

CPR - Instructional

A. Program Description

1. Describe your program’s purpose and identity/focus, noting any changes since the last review.

The Education/Early Childhood (EDU-ECE) Program equips students with the skills and knowledge necessary for careers in early care and education, including transfer to four-year institutions. We accomplish this through coursework, mentoring, and field experiences designed to foster students’ capacity for integrating interdisciplinary knowledge, critical thinking, inquiry-driven practices, and advocacy for children, families, and the early care community.

Our program content emphasizes the importance of diversity, equity, and inclusion, acknowledging the diverse backgrounds, lived experiences, identities, and aspirations of our students and the children and families in our communities.

While preparing students for teaching and non-teaching careers with children and families, our 14 pathway options emphasize the following focus areas:

- Developmentally appropriate practices for teaching young children, including curriculum development, assessment, and teaching strategies.
- Cultural diversity and inclusion, emphasizing the importance of anti-bias approaches in early childhood education.
- Family and community engagement, stressing the importance of partnerships and relationship building in the early childhood context.
- Special education and early intervention to prepare students to work with children with diverse learning needs and abilities.
- Nature-based pedagogy and sustainability, incorporating nature, environmental education, and stewardship into the curriculum, highlighting the benefits of outdoor learning environments.
- Hands-on learning experiences through fieldwork and practicum courses at the Santa Monica Early Childhood Lab School (ECLS) and a variety of high-quality, local early childhood centers, allowing students to connect and apply theoretical knowledge in real-world settings and develop essential skills for working with children and families.

There have been no changes of note to our program purpose or identity since our last program review in 2020–2021.

2. What are the critical ways your program advances the college’s mission, vision, and goals?

The EDU-ECE program contributes directly to several components of the college’s mission and vision, including access, equity, sustainability, and workforce readiness.

Access to High-Quality Education and Career Pathways

SMC’s Mission Statement emphasizes providing accessible and affordable, high-quality education leading to degrees and certificates while preparing students for careers and transfer. The EDU-ECE program directly supports this by offering a variety of affordable degree and certificate pathways, including transfer degrees, that prepare students for diverse careers in early childhood education. Our program prioritizes access to no-cost learning materials for students via our pathways that fully utilize OER, ZTC, and/or lending library materials. In addition, our program's strong focus on hands-on learning, fieldwork, and practicum provides students with practical experience, enhancing their career readiness. This aligns with the college's goal of equipping students with the skills needed for success in their chosen fields.

Fostering a Dynamic and Inclusive Learning Environment

SMC’s Vision Statement centers on being a leader and innovator in learning and achievement, fostering a community committed to open dialogue and inclusivity. The EDU-ECE program embodies this vision through our commitment to diversity, equity, and inclusion. We actively seek to dismantle inequitable practices, in alignment with the college’s commitment to diversity and inclusion. Our course offerings reflect this inclusivity, including courses focused on teaching in diverse societies, culturally relevant curriculum, and working with families from diverse backgrounds. The availability of comprehensive support services such as dedicated Education counseling, tutoring, and student resource centers further enhances the supportive learning environment envisioned by the college.

Promoting Student Success and Lifelong Learning

The SMC Mission Statement emphasizes that the college aims to support students in achieving their educational goals and nurture a lifelong commitment to learning. The EDU-ECE program aligns with this by providing a supportive and structured learning experience with clearly defined pathways, expectations, and opportunities for professional development. Our program's dedication to student success is evident in our comprehensive student support services, which are designed to assist students in navigating their academic journey and achieving their goals.

Encouraging Global Awareness and Sustainability

SMC’s Vision Statement emphasizes global awareness and sustainability as core values. The EDU-ECE program demonstrates this through our pathway focused on Nature-Based Pedagogy, which incorporates environmental education and stewardship into the curriculum, aligning with the college's focus on sustainability. Content from this course has also been infused into curriculum courses that are foundational to every pathway.

Contributing to the Community

In the Mission Statement, the college emphasizes the importance of student contributions to the local and global community. By preparing students for careers in early childhood education, our program contributes to the community and provides a well-trained workforce to support young children and families, directly benefiting the local community and economy.

B. People Involved – Your Students

Population and Demographics:

3. What are the key characteristics that define your program's student population? Compare your program's population to the overall college population, and discuss the extent to which your program's student makeup (including subgroups who are over or under-represented) currently aligns with your program’s intended target populations.

In Fall 2024, after two consecutive years of growth, the overall college student headcount was 27,218. Among them, 709 students were enrolled in the Education/ECE program. Data from 2022–2024 reveals several key characteristics that distinguish our students from the general SMC population.

At Santa Monica College, approximately 60% of students are 24 years old or younger, while 25% are between 25–40. In the EDU-ECE program, students in the 25–40 age group consistently represent 36–37% of enrollment. This reflects the number of returning and working adult students in our department.

Female students comprise the majority of both the college and EDU-ECE populations, but the percentage is significantly higher in our department. Women account for 56–58% of SMC students overall, compared to 86–89% in EDU-ECE.

Racial and ethnic demographics also differ. Latinx students make up 40–42% of the college’s population but represent 50–60% of EDU-ECE students. Similarly, the percentage of Black students is slightly higher in our department (10–11%) compared to the college (9%). In contrast, White (21–27%) and Asian (3–4%) students are underrepresented in our program relative to collegewide figures (34–36% and 10–11%, respectively). *Additional demographic data related to student enrollment can be found in Section D.*

Financial Aid & Generation Status

The majority of EDU-ECE students receive financial aid and identify as first-generation college students. Between 2021 and 2023, 51–57% of EDU-ECE students received financial aid, and 57–65% identified as first-generation. These trends underscore our role in expanding access for students historically underrepresented in higher education. They also highlight the need for strong, proactive student support services within our department.

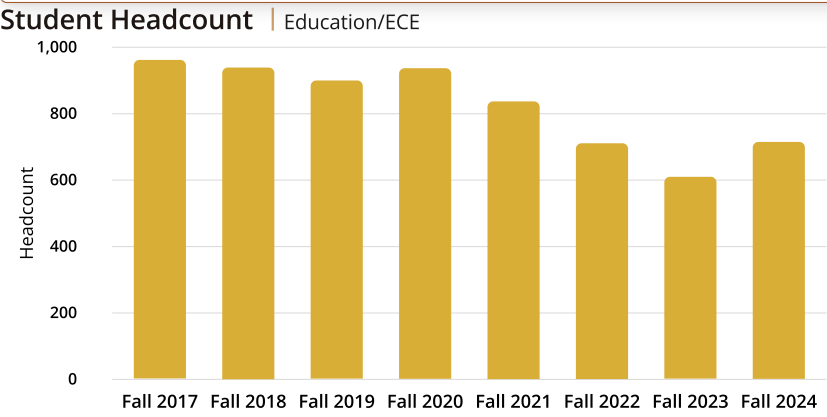
Residence and Commuting Patterns

Most EDU-ECE students are California residents (86–91%), with out-of-state students comprising 5–11% and international students 2–4% of enrollment. While most students live in-state, EDU-ECE students are more likely to commute long distances. Only 44% live within 5 miles of campus (compared to 54% collegewide), and 35% live more than 10 miles away, emphasizing the importance of offering flexible learning options.

Unit Load & Course Modality

Part-time enrollment is more common in EDU-ECE than in the general college population. While 60% of SMC students are part-time, nearly 70% of EDU-ECE students are enrolled part-time.

Prior to the pandemic, our department already had strong online and hybrid offerings. Between 2018 and 2020, 56–74% of EDU-ECE students were enrolled in mixed modality courses, while 10–22% were fully online. Post-pandemic, the shift to remote learning has persisted. In Fall 2024, 66% of students were enrolled in fully online classes, while 34% were in hybrid or on-ground sections. We continue to offer all three modalities and are committed to maintaining flexible options that meet students where they are.



Measures: Headcount

	Fall 2017	Fall 2018	Fall 2019	Fall 2020	Fall 2021	Fall 2022	Fall 2023	Fall 2024
Measures	962	939	900	937	837	711	610	715

Data loaded 21-Mar-2025

Outreach and Planning:

4. What opportunities do your analyses reveal about your current and future student outreach and planning efforts?

Improving Success and Retention

Beyond recruitment, efforts to improve student support and retention are crucial. Many students in the program face financial barriers, and the low wages associated with entry-level ECE positions can be a deterrent. Expanding financial aid options, helping students connect to scholarship opportunities, and working with local partners to create paid apprenticeship programs would allow students to earn while they learn, reducing the financial strain of completing their education.

We will continue to support flexible course scheduling, including ample hybrid and online learning options, to better accommodate students who are balancing work and family responsibilities. With the increased emphasis on remote learning, we may need to expand access to technology support and explore shorter course formats to help students accelerate their progress and certificate completion.

Our participation in statewide initiatives such as the Pathway for Prospective Educator Success (PPES) and the California Education Pathway Pre-Apprenticeship and Teacher Apprenticeship Program (CA EPPA and TAP) will further strengthen our efforts. These programs support historically underserved students by providing multi-layered mentoring, addressing financial barriers, and preparing students for in-demand roles in education—including early childhood, bilingual instruction, STEM, and special education. These projects, grounded in equity and access, will help boost student retention, sense of belonging, and transfer and completion rates across our program.

Building and Strengthening Pathways

To ensure long-term success, we are working to build stronger career and academic pathways for students. This includes seeking new articulation agreements with four-year institutions, modeled after our current partnership with Loyola Marymount University, to help students seamlessly transition into teacher preparation programs.

Expanding our partnerships with local employers, early childhood centers, and school districts is essential for helping students move from college to career. We aim to improve existing internship and apprenticeship pipelines, host employer networking events, and provide new work-based learning opportunities that give students hands-on experience while they complete their education.

