GATEWAYS TO OPPORTUNITY
Illinois Professional Development System

Professional Development Advisory Council's Steering Committee
October 25, 2023
Minutes

Beth Knight	Johnna Darragh Ernst	Marcy Mendenhall
Carisa Hurley Davis	Joni Scritchlow	Marsha Hawley
Christi Chadwick	Julie Lindstrom	Rebecaa Livengood
Elva DeLuna	Kate Connor	Shauna Ejeh
Gail Nelson	Kimberlee Hendricks	Stephanie Hellmer
Hollie Hoole	Laurie Rhodes	Teri Talan
Joellyn Whitehead	Marcus Brown	

Welcome – Members were welcomed to the PDAC Steering Meeting.
- Review and approval of the September 21 & 22, 2023 minutes.
  - Marsha Hawley moved to accept the minutes.
  - Laurie Rhodes seconded the motion.
  - Minutes approved.

RECOMMENDATION: Workforce Development and Pathways
- **RECOMMENDATION:** Systemized approaches to prior learning assessment should be prioritized as an avenue for workforce advancement to support Illinois' highly diverse incumbent workforce. The PDAC Workforce Development and Pathways Committee recommends systemized approaches to PLA including the standardized state system of PLA developed under the direction of the Governor's Office of Early Childhood Development (GOECD) via PDG-B5 funds be prioritized and expanded for implementation throughout Illinois higher education institutions to provide greater accessibility and a critical pathway for the ECE workforce.
  - **RATIONALE:** National researcher The Council for Adult and Experiential Learning (CAEL) found in their study that adult students who participate in Prior Learning Assessment/Credit for Prior Learning (PLA/CPL) are 17% more likely to complete a degree, compared to those without PLA/CPL and that adults' students save, on average, 9-14 months in earning a degree. PLA boosted completion rates for adult students of color, low-income adult students, and adult students across the academic performance spectrum.
    - *As background: Early childhood faculty at Illinois Higher Education Institutions created a series of PLA scenarios (based on workplace challenges) that were piloted for the ECE Level 2 at higher education institutions in 2022 and 2023 in both English and Spanish for learners.*
      - **Recommendation was approved.**

PDAC Strategic Plan X

- Joni Scritchlow reviewed the draft goals and objectives (below in the order they were presented at the meeting) that accompany the posters and notecards which were developed during the retreat. The expectation is that committee chairs and members will revise, edit, and shape the drafts into final documents that will be included in the Strategic Plan X. Committees can add and/or remove goals and objectives.

Goal 1: Ensure PDAC Steering and all PDAC members have awareness of depth, breadth, history and importance of PDAC's work

    Objectives:
1. Review existing onboarding process for new PDAC members
   a. Identify gaps/areas for expansion
2. Develop a more structured onboarding process for new PDAC members
3. Capture history of PDAC and incorporate into onboarding
   a. Document the work of PDAC
4. Review and decide whether to bring back former assigning of mentors to new PDAC members

Goal 2: Ensure PDAC continues to be a strong and productive advisory group to IDHS through member leadership development

    Objectives:
1. Identify and Review Succession Planning protocols used successfully by other groups and councils
2. Determine if succession planning protocol should be established for PDAC

Goal 3: Ensure ALL relevant state agencies and other needed constituencies are represented on PDAC
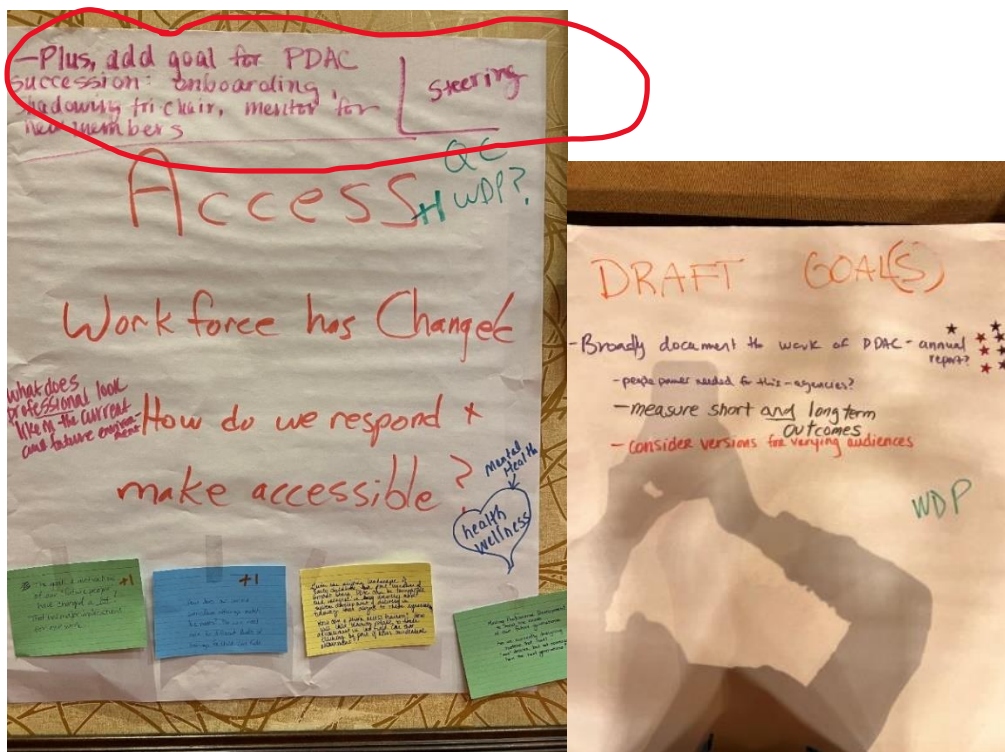
    Objectives:
1. Engage with DCFS as a needed and valued partner at the table
2. Enlarge IDHS representation in areas that are under-represented
3. Review other states and identify successful ways teacher/workforce voice is incorporated into system design and development

