



**PDAC Higher Education Committee
Meeting Minutes**

Carolina Casillas	Julie Lindstrom	Marsha Hawley
Emily Dorsey	Kate Connor	Mikki Sherwood
Gabriel Holmes	Lisa Downey	Rebecca Pruitt
Julia Auch	Marie Donovan	Thomas Pavkov

Welcome – Kate Connor and Rebecca Pruitt, Chairs

Approval of Minutes

- April 3, 2024

Julia Auch moved to accept the minutes.

Thomas Pavkov seconded the motion.

Minutes were approved.

Members shared events happening at their institutions and new members were welcomed to the committee.

Higher Education Goals and Objectives: PDAC Strategic Plan Phase X

- Goal 1: Developing systems for identifying, sharing, and promoting flexible and innovative higher education early childhood/child development program models.
 - Elevating, putting forward, and identifying the innovative work that has been done across institutions.
 - Identify specific models that are working well.
 - Explore program models that have been created.
 - Could the Illinois Community College Board (ICCB) or Illinois Board of Higher Education (IBHE) share data on the reports that institutions shared for ECACE?
 - Information could be used to familiarize new faculty and employers such as a “hub” shared on the Gateways website.
 - The Forum could be used to share ideas regarding practices and the workforce.
 - Acknowledging the work across the state from higher education partners could be used to build trust and re-engagement.
- Goal 2: Expand (scale up) identified successful innovative professional development higher education Early childhood/child development program models.
 - How do we think as a committee promoting the expansion or scaling up of those models and programs.
 - How do we find alignment among practices, how do we identify what people are doing across the state that could be connected and elevated by the work of PDAC and this committee.
- Goal 3: Gather and disseminate information on approaches to support new and/or incumbent early childhood professionals in entering or sustaining the field and/or workforce.
 - The focus is on the workforce and early childhood professional educators.

- How are we going to identify new pathways or call out pathways that are working well?
 - Early College, dual credit, prior learning assessment, and apprenticeship models.
 - University of Chicago is engaged in apprenticeship models.
- How do we gather the information we need in order to take the next steps?
 - Taking a systematic approach regarding information.
- A subgroup could be formed to gather, highlight, and distribute information on innovative programs, program evaluation, or evaluating what is happening at programs to create pathways for early childhood careers.
- Head Start was listed under Goal 3 to keep their specific teacher requirements in our conversations for the workforce.
- Identify high need credentials and which higher education institutions are offering the credential.
- Goal 4: Utilize and maximize Illinois' well-developed existing competency infrastructure for Gateways to Opportunity Credentials by increasing transparency.
 - Focus on the Credentials.
- Committee felt Goals 1 and 3 should be the first to be addressed with Goals 2 and 4 following after the information from Goals 1 and 3 had been developed, reviewed, and shared.

Gateways Higher Education Forum

- The Gateways Faculty Forum will be held on April 10 and 11, 2025.
- The Forum will be held at the Doubletree Hotel in Bloomington, IL.
- PDAC Higher Education Committee will help with input and be thought partners in the development of the Forum. Members who are interested can join the Forum Planning Committee.
- An RFP will be released for faculty to submit topics for presentations at the Forum.
- Committee members were asked to forward any keynote speakers or topics they believe would be of interest to faculty for the Forum.
- If anyone knows of a higher education institution that is bringing in speakers for their own purposes, they could possibly participate at the Forum as well.
- The Forum gives the opportunity for 2-year and 4-year faculty to come together.
- Faculty value the time together the Forum offers.
- Faculty could use their professional development funds to attend or offer scholarships to help cover costs for other faculty. A conference fee could be used to offset costs.
- Topics of interest for the Forum:
 - Student driven initiatives.
 - Innovations on how to reach the workforce and how have we partnered with the workforce to create and deliver innovations.
 - Program evaluations and what has been learned from them.
 - Could present different tracks regarding what is presented: innovations track, research track, myth busting track, workforce track, and/or program evaluation and data track.
 - Is there an opportunity to welcome new faculty? Use as an onboarding session.

Adjourn