In addition to our current initiatives, Santa Monica College is exploring the development of a CTE Teaching Credential program in Arts, Media & Entertainment, specifically focused on addressing California’s critical shortage of arts educators. *If approved, SMC would be the first community college in California to offer a teaching credential.* Despite more than \$1 billion in recent investments and the mandate of Proposition 28 to expand arts instruction in schools, California still faces a significant gap, particularly at the elementary level. Only a small percentage of teachers currently hold a single-subject arts credential, and many students receive arts instruction from teachers with out-of-field or ineffective credentials. At the same time, teacher shortages overall remain severe, with over 10,000 vacancies in public schools and a large segment of the teaching workforce approaching retirement.

Given these challenges, our strong workforce training infrastructure, diverse student population, and connections to local communities uniquely position us to support the development of a more diverse and qualified pipeline of arts educators. We are actively working to understand and navigate the current Commission on Teacher Credentialing process for becoming a credentialing sponsor. If approved, this would position SMC to play a leading role in preparing local artists and educators to enter the K-12 workforce and help meet the growing statewide demand for arts instruction.

Addressing these areas through strategic outreach, enhanced student support, expanded program offerings, and institutional partnerships will be essential in reversing enrollment declines and ensuring the long-term sustainability and relevance of our EDU-ECE program.

C. People Involved – Your Staff

Population and Demographics:

5a. Discuss your program’s staff (PT/FT faculty, non-faculty, and classified).

The SMC EDU-ECE department consists of 7 full-time faculty, 13 part-time faculty, 3 part-time counselors, and 1 classified staff member who is shared with another department.

5b. How reflective of your program’s student population is your staff?

Collectively, our team reflects the diversity of our student population at 52.65% Latinx, 23.84% White, 8.87% Black, and 6.56% Asian. Latinx faculty are particularly well-represented among our part-time instructors, while our full-time team includes White, Asian, and Black faculty members.

Our faculty also reflect a broad range of educational pathways. Some began their higher education journeys at community colleges, while others returned to college after working in the field or pursuing second careers. This diversity of experience allows us to meaningfully relate to students, support their aspirations, and guide them through challenges with empathy and authenticity.

Staffing Changes:

6. Discuss your program’s staffing changes since the last review. How have these changes impacted your program’s ability to achieve its desired student outcomes?

Over the past six years, our department has experienced a mix of gains and losses in staffing:

- We added two full-time faculty members—one a former adjunct with expertise in educational leadership, and another with K–3 specialization who joined us from outside the college.
- One full-time faculty member retired and transitioned to part-time status, preserving valuable institutional knowledge and instructional continuity.
- We also welcomed three new part-time faculty, although budget cuts have limited their teaching opportunities.
- At the same time, we lost four part-time faculty to retirement and three due to budget constraints or job offers from other colleges.

These gains—particularly the expansion of our full-time team—have enabled us to better meet demand for the Elementary Teacher Education transfer degree, respond to new TK certification requirements, offer high-quality coursework in nature-based education and leadership, and continue to innovate on future programs and pathways, like the CTE Teacher Credential. However, the departure of seven part-time faculty and the underutilization of new adjuncts due to budget cuts has negatively impacted our pool of experience from instructors still actively working in the field, a valuable resource for understanding current issues and experiences of teachers.

Staffing Challenges:

7a. Looking ahead to the next review period, discuss any staffing challenges you anticipate. How is your program planning to address these challenges?

Looking ahead, we anticipate several key staffing challenges:

- Integrating AI and emerging technologies into instruction
 - Faculty need structured time, training, and peer collaboration to adapt to rapid changes in pedagogy, student expectations, and instructional tools.
- Balancing rigor and student support
 - As we uphold high expectations, faculty are seeking guidance on equitable practices that also prepare students for real-world responsibilities.
- Aligning curriculum with workforce trends
 - Maintaining relevance requires sustained engagement with industry partners and flexibility in course design.
- Supervising practicum placements
 - Shifts in workplace expectations and policy require innovation in how we coordinate and support hands-on experiences.
- Using student success data effectively
 - Faculty are interested in learning to interpret and act on data in real time to improve learning outcomes.

7b. What institutional support does your program need to address these challenges?

Our program is well-positioned to meet these challenges due to its strong culture of collaboration, openness to innovation, and faculty expertise in equity and inclusive practices. However, to do so effectively, we will need continued institutional support in the following areas:

- Investment in AI and online learning development
 - Structured professional development, release time, and coaching will help faculty integrate emerging tools into their teaching in thoughtful and effective ways.
- Hands-on support for data analysis
 - Deeper training in Precision Campus and related tools will build capacity for real-time, evidence-based decision-making.
- Funding for industry engagement
 - Ongoing opportunities for faculty to connect with employers and field leaders will ensure curriculum remains responsive and relevant.
- Innovation in practicum placement and mentorship
 - Support for building and sustaining high-quality, flexible placements will be essential to meeting workforce needs and student goals.

With the right infrastructure and support, our department is eager to continue leading innovative, equity-centered work in education and early childhood preparation.

8. What key elements of your department culture facilitate and impede your program’s ability to achieve its desired student outcomes?

Our department culture is rooted in relationships, collaboration, and a deep commitment to equity. Faculty prioritize building trust and connection with each other and students, often dedicating the first weeks of a course to creating a strong community foundation. We approach teaching with an equity mindset, ensuring that inclusive practices are embedded into course design and instruction. This includes the use of Open Educational Resources (OER) and Zero Textbook Cost (ZTC) materials, equity plans, and a focus on culturally responsive pedagogy.

Our faculty model the professional skills and dispositions we expect students to develop in their future careers. With diverse backgrounds and experience in early childhood and education fields, faculty bring a range of real-world knowledge into the classroom. We emphasize hands-on learning, project-based assignments, and community engagement to support authentic learning experiences.

Collaboration is at the heart of our department. Faculty openly share instructional materials, co-present at conferences, and work together on grant projects, curriculum development, and the integration of AI and emerging technologies. We maintain consistent and high-quality Canvas course shells to support student navigation and success across all sections. Our student handbook and comprehensive support network—including classified staff and EDU-ECE counseling colleagues—help ensure students receive coordinated guidance beyond the classroom.

While our department’s culture strengthens student engagement and outcomes, we continue to face several challenges.

- Authentic assessment strategies, while aligned with our values, can be time-intensive and require continued refinement to ensure both effectiveness and sustainability. We continue to explore new ways to engage in meaningful authentic assessment and how to best align these practices across sections.
- Administrative processes occasionally hinder cross-functional collaboration, despite our commitment to shared leadership. For example, when enrollment targets and WTH change up or down outside of the scheduled production process creating unplanned for changes and shifts in assignments, departmental planning, and resources.
- Our flexible approach to assignment deadlines, while student-centered, sometimes fails to prepare students for the expectations and structures they will face in the workplace.

Additionally, as we expand access through online and hybrid modalities, we recognize the need to strengthen our prerequisite system. More intentional sequencing and enforcement of prerequisites will help students build a strong academic foundation and ensure success in advanced coursework. For example, we have many unenforced pre-requisites due to enrollment concerns, but this often is a dis-service to students who lack foundational learning experiences needed for success.

Despite these challenges, our department's culture remains one of shared purpose, innovation, and continuous improvement. We are proud of our collaborative spirit and our collective dedication to supporting students through inclusive, relevant, and equity-driven educational practices.

Staff Support and Professional Development:

9a. Discuss how your program involves and supports its staff (classified, non-faculty, and PT/FT faculty).

Our department fosters an inclusive and collaborative culture where all team members—full-time faculty, part-time faculty, and classified staff—are recognized as essential contributors. Everyone is encouraged to engage in department planning, program development, and campus-wide initiatives.

We are intentional in sharing opportunities for professional growth across all roles. Part-time faculty regularly receive updates on relevant workshops, Flex Day events, and training sessions. When possible, we advocate for stipends or paid opportunities to support adjunct participation in professional development. Full-time and part-time faculty alike are invited to contribute to curriculum development, advisory board meetings, and decision-making processes. All voices are consistently valued and integrated.

For our classified staff—though currently shared with another department—we ensure they are included in relevant communications and offered opportunities to attend meetings or participate in professional development aligned with their role. We recognize their critical contributions and continue to advocate for increased, dedicated staffing to meet the growing needs of our department.

We maintain a strong peer support culture across the faculty. Instructors frequently share teaching resources, collaborate on grant and curriculum projects, co-present at conferences, and serve together on campus committees. This culture of shared leadership and open exchange supports both professional growth and instructional quality. For example, most of our courses have templates in Canvas that have been co-constructed and are regularly modified by teams of faculty with new and relevant content, learning experiences, or assessments.

Mentorship, both formal and informal, is a key feature of how we onboard and support new faculty—especially part-time instructors who may be new to community college teaching or the field of early education. Through these efforts, we ensure all educators in our department feel prepared, supported, and connected to our shared mission. For example, upon hire, all faculty are partnered with a tenured faculty member to serve as their mentor in their first year.

9b. What roles do your program's staff play on campus and in the off-campus community?

On-Campus Engagement

Members of the EDU-ECE department are deeply engaged across the campus, contributing to shared governance, curriculum development, student support, and instructional innovation. Faculty and staff serve on a wide range of committees and initiatives, including:

- Governance and Academic Leadership
 - Academic Senate, Program Review, Curriculum Committee, Faculty Association, Tenure Track Evaluation Committees, and multiple hiring committees.
- Instruction and Online Learning:
 - Online Teaching and Learning Committee, Peer Online Course Review (POCR), OER Committee, New Faculty Committee, and Distance Education professional development initiatives.
- Equity and Innovation
 - Equitizing Gateway Courses, Ad Hoc AI Senate Committee, C-ID Course Reviewer roles, Grants Advisory Task Force, Area of Interest leadership, and support for AI adoption across campus.
- Student Success and Support
 - SMC Foundation Scholarship Review Committees, ECE Club mentorship, and student-centered resource coordination.