Goal 4: Increase IT representation on PDAC

    Objectives:
1. Scan current members for IT Expertise
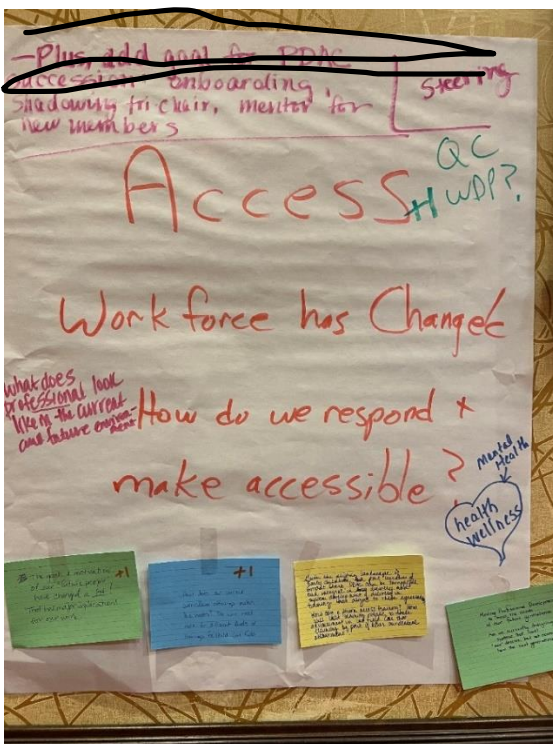2. Recruit PDAC members with technology knowledge and skillsets to inform PDAC's work

Goal 1: Gain better understanding of how early care and education workforce has changed post-COVID (e.g. generationally, culturally etc.) in order to strengthen professional development supports.
   Objectives:
   1. Review existing current workforce demographics. Compare to previous workforce demographics to ensure understanding of workforce changes
   2. Identify gaps in knowledge and creative ways to capture additional knowledge needed for informed decision making
   3. Ensure mental health needs, diversity, workforce work and life balance, generational, cultural, education, value placed on educational attainment, and other key factors and demographics related to workforce are captured and integrated
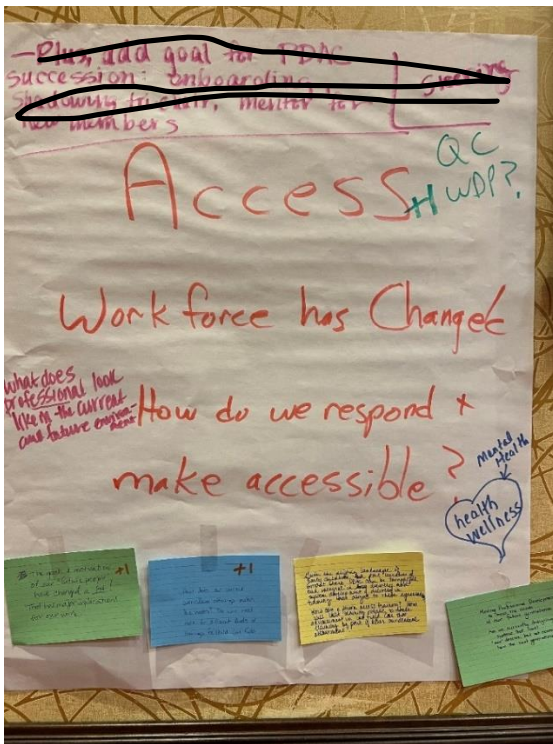

<mark>Workforce Development and Pathways ?</mark>

Goal 1. Improve workforce access based on current workforce/changing workforce needs and demographics
   Objectives:
   1. identify potential barriers to accessibility
   2. Identify needed revisions/modifications that can be implemented to improve workforce access
   3. Implement or test accessibility changes and collect feedback/data to evaluate

Financial Supports

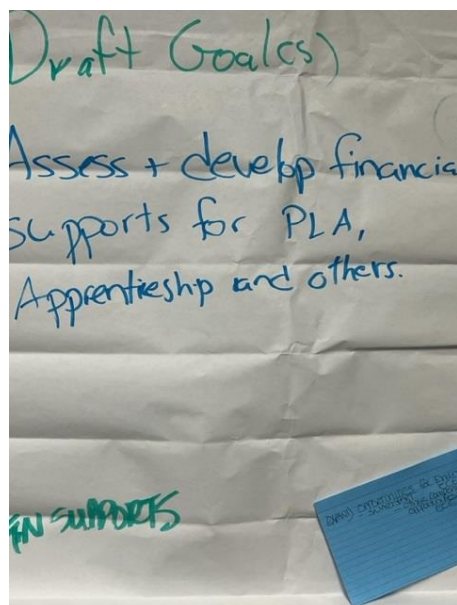**Goal1: Identify and advance potential new financial supports**
Objective:
1.Strengthen the ECE workforce through funding for learner models (e.g. PLA/Apprenticeship)
2. Expand existing funding opportunities

