



GATEWAYS TO OPPORTUNITY

Illinois Professional Development System

PDAC Higher Education Committee

Meeting Minutes

December 8, 2023

Julia Auch	Leslie Layman	Mikki Sherwood
Julie Lindstrom	Marie Donovan	Tom Pavkov
Kate Connor	Marsha Hawley	
Leslie Layman		

Kate Connor and Marsha Hawley welcomed members to the PDAC Higher Education Committee Meeting.

Approval of Minutes

- March 9, 2023
 - Marie Donovan moved to accept the minutes with corrections.
 - Leslie Layman seconded the motion.
 - Minutes accepted.
- Background of the Strategic Plan X: The PDAC Steering Committee held a strategic planning retreat in September to examine the ECE field, current trends, workforce data, and potential state and federal initiatives in order begin planning the PDAC Strategic Plan X. This is a 3-year plan, but with potential changes due to IDHS goals.
- The Higher Education Committee will review the potential goals and objectives brought forward during the Steering retreat. Not all goals and objectives need to be brought forward into the final plan. The Committee will prioritize the goals as high, medium, or low. The Committee will add any topics that would strengthen the higher education committee section of the strategic plan. The Committee will look at adding members to the committee roster to strengthen the Committee's work over the next 3 years.
- As background it is important to note that Committee members brought forward issues regarding sustained institutional support for ECE programs after the Early Childhood Access Consortium for Equity (ECACE) funding ends. It is possible programs could close without continued ECACE funding, or programs could quickly lose enrollment.
 - Long Term: How to encourage continued investment in programs.
 - Short Term: As schools make their budget decisions for the next fiscal year unsure if they can count on ECACE funds, what cuts they make could impact the infrastructure that has been built in the past year.
- The role of PDAC is really about the workforce, and to remember that funding for ECACE came from child care. The money was for a specific purpose to help the current workforce in early childhood start, continue, or finish their degrees at higher education institutions, it was not meant to be a sustaining piece of funding. For purposes of the strategic plan need to consider PDAC's role in thinking about professional development needs for the workforce which includes higher education.

The Committee reviewed the draft goals/objectives that came out of the PDAC Steering retreat. (Items in blue show revisions, additions or thoughts or potential inclusions to the goals and objectives. Items in red are background/thoughts about connections to other committees from the Steering retreat)

~~Goal 1: Evaluate potential for college credit for job embedded competency development and attainment~~ — Goal 1 was moved as an objective under goal 2.

Objectives: (should these continue as actions steps below under 1?)

- 1: Explore workforce pathways that currently exist and identify needs.
- 2: Develop strategies to incorporate apprenticeship and job embedded models into systems.
- 3: Identify pilot findings/recommendations and replicate for apprenticeships job embedded based models.

Potential objective: regarding identifying appropriate resources should be added/expanded upon

Goal 2 (Now Goal 1): Provide statewide access to Prior Learning Assessment that leads to college credit and counts toward credential/degree attainment for the early childhood incumbent workforce

Objectives:

1. Evaluate potential for college credit for job embedded competency development and attainment
2. Review and identify successful, tested models of PLA for the early care and education incumbent workforce for statewide scale up
3. Partner with Financial Supports Committee to ensure cost of PLA is incorporated into scholarship programs for accessibility
4. Partner with employers to facilitate incumbent workforce members using PLA as a proven pathway toward credential and degree attainment

Potential objective: consider Dual Credit as a way to recruit to the field as it partners both community colleges and universities

Potential new GOAL (or add within an existing goal): Evaluate or provide guidance, strategies and recommendations for approaches on how to support new early childhood professionals in entering the field/workforce.

Objectives:

1. Connect with Early College
2. Connect with workforce centers – small business
3. Apprenticeship models
4. Partnering with Head Start in local communities

HE and QC could focus on different models under a shared goal

Goal 3 (now Goal 2): Expand (Scale up) identified successful innovative professional development models

Objectives:

1. Review data upon completion of PD pilot models (e.g. apprenticeship, job embedded PD etc.)
2. Evaluate for efficacy using pre-determined metrics
3. Make recommendations for statewide scale-up of models that meet metrics
 - a. Provide guidance for best practices
 - b. Include evaluative component

4. Partner with Financial Supports Committee for recommendations needed to provide funding to bring to scale identified successful/impactful models
Potential objective: encouraging higher education offering additional opportunities/expand coursework needed to attain the Illinois Director Credential or the Infant Toddler Credential.

HE, WDP taking on different audiences under a shared goal example:

Higher Education (faculty), Workforce Development and Pathways (educator incumbent workforce), Financial Supports - as needed when ready to bring funding into picture.

Goal 4 (now Goal 3): Develop systems for identifying and sharing best practices and innovative models to strengthen and promote field flexibility and scaleup of successful models

Objectives:

1. Identify audiences that benefit from innovative practices (e.g. Program Directors, early childhood educators, P.D. Providers (faculty and trainers), PDAC, etc.)
2. Review and identify successful systems (state or national) for sharing innovations (e.g. peer learning, communities of practice, etc.)
 - a. Determine metrics for “success”
3. Implement and test systems for sharing best practices/innovations among various audiences

Potential new GOAL (or add within an existing goal) Develop landscape survey(s) in order to find ways to measure the impact of early childhood programs that are meaningful to those higher education programs and the industry in general. Survey(s) can be shared with interested parties to further the importance/impact of ECE.

This should be a shared goal - HE and QC could take on different audiences under a shared goal

Goal 5 (now Goal 4): Utilize and maximize Illinois’ well-developed existing competency infra-structure for Gateways Credentials by making it accessible and transparent to the field

Objectives:

1. Encourage all state agencies/stakeholders to utilize the consistency of existing competency infra-structure and language
 - a. IAI Panel (goes to Higher Ed)
 - b. ISBE IPTS
 - c. NAEYC
 - d. IDHS
 - e. DCFS (goes to QC)
2. Encourage all professional development (higher education courses and trainings) to identify content using competency language
 - a. Gateways entitled institutions courses that have competencies in their college coursework list competencies in corresponding syllabi.
 - b. Training list competencies on certificates (where applicable) (QC)

Additional language in supporting IHEs in understanding what alignment and entitlement means for programs in Objective 2.

Potential to add an objective: consider Dual Degree as a way to engage with High Schools (Dual was mentioned for Goal 1 as well)

Follow Up:

- An invitation should be shared with the PDAC Start Early representative (Mercedes Mondragon) regarding the PDAC Higher Education Committee so they are aware of issues and challenges impacting higher education.
- A Higher Education Committee meeting will be held in January to review the updated goals discussed during this meeting for further revision before sharing with PDAC Steering at their January 25th meeting.

