022: Group A and B biweekly meetings
September 9, 2022: Consultants module review meeting
September 15, 2022: Leadership Team meeting
September 16, 2022: Consultants modules review meeting
September 21, 23, 2022: Group A and B biweekly meetings
September 23, 2022: Consultants modules review meeting

September 27, 2022: Monthly IDC Faculty meeting/External review orientation
September 30, 2022: Consultants modules review meeting
October-December, 2022: External Review Groups
October 5, 7, 2022: Group A and B biweekly meetings
October 7, 2022: Consultants modules review meeting
October 14, 2022: Consultants modules review meeting
October 25, 2022: Monthly IDC Faculty meeting
October 26, 2022: IDC External Review Group 1 meeting
October 28, 2022: IDC External Review Group 2 meeting
November - December, 2022: External review, final edits and module revisions
November 1, 2022: IDC External Review Group 4 meeting
November 4, 2022: IDC External Review Groups 1 and 2 meetings
November 4, 2022: Consultants meeting - external review feedback and module revisions
November 7, 2022: IDC External Review Group 4 meeting
November 9, 2022: IDC External Review Groups 1 and 3 meetings
November 11, 2022: Consultants meeting - external review feedback and module revisions
November 16, 2022: IDC External Review Group 3 meeting
November 18, 2022: Consultants meeting - external review feedback and module revisions
November 29, 2022: Consultants meeting - external review feedback and module revisions
November 29, 2022: Monthly IDC Faculty meeting
November 30, 2022: Consultants meeting - external review feedback and module revisions
December 2, 2022: Consultants meeting - external review feedback and module revisions
December 7, 2022: Leadership Team meeting
December 9, 2022: Consultants meeting - external review feedback and module revisions
December 20, 2022: Monthly IDC Faculty meeting
December 20, 2022: Leadership Team wrap-up

Appendix D: Request for Proposal



TO: Illinois Higher Education Community

FROM: Governor's Office of Early Childhood Development and
Illinois Network of Child Care Resource and Referral Agencies

DATE: February 28, 2022

RE: Request for Proposal:
Illinois Gateways to Opportunity® Illinois Director Credential Competency Project

Due Date: April 22, 2022 @ 4:00PM

Gateways to Opportunity® Illinois Director Credential Competency Curriculum Development RFP

The Illinois Governor's Office of Early Childhood Development received federal funds through the Preschool Development Birth to Five (PDG B-5) Renewal Grant to offer grant opportunities via RFP to Illinois higher education institutions to participate in the Gateways to Opportunity Illinois Director Credential competency-based curriculum module project. The grants will be funded through the Illinois Network of Child Care Resource and Referral Agencies (INCCRRA). It is anticipated that up to five higher education institutions will be selected to participate in this project which ends December 30, 2022. INCCRRA seeks proposals from two- and four-year, public, and private, higher education institutions in Illinois who have demonstrated institutional commitment to and capacity for innovation, a desire to meet workforce needs, who have the technological capacity at their institution to support virtual learning and meet both learner lifecycle and student access needs. The institution must be currently entitled, or in process of becoming entitled, for the Gateways Illinois Director Credential. Institutions must be willing to appropriately support their faculty who will work collaboratively with faculty from other higher education institutions on this state-system development project over a six-month timeframe.

The Gateways Illinois Director Credential has three levels, which align to an associate, bachelor, or graduate degree. It was modeled after the *Whole Leadership*¹ framework developed by the McCormick Center for Early Childhood Leadership at National Louis University. It is structured into three domains: leadership essentials, administrative leadership, and pedagogical leadership; with a total of 42 competencies across 10 Gateways Administrative content areas.

¹Property of the McCormick Center for Early Childhood Leadership *Whole Leadership: A Framework for Early Childhood Programs*

As the nation addresses the recommendations in the Institute of Medicine and National Research Council's report, *Transforming the Workforce for Children Birth through Age 8: A Unifying Foundation*, leadership is identified as a key component for increasing workforce capacity in early childhood organizational administration. Leaders and Administrators are included with 'lead educators' and foundational knowledge and competencies necessary for successful program implementation. *"These leaders are an important factor in the quality of early learning experiences for the children in the settings they oversee"*.

The strength of the well-scaffolded Gateways to Opportunity Credentials, codified in administrative rule and competency aligned, is evidenced by pathways at Illinois higher education institutions. In Illinois, approximately one out of every three Higher Education Institutions have aligned their early childhood administrative coursework and programs with the Gateways Illinois Director Credential competencies. The Faculty Fellows designed assessment models for each competency that have built-in linkages to potential technology application. See page 20 of the Faculty Fellows report: <https://www.ilgateways.com/docman-docs/professional-development/higher-education-programs/ece-toolbox/1955-faculty-fellows-assessment-project>, with links to assessments here: <https://www.ilgateways.com/professional-development/higher-education-programs/idc-toolbox>. Full integration of assessments coupled with utilization of technology as suggested by the Faculty Fellows project will increase student access and provide critically needed supports to the Illinois director and assistant directors.

Effective July 1, 2017, the Illinois Department of Children and Family Services requires the following education qualifications for licensed Child Care Directors:

1. All new child care directors hired on or after July 1, 2017 shall have a minimum of an associate degree in child development or early childhood education, or the equivalent (defined as 64 semester hours in any discipline with a minimum of 21 semester hours of college credit in child development, early childhood education or early childhood special education) and
 - a. Either a Gateways to Opportunity Level I Illinois Director Credential (see 89 Ill. Adm. Code 50.720(b) or
 - b. 3 semester hours of college credit or 3 points of Credential approved training in administration, leadership, or management.

Section 407.130 Qualifications for Child Care Director can be found here: https://www2.illinois.gov/dcfs/aboutus/notices/Documents/Rules_407.pdf. This initiative bolsters the need for a pathway for program leaders and administrators to obtain an Illinois Director Credential.

Parallel to the need to increase opportunities for the incumbent workforce to increase their competencies, there is also a need to support higher education programs in being responsive to the needs of working adults. Early childhood directors and assistant directors may face a variety of barriers to gain an Illinois Director Credential and degree completion, such as limited income, young children to care for, and other obligations that make attending traditional classes challenging. Conventional higher education programs are not typically designed to support an individual who needs to fill in a 'gap' in attained competencies. Generally, Administrators who need to expand a specific skillset undergirded by relevant education and learning, must complete an entire course which may include content duplicative to what the learner already knows and can demonstrate. Traditional higher education programs are based on seat time and may not be as inviting or accessible for adult learners (the "working" workforce) who have evidenced skillsets and knowledge. Adult learners often have the capacity to move more quickly through course content that relates directly to their work experiences and knowledge and benefit when more time can be spent when needed to gain new skills, knowledge, and to evidence newly gained competence. For

² *Transforming the Workforce for Children Birth Through Age 8: A Unifying Foundation*

directors and assistant directors attempting to achieve the Illinois Director Credential, a vast majority already hold an Associate degree or higher; yet often need additional coursework and training specific to the Administrative Content Areas.

The Illinois Board of Higher Education (IBHE) recently completed its “Master Plan” for post-secondary education. The plan defines ways to better serve communities and close equity gaps in student learning outcomes. Early childhood faculty at higher education institutions in Illinois are recognized by IBHE as leaders in understanding the agility and innovation that competency-based education and learning bring to post-secondary education programs. IBHE and Illinois Community College Board (ICCB) both recognize early care and education as an essential component of the state’s economy and community workforce needs. Institutions who take advantage of this Request for Proposal (RFP) will have an opportunity to innovate and increase accessibility of their early childhood administration programs. *This is an at-will, grant-funded initiative with an anticipated end date of December 30, 2022, with the possibility to extend if the grant is renewed.*

Adult learners need courses that offer the ability to move more quickly when the subject matter is familiar, need 24/7 access, may prefer online and/or place-based learning, and benefit directly from well-constructed assessment of prior learning that provides college credit and supports Credential and degree attainment. For Illinois to expand the early educator pipeline, there is a need to maximize technology to increase coursework access, and to build in opportunities for the existing workforce to demonstrate competence based on an assessment of prior learning through carefully calibrated and thoughtfully designed assessments. ***“Research results are promising, showing that adult students who earn credit for prior learning have better academic outcomes compared with their peers who do not earn such credit.”***³ National attention will be focused on Illinois higher education institutions who undertake this project.

Through this Gateways to Opportunity Illinois Director Credential Competency project, GOECD, and INCCRRA seek to increase workforce access to virtual administrative competency-based modules and to expand the future potential for prior learning assessments (PLA).

Eligible Institutions:

Institutions must be authorized to operate in the state of Illinois; hold institutional accreditation through the Higher Learning Commission; have campuses physically located in Illinois and be currently entitled by INCCRRA for the Gateways Illinois Director Credential.

Grant Period:

The grant period will be May 2022 to December 30, 2022.

Application Deadline:

Applications must be received by 4:00 pm on April 22, 2022, to be considered for funding. The application materials may be submitted via email to GatewaysRFP@inccrra.org or sent to INCCRRA at 1226 Towanda Plaza, Bloomington, IL 61701. INCCRRA will announce decisions in partnership with GOECD on or before May 16, 2022.

Contact:

Contact GatewaysRFP@inccrra.org with any questions.