Goal 2: Identify and support ways to advance compensation for the field
Objectives:
1. Monitor impact of Smart Start – intended and unintended financial consequences
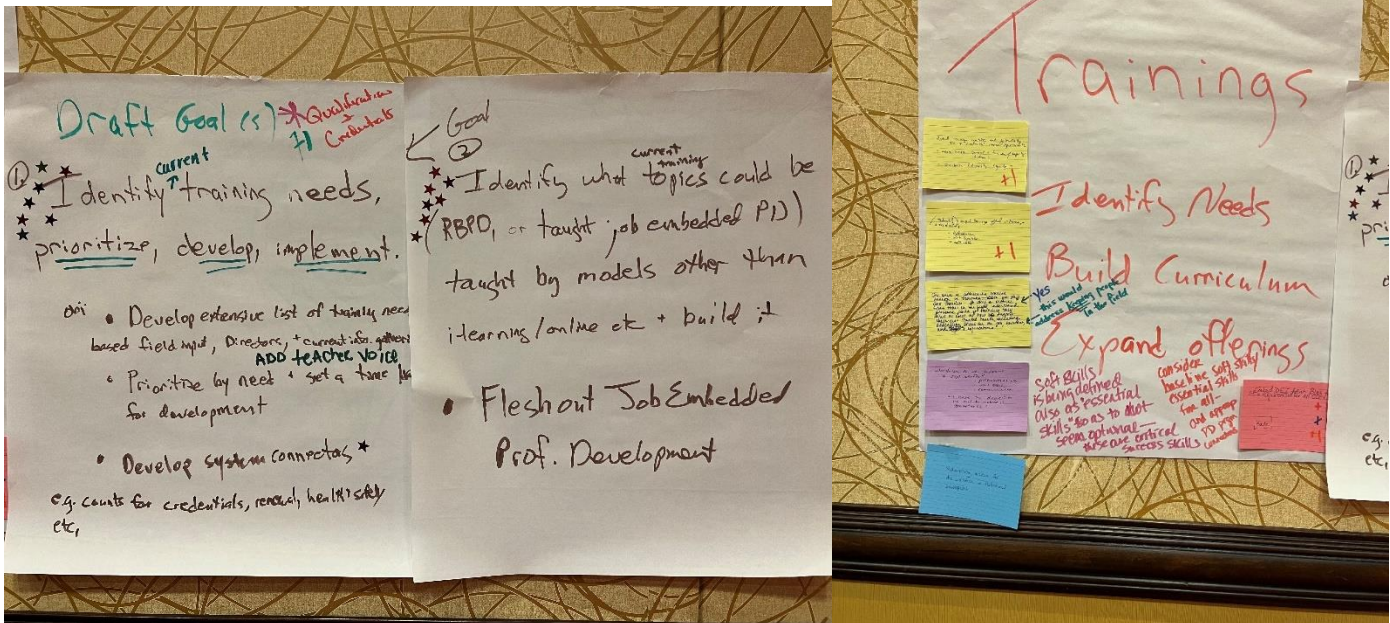2. Consider intersection (or integration) of Great START and Smart Start

Goal:
1. **Identify current professional development training needs based on field input (teachers, directors, current information gathering systems)**
   Objectives:
   a. Prioritize or rank all the identified training needs
      i. Identify those which are best taught through online (i-learning)
   b. Establish timelines for development for the highest priority trainings for i-learning
   c. Expand i-learning trainings offered to field

Qualifications and Credentials:

Goal 1. Strengthen Gateways Credentialing System connectors to trainings
   Objectives:
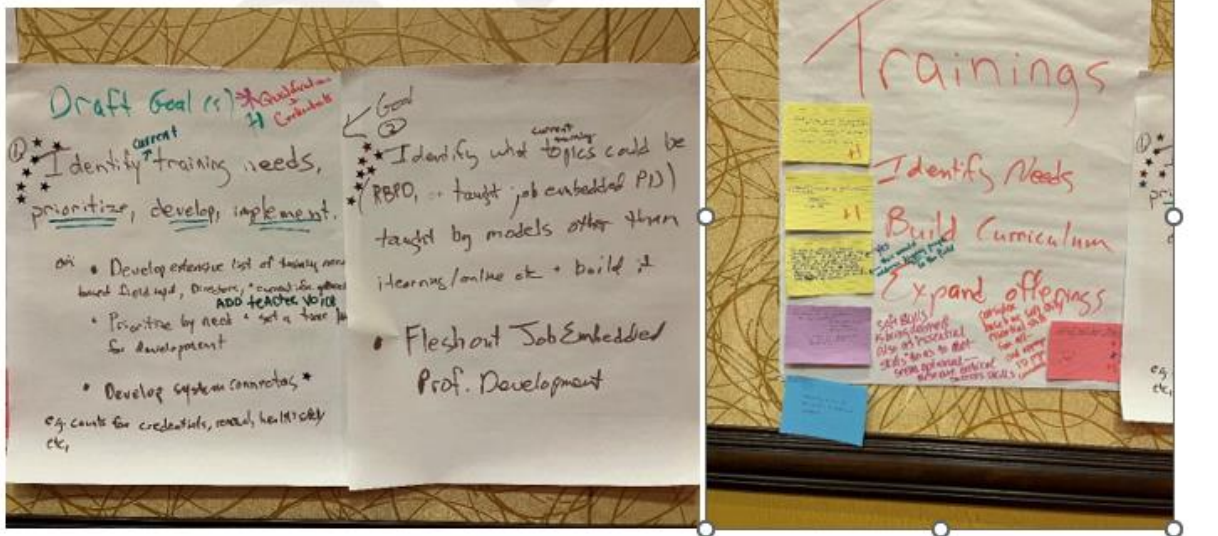   1. Increase number of and availability of trainings that support credential attainment
      a. Increase trainings aligned with Gateways Credential competencies

