IECAP Advisory Committee Meeting, 9/26/2023

Attendees:

Anita Andrews-Hutchinson
J Becker
Talina Carter-Bowie
Sonja Clark
Karee Clarke
Annie Connell
Kate Conner
Sonja Crum Knight
Johnna Darragh Ernst
Ashley Harms
Lori Harrison
Marsha Hawley
Carisa Hurley Davis
Michael Kim
Ruth Kimble
Cathy Main
Gabriela Manzanares

Lindsay Meeker
Jackie Melendez
Marcy Mendenhall
Mercedes Mondragon
Lauri Morrison-Frichtl
Larissa Mulholland
Joanna Paul
Toni Porter
Nikole Powell
Brynn Siebert
Sara Slaughter
Dexter Smith
Bryan Stokes
Edie Washington
Michelle Wood
Karen Yarbrough
Jean Zaar

- Welcome from Michelle Wood
- INCCRRA Updates
    - Four programs will participate in this pilot – Carole Robertson Center for Learning, Heartland Community College Child Development Lab, It Takes A Village Family of Schools, and Skip A Long Community Services
    - A kickoff meeting was held with these programs on September 1.
    - Program agreements have been sent out for signatures and will begin on October 1st.
    - The Smart Start portion of the Gateways website has been updated to include a brief intro to the Apprenticeship pilot and notes that it is in development.
    - INCCRRA staff are currently working to create a webform for monthly budget reporting which will be shared with programs once complete. A webinar will be held to outline how the webform can be used and to answer any program questions regarding budget reporting requirements.
    - IDHS has approved an opportunity for identified and registered Apprentices through the Gateways Scholarship Program. The flyer for this was shared with the Committee via email and is in the meeting invitation. The opportunity will be limited to a maximum of 25 Apprentices and includes 100% coverage of tuition, up to $250 per course for books, and up to $1500 of debt relief funding if needed. More information about this will be shared with Apprentices and Administrators at a later date.
    - Two and four-year higher education institutions that will partner with this pilot include City Colleges of Chicago, Black Hawk College, Heartland Community College, National Louis University, Western Illinois University, and University of Illinois Chicago.

- o Roles and responsibilities of the pilot programs and the higher education partners were shared (slide).
- UIC Updates
  - o The standards for this pilot are now federally registered.
  - o One focus moving forward will be on the Site-Based Mentors. The goal is to ensure that they have the needed supports to be successful. Identified Mentors will help to build a description of the Mentor role, determine proper qualifications, etc. A college course for Mentors will appear in the course catalog in January to allow for Spring 2024 registration.
  - o Information on SEQUAL and its purpose was shared (slide).
- Advisory Committee Feedback
  - o A Committee member asked what the biggest lift/challenge for success is for this pilot.
    - ▪ Members of the IECAP Work Group responded with various reasons, including implementation of a salary scale, implementation of partnerships with higher education institutions, developing an infrastructure for timely payments to programs, establishing efficiencies in required documentation, and creating reasonable timelines for many moving pieces. The general consensus by all was that pilots are established to learn, and that is the intent moving forward with hopes to use what is learned to drive the program forward in coming years.
  - o A Committee member asked if the Infant Toddler Credential would be included in the pilot.
    - ▪ The Infant Toddler Credential will be looked at closely to potentially include moving forward. Now that there is a level of knowledge and comfort on what it takes to have standards federally approved, adding other Credentials is a possibility.
- Advisory Committee Feedback on Research Questions – what might we want to learn from this pilot?
  - o Data around closed classrooms and ability to reopen those
  - o Any increases in staff retention rate?
    - ▪ Retention at site/program
    - ▪ Retention in the field
    - ▪ Retention in higher education programs
    - ▪ Retention data that tracks across all of ECE, including demographics for participation of people of color
  - o From a staff perspective, is there a change in becoming an ECE community of learning through this program?
  - o Earning increases
    - ▪ Total compensation increases
    - ▪ Salary increases
  - o Data regarding use of ECACE Mentors and higher education partnering with on-site IECAP Mentors to create full wraparound support for staff
  - o It was noted that a Community of Practice has been extremely helpful/essential to the ExceleRate pilot (now Smart Start Quality Support), and it is recommended that a similar structure be added to this pilot.

- National Apprenticeship Week – does this group want to put something together to celebrate this in Illinois?
  - Could partner with INCCRRA to include consistent message in Registry Newsletter and/or Director Download
  - Consider a proclamation through the Governor's office
    - IECAP work group members will work to convene a group of volunteers from the larger Committee to develop a plan for celebrating National Apprenticeship Week.
- Intent of the Committee moving forward
  - The hope is that this group will be used as a sounding board/think tank, or that they will act as "Mentors" for participating employers and program administrators.
- Next Steps
  - Apprentice kick-off meeting/welcome in late October/early November
  - Training webinar for budget report webform in late October/early November
- Adjourn