This high level of engagement ensures that the specific needs of Education and ECE students are represented in college-wide decision-making processes and fosters alignment between institutional goals and program practices.

Community and Professional Engagement

Faculty also maintain strong ties to the local community and professional field through participation in off-campus workgroups, networks, and leadership roles. These include:

- Community-Based Partnerships and Advocacy
 - Santa Monica Early Childhood Task Force, Santa Monica-Malibu Unified School District Early Learning District Advisory Committee, and Connections for Children.
- Practice-Oriented Innovation
 - The PlayLab.ai Pilot Cohort, California Community Colleges Nectir AI Pilot Program, and professional development facilitation with organizations like @One.
- Field-Wide Professional Review
 - Roles as Peer Online Course Review evaluators and contributors to professional conferences and research initiatives.

These roles help faculty stay connected to field-level changes, advocate for improved working conditions in early childhood education, and bring emerging best practices back into the classroom. Our deep involvement in local and state networks supports ongoing curricular relevance, robust student preparation, and community accountability.

Together, the department's extensive engagement across campus and community spheres reflects our commitment to collaboration, leadership, and continuous improvement—ensuring that our program remains responsive to student needs and the evolving demands of the education profession.

9c. Discuss how your staff's professional activities since the last review period have positively impacted your program.

Our department has prioritized faculty professional development by dedicating time in our twice-monthly department meetings for shared learning and reflection. These sessions have focused on topics such as mindfulness in education, cultural humility, gender equity, emerging technologies, etc. This consistent engagement has empowered faculty to reflect on their teaching practices and adapt them in ways that promote equity, relevance, and student-centered learning.

As a result of this work, faculty have:

- Developed new, forward-thinking courses such as *ECE 930: Gender & Equity in Early Childhood* and *EDUC 50: Teaching in the Age of AI – Strategies for Educators*.
- Enriched existing coursework with updated, industry-aligned content and more inclusive, trauma-informed teaching strategies.
- Shared best practices across sections, resulting in department-wide improvements to curriculum delivery, Canvas course design, and instructional responsiveness.

This culture of collaboration and professional growth ensures that innovations in pedagogy and content are quickly integrated across the program—enhancing outcomes for students and maintaining program currency.

9d. What additional areas of professional development and trainings are needed for your staff?

Looking ahead, several areas of professional development have emerged as priorities:

- AI Integration and Digital Literacy:
 - Faculty are experimenting with AI tools, but additional training is needed to support intentional, equity-minded integration into course design. This includes helping students develop AI literacy and critically engage with digital tools in educational contexts.
- Trauma-Informed Teaching and Student Mental Health
 - In response to workplace violence, natural disasters, and the broader sociopolitical climate, students are experiencing heightened stress and instability. Faculty need strategies and resources to create emotionally safe, trauma-informed learning environments.
- Gender Development and Equity
 - As issues of gender identity and expression become increasingly visible in educational settings, faculty need continued training to create inclusive classrooms, adapt curricula, and support gender-diverse students with confidence and care.
- Adolescent Development and Secondary Education
 - With the expansion of our department’s work in teacher preparation beyond early childhood, we are identifying a need for more focused professional development related to the developmental and instructional needs of middle and high school students.

Each of these areas is directly connected to our department’s mission and our commitment to equity, inclusion, and professional excellence. We are eager to partner with the college to secure access to structured learning opportunities, expert-led workshops, and designated time for faculty to grow together as a team.

Ongoing support in these areas will not only strengthen our department, but will also enhance student outcomes, instructional quality, and the overall responsiveness of our program to current and future challenges.

If applicable:

10a. In what professional organizations does your program’s staff participate?

Faculty in our program actively participate in a wide range of professional organizations to stay current with industry trends, curriculum standards, and evolving best practices. These affiliations support continuous learning, advocacy, and alignment with workforce needs.

Participation includes:

- National and State Early Childhood Organizations
 - National Association for the Education of Young Children (NAEYC)
 - California Association for the Education of Young Children (CAEYC)
 - Zero to Three
 - Infant Development Association (IDA)
 - Society for Research in Child Development (SRCD)
- Subject-Matter and Advocacy Networks
 - American Psychological Association (APA), Divisions 2 and 17
 - North American Reggio Emilia Association (NAREA)
 - Association for Environmental and Outdoor Education
 - Association for Nature-Based Education
 - Samara Early Learning
 - American Forest Kindergarten
 - Eastern Region Association of Forest and Nature Schools
 - California Early Childhood Special Education (CalECSE) Network
- Teacher Preparation and Workforce Development Associations
 - Association of California Community College Teacher Education Programs (ACCCTEP)
 - California Community College Early Educators (CCCECE)
 - California Teaching Commission (CTC) Community Circle
 - PEACH Early Childhood Higher Education Collaborative
 - National Career Pathways Network (NCPN)
 - Association for Career and Technical Education (ACTE)
- Technology and Online Learning
 - Online Learning Consortium
 - California Community Colleges AI Committee
 - Equitizing Gateway Courses Initiative

Faculty also engage in research, pilot initiatives, and collaborative projects with institutions such as the University of Alaska at Anchorage and the National College of Ireland, expanding our students’ exposure to global perspectives and innovation in education.

These affiliations ensure our faculty are connected to the latest research and field practices and allow us to continuously enhance our curriculum with evidence-based, equity-focused strategies that prepare students for the realities of the education profession.

10b. Discuss your staff’s grant-funded research and projects.

NA

10c. Discuss your program’s partnerships with regional educational institutions.

Our department maintains strong, mutually beneficial partnerships with regional educational institutions that support transfer, program alignment, and innovation in teacher preparation.

Key partnerships include:

- CSU Campuses
 - We work closely with CSULA, CSULB, and CSUN to articulate coursework, stay informed about changes in credentialing requirements, and support student transfer. Faculty from our department serve on advisory boards at these institutions, helping align our curriculum with the expectations of upper-division programs.
- Loyola Marymount University
 - We are currently partnering with LMU on a grant-funded initiative to develop a fully articulated pathway into their PK–3 multiple subject credential program. This equity-focused partnership ensures that students have access to streamlined, workforce-aligned transfer opportunities. In addition, each semester, we plan to participate in the "Lion for a Day" program, offering tours, student and faculty connections, and transcript evaluations for students interested in transfer to LMU's Teaching Program.
- Statewide Collaboratives
 - Our participation in teacher preparation networks (like the California Community College Early Childhood Educators network) and statewide initiatives (like the creation of new Teacher Performance Expectations for ECE) allows us to share best practices, respond to policy changes, and advocate for the needs of community college students pursuing careers in education.

Through these partnerships, we support smoother transfer experiences, increase transparency around credentialing pathways, and ensure that our students are academically prepared and professionally positioned for success.

10d. Discuss your program’s industry partnerships and relationships.

Our department has built and sustained strong partnerships with more than 100 local organizations that support early care and education. These partnerships serve as a foundation for connecting students to hands-on learning, current field practices, and career opportunities.

Key partnerships include:

- Early Care and Education Providers
 - Longstanding collaborations with The Growing Place (which operates the college’s Early Childhood Lab School), Connections for Children, and other community-based programs offer our students access to practicum placements, internships, and mentoring from experienced professionals.
- Public School Districts
 - Formal MOUs with LAUSD and LBUUSD allow students to complete required fieldwork and student teaching in transitional kindergarten through 12th-grade settings. These placements are essential for students preparing for TK–12 roles and those exploring multiple pathways in education.
- Community Organizations and Museums
 - We collaborate with partners such as the Cayton Children’s Museum, Santa Monica Early Childhood Task Force, and other nonprofit organizations that offer field-based experiences, community events, and guest speakers that deepen student learning.
- Workforce Development Programs
 - Our participation in the Early Childhood Mentor Program ensures our practicum students are supported by qualified mentor teachers and that mentor sites receive ongoing professional development and support.

Together, these partnerships ensure our curriculum stays aligned with evolving industry standards, allow students to gain real-world experience, and create meaningful pathways from college to career.

10e. Discuss how your faculty are upskilled to address industry and/or curricular changes.

Faculty in our department remain highly engaged in both college-wide initiatives and external professional networks to ensure that our program remains relevant and responsive to change.

- On-Campus Leadership
 - Faculty are active in shared governance and instructional initiatives, including the Academic Senate, Curriculum Committee, Distance Education workgroups, and the Equitizing Gateway Courses initiative. These roles provide critical insight into institutional priorities and student success strategies.
- Instructional Innovation and Curriculum Development
 - Our department has played a leading role in the development of Zero Textbook Cost (ZTC) pathways, equity-minded course redesign, and the adoption of inclusive online practices. Faculty have contributed to improved course shells, professional development on AI, and campus-wide training in trauma-informed teaching.
- External Engagement and Professional Networks
 - Faculty represent the department in advisory boards, workforce councils, and professional associations at the regional, state, and national levels. This includes participation in the California Teaching Commission, CCCECE, and other groups focused on teacher preparation and policy development.
- Curriculum Evolution
 - These activities have directly contributed to program advancements, such as the development of *EDUC 50: Teaching in the Age of AI*, the noncredit CPR and Gender Equity courses, and enhancements to fieldwork and leadership courses in response to employer needs.

Faculty are currently leading the development of a Student Success Program and a Pre-Apprenticeship initiative designed to increase career preparation and enrollment. These efforts demonstrate our department’s ongoing commitment to aligning curriculum with workforce expectations, building student opportunity, and sustaining program relevance in a dynamic educational landscape.

