

## Winter 2025 Newsletter

*“Specially trained, high-quality educators should not be a luxury only for families who live in our wealthiest neighborhoods and can afford higher tuition.” – Paradise Mingo, Washington, DC*

*“Highly qualified workers with specialized education and training are vital to young children’s development.”  
– Kimberly Perry, DC Action*

*“The lack of education and compensation requirements undervalues the skilled work of early-childhood education...whose continued low compensation in part reflects the false notion that anyone can do this work.” – Berna Artis, DCAEYC*

---

Dear Readers,

It’s our great honor to serve as members of the Commission on Professional Excellence. Each of the Commission’s members spend most of our days navigating the very real challenges and complexities of our current world. Yet, we are grateful for the time we’re able to spend as part of this Commission envisioning, partnering, and acting to build towards a different one. With the deep engagement of state leaders, and amazing educators from centers, schools, and family child care homes, our Commission has been making and supporting steady progress towards the unified, cohesive, and equitable early childhood education profession outlined in the *Unifying Framework*.

But with so much happening in and beyond our ECE world, you may not know a lot about this work! So, we hope you’ll allow us to highlight a few things that the Commission is up to these days, as we recognize the fifth anniversary of the release of the Unifying Framework:

- **Focusing on the inclusion of family child care.** Led by our FCC subcommittee, we are developing guidance and recommendations related to funding needs, structures, and supports for current and future educators working in family child care to support them as a key part of a thriving, well-respected, and well-compensated ECE workforce. If you’re an educator working in family child care who would like to participate in an interview or focus group to share your thoughts and ideas, please send a note about your interest to [commissionece@gmail.com](mailto:commissionece@gmail.com).
- **Exploring professional licensure.** We are creating resources that support the field in developing and implementing fair and equitable ECE professional state licensure systems that provide recognition at all professional designations, allow for reciprocity across settings and states, protect public investments, and lead to increased autonomy and a simplified, right-sized regulatory environment for early childhood educators. This includes [model state legislation and regulations](#) to provide a professional licensure framework that advocates and policymakers can adapt for their state contexts, as well as work to explore and [set parameters](#) for the professional assessments required for ECE I, ECE II, and ECE III licensure.

- ***Serving as a resource to states.*** The Commission and its organizational members frequently serve as a resource to states working on components of *Unifying Framework* implementation, including issues related to compensation, ECE professional preparation, aligning systems to the ECE designations, and strategies for creating a recognized ECE profession.

Our daily work with and on behalf of early childhood educators, families, and children in our own respective programs, organizations, and institutions remains paramount. But our work as part of the Commission has given us the gift of collaborative space, time, and partnership to meaningfully grapple with some of the big questions and opportunities related to the early childhood education workforce. This is difficult work, in a difficult time, but we are grateful for the powerful expertise and voices of our colleagues on the ground in states and communities, and we look forward to more opportunities to continue to work with them and each of you to come out of this time stronger and more unified than ever.

In our future, we see a diverse, equitable, well-prepared, well-supported, and well-compensated early childhood education profession working with children in all states and all settings – and we’re going to keep working with you, and with each other, to get there.

To learn more, you can always visit [www.commissionece.org](http://www.commissionece.org) or reach out to [commissionece@naeyc.org](mailto:commissionece@naeyc.org)

In solidarity,

The Commission on Professional Excellence (see who we are [here!](#))

---

## Commissioners @ Conferences

Commission members have been working steadily and around the country to make sure more people know about our shared work, the Unifying Framework, and how we can support each other! In the past year, Commissioners have been out and about at conferences from NAFCC in St. Louis, to ZERO TO THREE in Minneapolis, to NAEYC in Anaheim, to CCAoA in Washington, DC, to DEC in New Orleans, and more! Remember that members are available to present at your conferences and events as well! Reach out to [commissionece@naeyc.org](mailto:commissionece@naeyc.org) with questions or opportunities.