Goal 2: Utilize/maximize PDAC approved definitions for Job-Embedded Professional Development to expand opportunities for workforce development
   Objectives:
   1. Review previously approved definitions of job-embedded professional development
   2. Review competencies and/or training topics that could be taught through job-embedded professional development
      d. Prioritize
      e. **Develop and implement**

Goal 3: Integrate RBPD/Job-Embedded Professional Development into credential framework

College Credit Job Embedded Competency Development
Prior Learning Assessment

Goal 1: Evaluate potential for college credit for job embedded competency development and attainment
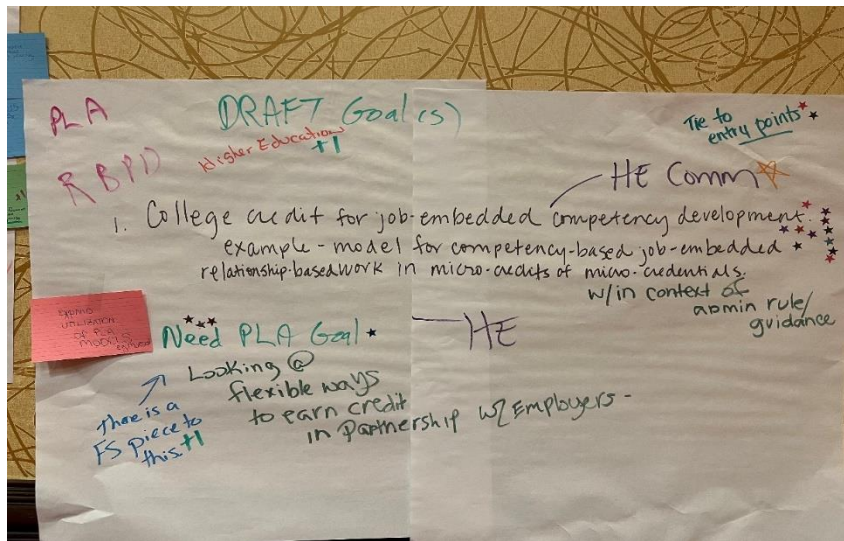 **Objectives:**
 1: Explore workforce pathways that currently exist and identify needs.
 2: Develop strategies to incorporate apprenticeship and job embedded models into systems.
 3: Identify pilot findings/recommendations and replicate for apprenticeships job embedded based models.

==Higher Education==

Goal 2: Provide statewide access to Prior Learning Assessment that leads to college credit and counts toward credential/degree attainment for the early childhood incumbent workforce
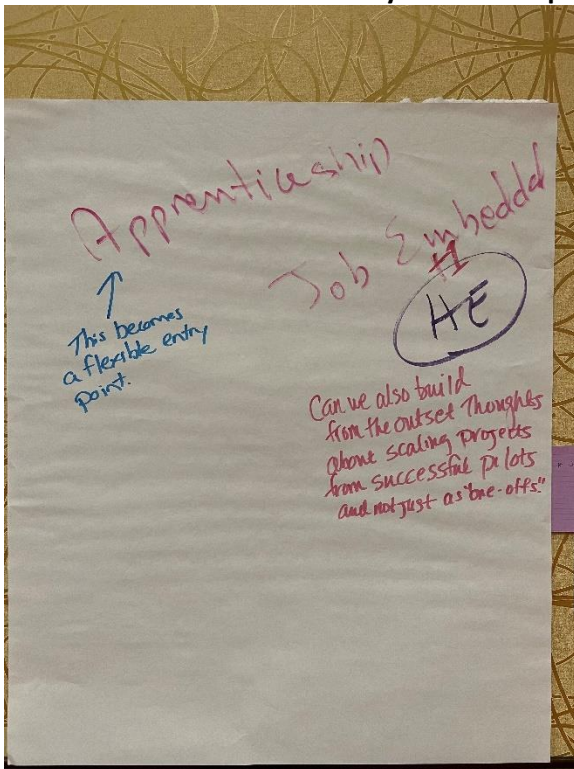 **Objectives:**
 1: Review and identify successful, tested models of PLA for the early care and education incumbent workforce for statewide scale up
 2: Partner with Financial Supports Committee to ensure cost of PLA is incorporated into scholarship programs for accessibility
 3: Partner with employers to facilitate incumbent workforce members using PLA as a proven pathway toward credential and degree attainment