10f. Provide your program’s advisory board membership and meeting dates since the last review period.

Each spring, the department hosts an Advisory Committee meeting that brings together over 100 local partners who provide care, education, and support services to children ages birth to eight and their families (*see 10d.*). Practicum students also attend and are paired with faculty to gain experience in engaging with the field and local leadership. They are also encouraged to share their thoughts, experiences, and recommendations for program improvement.

These meetings serve as a valuable forum for gathering direct input from employers and community partners about current workforce needs, trends, and opportunities. Advisory discussions inform curriculum planning, program priorities, and innovation. Notable themes from recent meetings include:

- **2019:** The need for leadership development and nature-based pedagogy led to the creation of new coursework and a certificate in this area.
- **2022:** Employers emphasized skill gaps in language development, cultural responsiveness, and special education, resulting in content revisions and the development of shared special education resources across courses.
- **2023:** A call for stronger DEI resources inspired the development of a noncredit course on Gender and Equity in Early Childhood.
- **2024:** Themed "Strengthening the Workforce," this meeting highlighted urgent hiring and retention challenges, the growing need for infant/toddler educators, and the effects of Universal TK. This affirmed the importance of expanding paid hands-on experiences, enhancing practicum support, and developing onboarding support for students entering fieldwork.

In response to this input, the department has expanded career development activities such as mock interviews, résumé workshops, and professional networking sessions led by advisory members. These partnerships continue to guide the evolution of our program and ensure alignment with community and workforce

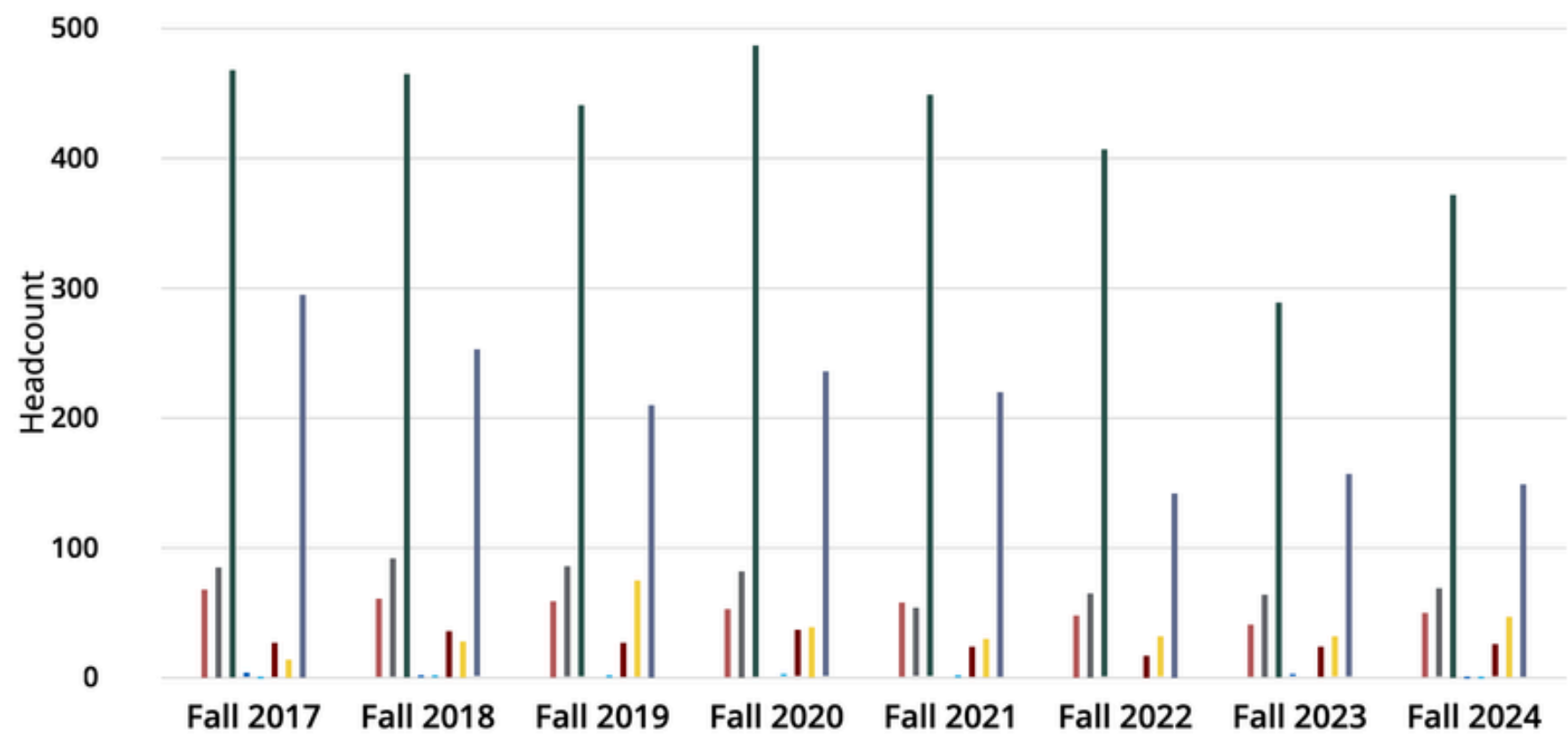
expectations.

D. Curriculum, Courses, and Scheduling

11. Analyze your program’s enrollment trends disaggregated by modality and other course attributes. Reflect on the extent to which your current course offerings and class scheduling practices maximize student success. Include any evidence to support your points. Discuss any changes your department plans to better respond to students' needs.

Enrollment by Student Demographic

Student Headcount | Education/ECE



Race/Ethnicity

- Asian
- Black
- Latine/x
- Native American
- Pacific Is.
- Two or More
- Unreported
- White

Latine/x students have consistently been the largest demographic group in the department. In Fall 2017, there were 468 Latine/x students, making up approximately 49% of total enrollment (962 students). Their numbers remained relatively strong through Fall 2020, peaking slightly that year at 487 students. However, there was a sharp decline to 289 students in Fall 2023—a 38% drop from 2017. Enrollment has since partially rebounded to 372 in Fall 2024, which still reflects a 21% decrease from 2017.

White students were the second-largest group in 2017, with 295 students (31%), but their numbers declined more sharply and consistently over time. By Fall 2022, enrollment had dropped to 142 students, representing a 52% decrease. However, there was a small increase to 157 in Fall 2023, followed by a slight dip to 149 in Fall 2024.

Black student enrollment started at 85 in 2017 and remained relatively steady through the years, with some fluctuation. By Fall 2024, the count was 69 students, a 19% decline overall—less severe than the declines seen in other groups, which suggests a more stable trend.

Asian student enrollment has seen a consistent decline from 68 in Fall 2017 to 41 in Fall 2023, with a slight recovery to 50 students in Fall 2024. This reflects a 26% drop over the full time span.

While all racial/ethnic groups experienced enrollment declines after 2017—particularly during the pandemic years—the Latine/x and White student populations experienced the steepest drops, both in total numbers and percentage terms. Black and Asian student numbers declined more gradually, and both groups show slight rebounds in the most recent year.

Enrollment Trends

Over the past several years, the Education/Early Childhood (ECE) Department has experienced a steady decline in enrollment, mirroring broader trends across the college, particularly during the height of the COVID-19 pandemic. While there has been some modest recovery since the initial drop, the pace of improvement has been slower than that of the overall college. Our students, many of whom are first-generation, working adults, and caregivers, have been especially impacted by ongoing post-pandemic challenges, including increased family and job responsibilities that make it difficult to commit to coursework, especially in-person classes. Additionally, a declining WTH (more than a 33% decrease) allocation has limited our ability to offer professional development courses, which previously contributed to enrollment and served as an re-entry point for employed students looking to advance their knowledge, skills, or job options.

Class Scheduling Practices

Our department continuously evaluates course offerings and scheduling practices to maximize student access and success. With 70% of EDU-ECE students enrolled part-time and 35% living more than 10 miles from campus, flexibility in modality and scheduling is a top priority.

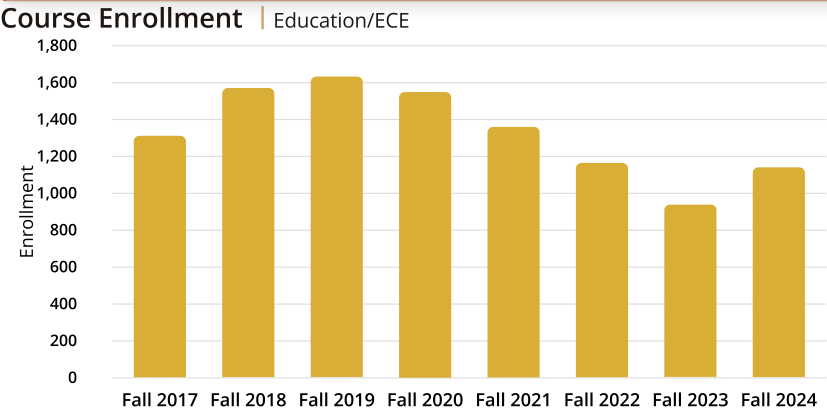
Even prior to the pandemic, our program had high engagement in hybrid and online learning. Between 2018 and 2020, 56–74% of students enrolled in mixed-modality courses. The transition to fully remote instruction during the pandemic further shifted student expectations, and in Fall 2024, 66% of students were enrolled in online-only sections, while the remaining 34% opted for hybrid or in-person formats.

To meet this demand, we offer fully online and hybrid pathways for each degree and certificate (when WTH allocations permit these multiple options).