³ Hayward and Williams 2014; Klein Collins 2010 - Credit for Prior Learning Charting Institutional Practice for Sustainability 2015).

Background and Program Specifications

Competency-based education and learning is reflected in national trends as a flexible, responsive, and adaptive model in response to workforce pathway needs. *“Competency-based education” allows students to move flexibly through an education program that’s designed to make sure they know and can do what’s expected of graduates. Though many types of students can benefit from a competency-based approach, its flexibility is especially attractive to working adults*.”⁴ INCCRRA is offering a competitive grant opportunity to two- and four- year institutions of higher education (IHEs) in Illinois to collaboratively develop innovative, individualized online mini-courses built from the Gateways Illinois Director Credential Competencies. Through these grants, the state seeks 1) to provide an innovative early childhood teacher preparation pathway model constructed using individual competencies offered as modules that are situated within the larger context of learning 2) expand utilization of technology to address workforce challenges related to access to early childhood teacher preparation programs 3) provide prior learning assessment (PLA) opportunities for the workforce. This work builds on previous Illinois higher education (IHEs) statewide efforts to develop ECE Credential and Infant Toddler Credential competency curriculum modules. The collective goal is to expand access to, and the pipeline for, early childhood program administrators to address a need to increase the knowledge and competencies of Illinois early childhood professional leaders and administrators to implement high-quality early childhood/school-age programs for children and their families in Illinois.

Higher education institution appetite and capacity to expand utilization of technology in course content with well-designed, comprehensive assessments of competencies, and in the development of opportunities to support the workforce through assessment of prior learning varies widely. Grants will be made to Illinois higher education institutions who successfully address the criteria in the RFP and who are open to innovation.

The intention of this RFP opportunity is to award \$45,000 grants up to five higher education institutions representative of public and private, two- and four-year, who represent Illinois’ geographic diversity. Grant opportunities may or may not be available in 2023 to support institutions who participate in this development phase for the specific testing of the newly designed administration competency modules.

Goals of the Gateways Illinois Director Credential competency RFP

The primary goals of the grant are to:

- Build the degrees and Credentials of the incumbent workforce so that they might increase their knowledge, skills, advance their employment and compensation opportunities, and increase the quality of the education and care the children and families in their programs receive
- Expanding opportunities for program/center directors to earn or advance their Illinois Director Credential
- Following ECE and Infant Toddler competency curriculum, the Illinois Director Credential will follow suit as the third credential advancing through the competency-based module development
- Foster innovation at Illinois higher education institutions through incentivizing the development of modularized, competency-based, online accessible mini-course sequences
- Support higher education institutions in developing opportunities for the incumbent early childhood workforce to build upon or receive credit for prior learning and acquired competencies

⁴ Judy Heiman, California Edge Coalition (<https://caedge.org/>)

- Promote opportunities for expanded access through online learning, which may use simulated learning, such as those provided by the Office of Head Start. <https://eclkc.ohs.acf.hhs.gov/family-engagement/article/parent-family-community-engagement-simulation-boosting-school-readiness-through-effective-family>
- Promote workforce advancement using the state-recognized Gateways Illinois Director Credential competency structure
- Address workforce demands for greater leadership Credential
- Provide opportunities to develop innovative and comprehensive assessments of prior learning which research shows supports diverse student success, thereby supporting institutional success through student completion
- Promote equitable opportunities to access Credential advancement and honor and increase the rich diversity of center administrators
- Develop competency-based curriculum models using federal funding that may accelerate degree and Credential completion to support student success

Project Description:

Faculty will work collaboratively from Illinois Higher Education Institutions will work collaboratively to build out curriculum into discrete modules using the Gateways Illinois Director Credential (Whole Leadership) competencies as the basis. The term “modularization” is being used to describe segmenting by competency of traditional course curriculum into smaller components of expected learning. It is expected that this modularization will continually be situated within the larger, integrated whole of learning expectations. Modularizing each competency with corresponding assessments will utilize existing rubrics developed through previous Illinois collaborative work. To ensure and expand student access, this modularization work will incorporate technology. Illinois Faculty Fellows previous assessment and technology collaborative work will be used as a guide in the development process. Technology and/or competency design experts will provide support to Illinois faculty as needed during the design or development process. Additionally, consultative leadership will be provided by Competency-Based Education Network (C-BEN, GOECD, and INCCRRA. The Gateways Illinois Director Credential framework and competencies can be found at <https://www.ilgateways.com/docman-docs/credentials/illinois-director/3-frameworks>. More information on the development and history of the Gateways Illinois Director Credential Competencies is located: <https://www.ilgateways.com/professional-development/higher-education-programs/idc-toolbox>.

Anticipated outcomes:

Gateways Illinois Director Credential individual competency curriculum modules will be created. Faculty from higher education institutions selected to do this work will choose to begin work at any level of the competencies (proceeding from lower to higher levels, or vice versa). The design will incorporate prior learning assessment (PLA) opportunities. Foundational supports for articulation between and among two- and four-year higher education institutions will be embedded. Students will be able to demonstrate a progression of knowledge that builds from lower to higher level competencies, leading to or advancing their Gateways Illinois Director Credential.

Grant Funding:

Funding from the PDG B-5 Federal grant will support a consortium of faculty from two and four-year higher education institutions collaborating to modularize Gateways Illinois Director Credential competencies. Up to five institutions will be selected to receive \$45,000* for faculty release time, and to support institution needs (e.g., instructional technology).

Project Timeline:

2022: Faculty will develop curriculum and design administrative modules to include online accessibility and incorporate assessments of prior learning between May and December 2022.

RFP Timeline:

Applications will be accepted via mail or email no later than 4 pm on April 22, 2022. Selection will be based on the application submitted and ability to meet priorities as stated. Applications will be reviewed by members of the State Competency Leadership Team and state agency representatives. The Governor's Office of Early Childhood Development will approve the final decision. Funding awards of \$45,000 will be made to each selected higher education institution and must be fully expended by the close of the grant. The institution's president and dean must both sign the application. All documents and information must be included before submitting to INCCRRA.

Grant Requirements:

Successful applicants will:

- Be a Gateways Illinois Director Credential Entitled institution
- Currently offer a program of study that includes use of technology (e.g., offers virtual or hybrid leadership courses, use of technology in assessment structure etc.)
- Work collaboratively with faculty from other institutions to design online curriculum inclusive of comprehensive assessment of competence
- Outline ways in which participation in this project will support and advance institutional goals for their students
- Agree to participate in an external evaluation of the modularization of the Gateways ECE Credential competencies for early childhood teacher preparation
- Demonstrate how this funding will provide opportunities that would be challenging to achieve otherwise
- Agree to work with an external evaluator to assess the impact of the PDG B-5 grant
- Applications must be received by INCCRRA no later than April 22, 2022, at 4 pm.
- Agree to participate in piloting the modules developed from this project in 2023 to capture relevant data to inform success or needed revisions if funding is available.

Priority:

During the review process, priority will be given to proposals that demonstrate faculty expertise or desire to expand virtual learning for center administrator preparation and to applications that can demonstrate a fit with their institutions future vision for advancing or supporting competency-based education and learning.

- Prior learning assessments aligned to the Gateways competencies
- Currently offering online early childhood administration and leadership course(s)
- Participation in the Faculty Fellows assessment project or alternatively, utilization of the Faculty Fellows designed assessment for the Gateways Illinois Director Credential competencies
- A strong history of collaboration with other institutions for state system development
- Demonstration of institutional innovation to support students, especially in leadership preparation within early childhood and/or school-age

- A plan to offer designed modules as part of a pilot or “test” by the institution in 2023, if funding is available
- A diverse student population (racial, ethnic, economically, first-generation students, rural, urban, returning students/workforce etc.)

Gateways to Opportunity Entitled Higher Education Institution Background:

Include a brief summary about the institution that provides demographics, number of students, current online access for teacher preparation, use of technology, and other information relevant to this project. The cover sheet should be on your institution’s letterhead and specify contact information.

Proposals should satisfy the following criteria:

- This pilot opportunity is only open to institutions that have aligned their programs to competencies and Credential requirements. The institution must be entitled to offer the Gateways to Opportunity Illinois Director Credential
- The higher education institution must offer release time for their faculty member to devote the needed hours of collaboration for this project to be successful
- Include the vitae of instructor/faculty who will be working on the project
- The higher education institution must evidence support of their institutional hierarchy (including president/registrar/program dean/technology & learning department) and have in place, or be structuring, the mechanisms needed to support testing and implementation in future years as grant funding support is available
- Use of technology to support online accessibility, and interest in developing assessment of prior learning must be incorporated into your proposal
- A budget that outlines how the \$45,000 grant award will be expended

Gateways to Opportunity:

Gateways to Opportunity is a statewide professional development support system designed to provide guidance, encouragement, and recognition to individuals and programs serving children, youth, and families. Gateways Credentials were signed into law, effective July 1, 2009. Gateways Credentials are awarded and recognized by the Illinois Department of Human Services (IDHS) Bureau of Child Care and Development.

Announcement:

Selections for the pilot will be announced jointly by GOECD and INCCRRA on or before May 16, 2022. Upon notification of acceptance, a Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) will need to be signed by the partnering institution. The pilot will conclude December 30, 2022.

