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# **ECE Industry Representative Interview Protocol**

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## PPSS ECE Articulation Project ECE Industry Representative Protocol

### 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 state, agency, or policy.
- 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, agencies, 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. 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 available documents. We'll sometimes reference that information during the course of the interview to confirm that our information is correct. This interview will take no more than 45 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 ask you questions your state's articulation policies and practices.

### Question

1. We'd like to start by asking you to tell me more about your role at {ECE INDUSTRY ORGANIZATION/AFFILIATION}?

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## Overview of Articulation Policy

Let's talk more about your state's articulation policy.

### Question

2. What state policies are in place to help students transfer from certificate or associate's degree programs to bachelor's degree programs?

3. To what extent do these policies work as intended?

**Probe for:**

- How do actual articulation practices differ from the vision set out in policy?

4. How has your state's economic and policy context influenced articulation policy for early childhood education?

**Probe for:**

- What workforce demands is the higher education system trying to meet?
- How have institutional actors influenced articulation policy?
- **Listen for:**
- State response to bachelor's degree requirements for teachers in Head Start, state prekindergarten, or QRIS

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

**Probe for:**

- Who has been involved in these efforts, and what role have they played?
- What successes and challenges have these efforts encountered?

6. How does higher education accreditation—either from your regional accreditor, such as the Higher Learning Commission, or from a specialty organization, like the National Association for the Education of Young Children—relate to articulation in your state?

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## Governance and Oversight

The following question asks about your state's governance and oversight structure for articulation.

Question	
<b>7. In your state, which stakeholders are involved in making policy decisions about higher education articulation?</b>	<b>Probe for:</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• <i>How are they involved?</i></li><li>• <i>In your opinion, are there any important stakeholders who are not included or do not have adequate input?</i></li></ul>

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## Articulation and Transfer Supports

The following questions ask about the articulation and transfer supports available to students.

Question	
<b>9. What state-level guidance is available to students regarding articulation and transfer requirements?</b>	<b>Probe for:</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• <i>Who provides this information?</i></li><li>• <i>At which stages of degree progress do students receive this information?</i></li><li>• <i>How are these transfer resources provided?</i></li></ul>
<b>11. What other advising services and other supports are available to help students with the transfer process?</b>	<b>Probe for:</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• <i>How well you do think students understand what will happen when they transfer?</i></li></ul> <b>Listen for:</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• <i>The sources of advice/guidance (state and institutional)</i></li><li>• <i>Advice about earning transfer credit</i></li></ul>
<b>13. What tools and information are available to students to help them determine their career paths?</b>	
<b>15. What have you heard from students about their ability to receive transfer credit for prior coursework?</b>	<b>Probe for:</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• <i>What barriers do students encounter when transferring credits?</i></li><li>• <i>What would make it easier for students to receive credit for prior coursework?</i></li></ul>

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## Licensure

The next set of questions is about ECE teacher licensure.

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### Question

**16. How does your state's teacher licensure policy influence the degree pathways available to students?**

**Probe for:**

- *How does your state's approach to early childhood licensure accommodate early childhood workers who hold a CDA credential?*
- *How does the approach accommodate those with a two-year degree?*

**17. In some states there are numerous ECE degree programs that do not lead to licensure. How common is that in your state?**

**Probe for:**

- *What do you see as the role of such degree programs in ECE workforce development?*

**18. Would you like to see more or less flexibility regarding the ways in which ECE teachers are licensed? Why?**

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## Evaluation

Next, I would like discuss efforts to evaluate how well existing ECE articulation agreements work.

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### Question

**19. What efforts have been made to evaluate articulation policy and transfer student outcomes in your state?**

**Probe for:**

- *What was found?*
- *How does your industry contribute to and use this data?*

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## Closing Perspectives

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

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### Question

**20. What aspects of your state's approach to articulation do you think work well?**

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

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Question

**22. What are the barriers to instituting comprehensive articulation policy in your state?**

**Probe for:**

- *What aspects of your state's higher education policy context make comprehensive articulation policy challenging?*
- *What are the barriers to coordination of academic policy across institutions?*

**23. What steps have been taken to overcome those barriers?**

**Probe for:**

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

**24. What advice would you give to policymakers to improve articulation?**

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## Conclusion

- **We have reached the end of the interview. Thank you for participating and for the information you shared.**
  - **We will be including a summary of your state's approach to articulation in our final report. Our research team will share the summary with you to get your input before the report is finalized.**
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