Our approach to scheduling is highly responsive. Faculty regularly engage in informal student surveys, classroom conversations, and departmental discussions to understand how time, workload, and modality affect learning and persistence. These insights inform changes to class times, Canvas shell structure, and support

hours for the ECE Resource Room and ECLS Observation Lab. Full-time faculty have engaged in co-creation of the schedule numerous times to ensure multiple perspectives and ideas are represented, to encourage innovation in meeting student's needs, and to ensure training redundancy in the schedule production process.

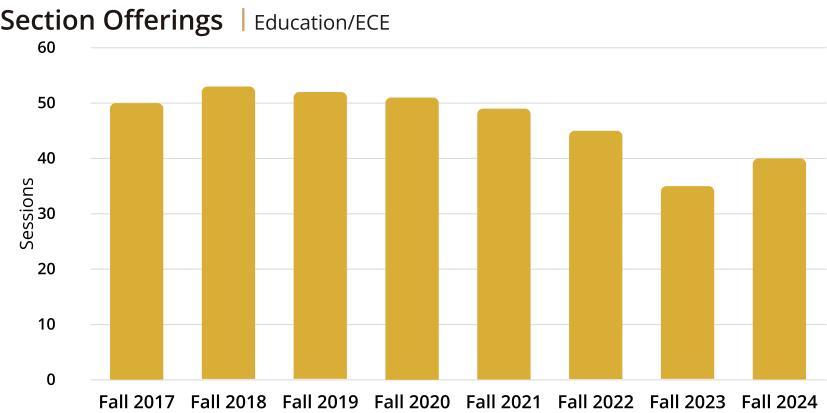
Our participation in guided pathways work and workforce initiatives ensures that course sequencing aligns with student goals and field expectations. As we continue to build stackable certificates, pre-apprenticeship pathways, and flexible, career-aligned offerings, we are committed to delivering a schedule that meets our students where they are—and helps them move confidently toward graduation and employment.



Measures: Enrollment

	Fall 2017	Fall 2018	Fall 2019	Fall 2020	Fall 2021	Fall 2022	Fall 2023	Fall 2024
Measures	1,312	1,571	1,633	1,549	1,360	1,165	939	1,141

Data loaded 21-Mar-2025



Measures: Sessions

	Fall 2017	Fall 2018	Fall 2019	Fall 2020	Fall 2021	Fall 2022	Fall 2023	Fall 2024
Measures	50	53	52	51	49	45	35	40

Data loaded 21-Mar-2025

12. What institutional support do you need to create a more equity-minded and student-centered curriculum, course offerings, and class schedules?

To sustain an equity-minded, student-centered program, our department urgently needs consistent and intentional support from the college in the following areas:

- Stable Weekly Teacher Hour (WTH) Allocations
 - Our current WTH has dropped from 152 to as low as 96 per semester. Without a guaranteed baseline, it is increasingly difficult to meet full-time faculty load and schedule the courses students need to complete certificates and degrees on time.
- Continued Support for Faculty Reassigned Time to Supervise the ECE Observation Lab
 - The Observation Lab at the Early Childhood Lab School is open to enrolled ECE students and serves as a unique learning experience, allowing students to connect high quality teaching practices, skills, and developmental content to their course assignments.
- Protection for Essential Low-Enrolled Courses
 - Many of our specialized courses—such as those required for the Child Development Permit—are not electives. They are critical for credentialing and student career advancement. Canceling them due to enrollment minimums undermines student progress and workforce preparation.
- Reliable Mechanism for Understanding Student Scheduling Needs
 - Currently, we rely on informal surveys to guide scheduling. A college-supported, systematic survey process would ensure we are meeting students' real needs and help reduce time-to-completion.
- Transparency and Support Regarding AI Bot Enrollment Fraud
 - Fraudulent enrollments have disrupted scheduling and created barriers for real students. Until this issue is resolved, WTH allocations should not be reduced based on metrics affected by bots. We also request clear communication on how the college is addressing this issue and protecting affected departments.

With adequate institutional support in these areas, our department can plan more effectively, serve a broader range of students, and uphold the college’s mission of access, completion, and equity.

13. Document any substantial changes to your program curriculum since the last review and discuss what prompted these changes. Looking forward, what changes to the curriculum do you plan based on the emerging needs of your discipline, industry, student population, etc.

Curriculum Changes

Our department has made substantial curriculum changes over the last review period in response to state policy shifts, workforce needs, and student demand. These include:

- Recent Updates
 - Major revisions to all ECE courses within the AS-T in Early Childhood Education to align with California’s new PK–3 Credential and updated Teacher Performance Expectations (TPEs).
 - Development of *EDUC 50: Teaching in the Age of AI*, designed to equip future educators with strategies for navigating and leveraging AI in teaching and learning.
 - Approval of new noncredit offerings, including:
 - CPR Training for Early Educators

- Gender Equity in Early Childhood
 - Parenting classes for the local community
- SLO/PLO Alignment
 - All course and program learning outcomes have been rewritten to ensure they are measurable, career-aligned, and clearly articulated for both students and instructors. These changes support more consistent and meaningful assessment across the program.
- Barriers to Implementation
 - Due to significant reductions in WTH allocations, we have been unable to consistently offer noncredit courses or fully implement our Transitional Kindergarten Teacher Pathway—even amid rising demand from credentialed teachers seeking TK-specific training.

Future Plans

- Reinstating and expanding course offerings for Transitional Kindergarten.
- Advocating for resources to launch noncredit parenting and community education classes. We may have a new partner and class location in the Cayton Children's Museum.
- Developing coursework in adolescent development and secondary education to support new teacher preparation pathways, like the new TK-3 Teacher Credential.
- Exploring additional curriculum focused on educational technology, equity in online learning, and stackable credentials for working adults.

All of these efforts reflect our commitment to offering timely, accessible, and relevant curriculum that meets students where they are and prepares them for meaningful work in education.

E. Evaluation, Effectiveness, and Equity:

Course Success and Retention: Indicate your program's chosen level of analyses for the review (choose one):

Discipline(s)

14a. Analyze your program’s course success and retention against your program’s institution-set standards (minimum threshold, as defined by program/department) and improvement goals. Discuss any significant changes/trends over time. Include your program’s plans to improve course success and retention.

As part of our continuous improvement and equity efforts, we regularly analyze course success and retention rates at the department level. Our primary goal is to exceed pre-pandemic benchmarks while identifying and addressing barriers that affect student persistence and achievement.

- Our institution-set standard for course retention is 83%. Retention has remained steady or improved across most terms: 83% (Fall 2017–2019), 84% (Fall 2020), 100% (Fall 2021), 91% (Fall 2023), and 90% (Fall 2024).
- Course success dipped in Fall 2022 to 66%, likely due to lingering pandemic impacts. However, success improved to 74% in both Fall 2023 and Fall 2024—surpassing pre-pandemic averages of 68–69%.

These gains reflect the department’s efforts to enhance inclusivity, relevance, and support. Initiatives such as trauma-informed teaching practices, flexible policies, AI-supported instructional tools, and updated course content (e.g., *EDUC 50* and *ECE 930*) have contributed to these outcomes.

Ongoing Challenges

- Student readiness has shifted post-pandemic, particularly in terms of time management and self-directed learning in asynchronous environments.
- Financial stress, digital access gaps, and caregiving responsibilities continue to impact success, especially among our most vulnerable students.

To address these issues, faculty have reexamined course design, participation policies, and grading practices. For example, we've adjusted "reply-to" requirements in discussion boards and begun exploring more authentic assessments to support diverse learners without sacrificing rigor.

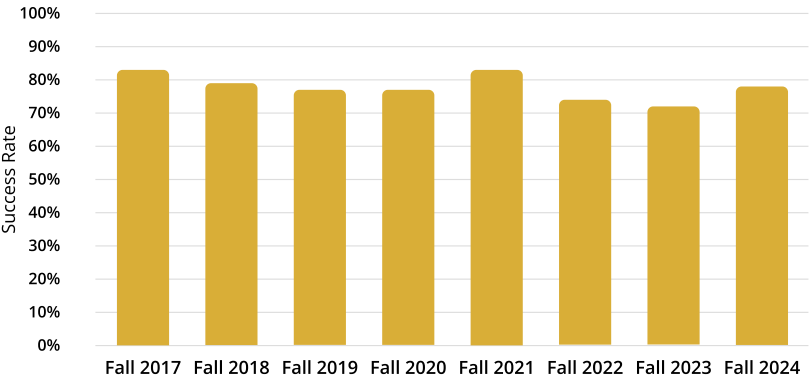
Improvement Plan:

To build on recent gains and close equity gaps, we are implementing the following strategies:

- Revise Early Alerts and Support Mechanisms
 - Partner with ECE counseling and classified staff for earlier, more personalized outreach.
 - Use Canvas analytics to identify and connect with at-risk students.
- Expand Trauma-Informed and Flexible Teaching Practices
 - Offer department-led Flex sessions on balancing rigor with compassion.
 - Promote alternative assessments and deadline flexibility rooted in Universal Design for Learning (UDL).
- Strengthen Use of Disaggregated Data
 - Work with Institutional Research to analyze outcomes by student demographics, modality, and course section.
 - Use Precision Campus dashboards to guide faculty discussions on course-level improvement.
- Enhance Online Readiness and Navigation Support
 - Implement “Getting Started” Canvas modules covering digital tools, time management, and academic integrity.
 - Continue to share consistent design templates and communication norms across sections.

By prioritizing real-time student engagement, inclusive pedagogy, and actionable data, we aim to increase course success, deepen student learning, and sustain equitable retention outcomes across all courses.