Apprenticeship /Job Embedded
This is similar to the one directly above incorporated into the one above.
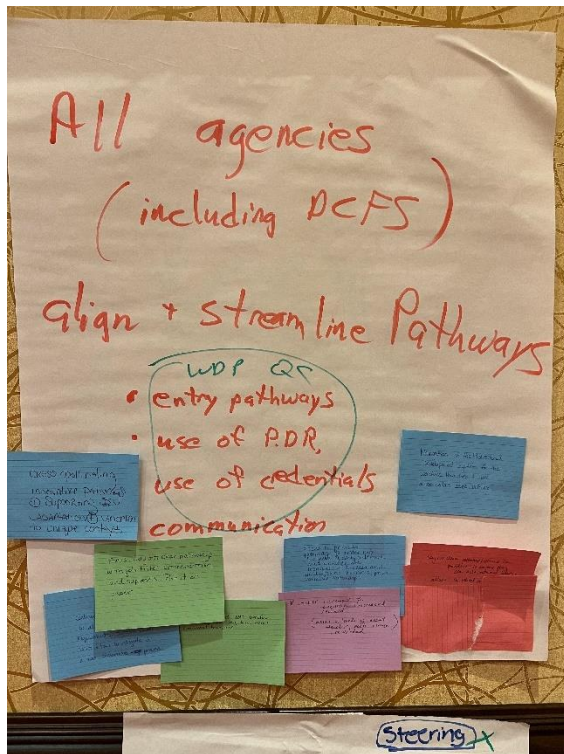

Align and Streamline Pathways

<mark>Qualifications and Credentials</mark>

Goal: Align and streamline pathway requirements between DCFS licensing, ISBE teacher licensing, and early care and education to ensure accessibility and transparency for workforce.

> **Objectives:**
> 1: Embed Gateways Credentials as markers indicating educational qualifications are met within state licensing system (DCFS)
> 2: Utilize Professional Development Record as tool that validates role qualification for programs/centers
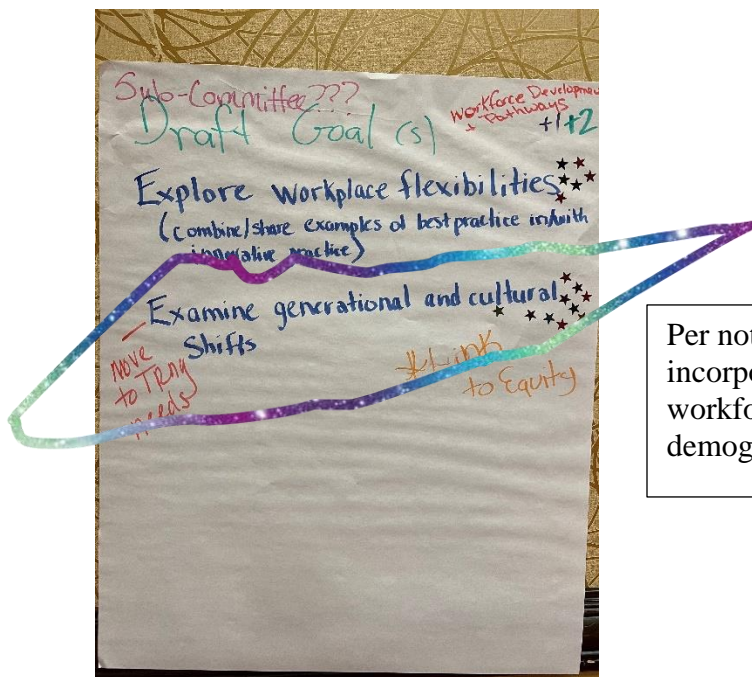
Explore Workforce Flexibilities

==Workforce Development and Pathways==

Goal: Identify innovative workplace flex strategies that may appeal to diverse workforce members to help employers stabilize the workforce.

    Objectives:
    1: Identify most popular flexible workplace options (may be generational, cultural, etc.)
    2: Review and identify programs/employers that have successfully expanded flexible work options for staff
    3: Share and/or further develop innovative ways to incorporate flexibility within early childhood structures and practices

Per note, this was incorporated into workforce demographics
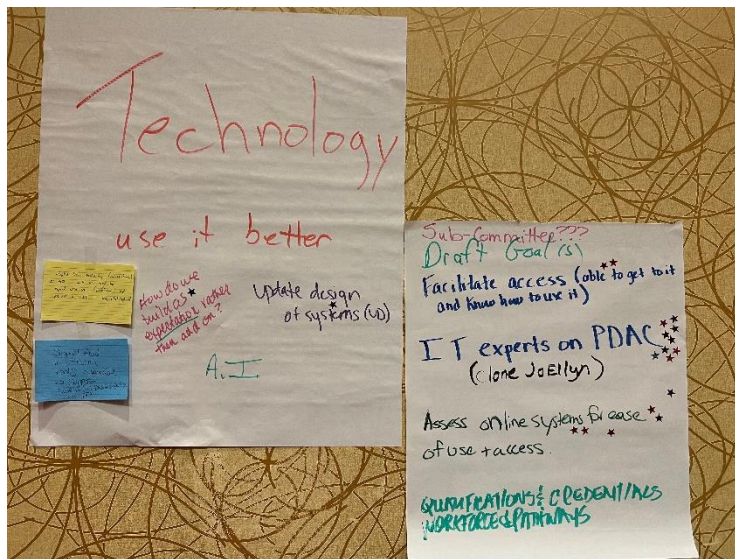
Technology Use it Better

Goal: Explore ways to use technology to expand workforce accessibility to various programs offered.
    Objectives:
    1: Research barriers that the workforce experiences regarding technology
    2: Identify new technologies that may strengthen workforce accessibility and remove barriers
    3: Identify trends in how technology is being used by different segments of the workforce and how we can incorporate into our programs (e.g. Mursion, GoReact, etc.)

