



## Early Childhood Education Advisory Committee Meeting Minutes

Date | time 9/15/2017 | 8:00AM in Room B1234

Meeting called to order by Sandee Plescia

### In Attendance

Jami Nguyen—Director, Land of Learning  
Tina Holtz—Teacher, DeKalb High School  
Amy Paffenroth—Professional Development Coordinator, 4-C  
Steve Kimmel—Director, Kishwaukee College ECC  
Diane Kubetz—Retired, Educator  
Joanne Kantner—Vice President of Instruction, KC  
Bette Chilton—Dean of Health and Education, KC  
Sandee Pleasia—ECE Faculty, KC  
Brianna Hooker—Administrative Assistant to Instruction, KC

### Approval of Minutes

Jami motions to approve Spring 2017 minutes. Tina seconds the motion. No opposition.  
Spring 2017 minutes are approved.

### Enrollment Report

FA16 Heads	FA17 Heads	FA16 Credits	FA17 Credits	Credits Change	Credits % Change
103	74	311.0	226.0	-85.0	-27.3%

Sandee reports the ECE program is down 27% in terms of credits from last fall. However, the entire college is down in enrollment as well. There is an economic trend that when employment rates are strong, enrollment in college declines, when people are working they are not pursuing education as strongly. Bette explains that sometimes smaller programs may have a more difficult time with declining enrollment.

Bette asks the committee how applicant pools are in the industry. Jami reports that she has seen a very small applicant pool, even for positions that do not require credentials. Steve believes the demand is high for childcare right now and it is worrisome when programs are closing, not because they do not have a need but they do not have care providers.

Joanne confirms 45-48% of KEC students become students at KC. Steve believes there is a strong cohort of KEC students right now so we should investigate ways to ensure these students transition into KC. Leads to discussion of background checks and other potential difficulties being able to provide high school students opportunities to observe ECE centers.

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## Scheduling Discussion to assist with Enrollment

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Joanne asks about “apprenticeship-type scheduling” where classes are condensed to one or two days a week to allow more time for students to pursue work and Sandee replies that the majority of ECE classes are already structured that way and believes that it has, in fact helped enrollment. Currently the “heavy” day of the week is Monday. Committee is asked if another day would be better? Consensus is that weekend offerings may be better but in terms of days of the workweek, it wouldn’t make much difference.

There is some opportunity to investigate weekend class options as the college is currently open on Saturdays during the academic year. However, an important thing to note is that services on campus are not available on weekend, such as media services/IT support. Bette assures that if advisory committee boards encourage expansion of weekend opportunities, if students have an interest, and if data supports these options, this feedback will contribute to administrative decisions.

Joanne and Bette introduce a trend in higher education regarding condensed (5-8week) online courses that are often taken one a time. Joanne reports high success in these courses, especially among non-traditional students because there is simply less time for life events to interfere with school.

Bette reports that there is already a credit-hour audit in place for offering 16 week courses as 8 week courses so it is relatively simple to offer 8 week courses.

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## GAP program with NIU

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Sandee confirms she has worked with NIU to update many of our ECE courses to better transfer directly into NIU’s program over the past several years which has been helpful to students.

Joanne expands on the Gap partnership with NIU and how the university will accept our AAS degrees without “unpacking” them, however, it does not guarantee that a student will be accepted into a specific program. An important thing to note however, is that KC students will be able to work with NIU advisors which will greatly impact their chances and opportunities to ensure they get into specific programs.

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## Program Updates—Graduates and More Enrollment Disucssion

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Sandee reports that there will be no program graduates this Fall semester but we are anticipating 4 graduates for the Spring 2018 semester. We’ve had to cancel some courses over the past year due to low enrollment which causes students to not be ready to move forward in their course sequence. Courses cancelled due to low enrollment happens because it is difficult to justify costs with maybe only three students in a course. Sandee confirms that many regional ECE programs are dealing with similar issues so we are not unique in that sense.

Tina seeks ideas on how we can be more effective in marketing to DHS students to get them to transition into KC? Joanne explains our Upward Bound grant for this year where KC will be sending Upward Bound representatives into DHS on Tuesdays/Thursdays.

Diane asks about ACCESS and whether it still exists? She explains it used to be a very helpful committee to address issues as most institutions are not unique in their challenges. Sandee will look into this.

Bette announces that the homeschooled population is growing considerably here at KC. They are a specific population that we could reach out to.

Joanne asks about presence/status of 4-H ECE projects...Sandee will investigate. Dianne believes there is an open house at the Farm Bureau next week. *Sandee confirms 4-H does indeed have a Child Development Project as of 9/18/2017.*

Bette asks Sandee and Steve if they are able to identify key student leaders because in other health-oc programs, student leaders are great at recruiting new students.

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## Other Program Updates

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Spring 2018 Advising—Sandee is going to start advising students for Spring 2018 soon as registration begins November 6, 2017.

Marketing Spring Classes—Sandee announces that we will continue to market class for Spring 2018.

Offered ECE 210 The School Age Child online for Fall 2017.

KinderCare Student Teachers—Sandee announces that we will now be placing students at KinderCare.

Sycamore HS childcare will be closing so we will no longer have students there. Amy thinks there were around 26 families being served at Sycamore HS.

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## Industry Recognized Certifications

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Sandee reports that she submitted application to Gateways on May 30, 2017. Final project will be due January 1, 2018.

Bette suggests reaching out to Matt Crull to assist us with tracking for the new credentialing process when we have more information.

Joanne explains benefits of credentialing in terms of funding and being able to financially assist our students.

While it may be a challenging process to get through the credentialing, it is a great asset to have.

Committee discusses Gateways and potential challenges/opportunities. As of October 1, 2017, people must have at least Level 1 credentialing in order to work with children in any capacity. Level 1 credentialing must be completed through Gateway's online courses. Level 1 credentialing also includes First Aid training as well as Mandated Reporter training.

KC ECE program contributes to Level 2 and Level 3 credentialing.

Jami understands and appreciates the importance and need for credentialing, however, childhood centers are enduring significant costs involved with ensuring all employees are credentialed. There is difficulty enduring the costs while also striving to not raise tuition for families utilizing childcare.

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## Curriculum Update

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Sandee seeks ECE The Exceptional Child Syllabus Approval.

Sandee seeks ECE Observation and Assessment Syllabus Approval.

Sandee hoped to have these syllabi prepared and completed for this meeting but they are not quite finished. Sandee will be sending proposed syllabi out to the committee via email for approval soon.

If/once the advisory committee approves the courses, the proposal will go to the Health and Education Division. Once approved at the Division level, it will advance to Curriculum Committee. If approved by the Curriculum Committee, the proposal will be sent to the State for final approval.

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## Next Meeting

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Friday, March 24, 2018 at 8:00AM, Kishwaukee College  
Meeting Adjourned at 9:14 AM.