Updates and Reminders

Late Winter Commission Meeting

The NAEYC Commission on the Accreditation of Early Childhood Higher Education Programs met for its regular late winter meeting at NAEYC headquarters. It welcomed its newest Commissioners, Eric Bucher (Children's Equity Project at Arizona State University), Erin Donovan [Ivy Tech Community College – Muncie & Anderson (IN)] and Carrie Nepstad (City Colleges of Chicago-- Harold Washington College) and enjoyed three days together working through a packed agenda. Over the course of the meeting, the Commission reviewed a number of cases for renewal accreditation, Responses to Conditions and Year 4 Interim Reports, participated in a calibration exercise to continue strengthening consistency in its decision-making, discussed ongoing issues facing the ECE profession and the higher education programs within it, and reflected on programs', peer reviewers' and Commissioners' experiences and feedback in transitioning to the updated (2021) higher education accreditation standards.

To the latter, the Commission has been gathering feedback throughout the transition period to identify where potential changes to the accreditation standards and various report templates used in the system may be needed (see more about ways in which you can provide feedback to the Commission later in the newsletter). It will be reviewing a large group of first-time/renewal cases using the new standards at its upcoming summer meeting. Following that meeting, it will have

reviewed a sufficient number of cases and gathered enough feedback to inform revisions to the system. The Commission is deeply appreciative of programs' and peer reviewers' partnership in making this transition to the new accreditation standards as well as for the formal and informal feedback that has been provided throughout. The Commission is committed to a continuous improvement mindset and to using data (gathered from all stakeholders in our accreditation community) to inform changes to the system.

Commissioners are ECE faculty in accredited and as well as non-accredited programs, college administrators, former peer reviewers, and professionals in ECE field. In other words, they are just like you! The Call for Applications to serve on the Commission typically opens in the summer with interviews conducted in the fall. We hope you'll consider applying during the next call for applicants. To learn more about the Higher Education Accreditation Commission, we encourage you to visit **the website.**

Professional Development Opportunities at NAEYC's Professional Learning Institute

Join NAEYC staff and Commissioners for higher education accreditation training sessions June 1-5 in New Orleans! From a pre-institute workshop on June 1 to several sessions throughout the week, there are plenty of options for increasing your accreditation know-how. **Learn more and register online.**

Accreditation Policy Updates

At the Commission's recent meeting it voted on minor updates to the Accreditation Handbook. This included clarifying language in accreditation eligibility criteria, offering opportunity for an additional extension for programs in initial self-study, and clarifying when staff might consult the Executive Committee with regard to completeness of a Self-Study Report. The updated Accreditation Handbook is available in the **Resource Library** as well as the NAEYC **website.**

Check out our NEW and NEWLY REVISED Higher Education Accreditation Resources!

In case you haven't yet heard, we have some new and newly revised accreditation resources now available in the **online resource library** specifically for programs (you must be logged in to your Basecamp account to access these resources).

- **Guidance Document- Using Candidate Observation as a Key Assessment**
- **On-Demand Training Module- Preparing for the NAEYC Higher Education Accreditation Site Visit**
- **On-Demand Training Module- Focus in Fifteen: The Learning Opportunities Chart**
- **Key Assessments Self-Assessment Tool (re-purposed and adapted former peer reviewer KA tool)**
- **Creating Key Assessments that Clearly Align with the Standards and Will Lead to Meaningful Data (REVISED-Updated to new standards!)**

And we didn't forget our peer reviewers! We also recently released a new guide to help peer reviewers become team chair and an assessment tool to better get to know the peer reviewer team's strengths, experiences and interests to assist in planning the site visit!

- **Peer Review Team Chair Guide**
- **Peer Reviewer Self-Assessment for Team Chairs**

In addition, if you missed our *Diving Deeper into Key Assessments & Data Analysis* live webinar session in January or our *Winter 2024 Ask Me Anything* live webinar session in February, you can access the recorded sessions in the **Online Resource Library's recorded webinars section.**

More resources and trainings are being developed as we speak! We'll continue to keep you updated as new supports roll out!