Note: Ensure PDAC overall has sufficient IT Experts moved to PDAC Steering goal/objectives

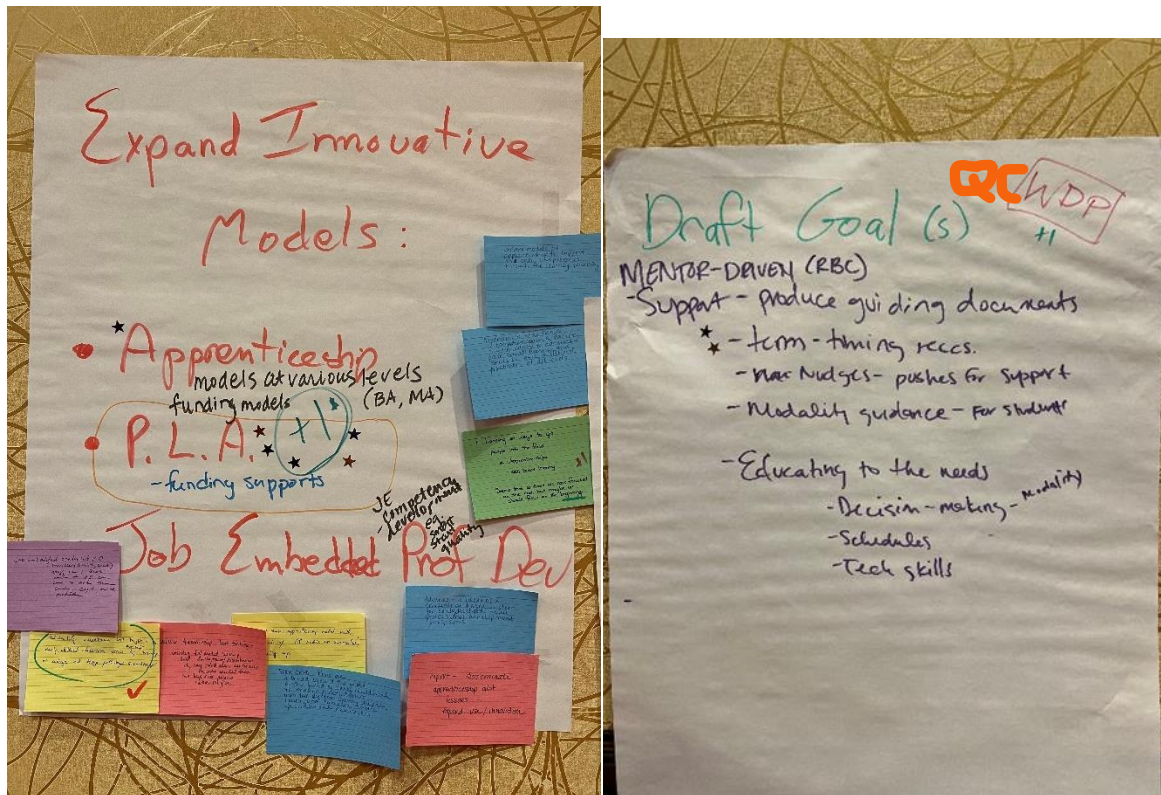**COMBINED Expand Innovative Models with RBC/ Job Embedded**

HE and QC could focus on different models under a shared goal

Goal 1: Expand (Scale up) identified successful innovative professional development models
    Objectives:
    1. Review data upon completion of PD pilot models (e.g. apprenticeship, job embedded PD etc.)
    2. Evaluate for efficacy using pre-determined metrics
    3. Make recommendations for statewide scale-up of models that meet metrics
        a. Provide guidance for best practices
        b. Include evaluative component
    4. Partner with Financial Supports Committee for recommendations needed to provide funding to bring to scale identified successful/impactful models

Messaging

Goal: Develop targeted communication and messaging tools that appeal to a diverse potential workforce

    Objectives:

    1: Simplify and streamline communication to early childhood educators

    2: Map career pathways

    3: Simplify system communication tools
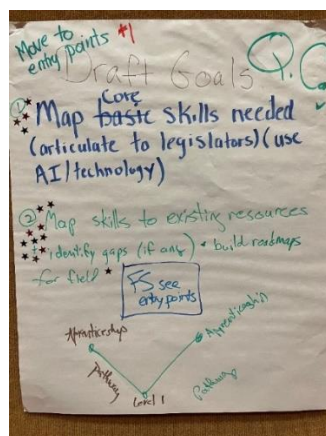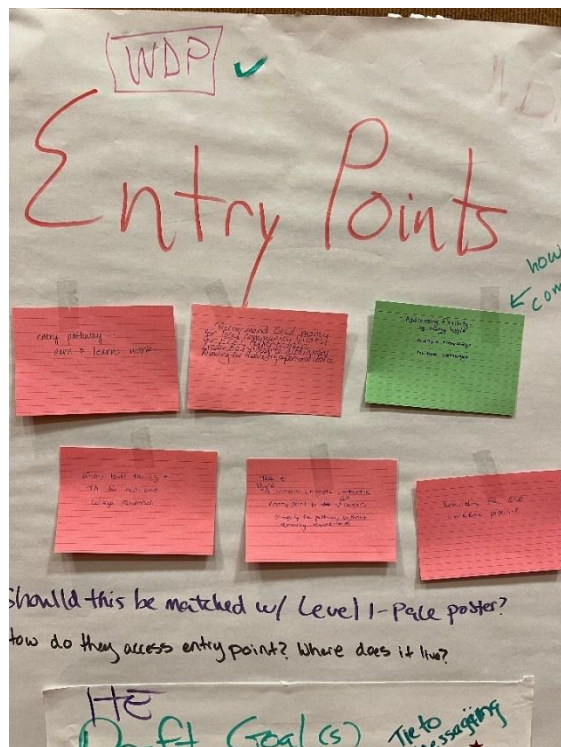