The project described was supported by the Preschool Development Grant Birth through Five Initiative (PDG B-5), Grant Number 90TP0001-01-00, from the Office of Child Care, Administration for Children and Families, U.S. Department of Health and Human Services. Its contents are solely the responsibility of the authors and do not necessarily represent the official views of the Office of Child Care, the Administration for Children and Families, or the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services.

Appendix E: Module Template

Competency Template

Total Clock Hours for Module (assessment time + learning activities time): _____ hours

Competency Title/Statement:

Reviewer Guided Questions	<input type="checkbox"/> Does the competency title and statement match the phrasing from the Gateways website?
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Competency Description:

Write 1 paragraph explaining why the Competency is important and what students can expect as they move through the learning activities. Keep the tone friendly and speak directly to the student.

Reviewer Guided Questions	<input type="checkbox"/> Does the competency description build enthusiasm for the competency? <input type="checkbox"/> Is it written in a friendly tone and does it speak directly to the learner? <input type="checkbox"/> Does the competency description clearly explain exactly what a student/learner will do in this module with sufficient detail?
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Sub-Competencies (between 2-5):

List the topics or sub-competencies learners need to understand in order to achieve the competency. These can be pulled from the rubrics in many cases.

- XXX
- XXX
- XXX

Reviewer Guided Questions	<input type="checkbox"/> Do the sub-competencies correspond with the appropriate indicators (see rubrics or checklists) already developed by the Gateways team? <input type="checkbox"/> If not, do the sub-competencies clearly align to the competency statement? Do they break down the competency into smaller components? If it adds to the scope of the competency itself, the sub-competencies may need to be revised.
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Summative Competency Assessment

Time estimate to complete the summative assessment: _____ hours

Which type of assessment is this (performance-based, written response, multiple choice):

Briefly describe how this assessment measures this specific competency. How does this assessment correspond with the required cognitive level of the competency?

Include assessment instructions below. Write these for students, ensuring they are easily understood in online/asynchronous environments. Be sure to include any ancillary materials like case studies, video links, templates, as needed.

Reviewer Guided Questions	<input type="checkbox"/> Are the instructions clear and detailed? <input type="checkbox"/> Will a learner know exactly what they are supposed to do? <input type="checkbox"/> Do they have all the materials they need to begin the assessment? <input type="checkbox"/> Does the assessment clearly explain exactly what a learner will submit and how they will be assessed? <input type="checkbox"/> Is the assessment rigorous and a clear/valid measure for assessing the competency? <input type="checkbox"/> Does the assessment clearly align with and assess the competency statement? <input type="checkbox"/> Does the assessment emulate what the learner would do "on the job"? <input type="checkbox"/> Does the assessment include DAP and/or UDL practices? <input type="checkbox"/> Is there a corresponding rubric (see Gateways website) and does it tell the learner how they will be assessed?
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Learning Activities & Resources

Total Time to Complete All Learning Activities (listed below), Read, Watch, Complete Formative Assessments: _____ hours.

Once you have identified the sub-competencies, identify learning resources and activities that align with each topic/sub-competency. These activities and resources should help students develop their understanding related to the competency. Remember, “trim the fat” – give students what they need, no more and no less, to be able to achieve the competency and complete the assessment.

- When filing in the resource grid, use black type for all student-facing copy. Use red type for internal call-outs/faculty notes.
- Indicate the title of each resource followed by an APA citation. If the resource is long or students only need part, list the chapter number, title, and pages below the citation.
- Use recent resources whenever possible, unless a seminal work.

Reviewer Guided Questions	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><input type="checkbox"/> Does the getting started prepare the student for what they will read, what they will think about , etc?<input type="checkbox"/> Do the learning activities align with the sub-competency?<input type="checkbox"/> Is it clear how the resources will help the learner complete the assessment?<input type="checkbox"/> Are the resource types varied, accessible, and engaging (i.e., videos, articles, infographics, PPTs, etc)<input type="checkbox"/> Are the resources free/OER?<input type="checkbox"/> Are formative activities/assessment instructions clear and provide learners with everything they need to begin/complete?<input type="checkbox"/> Are there opportunities to engage with peers or other professionals (i.e., discussions, encouraging conversations, etc)?<input type="checkbox"/> Are the sections of the learning activities directly linked to the summative assessment, such as knowledge and level?<input type="checkbox"/> Are the activities feasible for students to do (i.e., does not require unreasonable placement requests, access to scarce materials, etc)?
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- **Sub-Competency #: STATEMENT**
 - **Activity 1: Title** [estimated amount of time to complete]
 - Getting Started
 - Materials
 - Formative Assessment/CFU
 - **<Add activities as necessary>**

- **Sub-Competency #: STATEMENT**
 - **Activity 1: Title** [estimated amount of time to complete]
 - Getting Started
 - Materials
 - Formative Assessment/CFU
 - **<Add activities as necessary>**

Appendix F: Faculty Review Questions

All faculty assigned to review this module, please put your comments in this document.

Question	Yes/No	Notes [Please indicate your initials or color code your responses per reviewer. Please indicate page numbers if applicable.]
Summative Assessment		
Does the summative assessment measure competency?		
Is it an appropriate assessment for the level of the competency?		
Is the assessment feasible for the student to accomplish?		
Summative Assessment		
Are the learning activities pertinent to the competency or sub-competency?		
Are the learning activities and formative assessments accessible to different types of learners and learning styles?		
Do formative assessments provide opportunities for feedback?		
Does completion of this module provide opportunities to demonstrate attainment of the competency?		
Summative Assessment		
What aspects of this module resonated with you?		
What aspects do you think will resonate with the students?		
What challenged or surprised you in reviewing this module?		
Module Reviewed Holistically...		
Does completion of this module provide an opportunity for a student to attain the requisite knowledge and evidence attainment of this competency?		

- Once all of the modules in this competency topic are complete, the following questions will be sent to your review group:
 - Overarching questions regarding module development:
 - Is the sequence of modules in this content area logical and comprehensive?
 - Are there gaps in skill and knowledge progression?
 - Are prerequisite knowledge and skills included in this module or the sequence of modules?

Appendix G: Scope and Sequence Example

IDC EP Scope and Sequence											
Competency	IDC EP1			IDC EP2			IDC EP3				
Clock Hours	12			8			14				
Level	I			I			I				
Competency	EP1: Describe, plan, and implement instructional strategies, curriculum, and environmental plans that reflect evidence-based practice and support and enhance the development and learning of young children and their families			EP2: Develop collaborative transition policies and procedures that promote smooth transitions for children entering and exiting the program			EP3: Assure utilization of ethical, confidential, research-based, developmental screening tools and developmentally appropriate formative and summative child assessment practices				
Assessment	Summative Assessment: Create a narrated slide set that introduces your program's curriculum (real or hypothetical). Include an introduction, discussion of evidence-based practices, and main curriculum components as specified.			Summative Assessment: Examine the documents of a center and interview the director regarding transitions. Afterward, provide your analysis using the prompts provided.			Summative Assessment: Interview a director regarding the assessment plan at their center; focus on prompts provided, confidentiality and ethics.				
Sub-Competencies	SC1: Describes evidence-based instructional strategies, curriculum, and environmental plans that support and enhance the development and learning of young children and their families.	SC2: Plans and implements evidence-based instructional strategies and curriculum components that support and enhance the development and learning of young children and their families.		SC3: Plans and implements evidence-based environmental plans that support and enhance the development and learning of young children and their families	SC1: Develop written transition policies, in partnership with families, for children entering and exiting the program.	SC2: Develop written transition procedures, in partnership with families, for children entering and exiting the program.	SC1: Use research-based, developmentally appropriate screening tools and assessments.			SC2: Apply principles of ethics, including confidentiality, to screening and assessment practices.	
Activities	A1: Complete the table detailing 3 evidence-based curriculum models. Chose one and defend your decision.	A1: Write a blog post for families describing how child guidance in the classroom supports child learning and development.	A2: Write five program goals that align with your chosen curricular system	A1: Find 5 environmental design images that support children and families; add to a document and annotate.	A1: Review the parent handbook; find policies that support children and families entering and leaving the program; and add to class discussion board. Afterward, comment on others.	A1: Review the parent handbook; find policies that support children and families entering and leaving the program; and add to class discussion board. Afterward, comment on others.	A1: Submit a written response on why assessment is important; the difference between assessment and screening; and how DEI factors in.	A2: Using the template provided, make or expand your library of assessment and screening resources	A3: Respond to a scenario about a parent who is reluctant to allow child to be screened	A1: Using relevant sections of NAEYC Code of Ethics, summarize key points, and articulate how this informs work as a director	A2: Write or audio/ videotape yourself describing the importance of confidentiality in child assessment, and what directors can do to protect it.
Result	chart	paper	paper	project	paper	dis bd	paper	chart	paper	paper	ppr/video