Course Success Rates | Education/ECE

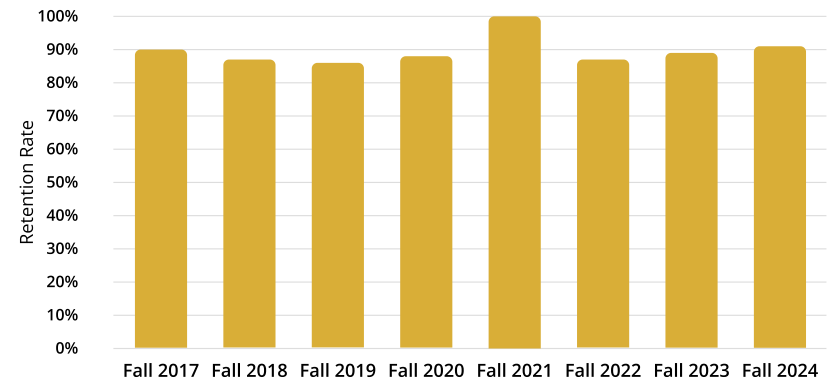


Measures: Success Rate and Success Count and Attempts

	Fall 2017			Fall 2018			Fall 2019			Fall 2020			Fall 2021			
	Success Rate	Success Count	Attempts	Success Rate	Success Count	Attempts	Success Rate	Success Count	Attempts	Success Rate	Success Count	Attempts	Success Rate	Success Count	Attempts	
Measures	83%	1,084	1,312	79%	1,028	1,303	77%	966	1,260	77%	1,002	1,308	83%	816	985	7

Course Retention Rates | Education/ECE

Limits: Course Credit Type Credit, Degree Applicable, Credit, Not Degree Applicable Course Retention Not Retained, Retained



Limits: Course Credit Type Credit, Degree Applicable, Credit, Not Degree Applicable Course Retention Not Retained, Retained

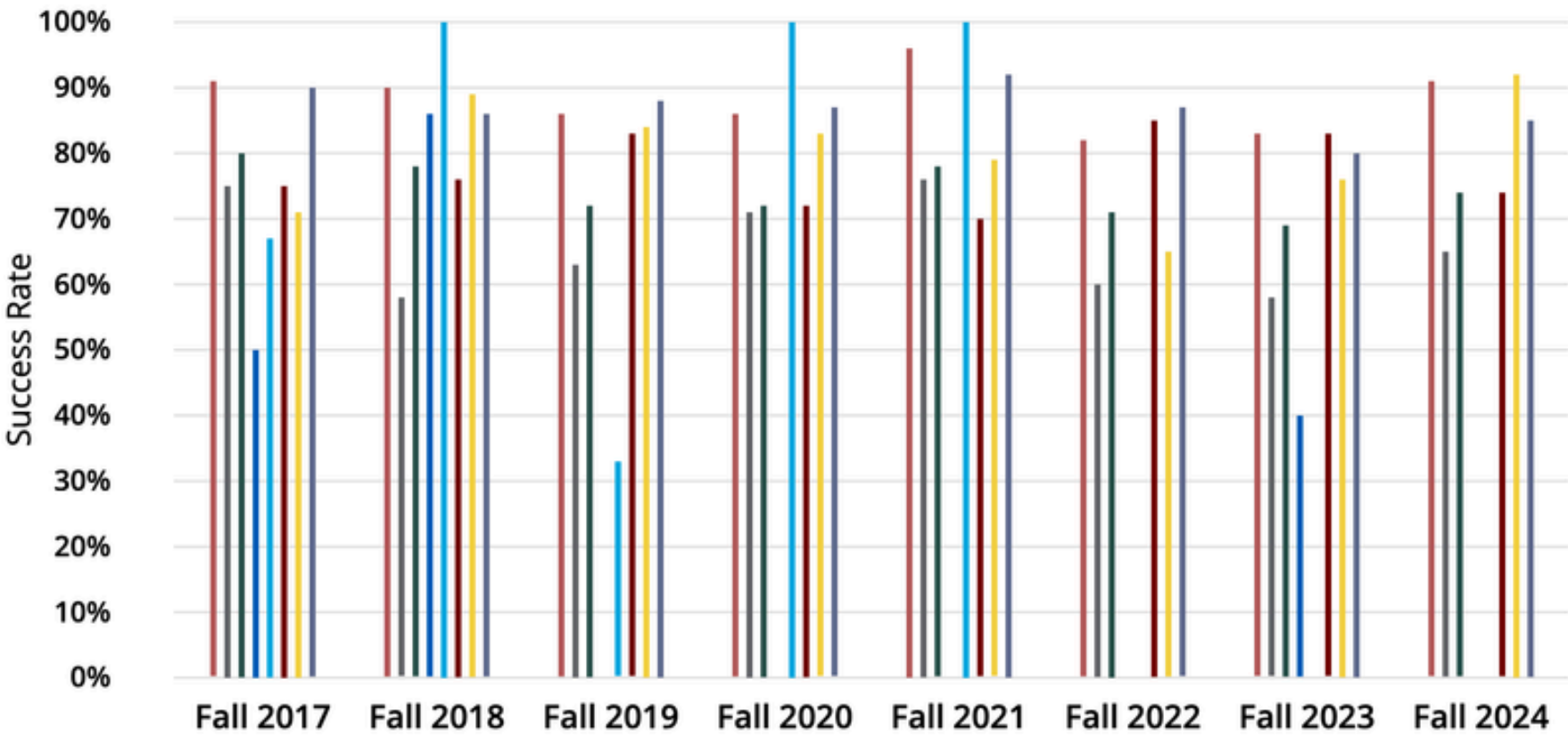
Measures: Retention Rate

	Fall 2017	Fall 2018	Fall 2019	Fall 2020	Fall 2021	Fall 2022	Fall 2023	Fall 2024
Measures	90%	87%	86%	88%	100%	87%	89%	91%

14b. Disaggregated data: Which racial/ethnic student group completes their courses at the highest rates? Which racial ethnic groups experience the largest gaps when compared to the highest performing group? Analyze the trends across the last review period.

Course Success by Race/Ethnicity

Course Success Rates | Education/ECE



Race/Ethnicity

- Asian

Black

Latine/x

Native American

Pacific Is.

Two or More

Unreported

White

Equity Trends

From a student equity perspective, course success trends in our department from Fall 2017 to Fall 2024 reveal persistent and widening equity gaps that disproportionately impact historically marginalized student groups. While Asian students consistently achieved the highest success rates (ranging from 86% to 91%) and White students maintained rates in the mid to high 80s, Latine/x and Black students experienced significantly lower outcomes. Latine/x students, who represent our largest racial/ethnic group, began with a success rate of 80% in 2017, which declined to 69% in 2023 before improving slightly to 74% in 2024. Black students began at 75% in 2017 but saw a more dramatic and sustained decline, dropping to 58% in 2023 and rebounding only modestly to 65% in 2024. These trends signal notable equity gaps in course success rates, with the largest disparities emerging in the post-pandemic years, particularly for Black and Latine/x students.

Relationship to Enrollment

These gaps align closely with enrollment trends and highlight the compounded impact of structural inequities. The sharp decline in Latine/x enrollment, particularly between 2021 and 2023, mirrors the drop in their course success rates, pointing to increased barriers to both persistence and performance. Black student enrollment remained comparatively stable, yet this group faced the most consistently low success rates, underscoring the need for intentional, culturally responsive support structures that go beyond access and address conditions for academic success. In contrast, while Asian student enrollment decreased over time, their course success rates remained high, illustrating the importance of understanding the broader context of each group’s experiences and support systems. These patterns make clear that while the department has continued to serve a diverse student population and has intentional centered racial equity best

practices and strategies, not all students have experienced equitable outcomes. Addressing these disparities requires our continued commitment to identifying and working to dismantle barriers to success.

14c. Equity Gaps: What factors might be contributing to the equity gaps? Consider factors that relate to people, programs, practices, and policies in the classroom, program, or college.

Contributing Factors

- People
 - Many of our students face compounding demands related to work, caregiving, and financial instability.
 - The psychological toll of systemic racism and marginalization affects mental health, persistence, and engagement.
- Programs
 - Limited access to wraparound services, particularly for online students (e.g., tutoring, tech loans, mental health support) hinders student success—especially when services are not well-advertised or accessible after hours.
- Practices
 - Rigid assessment formats, unclear participation policies, and inconsistent use of Canvas tools across sections can disadvantage students who need flexibility or clearer expectations.
 - Some well-intentioned practices (e.g., too many required peer responses, high assignment load, too much flexibility in late assignment submission windows creating allowing students to create a backlog of coursework) may create unintended barriers for students.
- Policies
 - Opt-in support models may miss students who don't know what's available.
 - Financial aid restrictions, course repeat limits, and placement into practicum courses without streamlined onboarding add additional friction.
 - Barriers to participation in practicum and field work courses caused by the logistics and cost of obtaining TB tests, proof of immunizations, LiveScan, etc.

14d. What else does your program need to know to better understand how to address equity gaps in your program's course success and retention rates?

Next Steps to Close Gaps

- Expand student voice efforts through surveys, focus groups, and embedded course reflection activities.
- Better orient new students to the department and field requirements via the EDU/ECE Student Handbook and orientation workshops
- Strengthen our practicum onboarding process to help students meet LiveScan, TB test, and immunization requirements through clear timelines and supports.
- Increase opportunities for students (particularly online students) to informally meet and connect with faculty to increase sense of belonging and improve communication and support
- Build Canvas Commons resources with equitable assignment/assessment examples and trauma-informed course practices.
- Leverage department equity plans and continue internal equity discussions to challenge practices and systems that may disadvantage our most impacted students.

SLO Mastery Rates:

15a. Description of process: Describe your program's processes and practices for defining, assessing, and analyzing learning outcomes. Include a discussion of how your program uses the results of SLO data to inform course and program improvement efforts.