Entry Points

Goal: Identify and address entry point challenges for workforce

    Objectives:

    1: Explore entry points that currently exist and identify successes and challenges

2: Develop strategies to mediate challenges and improve design of entry level pathway(s)
   a. Map core (minimum) health and safety requirements for teacher assistant as entry point
      i. Align with existing resources
      ii. Partner with Financial Supports if additional resources need to be allocated
   b. Create/map entry points for teachers that meet health and safety requirements and allow opportunities for innovative ways to grow/gain competencies and increase education
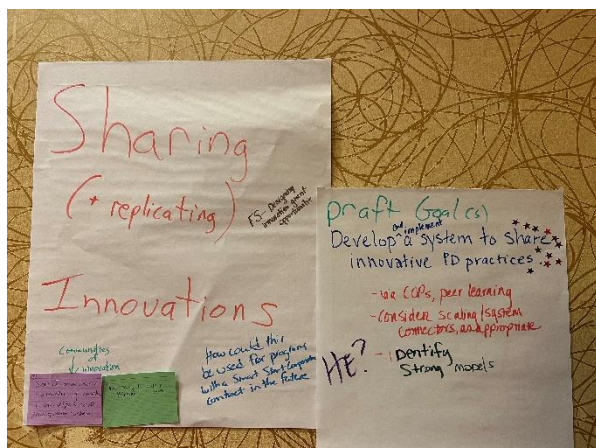

NOTE SAYS TO MOVE to ENTRY POINTS

Sharing Innovations - Suggested goal for several committees   HE, WDP taking on different audiences under a shared goal example:
   Higher Education (faculty)
   Workforce Development and Pathways (educator incumbent workforce)
   Financial Supports - as needed when ready to bring funding into picture.

Goal 1: Develop systems for identifying and sharing best practices and innovative models to strengthen and promote field flexibility and scaleup of successful models

Objectives:
1. Identify audiences that benefit from innovative practices (e.g. Program Directors, early childhood educators, P.D. Providers (faculty and trainers), PDAC, etc.)
2. Review and identify successful systems (state or national) for sharing innovations (e.g. peer learning, communities of practice, etc.)
   a. Determine metrics for "success"
3. Implement and test systems for sharing best practices/innovations among various audiences

Combined two posters:
1. **Badging, Micro Credentialing, Professional Development Record**
2. **Identify gaps/needed supports to create badging system for competencies; show on professional development record**

==Higher Education and Qualifications & Credentials==

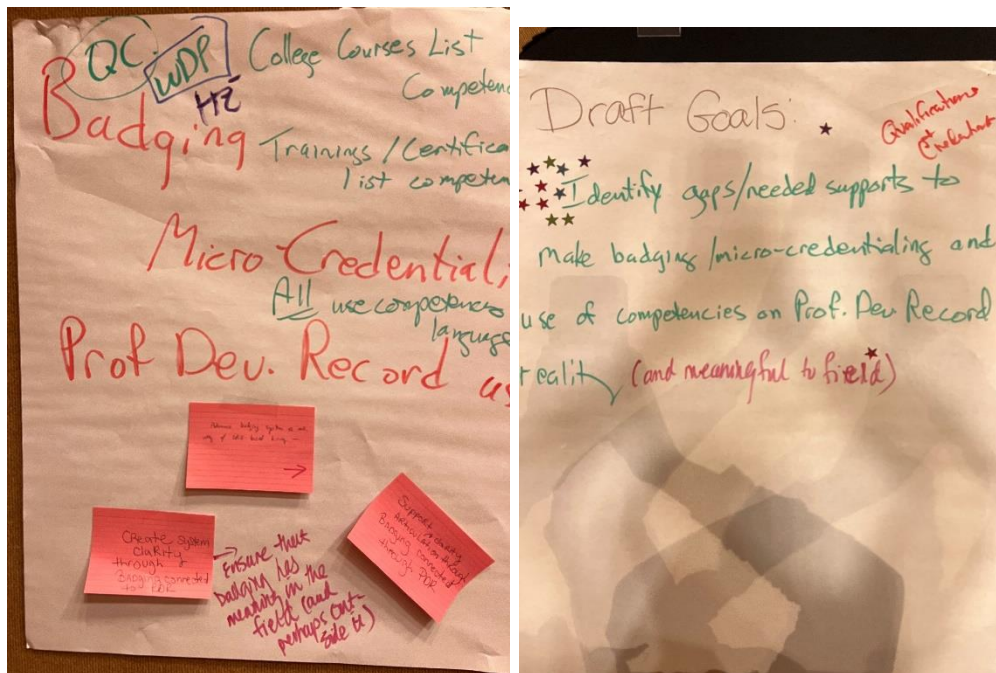HE and QC could take on different audiences under a shared goal