IDC EP Scope and Sequence

Competency	IDC EP4					IDC EP5				IDC EP6			
Clock Hours	9					10				11.5			
Level	II					II				II			
Competency	EP4: Utilize data generated from children and families to ensure integrity in program design, decision-making, and goals					EP5: Evaluate the appropriateness and effectiveness of different curricula, individual and group management strategies, and program design				EP6: Develop, implement, interpret, and evaluate child assessment policies and practices			
Assessment	Summative Assessment: Create a tool kit to use for creating plans that support your work, utilizing data generated from children and families to ensure integrity in program design, decision-making, and goals. Include examples of tools.					Summative Assessment: Complete a program self-study as it relates to curriculum, individual and group management, and program design. Summarize the importance of your findings and indicate next steps.				Summative Assessment: Create a short video on assessment practices used at your center. Include screening tools and assessment practices as well as how assessment data is gathered and used. Afterward, evaluate the strengths/needs of your plan using the chart provided.			
Sub-Competencies	SC1: Articulates the purpose for program evaluation in examining the curriculum system and program design, and the role of the administrator in this process.		SC2: Plans and implements evidence-based instructional strategies and curriculum components that support and enhance the development and learning of young children and their families.			SC1: Articulates the purpose for program evaluation in examining the curriculum system and program design, and the role of the administrator in this process.		SC2: Chooses valid and reliable strategies for assessing an all-encompassing curriculum system and program design.	SC3: Evaluates policies and practices for individual and group management	SC4: Uses data to assess the appropriateness and effectiveness of different curricula, individual and group management strategies, and program design	SC1: Evaluate the appropriateness of different assessment tools for children of varying ages, ability levels, culture and linguistic backgrounds.	SC2: Interpret data generated from formal, standardized instruments.	SC3: Apply principles of ethics, including confidentiality, to screening and assessment practices.
Activities	A1: Watch the NAEYC video on NAEYC accreditation and reflect on parent and child's role in the program evaluation process. Afterward, respond to the prompt.	A2: Review the kindergarten readiness checklist, and discuss per prompts provided.	A1: Read the NAEYC position statement and discuss how it informs data-driven decisions and integrity of data processes.	A2: Critique a parent handbook and a parent survey of your choice. Discuss how each welcomes families, and provide suggestions for change.	A3: Using the scenario, describe what you would do with data from the kindergarten readiness checklist.	A1: Develop an elevator speech on the importance of program evaluation	A1: Select assessment tools and strategies that promote valid and reliable evaluation of curricula, individual and group management, and program design using NAEYC. Add it to chart and share in discussion board.	A1: Using the reading, develop an additional list of 5 recommendations for policy and practice as they relate to trauma-informed principles. Discuss online with peers.	A1: Use data from one assessment in SC2 to assess one area of a program. Summarize key findings and share with peers.	A1: Using the resources provided, evaluate and create a list of 3-5 developmentally appropriate assessment tools for children at both age levels 0-2 and 3-5.	A1: Develop a PowerPoint describing effective child assessment strategies as you would explain to your staff	A1: Review the data a child assessment provides (your actual data or hypothetical) and discuss its strengths and weaknesses as they relate to your center practices	
Result	paper	paper	paper	paper	ppt	speech	chart	dis bd	action	paper	ppt	paper	

IDC EP Scope and Sequence

Competency	IDC EP7				IDC EP8				IDC EP9			IDC EP10		
Clock Hours	7				14.5				8			10		
Level	II				III				III			III		
Competency	EP7: Aggregate and analyze data to identify opportunities for program improvement and to inform program goals				EP8: Develop, implement, and evaluate system for providing feedback and support to teaching staff				EP9: Collaborate with external organizations and agencies to promote smooth transitions for children entering and exiting the program			EP10: Utilizes results of data gathered to impact program decision-making and design		
Assessment	Summative Assessment: Create a PowerPoint presentation in which you share the program goals, plans, and actions that will be implemented as a result of your analysis of aggregate data. Include opportunities for discussion and collaboration, as well as a call to action for staff.				Summative Assessment: Create a portfolio of artifacts, critically reflective on each artifact, and create a calendar to demonstrate a system of support and feedback for teaching staff.				Summative Assessment: Using the scenarios provided, write a comprehensive analysis of the cross-sector programs you would use to support a child and child's family transitioning in/out of your program.			Summative Assessment: Create a guide to data-based decision-making in which you incorporate the scenarios provided and include a list of "go-to" data sources.		
Sub-Competencies	SC1: Aggregate data from a diverse set of valid and reliable sources to inform program improvement.	SC2: Analyze data to inform program improvement.	SC3: Designs continuous quality improvement plans using attainable goals and measurable outcomes	SC1: Develop, implement, and evaluate a system for providing feedback to teaching staff				SC2: Develop, implement, and evaluate a system for providing support to teaching staff	SC1: Works consistently with external organizations and agencies to promote smooth transitions for children entering the program	SC2: Works consistently with external organizations and agencies to promote smooth transitions for children exiting the program	SC1: Explains processes used to gather and interpret data for purposes of program design and improvement.	SC2: Works consistently with external organizations and agencies to promote smooth transitions for children entering the program		
Activities	A1: Collect data summaries from the variety of sources specified, and use to identify program strengths, needs, and program improvement plans. Discuss online with peers.	A1: Perform a SWOT analysis of your program. Include at least 3 elements for each section. Discuss online with peers.	A1: Write 3 SMART goals for 3 areas of your program. Share your goals online with peers.	A2: Identify at least three areas in your program to focus on for this activity and complete a separate CQIP for each of the areas you selected. Discuss online with peers.	A1: Using the template provided, add 10 regularly-occurring events to the calendar	A2: Using the video scenario, discuss how you could use strength-based coaching based on the prompts provided.	A3: Reflect on teacher triad teams, and post to discussion board. Respond to 2 peers.	A4: Write a description of how you could use a modeling example in a staff meeting. Outline your strategies.	A1: Evaluate the short-term professional goals of teachers in the scenario provided.	A1: Drawing on the readings, discuss collaboration with families as it applies to transitions, as well as important transition concepts to keep in mind.	A1: Create a 2- minute recording explaining how you work with one of your community resources in support of children transitioning into kindergarten	A1: After reviewing Excelerate, respond to the following: Why is it important to use an objective set of standards when making program improvements?	A1: Evaluate the list of websites by determining which ones are valuable and trusted sources and which ones are questionable.	A2: After reading the Harvard report on improving outcomes, respond to the questions provided regarding decision-making and data.
Result	dis bd	dis bd	dis bd	CQIP form	chart	paper	dis bd	paper	paper	paper	ppt	paper	paper	paper

Appendix H: Full List of PDG Faculty

Dr. Diane Schael; Chair, Early Childhood at College of Lake County

Dr. Susan Bowers; Associate Professor at Northern Illinois University

Ann Gadzikowski; Instructor at Oakton Community College

Gina Schuyler; Adjunct Professor at College of Lake County

Wendy Connell; Leadership Coach at the McCormick Center for Early Childhood Leadership and part-time faculty

Lisa Dickey; Adjunct Early Childhood Instructor at National Louis University

Kamilah Wilson; Assistant Professor at National Louis University

Appendix I: External Reviewers

Dr. Teri Talan; Senior Policy Advisor at the McCormick Center for Early Childhood Leadership at National Louis University

Dr. Leslie Katch; Coordinator for the Early Childhood Administration program at National Louis University

Dr. Melissa Clucas Walter; Assistant Professor at Northern Illinois University

Dr. Florensia Surjadi; Associate Professor at Northern Illinois University

Cheryl Joseph; Assistant Professor of Early Childhood Education at Oakton Community College

Appendix J: Level I, II, III Examples

SAMPLE MODULE, LEVEL I: EDUCATIONAL PROGRAMMING 2

IDC EP2 Competency

Total Clock Hours for Module: 8 hours

Competency Statement: EP2: Develop collaborative transition policies and procedures that promote smooth transitions for children entering and exiting the program.

Competency Description: It is important for early childhood programs to support children and families as they join a program as well as when they leave the program. Taking time to make sure that families feel welcomed as a member of the community is essential to forming strong family center partnerships. It is also crucial to support families and children as they move to a different classroom environment and also when they leave the program. In this module you will spend time learning about effective practices to support children and families throughout the many transitions they will encounter as part of their early childhood program. As you complete the module you will interview and analyze a center for their transition policies and make recommendations to strengthen these policies and procedures for the center you chose.

Sub-Competencies:

- **SC1:** Develop written transition policies, in partnership with families, for children entering and exiting the program.
- **SC2:** Develop written transition procedures, in partnership with families, for children entering and exiting the program.

Summative Competency Assessment

Time estimate to complete the summative assessment: 4 hours

Assessment Type: Written Response

This summative assessment will support your overall understanding of the importance of transition policies and procedures within a center focusing on children and families joining you as well as when they leave. You will complete the summative assessment in two parts: 1) answer questions in the role of a director and 2) identify missing pieces in policies.

Part 1: Read and respond to the following questions in the role of a director. Provide detailed descriptions of how you will ensure each of the questions are addressed in your center/program. The questions focuses on policies and procedures for children and families entering and leaving the center.

Children entering the enter/leaving center focused questions:

- What ways does the center support families and children to feel welcomed as they join the program?
- How does the center support children with special needs as they transition into the program?
- How does the center support children with special needs during the transition to another program?
- How is the center culturally responsive to families in their transitional policies and procedures?
- What agencies and cross sector supports does the center use to support overall transitions?
- What are the procedures that are followed as children transition to another classroom at your center?
- How does the center support children as they transition to kindergarten?
- What processes does the center use to transition a family to another center?

