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**naeyc**<sup>®</sup> National Association for the Education of Young Children

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**Early Childhood Higher  
Education Accreditation**

Happy spring to our higher education accreditation community! Welcome to this next edition of the quarterly NAEYC Higher Education Accreditation Newsletter! Below you'll find a number of updates and reminders about our accreditation system. Want more frequent updates that are relevant to early childhood higher education faculty engaged in accreditation? Bookmark our blog-like feed of updates we call **The Latest**.

## Accreditation Updates

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### **Thank you Higher Education Accreditation Volunteers**

April includes National Volunteer Week, and organizations across the world are celebrating and appreciating the volunteers in their orbit. We cannot let April go by without acknowledging the essential role that volunteers play in our own accreditation system. Like other institutional and programmatic higher education accreditors, our

system uses a peer review model to evaluate programs in relation to our professional standards for ECE higher education program quality.

Our team of over 130 active peer reviewers and 15 Commissioners includes ECE faculty and administrators from institutions of higher education across the country. These volunteers dedicate weeks of their time and expertise each year to prepare for and conduct site visits, accreditation case deliberations, and oversight of the accreditation system. They do this work on top of already more than full-time jobs and personal responsibilities. They do this work in good spirits, with a spirit of inquiry, and with a strengths-based approach. They do this work because they believe both in the importance of ECE higher education pathways and in the ECE profession holding itself accountable for its quality. Thank you to all of the volunteers in our system!

### **Interested in Learning More About Volunteering?**

If serving as a peer reviewer or Commissioner sounds like something up your alley, we encourage you to learn more about these roles. In the late summer, NAEYC will open a Call for Applications for the Higher Education Accreditation Commission. In the meantime, you can meet our current Commissioners, learn more about the work they do, and sign up to receive an email notification when the Call for Applications is posted by visiting the [Commission web page](#).

Each January and August we also open the application to serve as a peer reviewer. You can learn more about the responsibilities of peer reviewers and sign up to receive a reminder when applications reopen by visiting our [Peer Reviewer web page](#).

### **Accreditation Report and Annual Fee Due Date and Template Reminders**

**Note: some links throughout this newsletter go to the online accreditation resource library, to which you must be logged in. Please reach out to [highered@naeyc.org](mailto:highered@naeyc.org) if you cannot locate the password sent to all primary contacts.**

Programs preparing to submit renewal Self-Study Reports during the spring cycle, please note that the submission deadline is **May 31**. Programs this cycle may choose to use the [new template](#) or the [prior template version](#). For those that choose the latter, please review the [template transition guidance document](#) created specifically for spring 2026 report submissions using the prior template. Beginning in the fall 2026 cycle, all programs must use the new template (including any programs originally scheduled to submit this spring that received an extension to fall).

Programs are encouraged to schedule a report 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 the submission deadline). To schedule a call,

please email [highered@naeyc.org](mailto: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 if applicable; however, staff are unable to review Key Assessments for alignment to standards or other assessment quality indicators.

Annual Fee invoices have been sent out to all program coordinators and were due on **March 31**. If you have not received your invoice or have questions about your payment status, please reach out to our Accreditation Coordinator, Javon Johnson, at [jjohnson@naeyc.org](mailto:jjohnson@naeyc.org).

### **Spring 2026 Accreditation Decisions**

Congratulations to the degree programs at two institutions that earned first-time accreditation and the programs at eight institutions that earned renewed accreditation from the Commission on the Accreditation of Early Childhood Higher Education Programs at the Commission's spring 2026 meeting. See our [press release](#) for more information on these programs and visit our website for a [list of all currently accredited early childhood higher education programs](#).

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## **Meet a Higher Ed Accreditation Commissioner**

### **Dr. Jayme Hines, St. Bonaventure University, NY**

Dr. Jayme Irene Hines is an Assistant Professor of Education at St. Bonaventure University in NY. She teaches coursework across the Early Childhood & Elementary program. Before joining the faculty at St. Bonaventure, Jayme taught at Wilkes University in Pennsylvania, Keene State College in New Hampshire, and Metropolitan Community College in Nebraska. She has also worked for Rhode Island AEYC as the Manager of Early Childhood Initiatives. Before moving into higher education, she was

a classroom teacher, teaching grades PreK-6. Dr. Hines holds an Ed.D. in Educational Leadership from the College of Saint Mary, NE, an M.Ed. in Early Childhood Education from the College of Charleston, SC, and a B.S. in Elementary Education from St. Bonaventure University, NY.

In addition to serving as a commissioner for the Accreditation of Higher Education Programs, Jayme is a Consulting Editor for Young Children and NAEYC Books. Her research interests include the social/emotional development of preschoolers, teacher preparation, and faculty-student relationships.

We asked Dr. Hines what advice she would give to a program pursuing accreditation. She said "Build your team! The accreditation process is challenging, but it is also very rewarding. You cannot do it alone. Not unlike teaching, collaboration makes us all better. Get buy-in. If you are going to take this step, start with your colleagues & go up...all the way to the president's office. Everyone needs to understand this process, and you need to know where your supporters are."

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## Accreditation Resources

Looking for resources to support your accreditation journey? Look no further than the [Online Accreditation Resource library!](#) From resources on preparing for your site visit, to key assessments and rubrics, to data collection and analysis, and even program website requirements, you will find a plethora of support through our growing resource collection. Our most recent addition to the library features higher ed accreditation advice and tips shared by accredited program faculty colleagues ([see resource #9 in the New Program Landing Pad](#))!

Resource In Case You Missed It (ICYMI)- Have you checked out the comprehensive resource called *The Compass* that was released last fall? This resource is full of helpful guidance and information related to all phases of the accreditation process from eligibility through maintaining accreditation and everything in between. In addition, *The Compass* helps connect you to other applicable resources in our library for what you are working on! The Compass is a great companion to the Higher Education Accreditation Standards and the Accreditation Policies and Procedures Handbook to help guide the way. Check it out [here](#) or via the [Online Accreditation Resource library](#).

Did you know that you can filter the resource library collection to help you more quickly identify resources around specific topics that you may be looking for? Check out the [resource library tutorial](#) to learn more or our new "document version" of the filter known as the "[Resource Index](#)."

## Save the Date! NAEYC Annual Conference in Washington DC

While registration won't open until July, keep your calendars open for NAEYC's Annual Conference December 5-8, which promises to be an exciting one as NAEYC celebrates its 100<sup>th</sup> anniversary and the higher education accreditation system celebrates its 20<sup>th</sup>! We hope you'll consider joining us for a pre-conference full-day higher ed accreditation workshop on December 4 or any of the several other accreditation sessions and gatherings that will be scheduled throughout the week!

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