Goal: Utilize and maximize Illinois' well-developed existing competency infra-structure for Gateways Credentials by making it accessible and transparent to the field

Objectives:
1. Encourage all state agencies/stakeholders to utilize the consistency of existing competency infra-structure and language
   a. IAI Panel (goes to Higher Ed)
   b. ISBE IPTS
   c. NAEYC
   d. IDHS
   e. DCFS (goes to QC)
2. Encourage all professional development (higher education courses and trainings) to identify content using competency language
   a. Gateways entitled institutions courses that have competencies in their college coursework list competencies in corresponding syllabi.
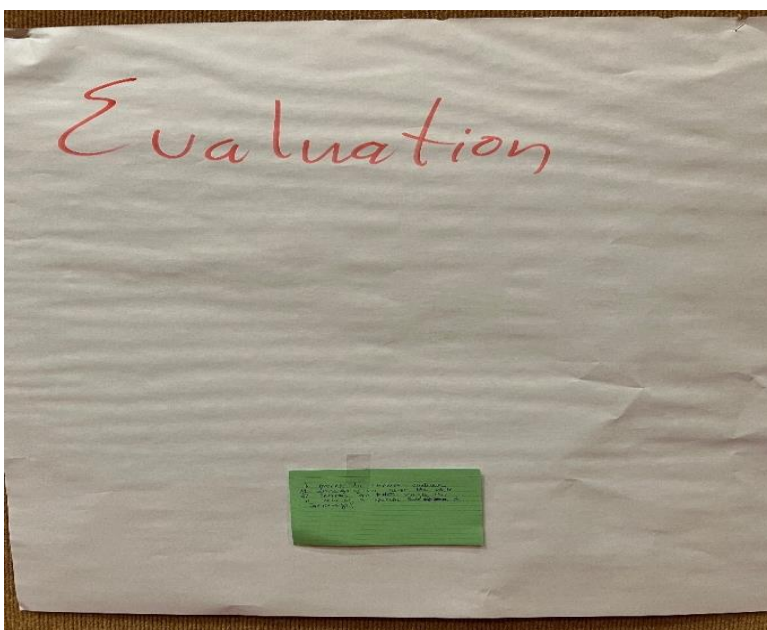   b. Training list competencies on certificates (where applicable) (QC)

==AD HOC Committee with Qualifications and Credentials==
3. Expand the readily accessed Professional Development Record to include competency attainment
4. Review micro-credentialing systems and determine if relevant to IL work
   a. Determine if use of micro-credentials to award educational advancement in smaller increments would be beneficial to the field
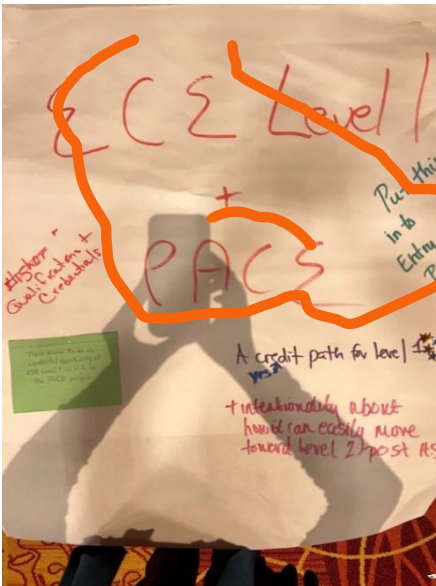
.

Evaluation
All goals/strategic plans should include an evaluative component – yet little was written and there are no "stars" indicating group thought this was a priority. Should "evaluation" be included in directions given to every committee?
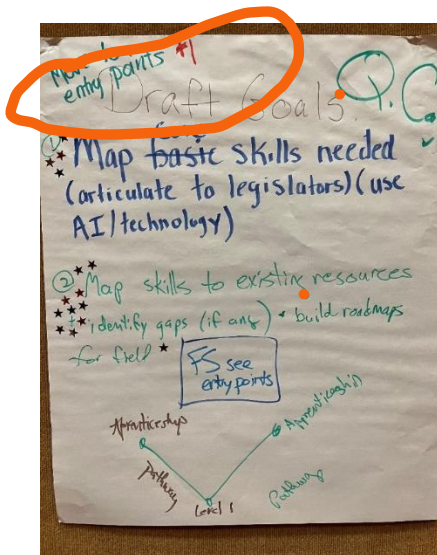

ECE Level 1 and PACE – PRIORITIZE FY24 – AD HOC GROUP

This will be addressed by an Ad Hoc

Map Core Skills

NOTE SAYS TO MOVE to ENTRY POINTS

Breakout Session
- Following Joni's overview of each of the posters/goals/objectives committee members went into breakouts to recap their thoughts on the information provided. Committees will be provided the posters specific to their committees following the Steering meeting.

Wrap Up
- Committees are to use the next few months to meet and give initial feedback on the goals and objectives, with a concentration on the goals they would like to move forward in the next three years.

Adjourn