Part 2: After responding to the questions above, review this [family handbook](#) and this [policy](#). Use the family handbook, policy, and the answers you provided in part 1 to complete a comprehensive analysis and write up the following information listed below:

- What are three written policies and procedures the center uses that are relevant to children and families entering the program?
- What are three written policies and procedures the center uses that are relevant for children exiting the program?
- Explain how the policies and procedures you chose reflect collaboration with families and agencies?

In your overall analysis also describe at least:

- One possible area of need or improvement you have identified related to transition policies at the center for children entering
- One possible area of need or improvement you have identified related to transition policies at the center for children that are leaving.
- Why did you choose these recommendations for improvement of the transitional policies for children and families entering the center and also for those that are leaving the center?

Part 1: Written Response length: 5 page paper

Part 2: Written Response length: 5 page paper

The assessment will be graded based on the following rubric, which can also be found here under “Master Rubrics.”

Competency	Distinguished	Competent	Developing	Unacceptable	Unable to Assess
EP2: Develop collaborative transition policies and procedures that promote smooth transitions for children entering and exiting the program.	Creates and consistently supports policies and procedures that promote smooth transitions for children entering and exiting the program and reflect consideration of family needs and context	Devises policies and procedures that promote smooth transitions for children entering and exiting the program	Attempts to create policies and procedures that promote smooth transitions for children entering and exiting the program	Neglects the importance of planning for smooth transitions for children entering and exiting the program	

Learning Activities & Resources

Total Time to Complete All Learning Activities: 4 hours

Sub-Competency 1: Develop written transition policies, in partnership with families, for children entering and exiting the program.

- **Activity 1:**
 - **Getting Started:** This activity will support your understanding of transitions that occur when children enter a new center and leave the program. You will review a parent handbook from a center and look over the transitional policies the center uses to support their families during these transitional times.
 - **Materials:**
 - [Welcoming New Children to Child Care Program](#) (Read this short article on tips to include in creating a warm, caring environment)
 - [Innovative ways to welcome new families // Early Childhood Innovation \(S1E10\)](#) (Watch this 13 minute 45 second video on how administration can support families as they enter a program)
 - [Transitions in Early Head Start: Tips on Supporting Families of Infants and Toddlers | ECLKC](#) (Read the front page of this website focusing the following sections: relationships, alignment, and the transitional process)

- [What Works in Transitions](#) (This is an oldie but a goodie- read this 6 page article that provides tips and strategies to support children and families in their transitions entering and leaving a center)
- **Formative Assessment:** Review the current transition policies from a center parent handbook and respond in the discussion board listing 3 collaborative policies the center uses that supports the children and families joining the center and 3 policies that they support the families leaving the program and indicate why you chose these particular items. When finished, respond to 2 of your peers in the discussion board.

Sub-Competency 2: Develop written transition procedures, in partnership with families, for children entering and exiting the program.

- **Activity 1:**
 - **Getting Started:** During this activity, you will explore the various ways to support children and families throughout their transitions entering your program or leaving the center. After reading through the materials below, you will engage in a series of reflective discussion board prompts focusing on the ways that directors of centers can help create supportive transitional practices and procedures.
 - **Materials:**
 - [Educator Practices to Support Successful Transitions to Kindergarten | ECLKC](#) (read through the first page of this website focusing on the strategies to support children as they leave preschool for kindergarten)
 - [Preschool for All Expansion](#) (Read pages 38-41 of this document on transitional plans for preschoolers entering kindergarten)
 - [Pathways and transitions Online](#) (Read the first full page of the website on transitions including: Key ideas, implication for leadership and connections to principles)
 - [Transition Plan](#)(Read over the first page of this website on the various points to consider in transitional plans)
 - **Formative Assessment:** Respond to each of the discussion board prompts about the collaborative transitional procedures that are supportive of children’s daily and annual transitions including support for children that are receiving special services and using culturally responsive support. After you respond, respond with a thoughtful response to 2 peers for each question.
 - How can your center support the transition of children from your center into kindergarten?
 - What are important components to keep in mind to support children and families that are receiving special services within their transition plan when entering and leaving the center?
 - How do you as a director make sure to be culturally responsive in your approaches to transitioning children both in and out of the program?

SAMPLE MODULE LEVEL II: ORAL AND WRITTEN COMMUNICATIONS 2

IDC OWC2 Competency

Total Clock Hours for Module: 13.5 hours

Competency Statement: EP2: Demonstrate formal presentation skills in professional forums.

Competency Description: As the leader of an early childhood program, you are not only the expert in early childhood care and education, you are a business professional. As the leader, you will be expected to communicate with families, staff, your governing board, the community and other early childhood professionals. Daily, you will communicate with staff and families informally and formally through written and oral communication methods. In addition, you will have to make formal presentations to your staff and meetings; families at open houses or educational events; to your governing or advisory board, presenting the budget or talking about staffing or enrollment; and even at conferences or community meetings, such as presenting a workshop or talking at a Chamber of Commerce meeting. When you represent your program and yourself in this way, it is important to have the presentation skills necessary to be professional. It is also important to know your audience and how to best present information to them. Presentation skills are the skills you need to deliver effective and engaging presentations to a variety of audiences. These skills include the organization of your presentation, the design of your PowerPoint slides, the tone of your voice, and the body language you convey. In this competency, you will have the opportunity to learn and practice speaking using a professional voice and vocabulary and demonstrate adequate preparation and organized ideas through a series of related PowerPoint presentations for varying audiences.

Sub-Competencies:

- **SC1:** Exhibit the ability to be able to speak using a professional voice and vocabulary.
- **SC2:** Demonstrate adequate preparation and organized ideas to address a variety of audiences

Summative Competency Assessment

Time estimate to complete the summative assessment: 8 hours

Assessment Type: Performanced-Based

This summative assessment will support your overall understanding of the importance of transition policies and procedures within a center focusing on children and families joining you as well as when they leave. You will complete the summative assessment in two parts: 1) answer questions in the role of a director and 2) identify missing pieces in policies.

Presentation skills are the skills you need to deliver effective and engaging presentations to a variety of audiences. These skills include the organization of your presentation, the design of your PowerPoint slides, the tone of your voice, and the body language you convey. In this summative assessment, you will create an organized and professional PowerPoint and record yourself presenting the material either through a Zoom meeting or as if presenting to a live audience. You will choose a topic related to early childhood care and education that you are passionate about and then create three short presentations for three audiences: the staff, the families, and the governing board. The presentation will demonstrate your mastery of understanding your audience and utilizing formal presentation skills in professional forums.

For your summative assessment, you will build on the information started in Sub-Competency 2, Activity 2, Organizing Your Presentations. Using the early childhood topic you've chosen and the outlines you've created, you will create three organized and professional PowerPoint presentations and record yourself as if presenting to a live audience. The three presentations will be on the same topic but with three different audiences: the staff, the families, and the governing or advisory board.

1. Choose your early childhood topic for your presentations. This can be the same topic you used in your formative assessment, or you can opt to choose another topic for the summative assessment.

2. Write the outlines for each of the three presentations you will create, one for each audience: the staff, the families, the governing board. See the full descriptions of each of your audiences below.
 - a. Teaching Staff - You have 22 teachers and teacher’s assistants in your early childhood program. The staff have various educational backgrounds from a high school diploma through bachelor’s degrees in ECE. The staff are all ages and have varying years of teaching experience, although the longest anyone has been at your center is four years. You will be presenting this information to them at a staff meeting. What do they need to know about your topic and how will it be presented?
 - b. Families - The families in your program come from a variety of backgrounds; however, most have little or no college education. About 60 percent of the families are single-parents and some live in multi-generational households. Ten percent of the families have a home language other than English (Polish, Spanish, Tagalog). Many of the families have more than one child in your program.
 - c. Governing or Advisory Board - You have an advisory board in your program consisting of mostly retired educators and a retired accountant. They are supportive of your decisions, but do like to see presentations of new ideas and give approval before making changes or spending large amounts of money. The board meets every other month.
3. Create three different PowerPoint presentations on your early childhood topic for each audience. The PowerPoints can follow the same format, but each should be different and contain relevant information for the particular audience. Keep in mind that the same general topic needs to be used for all three presentations. What does the staff need to know about your topic? Do they need information linked to Illinois Learning standards or DCFS guidelines? What do the families need to know about your topic? Be sure to stay away from ECE jargon and connect the information to the home. What does the board need to know about your topic? Are your presentations informative or making a request?
 - a. Each PowerPoint presentation should be 5-10 minutes long. Include a short introduction that lets the viewer know who you are speaking to (i.e. “Welcome families...”/“Thank you staff for being here today...”).
 - b. You must add your speaking notes in the Notes section at the bottom of each slide.
 - c. See additional suggestions for PowerPoints below, including resources if you are new to creating and designing a PowerPoint presentation.
4. Choose whether you will record yourself making the PowerPoint presentation live or if you will present the PowerPoint through a virtual platform such as Zoom and record the meeting for submission. Practice using your technology.
5. Practice your presentations several times. The competency for this module is about oral and written communications. Practice until you feel comfortable with your speaking and presentation skills.
6. Video record your three (3) 5-minute presentations. This should be three separate video recording files. Save the recording files.
7. Submit the three (3) PowerPoint presentations and the three (3) video recordings.