In addition to new resources, we will also soon be rolling out **a new online resource library**. This new easier-to-navigate hub will be available this spring and will become your go-to source for guidance documents, templates, and more, so please keep an eye on your email in the coming weeks for access information. For the first few months after rollout, we will keep both the new resource library and the current one in Basecamp accessible simultaneously, with the intent to sunset the Basecamp version for program contacts later this year (peer reviewers and commissioners will continue to utilize Basecamp in their review work).

Fall Report Submissions: Templates, Deadlines, and More

Report Deadlines

Programs preparing to submit a first-time Self-Study Report, a Response to Conditions Report, or an Interim Report this fall, please note that the submission deadline is September 30. For programs preparing to submit a renewal Self-Study Report, the deadline is November 30. (Recent policy updates may allow some flexibility for first-time Self-Study Reports that are not ready by September 30 but could be ready by the renewal program deadline; programs facing that situation are encouraged to contact staff.)

Report Templates

The most recent Self-Study Report templates are labeled as "Pilot Self-Study Report Template for the New Higher Ed Accred Standards" in the Accreditation Resource Library. Report submissions should follow the most recent version of the template, though if a Self-Study Report template was updated within six months of a program's submission (or a Response-to-Conditions/Interim Report template was updated within three months of a program's submission), the version immediately prior to the most recent version may be used.

Programs *responding to conditions* that were cited under 2010 standards have the option to submit key assessments aligned with the 2010 Professional Preparation Standards or the 2020 Professional Standards and Competencies. Programs that update to the 2020 standards while responding to an alignment condition may receive an additional year to address feedback under the updated standards. Programs responding to an alignment condition under the 2020 standards are encouraged to submit a Learning Opportunities Chart (available as a stand-alone document in the Accreditation Resource Library) concurrent with (ideally in the same document as) their Response to Conditions Report.

To obtain the most benefit from the Commission review of *Year 4 Interim Reports,* programs submitting these reports are now **required** to align learning opportunities and key assessments with one of the **2020 Professional Standards and Competencies** (it is OK if candidate performance data were collected previously from versions of assessments aligned with the 2010 standards). Programs preparing Year 4 Interim Reports that are unable to submit learning opportunities and key assessments aligned with the 2020 Professional Standards and Competencies should submit an **extension request form** to **highered@naeyc.org** to request additional time to align with the updated standards.

Some questions have arisen about the timeline for feedback on Year 4 Interim Reports. While timely feedback is always a goal, the Commission is also equally committed to providing thorough and helpful feedback. The shift to the 2020 Professional Standards and Competencies led many

programs to request extensions; therefore, the Commission is working through a larger-than-usual caseload as these reports start to come in, and we thank programs for their patience while awaiting feedback. In general, programs can expect to receive feedback on their Year 4 Interim Report by the end of the semester following the report's submission (programs that submit in September can generally expect to hear back by the end of the spring semester; programs that submit in March can generally expect to hear back by the end of the fall semester). Programs may wish to keep in mind that requesting an extension on a Year 4 Interim Report will mean less time to implement feedback received prior to the deadline to submit the renewal Self-Study Report. (As a reminder, Commission feedback is based on the limited information provided in the Year 4 Interim Report and does not guarantee a particular accreditation decision at the time of renewal.)

As always, for any report type, for questions about which standards or template your program should use, please contact us at **highered@naeyc.org.**

Annual Fee Reminder

2024 annual fees for all accredited programs were due March 31, 2024. If your program has not yet submitted payment and/or has not received an invoice, please email us at **highered@naeyc.org.**

Transitions: Professional Standards & Competencies

Has your higher ed. program begun (or completed!) the transition to the 2020 *Professional Standards & Competencies* (and out of the 2010 Professional Preparation Standards)? We'd love to hear how this process is going! In an effort to continue to provide feedback to the **Commission on Professional Excellence in Early Childhood Education** who oversees this set of professional standards for the field and in an effort to collect tips and strategies that may be of benefit to others making this transition within the higher education accreditation community, we are collecting feedback from you! We'd love to have your program's input and insight into the implementation of the new *Professional Standards and Competencies* within your program. Please consider taking a few minutes to complete **this feedback tool to share your experiences** with us.

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