

Power to the Profession

Decision Cycle 1 – Working Draft 2

3/20/17

Preface and Summary of the Decision Cycle 1 – Draft 1 Survey

Thank you to everyone who responded to the Decision Cycle 1 – Working 1 survey. Here is a summary of the survey and how the feedback was used to inform Decision Cycle 1 – Working Draft 2.

Profile of Responders:

- 2,308 individuals responded to the survey
- 46.77% teacher, teacher assistants, and early childhood program administrators
- 14.85% higher education faculty
- 40.26% ages 31 to 49, 42.43% ages 50 to 65
- 3.87% male, 94.42% female
- 78.64% Caucasian or White
- 8.69% African American or Black
- 1.82% Asian American
- 1.41% American Indian/Native American/Native Alaskan
- 5.8% Hispanic or Latino/a Origin

Summary of Feedback	We Will Use This Feedback to
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Distinguish between the profession and the field. There are many professions in the early care and education field. The early childhood education <i>profession</i>, as defined through Power to the Profession, is one of the many <i>professions</i> in the <i>field</i>. • Use language that can be understood by people outside the profession • Emphasize “teacher” • Acknowledge that some decisions may be a reaffirmation of what already exists • Reiterate and provide stronger rationale for 0-8 focus 	Sharpen messaging and inform future Decision Cycles
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Provide more guidance, materials, and resources to better describe the intent and implementation strategy • Enhance outreach and engagement • Implement strategies to ensure that survey responders reflect the diversity in the field • Minimize the anxieties – responders are most anxious about creating overly burdensome standards or requirements for entry into the profession and the professions’ ability to influence local, state, and/or federal standards or systems. • Focus more on what could be – responders are most excited about making a stronger case for compensation, support and additional investments, being a more recognized and valued profession in society, and a more unified profession with consistency across states and early learning settings 	Strengthen engagement and implementation
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Clarify the purpose of the guiding principles • Include families in the guiding principles • Strengthen commitment to the diversity of the profession in the guiding principles • Be inclusive of the field and strategically exclusive to advance the early childhood education profession. • Ensure that the role of care in professional practice is elevated • Add language development, reflective practice, continuous learning, and assessment to the responsibilities 	Develop Decision Cycle 1- Draft 2 (See highlighted text in beginning on page 2)

Introduction

In order to advance the early childhood education profession and effectively demand and receive the investments we need, we as a field must come to agreement on some foundational elements of the profession, held regardless of state or setting. All established professions are built upon a shared purpose, common identity, and agreement on the unique responsibilities and characteristics of their members. From this foundation, a profession can build pathways for preparation, requirements for entry, a clear scope of practice, differentiated roles within the profession, standards, and individual accountability. Equally important, a defined profession can build a stronger case for public investments and support. This first working draft defines the purpose, responsibilities, and unique identity of the early childhood education profession.

Power to the Profession is structured in a series of [decision cycles](#). The profession identified in this decision cycle, Decision Cycle 1, will be taken through the eight cycles of the Power to the Profession process. Essentially, we commit to advancing, promoting, influencing, and governing the profession we identify in Decision Cycle 1.

Future decision cycles will cover the competencies, specializations, competency attainment, qualifications and pathways, recommended compensation structure, accountability and quality assurance, and required support and infrastructure.

1. Guiding Principles to Drive Task Force Decisions:

As the National Task Force on Power to the Profession, we agree to the following guiding principles for our decision-making:

The following guiding principles have been agreed upon by the National Task Force for guiding *their* discussions and decision making process.¹

1. We commit to conducting our work to the benefit of each and every child and their family. ~~with a dedication to equity.~~
2. We will be intentional about advancing a profession that reflects the diversity of the children and families the profession supports.
23. The voices of the profession will lead our deliberation.
34. We will take into account what exists, and imagine what could be.
45. We will ask questions and strive to understand.
56. We will rely on research and use evidence.
67. In building a unified profession, we will acknowledge the commonalities among professions.