---

## More Opportunities to Connect with the Commission

Members of the Commission are working together to offer occasional topic-based “Office Hours.” For example, maybe you:

- have specific questions about how your state, community, or organization might work to [understand and align with the Unifying Framework](#)
- want to connect about [professional licensure](#), or [request access to the licensure legislative language](#)
- are interested in learning more about how your state agencies or institutions of higher education can align with the [Professional Standards and Competencies](#)

Reach out to [commissione@naeyc.org](mailto:commissione@naeyc.org) to learn more or request an office hours meeting for you and your state allies!

---

## Meet the Commissioners!

On occasion, the Commission on Professional Excellence will be sending out a newsletter, like this one, with updates and information, including opportunities for you to get to know [the members of the Commission](#). While the Council for Professional Recognition has stepped back from their organizational membership due to emerging conflicts of interest, we encourage you to get to know two of our Commissioners who bring deep experience as current and former educators in the early grades at public schools.



**Educator Member:** Shucra Victor-Cameron is the newest member of the Commission’s Executive Committee! Joining the Commission as a first grade teacher in Broward County Public Schools, Shucra has stepped into her own leadership role as the owner of Intentional Teaching Consulting Services. She is a master trainer and coach supporting early childhood professionals in the state of Florida, and her professional mission is to transform early education professional practice through intentional teaching by building on evidence-based exemplary strategies. One of Shucra’s goals for this year is to join more of the Commission’s public presentations, so keep an eye out for her in 2025!



**Organizational Member:** Like Shucra, **Dr. Leah Austin** also began her career as a public school teacher teaching first grade, as well as kindergarten – right in our nation’s Capitol. From there, she has gone on a journey in support of Black children and their families that has taken her to roles in organizations including the Schott Foundation for Public Education, the United Way of Greater Atlanta, and the Annie E. Casey Foundation – all the way to her current role as the President & CEO of the National Black Child Development Institute. As the chair of the Commission’s Licensure and Assessment Subcommittee, Leah is leading critical components of the Commission’s work, even as she leads extraordinary efforts within her own organization – and continues to pursue her own learning and growth, as well as that of her energetic and insightful son!

## **ICYMI: Resources and Links from Commission Members, Partners, and More!**

- NAFCC and the Council for Professional Recognition announced a formal partnership that will support family child care educators in earning the Council's Family Child Care Child Development Associate® credential as a pathway to NAFCC Accreditation. The Council will support NAFCC in these efforts, including avoiding duplication of requirements. The nonprofits will work to develop a joint recognition program to honor educators who've earned both a CDA® Credential and NAFCC Accreditation. [Learn more here!](#)
- The National Workforce Registry Alliance (NWRA) has merged with the Buffett Early Childhood Institute at the University of Nebraska. NWRA supports 46 statewide early childhood workforce registries with 2.8 million members and, combined, the two organizations will be able to offer an unprecedented level of research, data analysis, and insight into the nation's early childhood workforce, creating new opportunities to craft stronger child care policies nationwide. [Read more here.](#)
- TEACH National Center and NAEYC co-hosted a webinar featuring ECE students, instructors and the Center for the Study of Child Care Employment, to learn more about how educators and instructors see the importance and impact of competencies earned on a clear pathway of credentials, degrees, and compensation. [Access the recording here.](#)
- NAEYC and the Council for Adult and Experiential Learning (CAEL) are co-hosting a resource series focused on expanding the use of credit for prior learning in ECE higher education programs. [Watch the recording here](#) about utilizing the CDA as a CPL pathway – and access previous [credit for prior learning webinars](#) and the "Credit Where Credit is Due" [brief](#) here.

**Reach out anytime to  
[commissione@naeyc.org](mailto:commissione@naeyc.org). Learn more at  
[www.commissione.org](http://www.commissione.org).**

**Thank you for all you do to support  
children, families, and educators each and  
every day!**