Our department has a long-standing culture of assessing and analyzing student learning outcomes (SLOs) as a core component of program improvement. Historically, this process was embedded in our accreditation through the National Association for the Education of Young Children (NAEYC). Under that model, we implemented a robust cycle of assessment, reflection, and course-level action planning based on key assessment data (often, but not always mirroring course SLOs).

In 2023, we chose not to renew our NAEYC accreditation in order to focus on aligning our curriculum with California's emerging Teacher Performance Expectations (TPEs). Despite this shift, we have continued to apply many of the same best practices from our NAEYC experience, including consistent use of key assessments across multiple courses.

In 2024, we began evaluating how well these key assessments aligned with course-level SLOs and program learning outcomes. Looking ahead, our goal is to standardize assessments linked to each SLO across all sections and to collect and analyze data more systematically (includes increasing faculty accountability in reporting SLO data). This alignment will allow us to better understand student learning patterns, support instructional improvement, and maintain a culture of reflective, data-informed practice.

15b. Most salient findings: Describe the most salient results of course or program SLO mastery rates data over the last review period, including results of disaggregated data. Include a discussion of how the results will be used to improve student learning.

A key insight from recent SLO data is that students who do not meet SLO mastery often have not attempted the associated assessment at all. This finding has been critical in shaping how we design and structure learning activities.

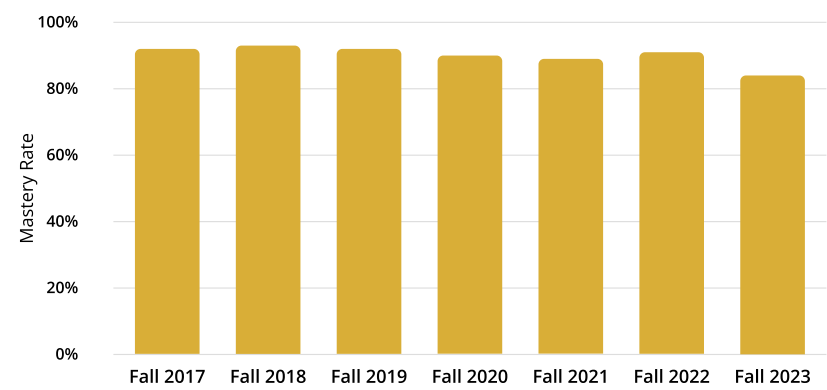
To increase participation in assessments, many instructors have redesigned large summative assessments by "chunking" them into smaller, lower-stakes tasks. These smaller assignments are more approachable and less anxiety-inducing for students, while still providing meaningful evidence of learning.

Since implementing these changes in 2021, we have seen modest but consistent improvements in SLO mastery rates across several courses. Faculty report that more students are completing assessments, and that they're gaining better insight into student understanding earlier in the term.

We also recognize that additional improvements are needed. Key focus areas moving forward include:

- Refining assignment prompts and rubrics for clarity and alignment with learning outcomes.
- Increasing consistency in how scaffolding and formative feedback are used across sections.
- Expanding faculty use of tools like Precision Campus to disaggregate and interpret SLO data.

Disaggregated results reveal that equity gaps persist in SLO mastery, particularly for Black and Latine/x students and in online courses. These trends mirror broader course-level gaps and further emphasize the need for inclusive assessment design.



Measures: Mastery Rate and Successes and Attempts

	Fall 2017			Fall 2018			Fall 2019			Fall 2020			Fall 2021		
	Mastery Rate	Successes	Attempts	Mastery Rate	Successes	Attempts	Mastery Rate	Successes	Attempts	Mastery Rate	Successes	Attempts	Mastery Rate	Successes	Attempts
Measures	92%	2,752	2,982	93%	2,629	2,832	92%	2,366	2,578	90%	2,125	2,353	89%	1,729	1,940

Data loaded 23-Aug-1970

Degrees and Certificates:

16a. Analyze your program’s degree and certificate award trends against your department’s institution-set standards (minimum threshold) and improvement goals. Document any significant changes or trends over the last review period.

Our department continues to meet or exceed our institution-set standards for degrees and certificates awarded. This success reflects our strong alignment with labor market needs, transfer preparation, and the increasing demand for early education professionals.

Key Trends (2020–2024)

- A steady increase in certificate awards, particularly in short-term, skills-based areas aligned with immediate workforce needs.
- Sustained strength in associate degree completion, with year-over-year totals consistently meeting or surpassing internal benchmarks.
- Expansion of new or revised pathways, including Transitional Kindergarten, Elementary Teacher Education, and noncredit offerings that support stackable credentials.

While we noted a temporary dip in awards during the height of the COVID-19 pandemic (2020–2021), completions have since rebounded. This recovery is largely due to enhanced online course design, proactive counseling, and grant-funded supports like the part-time ECE Counselor funded through Perkins.

Moving Forward

Our program plans to work toward:

- Increasing the number of students earning multiple stackable credentials within a single academic year.
- Expanding access to credit and noncredit early education career pathways, including dual enrollment and adult education bridges.
- Analyzing award trends by race/ethnicity and gender to ensure program completion equitably reflects the diversity of our student population.

Degrees and Certificates | Education/ECE

Measures: Degrees and Certificates

Award Type Detailed	Program Title	2015-2016	2014-2015	2016-2017	2017-2018	2018-2019	2019-2020	2020-2021	2021-2022	2022-2023	2023-2024
A.A.-T	Child and Adolescent Development	0	0	0	0	0	4	24	29	25	16
	Total	0	0	0	0	0	4	24	29	25	16
A.S.	Early Childhood Intervention Teacher	1	1	2	1	0	0	0	0	0	0
	Early Childhood Studies	25	20	29	39	33	39	35	35	31	29
	Early Intervention Assistant	3	1	1	1	5	4	6	3	8	6
	Infant/Toddler Teacher	0	0	0	2	3	5	9	5	14	12
	Total	29	22	32	43	41	48	50	43	53	47
A.S.-T	Early Childhood Education	20	15	18	31	41	44	40	26	32	21
	Total	20	15	18	31	41	44	40	26	32	21
Cert 16 to 29 Units	Early Childhood Associate Teacher	0	0	0	0	46	382	235	278	109	169
	Elementary Teacher Education	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	2	0
	Nature-based Pedagogy	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	11	4	5
	Transitional Kindergarten	0	0	0	0	2	5	5	7	2	5
	Total	0	0	0	0	48	387	240	296	117	179
Cert 30+ Units	Early Childhood Education Master Teacher	0	2	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
	Early Childhood Intervention Teacher	1	3	3	2	0	0	0	0	0	0
	Early Childhood Studies	39	36	43	32	27	54	53	39	28	35
	Early Intervention Assistant	3	3	1	3	6	4	9	5	5	7
	Infant/Toddler Teacher	0	0	0	1	1	8	14	10	14	12
	Total	43	44	47	38	34	66	76	54	47	54
Departmental Cert	Early Childhood Education Core	0	0	86	74	0	0	0	0	0	0
	Total	0	0	86	74	0	0	0	0	0	0
Noncredit Cert	Introduction to Early Care and Education	0	0	0	0	21	17	34	15	12	17
	Total	0	0	0	0	21	17	34	15	12	17
Total		92	81	183	186	185	566	464	463	286	334

Data loaded 23-Aug-1970

16b. Which student racial/ethnic groups disproportionately earn more awards in your program? Which racial/ethnic groups earn disproportionately fewer degrees and certificates?

Award data from 2020–2024 reveals

Based on Precision Campus data, from 2015–2016 through 2023–2024, Latine/x students earn a disproportionately high share of degrees and certificates in the Education/ECE program at Santa Monica College, accounting for 59.15% of all awards. This is significantly higher than any other group and reflects the department’s strong engagement with Latine/x students—who also represent the largest enrollment group in the program. This was an interesting discovery for us given the existing and persistent equity gaps for Latine/x students in course-level success data.

Exploring the data more deeply, we see that Latine/x students complete our stackable certificate pathways and local AS degrees at a higher percentage than other categories. Transfer degrees represent a much smaller share of awards. We believe this may reflect both the community’s immediate employment needs and the effectiveness of certificate-based entry points into the ECE workforce. However, Latine/x students not only earn the most awards overall, but they also have the highest focus on transfer degrees, with 16.42% of their total completions falling into this category. This is notably higher than any other racial/ethnic group

In contrast, Black students (6.31%) and Asian students (7.00%) earn disproportionately fewer awards relative to their enrollment and representation in the broader college population. While White students account for 20.26% of awards, this share is also lower than their enrollment totals in earlier years, highlighting a small decline or underrepresentation in more recent program completions.

16c. Based on your analyses, what changes is your program exploring, including addressing any equity gaps?

Addressing Equity Gaps in Completion

- Partner with Institutional Research to disaggregate completion data and identify where in the pipeline students are being lost.
- Utilize Precision Campus dashboards during department meetings to guide improvement conversations.
- Continue implementation of our department equity plan, with a focus on certificate and degree completion for disproportionately impacted groups.
- Streamline practicum onboarding (e.g., LiveScan, TB testing, immunizations) to reduce administrative barriers that may delay or prevent completion.
- Expand targeted outreach for transfer degrees—especially Child and Adolescent Development and Elementary Teacher Education—to support Latine/x students in progressing from certificates and local degrees into longer-term academic pathways.
- Increase visibility and support for Black and Asian students, who remain underrepresented in both enrollment and award attainment, by exploring culturally responsive teaching practices, peer mentorship, and community-building opportunities.
- Rebuild and promote stackable credential pathways to help students see a clear trajectory from short-term certificates to degrees and transfer options.
- As WTH permits, reintroduce professional development courses that historically helped increase enrollment and re-engage adult learners and working professionals.
- Collaborate with Counseling and Financial Aid to strengthen communication about academic pathways, transfer options, and available support for students managing work, school, and caregiving responsibilities.