2. Proposed Name of Profession: The name of the profession is the Early Childhood Education Profession. As a whole, members of this profession are called Early Childhood Educators. ²

¹ Note that these guiding principles drive the Task Force decision-making process; these are not guiding principles for the early childhood education profession.

² There are many professions in the early care and education field. The early childhood education profession, as defined through Power to the Profession, is one of the many professions in the field. While Power to the Profession values all professions in the field, this initiative will define and advance the early childhood education profession.

3. Proposed Role and Responsibility of the Early Childhood Education Profession:

The Early Childhood Education Profession **cares for** and promotes the learning, development and well-being of children birth through age eight - including social, emotional, cognitive and physical domains, **and language development** - to establish a foundation for lifelong learning and development³.

Members of the Early Childhood Education Profession are responsible and accountable for⁴:

1. Planning and implementing intentional, developmentally appropriate learning experiences that advance the cognitive, social, emotional, **language** and physical development of children
2. Establishing and maintaining a safe, **caring**, and healthy learning environment
3. **Observing, documenting, and assessing children's learning and development using guidelines established by the profession**
34. Developing reciprocal relationships with families and communities
45. Advocating for the needs of children and their families
56. Advancing and advocating for the early childhood education profession
7. **Engaging in reflective practice and continuous learning**

These responsibilities and accountability are consistent across early **childhood** education settings **that support young children birth through age eight** including elementary schools, centers, and home-based businesses.

4. Professional Boundary Includes: Members of the Early Childhood Education profession include individuals who are directly accountable for all the responsibilities outlined above and adhere to the guidelines established by the profession⁵. These individuals are called Early Childhood Educators. We will develop systems and policies that advance, promote, influence, and govern Early Childhood Educators.

- Early Childhood Educators providing direct services to young children will be the primary, **but not singular**, focus of the Power to the Profession initiative in 2017 through 2018. Multiple levels of Early Childhood Educators will be defined to reflect varying levels of responsibility and autonomy to practice independently.
 - Early Childhood Educators often practice under the guidance of instructional or pedagogical leadership. It is imperative that individuals who provide instructional or pedagogical leadership have a deep understanding of the standards and practices that govern the Early Childhood Education Profession. Therefore, decisions made to define Early Childhood Educators in 2017-2018 will influence how individuals providing instructional or pedagogical leadership are positioned in the context of the early childhood education profession.
 - Similarly, individuals evaluating and guiding aspiring Early Childhood Educators in professional preparation settings, like higher education programs, should also have a deep understanding of the standards and practices that govern the Early Childhood Education Profession. Therefore, decisions made to define Early Childhood Educators in 2017-2018 will influence how individuals

³ Influenced by UNESCO definition: <http://en.unesco.org/themes/early-childhood-care-and-education>

⁴ Influenced by Head Start definition of classroom teacher: <https://eclkc.ohs.acf.hhs.gov/hslc/tta-system/pd/fsd/All%20Staff/Sec648AStaff.htm>

⁵ Established through Power to the Profession

evaluating and guiding aspiring Early Childhood Educators in professional preparation settings are positioned in the context of the early childhood education profession.

5. Professional Boundary Excludes and Does Not Include⁶: Individuals who are not accountable for *all* of the responsibilities outlined above and/or individuals who choose to not adhere to the guidelines established by the profession⁷ operate outside the boundaries of the Early Childhood Education Profession. These occupations and professions are valuable partners. We will seek opportunities to collaborate with and support these individuals.

Examples of these include mental health consultants, social workers, caregivers (those with care and nurture as primary responsibilities and are not accountable for all items listed in Section 3), child psychologists, home visitors and others who are not accountable for *all* of the responsibilities outlined above and/or who choose to not adhere to the guidelines established by the profession⁸.

⁶ There are many professions in the early care and education field. The early childhood education profession, as defined through Power to the Profession, is one of the many professions in the field. While Power to the Profession values all professions in the field, this initiative will define and advance the early childhood education profession.

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