The assessment will be graded based on the following rubric, which can also be found here under “Master Rubrics.”

Competency	Distinguished	Competent	Developing	Unacceptable	Unable to Assess
OWC2: Demonstrate formal presentation skills in professional forums	Models formal presentation skills in a variety of professional forums and supports these skills in other ECE professionals	Exhibits formal presentation skills in a variety of professional forums.	Assists others in delivering formal presentations in a variety of professional forums	Avoids presenting or presents inappropriately in public presentation forums	

Learning Activities & Resources
Total Time to Complete All Learning Activities: 5.5 hours

Sub-Competency 1: Exhibit the ability to be able to speak using a professional voice and vocabulary.

• **Activity 1:**

- **Getting Started:** Presentation skills are the skills you need to deliver effective and engaging presentations to a variety of audiences. These skills include the organization of your presentation, the design of your PowerPoint slides, the tone of your voice, and the body language you convey. Many people have a fear of speaking to a group of people in a professional setting; however, it is required for early childhood administrators to speak to groups of staff, families, the governing board, at community meetings, or presenting at a conference. In this activity, you will prepare for this module by learning skills for overcoming a fear of speaking publicly, then you will reflect on your experience and feelings about speaking publicly.
- **Materials:**
 - [To Overcome Your Fear of Public Speaking, Stop Thinking About Yourself](#) Read this article in the Harvard Business Review. The information in this article will be helpful as you prepare for your summative assessment also.
 - [30 Ways to Manage Speaking Anxiety](#) Read through these 30 tips and see which strategies will work best for you.
 - [How to Conquer the Fear of Public Speaking](#) Read this article from Psychology Today with more helpful information for public speaking.
 - [Your Voice Says A Lot About You](#) Watch this 9-minute Ted Talk about the science of the vocal cords and how fear and emotion affect our voices.
- **Formative Assessment:** After you have read the resources about facing your fears about public speaking, and watch the Ted Talk video, you will now think about your feelings about public speaking. You may already be an accomplished public speaker, you may have little experience speaking publicly, you may feel comfortable, or you may dread it. In the discussion boards, write a paragraph reflecting on your experience with public speaking and your feelings about it. Write a second paragraph about which of the tips for public speaking in the provided resources that you can use. After adding your paragraphs, respond to at least two of your peers.

• **Activity 2:**

- **Getting Started:** In this activity, you will make a video recording of yourself making a 60-90 second presentation, and then you will critique your performance, assessing your strengths and areas for growth. This activity will help you prepare to speak in a professional voice when making a presentation.
- **Materials:**
 - [Effective Speaking by Skills You Need](#); Read this article including great tips on speaking effectively in public. This is a resource that can be used throughout this module as a reference. Read all the way through to include the last section on the page, Body Language.
 - [Tips for Recording Yourself on Video](#) Read through these helpful tips to prepare for a successful video recording. This covers the mechanics of the recording process.

- **Formative Assessment:** You will create an approximately 2-3 minute video recording of yourself reading one of the [Illinois Early Learning Tip Sheets](#). Choose any Tip Sheet that is of interest to you. You do not have to read it word-for-word, but it should be close. For example, you can add a few additional words for transitional purposes, or eliminate words in parentheses. Practice reading the information several times before recording. Use the tips you have learned in the activities so far. In the recording you should speak and present professionally. Sit formally at a desk/table if you are recording from your computer, or stand as if speaking in front of a live audience. When you submit your recording, include a copy of the Tip Sheet you chose to use.

After making your recording, watch it and then write one paragraph reflecting on the strengths of the recording and areas for growth. It is important to take into consideration what you've learned through the module resources and reflect to prepare for your final summative assessment. Submit the video recording, original Tip Sheet, and reflection together.

Sub-Competency 2: Demonstrate adequate preparation and organized ideas to address a variety of audiences

- **Activity 1:**

- **Getting Started:** In your role as early childhood leader, you address a variety of audiences - your staff, the families in your center, community organizations, and perhaps other early childhood professionals at workshops or conferences. Knowing your audience helps you successfully prepare the right information to share. In this activity, you will decide which information is appropriate to share with each of three audiences - the staff, families, and governing board.
- **Materials:**
 - [Speaking to Diverse Audiences](#) Read this short article with tips about speaking to diverse audiences from Toastmaster International. When you address different groups, you may need to consider the different cultures represented.
 - [The Importance of Knowing Your Audience When Delivering a Speech](#) Read this short article with information about the importance of knowing your audience. In this activity, you will be thinking about presenting to staff, families, and a governing board. Keep that in mind when reading the article.
 - [Audience Analysis for Presentations: How to know your audience and present better](#) Read this article about analyzing your audience in advance of making a presentation.
 - [Why Boards Don't Work How They Should Work](#) Read this article from Child Care Exchange about boards in child care programs. The article starts with what can go wrong and ends with the benefits of boards when they are functioning well. Use this article to get an understanding of what boards should be and how they can support a program and its director.
- **Formative Assessment:** You will think about three target audiences that you will have the most opportunity to present to in your typical early childhood setting - the staff, the families, and the governing board. In this activity, each row has some information to share with one of the three targeted audiences. In the columns next to it, choose the most appropriate target audience, and place an X in the corresponding column. [Knowing your Audience Activity](#)

- **Activity 2:**

- **Getting Started:** Before speaking to an audience, it is necessary to be prepared by having a well thought out presentation. Remember, one of the main components of a formal presentation is the organization and design of the slides you are sharing. The first step is to create an outline. This ensures that every topic will be covered and that your thoughts are organized in a sequential manner. In this activity, you will demonstrate the ability to adequately organize a presentation by creating three outlines for the teaching staff, families, and governing board.
- **Materials:**
 - [How to Outline a Presentation](#)
- **Formative Assessment:** You will start building on information for your summative assessment beginning with this formative assessment activity. Choose a topic related to early childhood care and education that you are passionate about. You can use the [Illinois Early Learning Tip Sheets](#) as a resource, choose an advocacy issue, or anything else. This is the topic you can use in your summative assessment activity. Using the three target audiences outlined below, do an audience analysis and think about what each audience (staff, families, governing board) needs to know about your chosen topic and create an outline of a presentation for each audience. You are putting yourself into the early childhood leadership role and presenting as the expert in the field, sharing information with each audience. Each audience should have its own outline. This can be a short list of topics to be covered in your presentation.

Example:

- *Introduction to the topic*
- *Why it is important for that audience*
- *Point 1*
- *Point 2*
- *Point 3, etc.*
- *Next steps, actions*

SAMPLE MODULE LEVEL III: LEGAL AND FISCAL MANAGEMENT 4

IDC LFM4 Competency

Total Clock Hours for Module: 14 hours

Competency Statement: LFM4: Analyze and adapt, based on best practice, the effectiveness of operating budgets, resource allocation, and the utilization of blended funding streams

Competency Description: Early childhood program budgets do not exist within a vacuum. Rather, they exist within a landscape of opportunity and change. In this module, you will move beyond budget basics and consider a wider financial picture. Using this wider lens allows you to better consider why adjusting a budget might be necessary. Doing so also helps you uncover opportunities that may have been overlooked. In the end, such analyses help advance quality programs for children and families. As you work through the module, you will have the opportunity to learn, review, and practice using tools for budget analysis, as well as practice creating budgets which are responsive and adaptive. Along the way, consider how each tool or concept can strengthen your program and, ultimately, help promote best practice.

Sub-Competencies:

- **SC1:** Identify areas of opportunity in resource allocations, including blending funding streams.
- **SC2:** Effectively adjust operating budgets to meet program needs and allowable expenditures

Summative Competency Assessment
Time estimate to complete the summative assessment: 9 hours
Assessment Type: Performance-Based

In this assessment, you are asked to engage in thought and analysis related to budget forecasting and resource allocation. In part 1 of this summative assessment, you will analyze a key performance indicator (FTE) based on a case study, and subsequently describe how that indicator might be helpful in terms of overall planning. This task gets at the effectiveness of the planned budget, e.g., incoming funds from enrollment. This also addresses the evaluative part of the competency (e.g., as spelled out in the developing and unacceptable IDC toolbox descriptors and as in contrast to those 2 categories).

In part 2, you are asked to consider resource allocation, particularly in light of current industry initiatives. Thus, you will consider ways to adapt staff compensation in the absence of increasing pay. Here, you will consider other incentives (which can also address ECE equity) by adding a line item for professional development. This gets at both the areas of (budgetary) opportunity and contextual factors elements of the competent level from the IDC toolbox.

In Part 3, you will demonstrate how to utilize blended and braided funding streams by suggesting a blend or braid using a case study. This targets the adjustment of funding streams in relation to opportunity. Finally, you will tie it all together by describing how these analyses and adjustments can impact program quality.

Most people, when considering budgets, plan effectively for short- and long-term goals. Less often, they take time to consider their overall budget landscape, including missed opportunities and areas for growth. In this summative assessment, you will have an opportunity to consider some of these factors as you help a director walk through some of her key performance indicators and funding stream options. As you work, think back to what we have learned so far in this module— specifically, how key performance indicators help us forecast our financial picture (SC1); how contextual factors help us think of new and innovative ways to work our budget (SC2); and finally, how using multiple funding streams can help us stay afloat (SC3). If you become confused as you're working through the case study, remember to go back to the reading(s) and/or be sure to follow the hint(s).

