

IHE Senior Administrator Interview Protocol

PPSS ECE Articulation Project

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Key points to convey to the respondent:

- This is a study conducted by American Institutes for Research on behalf of the U.S. Department of Education. The purpose of the study is to examine the policies and practices that supports effective higher education articulation for early care and education (ECE) workers, so that they may progress from a Child Development Associate credential (CDA) to an associate of arts degree (AA) to a bachelor of arts degree (BA) without losing relevant coursework and credits. For the purposes of this study, early childhood education refers to the care and education of children ages birth to 8.
- The goal of this study is to highlight effective ECE articulation practices to inform the work of state and higher education leaders who are developing, revising, or implementing ECE articulation policies. The final report will highlight promising practices and the specific approaches states have taken to implement articulation policy in both two-year and four-year institutions of higher education in six focal states. This study is *not* meant to evaluate any individual, program, or institution.
- Have you received the consent form for this study? We want to assure you that we will protect your privacy and the information you share will be protected to the extent provided by law. We will not use your name in any reports, although states, institutions, and/or job roles or titles may be used in some sections of the report.
- We would like to record this conversation so that we can be sure we have an accurate record of our discussion. We will not share this recording with anyone outside the research team, and we will delete the recording after the final report is complete. Is that okay with you?
- Please note that your participation is completely voluntary. You may discontinue your participation in this interview at any time. Throughout the course of the interview, if we touch on topics that you believe to be sensitive for any reason, please bring that to our attention, and we will not include these comments either in public reporting or in discussions with the U.S. Department of Education.
- There are no right or wrong answers. Please feel free to talk about what you think, even if it's different from what someone else thinks. Keep in mind that we're just as interested in critical comments as we are positive comments, and sometimes the critical comments can be the most constructive.
- We know that you are very busy, and we want to be respectful about your time, so we've made an effort to collect as much information as possible through publicly available documents prior to our call. We may reference that information during the course of the interview to confirm that our information is correct. This interview will take no more than 60 minutes.
- Do you have any questions about the purpose of this interview, your privacy, or anything else?
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Introduction

Today, we'll be asking you questions your state's articulation policy and how the transfer process works for students at your college. We'd like to start the interview by learning more about you, your institution, and its early childhood education program.

Question

1. What is your role at {COLLEGE}?
2. Would you please tell me about your early childhood education program?
Probe for:
 - What is its mission?
 - Where is it housed?
 - What types of certificate or degree programs are offered?

Articulation Policy

The next questions are about articulation policy for early childhood education degree programs in your state, higher education system, and institution.

Question

3. What state policies are in place to help ECE students transfer from certificate or associate's degree programs to bachelor's degree programs?
4. What system and institutional policies are in place?
Probe for:
 - How does your institution balance academic quality against the burden placed on students when they lose credits during the transfer process?
 - What input have you or your college had on the development of articulation policy?
5. In your institution and in your department, how are decisions made about implementing articulation policies?
Probe for:
 - Who is involved?
 - What are their roles?

Question

6. What efforts have been made to align ECE curriculum and learning standards between two-year and four-year institutions?

Probe for:

- How have these efforts been unique to early childhood education, as opposed to other subjects?
- Who has been involved in these efforts, and what role have they played?
- How have institutional actors influenced articulation policy?

7. How does accreditation—either from your regional accreditor or from a specialty organization like the National Association for the Education of Young Children—relate to articulation in your state?

The Articulation and Transfer Process

The next set of questions is about the articulation and transfer process at {COLLEGE}. To the extent that you can answer these questions in a way that is specifically applicable to the field of early childhood education, please do so.

Question

8. Please tell me how the transfer process works at {COLLEGE}.

Probe for:

- What kinds of information are shared between institutions, other than transcripts?
- How do questions about the transferability of credit get answered?
- How does the process vary by receiving or sending institution?

9. What resources are in place to ensure that you, as an administrator, can meet the needs of students before, during, and after the credit transfer process?

Probe for:

- How are you informed about articulation decisions made about specific students?
- How are you informed about state or system transfer and articulation policies?
- What kind of professional development is available to you?
- What other resources do you wish were available?

10. What advising services and other supports are available to help students at {COLLEGE} with the credit transfer process?

Probe for:

- How are students informed about what will happen to their credits when they transfer?
- How well do you think students understand

Question

the credit transfer process?

- *To what extent do the advising services address career paths and degree affordability?*
- *How does {COLLEGE} ensure these advising services are accessible to students?*

Listen for:

- *Who provides the advice (department or title)*
- *Advice about earning transfer credit*
- *Student understanding of the transfer process*

Probe for:

- *What would make it easier for students to receive credit for prior coursework?*

11. What have you heard from students about their ability to receive transfer credit for prior coursework?

12. How does your institution balance academic quality against the burden placed on students when they lose credits during the transfer process?

Closing Perspectives

Last, we'd like to understand your perspective on what has worked well, and what has not, as your institution has worked to implement articulation policy.

Question

13. What aspects of your institution's approach to articulation do you think work well?

14. Are there aspects of articulation that you think work less well, or that you would like to improve?

15. What are the barriers to instituting comprehensive articulation policies and procedures at {COLLEGE}?

Probe for:

- *What are the challenges you face in supporting transfer students?*

16. What steps have been taken to overcome those barriers?

Probe for:

- *What other approaches could be tried to overcome the barriers?*

17. What advice would you give to policymakers to improve articulation?

Conclusion

- We have reached the end of the interview. Thank you for participating and for the information you shared.
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