



Updates and Reminders

Happy New Year to all of the programs, peer reviewers and commissioners who are part of NAEYC's higher education accreditation community! We hope that the year ahead includes much professional and personal fulfillment!

Thank you for the commitment you make every day to advancing the ECE profession through supporting your students, through your advocacy, and through the many ways you connect and work with your ECE colleagues inside and outside of higher education. And thank you for making this commitment by upholding the guidelines for quality ECE professional preparation by your participation in NAEYC higher education accreditation.

2023 was a year of transition for the higher education accreditation community as we moved toward full implementation of the new accreditation standards. Thank you for being on this transition and learning journey with us! In this newsletter, you'll learn more about new resources to support your implementation of the standards as well as important reminders about policies and upcoming deadlines.

We look forward to the year ahead with you as we all work toward the north star vision of the **Unifying Framework** for a well-prepared, diverse, effective and well-compensated ECE profession!

Updated Accreditation Handbook

The Commission recently approved minor updates to the Accreditation Handbook. The updates primarily clarify extension policies and program eligibility criteria. The updated handbook can be found [here](#).

Call for Peer Reviewer Applications

NAEYC's accreditation of early childhood higher education programs depends upon the commitment and professionalism of our volunteer peer reviewers. Becoming a higher education peer reviewer is an excellent way to learn more about this quality assurance system, as well as to give back to the early childhood field. Current or former full- or part-time early childhood faculty members who meet the qualifications are encouraged to apply! Qualified applicants will be invited to participate in an online training program. Applications are currently being accepted through

February 29. More information and the link to apply can be found on the [peer reviewer page of our website](#).

Upcoming Ask Me Anything Session

Submitting an accreditation report this spring? You may be interested in joining us for our upcoming “Ask Me Anything” accreditation session. This session is designed for programs preparing to submit a new or renewal Self-Study Reports, a Response to Conditions Report or a Year 4 Interim Report and is an opportunity to pose questions to members of the Higher Education Accreditation Commission & staff. The upcoming Ask Me Anything session will be held on Feb. 13, from 2-3:30 PM EST. You can register and submit questions in advance [here](#). We hope to see you there!

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 have recently released a new guide to assist peer reviewers taking on the role of team chair!

- [Peer Review Team Chair Guide](#)

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 later this winter and will become your go-to source for guidance documents, templates, and more, so please keep an eye on your email in the coming months 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).

Spring report submissions: deadlines, template versions, and completeness calls

Report Deadlines

Programs preparing to submit a first-time Self-Study Report, a Response to Conditions Report, or an Interim Report this spring, please note that the submission deadline is March 31. For programs preparing to submit a renewal Self-Study Report, the deadline is May 30. (The recent policy updates

may allow some flexibility for first-time Self-Study Reports that are not ready by March 31 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 Accredited 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 strongly encouraged 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 that are unsure about their capacity to submit learning opportunities and key assessments aligned with the 2020 Professional Standards and Competencies are strongly encouraged to contact staff (by emailing highered@naeyc.org) to consider whether requesting an extension to align with the updated standards may be in the program's best interest. **Please contact staff at highered@naeyc.org prior to submitting a Year 4 Interim Report aligned with 2010 standards.**

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

Completeness Review

Programs are encouraged to schedule a completeness review call with our Director of Accreditation Services, Pamela Ehrenberg, as early as the report is ready to review and at least two weeks prior to their submission deadline. To schedule a call, please email highered@naeyc.org with your top 3 preferences for a date/time, and we will reach out to confirm your scheduled time. Please note that the purpose of this call is to ensure all required components are included and the report is ready to be submitted, as well as to review program questions and past Commission feedback if applicable; however, staff are unable to review key assessments for alignment to standards or other assessment quality indicators.

New Commissioners Appointed

The **NAEYC Higher Education Accreditation Commission** is pleased to announce that three new Commissioners have been appointed with terms that began January 1.

- Eric Bucher, Executive Director of AzAEYC and Assistant Research Professor at the Children’s Equity Project at Arizona State University
- Erin Donovan, ECE Department Chair, Ivy Tech Community College-Muncie/New Castle and Anderson Campuses and Statewide ECED Curriculum Committee Lead Chair

- Carrie Nepstad, ECE Faculty, Harold Washington College (part of the City Colleges of Chicago)

The Commission is responsible for setting the standards and policies that guide the accreditation system and for making accreditation decisions. The Commission thanks outgoing Commissioners Vickie Young-Chiverton (retired faculty at Central Arizona College) and Stacy Atkinson (Chancellor of Ivy Tech Indianapolis) for their invaluable service.

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.

We also are actively reaching out individually to programs that have transitioned to the new Higher Education Accreditation Standards via a separate survey as they complete their new or revised self-studies, along with peer reviewers that are conducting site visits utilizing the new accreditation standards. Your feedback on the strengths and challenges of transitioning to these various new standards is an important next step for the accreditation system and the field. Thank you for your time and willingness to provide feedback!



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1401 H St. NW, Suite 600, Washington, DC 20005
(202) 232-8777 | (800) 424-2460 | webmaster@naeyc.org