Directions: First, review the resources below which contain key concepts related to budget analysis and adjustment. Afterward, read about Kiara, a new director, with whom you will partner to analyze her program. Specifically, your task below is to partner with Kiara to engage in evaluation of key performance indicators, wages and compensation, and finding additional funding streams. As you go along, pat yourself on the back for yourself and all the directors who engage in these activities regularly to help make programs in Illinois sustainable and of high quality.

Review these materials, all of which are included in the sub competencies and activities in this module:

- Ferdinando, A. (2021, Feb. 11). Five strategies to improve the financial health of your child care business [Blog Post]. Childcaresuccess.com. [5 Strategies to Improve the Financial Health of Your Child Care Business](#). This document provides an overview of short- and long-term budgeting strategies, and reminds us that our budgeting practices can be analyzed and adapted to meet the needs of our program and the wider contexts in which we operate. As you read, look for the five strategies, and think about the pros and cons of each.
- Honest Buck. (2021). How to calculate full-time equivalency for your childcare business [Blog Post]. Honest Buck Accounting. [How to calculate full-time equivalency](#). In this article, the authors review how to calculate full-time equivalency, which can be used as a key performance indicator (KPI). As you read, look for the definition of full-time equivalency, and think how using it helps us estimate how part-time enrollments will affect our financial picture. Pay close attention to the equation, as demonstrated in paragraph 4. Here, the author calculated part-time equivalency by multiplying the number of part-time children by the average number of hours a child attended part-time. This was then divided by the total number of hours the center was open per week. In essence, it represents the total number of billed hours used by part-timers per week.

- Lund University. (2022, June 2). Inspiration and ideas for different forms of professional development. Lund University. [Ideas for Professional Development](#). Review this page for ideas related to professional staff development. As you read, think about the many different formats available. Think also about which option(s) you might build into a staff compensation package.
- Kangarootime. (2020, Oct. 22). 5 top KPIs every childcare center should track [Video]. YouTube. [5 Top KPIs to Track](#) (1 hour). The video at this resource introduces you to the concept of the KPI (Key Performance Indicator). As you watch, look for the five KPIs presented, and stop and pause the video as needed to ensure you find the example calculations.
- New York Council on Children and Families. (2013). Blending and braiding funds to support early childhood programs: Your “how-to” guide. ccf.ny.gov. [Blending and Braiding Funds](#). This resource provides an overview and examples of what is meant by blending and braiding. In short, these are two methods we use when adding additional funding streams to our programs. As you read, look to understand the difference between what is meant by blending and what is meant by braiding. Utilize this resource by
 - reading up to page 13;
 - reading about the first 4 stages of income stream planning (p. 14-25)
 - reading about possible funding sources on page 23;
 - and then reading example scenarios 1- 4 (p. 41- 45).

Case Study: Kiara is fairly new to her job as director of an early learning program in Peoria, Illinois. Kiara’s program currently has an enrollment of 50 children, and is partly subsidized by a corporation (see budget below). Children in Kiara’s program come from a variety of backgrounds; about a fourth of Kiara’s enrolled children are from very low-income families without many resources at home. In her first year, Kiara has made it a priority to analyze the budget and determine places in which the budget is weak and/or does not provide enough revenue to maintain a high-quality program. As part of her study, Kiara is also looking at how much is realistically needed to retain quality staff. As part of this exercise, Kiara is interested in examining her budget landscape, and deciding if/when/how additional income streams might be helpful and/or places in which the budget needs adjusting.

Additional information:

- *Kiara has 50 children enrolled*
- *40 children are full-time*
- *10 children are part-time*
- *Average number of hours per week for the part-time children is 10*
- *Kiara’s program is open 7:00 a.m. - 6:00 p.m*
- *Maximum capacity for Kiara’s program is 60 children*
- *Kiara’s program is not a Head Start program*

As she completes this analysis, Kiara has partnered with you.

- Partner with Kiara to examine key performance indicators (KPIs).
 - Determine Kiara’s full-time equivalency. Remember to show your work/calculations. (Hint: see Honest Buck (2021) reading above)
 - What is Kiara’s FTE?
 - Based on the Honest Buck (2021) reading, how profitable is Kiara’s program? 2-3 sentences.
 - Based on this analysis, what are your recommendations for Kiara in terms of enrollment? If changes are suggested, how would this help/hurt her program? Remember to justify your answer, even if no changes are suggested. 2-3 sentences.
- Next, help Kiara think about resource needs and adjustments by looking at wages.
 - Kiara currently pays her early childhood teachers \$12.00 an hour, while she pays her assistant teachers \$10.00/hour. List how Kiara can work toward equity by, in part, by providing staff professional development. Do this by providing one specific example of a professional development activity/line item she can include in her budget for staff.

- Help Kiara demonstrate how funding streams can be aligned.
 - After reading the resources above, help Kiara choose 2 funding stream programs to add to her program. Choose these from the New York Council (2013) reading above (Appendix B).
 - Write a short statement in which you describe the following:
 - Why you chose each program
 - The requirements her program and enrolled children need to meet to be eligible
 - How each will positively impact Kiara’s overall budget (assume her program is eligible for your choices)
 - Whether each will be used as a blend or a braid and why
- Summary
 - Finally, write a summary statement in which you explain which/how many of the above adjustments you recommended (or recommend) for Kiara, and how the change, if any, will help Kiara offer a stronger, more quality program. (approx. one paragraph, 12-pt font, double-spaced)

What to submit for this summative assessment: Submit your completed FTE analysis, compensation for professional development statement (Part 2), funding stream choices (Part 3), and summary statement to your instructor. Be sure to include a title heading for all documents, and a cover page entitled “Financial Landscape Case Study.”

The assessment will be graded based on the following rubric, which can also be found here under “Master Rubrics.”

Learning Activities & Resources

Competency	Distinguished	Competent	Developing	Unacceptable	Unable to Assess
LFM4: Analyze and adapt, based on best practice, the effectiveness of operating budgets, resource allocation, and the utilization of blended funding streams	Promotes with other ECE leaders’ effective evaluative procedures which consistently provide data to justify the effectiveness of operating budgets and resource allocation, and the potential utilization of blended funding streams	Identify areas of opportunity in monetary and resource allocations. Effectively adjust operating budgets, resource allocation, and the utilization of blending funding streams based on fluctuating contextual factors, program needs and allowable expenditures	Implements some evaluative procedures which provide data to inform usefulness of operating budgets and resource allocation	Does not have or use data to justify the effectiveness of operating budgets and/or resource allocation	

Total Time to Complete All Learning Activities: 7 hours

Sub-Competency 1: Identify areas of opportunity in resource allocations, including blending funding streams.

- **Activity 1:**
 - **Getting Started:** In addition to ongoing analysis, another key financial task is aligning your budget to multiple changing contexts and/or initiatives in early childhood. In this activity, you will look more closely at one of these initiatives, the Advancing Equity in Early Childhood Education initiative out of the National Association for the Education of Young Children (NAEYC). You will also consider more broadly how benefits help enhance the wages you can offer staff, thus contributing to a stronger overall compensation package (which is salary plus benefits).
 - **Materials:**
 - Sandbox Software. (2021, Jan. 7). Employee benefits and wage compensation for child care [Video]. runsandbox.com. [Employee Benefits and Wages for Childcare](https://www.runsandbox.com/employee-benefits-and-wages-for-childcare) (~5 minutes). This short video reviews factors to consider in deciding pay for an employee. Factors the video covers include base pay, raises, and benefits. As you watch, look for some of the context around how these decisions are made.

- Proctor, P. (2022, Jun 29). How to create a desirable compensation plan. BusinessNewsDaily.com. [How to Create a Desirable Compensation Plan](#) (1 page). This article provides an overview of compensation, including indirect compensation and how to ensure fairness and equity. Scroll down and start reading at the section “type of indirect compensation” and read through until the end.
- NAEYC P2P Caucus. (2020, July). A manifesto demanding the end of exploitation of black and brown women in early childhood education. [NAEYC Equity Initiatives](#). Read this document (3 pages) to learn more about equity initiatives out of the National Association for the Education of Young Children (NAEYC). Hint: Click “download the statement” in orange halfway down the page.
- Lund University. (2022, June 2). Inspiration and ideas for different forms of professional development. Lund University. [Ideas for Professional Development](#). Review this page for ideas related to professional staff development. As you read, think about the many different formats available. Consider how providing professional staff development contributes to equity in the work environment. Think about which option(s) you might build into a staff compensation package.
- **Formative Assessment:** Write an exit card with three key takeaways on creating equity in resource allocation and staff compensation.
- **Activity 2:**
 - **Getting Started:** Creating a healthy and robust program that can be sustained over time often involves utilizing funding from external resources, initiatives, and government reimbursement programs. In this activity, you will pivot from money out (e.g., employee wages and compensation) and look instead at money in (e.g., such as funding streams). Broadly speaking, funding streams are most often money that flows into your program from the government, such as child care subsidies. In the activity below, we take a look at funding streams and practice defining them for our staff.
 - **Materials:**
 - New York Council on Children and Families. (2013). Blending and braiding funds to support early childhood programs: Your “how-to” guide. ccf.ny.gov. [Blending and Braiding Funds](#). This resource provides an overview and examples of what is meant by blending and braiding. In short, these are two methods we use when adding additional funding streams to our programs. As you read, look to understand the difference between what is meant by blending and what is meant by braiding. Utilize this resource by
 - reading up to page 13;
 - reading about possible funding sources on page 23;
 - and then reading example scenarios 1- 4 (p. 41- 45).
 - The Early Learning Lab. (2019). Early childhood funding in Illinois: A primer on how it works. [Early Childhood Funding in Illinois](#). This resource provides an overview of funding programs in Illinois. Be sure to click the boxes at the bottom of the page to read about each program and its eligibility requirements.
 - **Formative Assessment:** Using Scenario 4 from the New York Council (2013) reading, create a visually-pleasing PowerPoint (e.g., include graphics/photos/etc.), one slide for each bullet point, in which you convey the following:
 - Briefly, explain (or compare/contrast) the difference between blending and braiding
 - Describe which method you are using for the services provided and the funding sources that go into it
 - Describe what you do that makes it a blend or a braid
 - Finally, include a statement or visual about keeping track of funds or hours

Sub-Competency 2: Effectively adjust operating budgets to meet program needs and allowable expenditures

- **Activity 1:**

- **Getting Started:** Ongoing analysis is a key part of good financial management. Key performance indicators (KPIs) are benchmarks we can use as we analyze and adjust our programs' financial needs. In this activity, we examine KPIs more closely, and learn about five specific KPIs that can help us gauge how our finances are performing and where there might be room for adjustment.
- **Materials:**
 - Honest Buck. (2021). Seven financial management tips for early childhood education businesses [Blog Post]. Honest Buck Accounting. [7 Financial Management Tips](#). In this article, the authors review strategies to improve your program's overall fiscal health by planning ahead and monitoring key performance indicators (KPIs).
 - Kangarootime. (2020, Oct. 22). 5 top KPIs every childcare center should track [Video]. [5 Top KPIs to Track](#) (1 hour). The video at this resource introduces you to the concept of the KPI (Key Performance Indicator). As you watch, look for the five KPIs presented, and stop and pause the video as needed to ensure you find the example calculations.
 - Honest Buck. (2021). How to calculate full-time equivalency for your childcare business [Blog Post]. Honest Buck Accounting. [How to calculate full-time equivalency](#). In this article, the authors review how to calculate full-time equivalency, which can be used as a key performance indicator (KPI).
 - Ferdinando, A. (2021, Feb. 11). Five strategies to improve the financial health of your child care business [Blog Post]. Childcaresuccess.com. [5 Strategies to Improve the Financial Health of Your Child Care Business](#). This document provides an overview of short- and long-term budgeting strategies, and reminds us that our budgeting practices can be analyzed and adapted to meet the needs of our program and the wider contexts in which we operate. As you read, look for the five strategies, and think about the pros and cons of each.
- **Formative Assessment:** Using the chart, describe the five KPIs identified in the Kangarootime video. In addition, explain how it is useful in adjusting operating budgets to meet the program needs. (Explain briefly using short sentences)

Appendix K: Specific Recommendations

Competency	Competency/Rubric Misalignment	Recommended Change at Competent Level
EP4: Utilize data generated from children and families to ensure integrity in program design, decision-making, and goals.	X The competency statement does not address informal and formal assessment language that is in the rubric.	<i>Rubric: Plans reflect the use of data, both formal and informal, to support program design, decision-making, and goals.</i>
EP6: Develop, implement, interpret, and evaluate child assessment policies and practices.	X Establishes and applies are the verbs used in the rubric which covers develop, implement, and interpret, but evaluation is not specifically addressed at the competent level.	<i>Rubric: Establishes, applies and evaluates developmentally appropriate child assessment policies and practices</i>
FP1: Create processes, procedures, and program plans that support and enhance family functioning, cultivate respectful, responsive relationships, foster family engagement, and facilitate bidirectional communication.	X The rubric omits “cultivate respectful, responsive relationships, foster family engagement, and facilitate bidirectional communication.”	<i>Rubric: Explains strategies that support family engagement as part of an ongoing program plan, such as cultivating respectful, responsive relationships and facilitating bidirectional communication.</i>
FP2: Develop, implement, and assess organizational systems that support and enhance family relationships and promote meaningful family engagement.	X The rubric omits “support and enhance family relationships.”	<i>Rubric: Cultivates, infuses and assesses organizational systems that support and enhance family relationships and promote family engagement</i>
HRD1: Develop written policies and procedures and implement best practices for hiring, onboarding, and mentoring new staff in accordance with legal mandates and professional standards.	X The rubric omits “onboarding new staff and professional standards.”	<i>Rubric: Creates and implements written policies and procedures for hiring, onboarding and mentoring new staff in accordance with legal mandates and professional standards.</i>
HRD3: Apply and assess best practices supportive of optimal professional performance, professional staff interactions and ongoing staff development and engagement.	X The rubric omits ongoing staff development and engagement. Additionally, the competent level does not align with the other three levels (unacceptable, developing, and distinguished), which refer to the creation and/or implementation of written policies and procedures.	<i>Rubric: Implements and evaluates best practices supportive of professional performance, professional staff interactions, staff development and engagement.</i>

Competency	Competency/Rubric Misalignment	Recommended Change at Competent Level
HRD4: Implement and evaluate best practices and provide reflective supervision that enhances professional staff interactions and promotes individualized staff development and collaboration within the context of unique roles.	X The rubric omits reflective supervision. The rubric includes written policies and procedures, which are not included in the competency statement.	<i>Rubric: Plans reflect the use of data, both formal and informal, to support program design, decision-making, and goals.</i>
LA3: Engage staff, families, community stakeholders, and professional organizations in support of high-quality early childhood services for young children and their families.	X The rubric omits professional organizations. The rubric includes equitable compensation, which is not specified in the competency.	<i>Rubric: Establishes, applies and evaluates developmentally appropriate child assessment policies and practices</i>
LFM2: Develop fiscal policies and procedures and implement best practices to support sound fiscal operations.	X The rubric includes fundraising, but that is not in the competency statement or in any rubric row other than competent.	<i>Rubric: Explains strategies that support family engagement as part of an ongoing program plan, such as cultivating respectful, responsive relationships and facilitating bidirectional communication.</i>
LFM3: Develop and/or implement policies and practices that align funding stream requirements and long-term fiscal health, equitable compensation for staff, and high-quality services for children and families.	X The rubric includes fundraising, but that is not in the competency statement or in any rubric row other than competent.	<i>Rubric: Cultivates, infuses and assesses organizational systems that support and enhance family relationships and promote family engagement</i>
POFM2: Design, arrange, and evaluate the effective use of space based on principles of environmental psychology, safety, and child development.	X The rubric does not address the effective use of space at any level.	<i>Rubric: Creates and implements written policies and procedures for hiring, onboarding and mentoring new staff in accordance with legal mandates and professional standards.</i>
MPR2: Collaborate with families and stakeholders in ongoing development, implementation, assessment, and revision of the center's strategic/business plan.	X The rubric does not address revision at the competent level.	<i>Rubric: Implements and evaluates best practices supportive of professional performance, professional staff interactions, staff development and engagement.</i>

Competency	Competency/Rubric Misalignment	Recommended Change at Competent Level
TEC1: Demonstrate technological literacy	<p style="text-align: center;">X</p> <p>The rubric needs to be updated back on the IDC toolbox, using the rubric from the Faculty Fellow's TEC Assessments.</p>	<p><i>Rubric: 1) Uses technology tools to access information (e.g., resource guide with web links)</i> <i>2) Uses technology tools to manage information (e.g., staffing plans, meals, enrollment numbers, etc.)</i> <i>3) Uses technology tools to integrate information (e.g., spreadsheet software, use of devices like smartphones, tablets, smartboards, digital cameras, etc., in the classroom and in the management of the program)</i> <i>4) Uses technology tools to evaluate information (e.g., digital child assessment programs, needs assessments surveys, electronic teacher/admin professional goal tracking, electronic attendance tracking)</i> <i>5) Uses technology tools to create information (e.g., presentation software, website creation/ updating, digital apps, communication artifacts, etc.)</i> <i>6) Uses technology tools to communicate information (e.g. email, presentation software, websites, digital information sharing apps/ programs, social media, etc.)</i></p>
TEC3: Develop and/or implement technology policies and appropriate technologies to manage administrative functions.	<p style="text-align: center;">X</p> <p>Rubric needs to define what is meant by "administrative functions."</p>	<p><i>Rubric: Critically chooses and employs technology policies and appropriate technologies to manage administrative functions (ie, program data management, finances, internal and external communication)</i></p>
PPS4: Develop, implement, and assess plans that support personal and professional development as well as the status of the profession.	<p style="text-align: center;">X</p> <p>The rubric omits "status of the profession" at the competent level.</p>	<p><i>Rubric: Creates, carries out and evaluates plans that support personal and professional development as well as the status of the profession</i></p>



1226 Towanda Plaza | Bloomington, Illinois 61701 | Telephone: (866) 697-8278 | www.ilgateways.com

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