By using data to guide strategic improvements and layering in targeted supports, our department aims to close equity gaps in program completion and increase credential attainment across all student groups.

If applicable:

17a. Labor Market Data: Discuss the labor market demand for your program. What is the gap between demand and supply? How does labor market data inform your overall program planning?

The labor market for early childhood and K–12 educators continues to reflect high demand, both regionally and statewide. Program planning is directly informed by projected employment needs, credentialing trends, and shifts in state policy, such as the expansion of Transitional Kindergarten (TK).

Key Labor Market Trends

- Nationally:
 - The U.S. Bureau of Labor Statistics projects sustained demand across ECE roles despite overall employment declines in some education sectors. Preschool teacher employment is expected to grow 4% from 2023–2033, with significant annual job openings driven by workforce attrition.
- Statewide (California EDD 2020–2030)
 - Preschool Teachers: +22.1% statewide | +23.7% in LA County
 - Kindergarten Teachers: +8.4% CA | +7.0% LA
 - Special Education (K–Elementary): +8.5% CA | +8.1% LA
 - Childcare Workers: +4.7% CA | +3.2% LA
- Workforce Gaps
 - Data from the Centers of Excellence indicates a shortfall in the number of awards being conferred relative to projected job openings in LA and Orange Counties.
- TK Expansion
 - California’s rollout of Universal TK has created immediate demand for qualified lead and assistant teachers, along with ripple effects that increase the need for infant/toddler teachers as preschool programs reconfigure.
- Chronic Shortages
 - Long-standing shortages persist in special education, bilingual education, and schools serving English Learners and low-income students.

Implications for Program Planning

Our existing programs—including the TK Certificate, Elementary Teacher Education AA-T, and planned CTE teaching credential—are directly aligned with these workforce needs. Planning priorities include:

- Offering flexible, accessible coursework for working adults
- Expanding entry-level certifications and noncredit pathways
- Providing infant-toddler courses required for licensing
- Strengthening fieldwork and mentorship opportunities
- Building “earn and learn” pipelines through pre-apprenticeship and internship models

Our department’s longstanding community partnerships, culturally responsive curriculum, and focus on real-world preparation position us to support a more diverse and qualified education workforce.

Additional Assessment and Use of Findings

Beyond labor market data, we engage in ongoing program assessment through our advisory board, equity plan review, and analysis of key course-level and program-level trends. These feedback loops are essential for ensuring relevance, responsiveness, and equity.

Recent Examples of Assessment-Driven Change:

- **2019:** Advisory board feedback on nature-based education led to the development of new coursework and a related certificate.
- **2022:** Input on gaps in special education, language development, and cultural responsiveness resulted in revised assignments and the creation of a shared Canvas resource module for SPED content.
- **2023:** Advisory interviews emphasized the need for DEI resources and affirmed the launch of a noncredit course on Gender and Equity.
- **2024:** A focused discussion on “Strengthening the Workforce” identified immediate hiring needs, skill gaps, and barriers to onboarding. In response, we:
 - Increased job readiness support (résumé workshops, mock interviews)

- Began planning for improved practicum onboarding
- Piloted evening sessions for career and networking support

Additionally, faculty participation in the Equitizing Gateway Courses initiative and our department’s internal Equity Plan have driven changes to course structure, policies, and instructional practices with a focus on improving outcomes for Black and Latine/x students.

17b. Additional Assessment: Describe the results of any additional assessment or evaluation your program conducts and how the findings inform program planning and improvement.

N/A

F. Your Program’s Past and Future

Past Action Plan:

18. Discuss the progress made on the action plan and objectives from your program’s last review.

Objective 1: Plan, guide, and facilitate the successful opening and introduction of the SMC portion of the Early Childhood Lab School (observation room, resource area, new classrooms, and new programs) for ECE students, students from related disciplines, and the Santa Monica community.

The Santa Monica Early Childhood Lab School, operated by Growing Place, officially opened its doors to children and families in September 2021. Due to Covid-19 protocols that were in place at the time, all SMC ECE courses were fully online and students only had access to virtual fieldwork options. One semester later, in Spring 2022, SMC students began taking hybrid classes at the ECLS, visiting the Observation Lab and Deck to complete assignments, accessing our ECE Resource Room, and completing on-ground fieldwork in Lab School classrooms, under the supervision of highly qualified Growing Place mentor teachers. The Table below shows the number of SMC ECE students served at the ECLS between Fall 2023 and Spring 2025. We are encouraged by increasing enrollment in our hybrid classes and will be offering 14 classes at the ECLS in Fall 2025.

	Fall 2023	Spring 2024	Fall 2024	Spring 2025
Classes offered at ECLS	8	7	5	10
Students using ECLS Observation Lab/Deck	68	97	92	TBD
Visits to the ECLS Observation Lab/Deck	235	767	760	TBD
Students completing on-ground fieldwork at the ECLS	11	15	17	11

Importantly, our goal is not only to serve as many students as possible, but also to serve them well. In collaboration with Growing Place faculty and staff, we continuously seek to improve the quality of our students’ experiences at the ECLS. Student feedback (collected at the end of every semester) shows that their experiences are generally very positive. It also has given us insight about barriers (i.e. cost of parking) that exist at the ECLS campus, which may impede enrollment and student success.

Objective 2: Faculty and staff will collaborate on opportunities to embed coursework related to Advocacy and Early Childhood Education policy throughout the program and identify ways to make existing, related coursework more intentional and visible.

This objective was developed in response to feedback from our Industry Advisory Board, which emphasized the need to better prepare students to engage in advocacy for children, families, and the early childhood workforce.

To assess current offerings, we conducted a department-wide poll asking faculty to identify where and how students are introduced to advocacy concepts, develop related skills, and engage in meaningful practice. The results revealed that advocacy is already well-represented across our curriculum, particularly in courses such as ECE 2: Principles and Practices and ECE 11: Child, Family, and Community, along with other courses emphasizing systems and equity.

As a department, we collectively decided that rather than creating a new standalone advocacy course, we would better serve students by:

- Spotlighting existing advocacy content within current courses;
- Collaboratively aligning and sequencing advocacy-related learning opportunities across sections and instructors to ensure consistency and intentionality.

This effort has deepened our shared understanding of how advocacy is embedded throughout the program and has strengthened the integration of policy and leadership development within existing coursework. After completing this internal review and alignment process, we formally reported our findings and progress to the Industry Advisory Board, marking this objective as completed.

Future Action Plan:

19a. Considering your program’s past plan and this review’s findings, what challenges and concerns need to be addressed in the next review period?

While we have made progress in enforcing prerequisites to ensure student readiness, we recognize the importance of closely monitoring the impact of these changes on enrollment patterns, access, and student outcomes. Striking the right balance between academic preparedness and equitable access remains a critical and ongoing challenge. We will need to continuously analyze enrollment data and adapt our strategies to support student success without inadvertently creating barriers.

While we have strengthened communication with (general and transfer) counselors and improved alignment with degree pathways, there is a need for even deeper collaboration. Ensuring that all students receive consistent, informed guidance will require regular meetings, shared data analysis, and sustained outreach

efforts. Counselor engagement is vital to helping students navigate complex academic and career pathways, and maintaining strong communication loops will be essential.

As a result of this review process, our department has a renewed commitment to strengthening a culture of data-driven decision-making. While tools like Precision Campus and the CCCCO Data Mart have been valuable, fully integrating data analysis into our regular department reflection and planning cycles will be a key focus moving forward. Embedding regular discussions of enrollment trends, student outcomes, and program metrics into department meetings will help inform strategic scheduling, resource allocation, and program improvements.

A significant concern is the sustainability of critical student support services, particularly the part-time ECE counselor position that has been instrumental in improving student retention and completion rates. Securing stable, ongoing funding for this position remains a high priority. Continued advocacy using student success data to demonstrate the counselor’s impact will be necessary to build a case for institutional investment.

Finally, while our community partnerships have grown, ensuring that these collaborations translate into clear pathways for students—such as increased internships, mentorships, and employment opportunities—requires ongoing attention and refinement. Strengthening our feedback loops with partners and monitoring student outcomes connected to these partnerships will be critical to deepening their impact and alignment with workforce needs.

Overall, our goals for the next review period will need to be grounded in our department’s commitment to equity, workforce alignment, and student success. Achieving them will require intentional collaboration within the department and continued support from college leadership.

19b. Identify 1 – 5 goals for your next review period’s Action Plan to address your program's challenges and concerns. Label the goals Ongoing, Revised, or New.

Legend:

- **Ongoing** – A goal from the last cycle that continues
 - **Revised** – A continued goal with significant updates
 - **New** – A new objective responding to emerging needs
- 1. Enhance Enrollment Strategies and Prerequisite Enforcement (New)**
 1. Enforce appropriate prerequisites to ensure readiness
 2. Analyze the impact of these restrictions on student outcomes
 3. Use Precision Campus to adjust strategies based on data
 - 2. Improve Counselor Engagement and Communication (New)**
 1. Hold regular meetings with general education and transfer counselors
 2. Align advisement with program pathways and data insights
 3. Monitor student access and alignment of guidance with degree plans
 - 3. Strengthen Data-Driven Decision-Making (New)**
 1. Expand our use of Precision Campus dashboards to support planning and reflection
 2. Analyze waitlist and enrollment trends to inform scheduling
 3. Embed data discussions into regular department meetings
 - 4. Ensure Sustainable Funding for Counseling Services (New)**
 1. Advocate for institutional funding to continue part-time ECE counseling
 2. Use student success data to demonstrate counselor impact
 - 5. Expand Workforce Development and Community Partnerships (New)**
 1. Deepen relationships with ECE centers, districts, and community partners
 2. Strengthen internship pipelines and mentorship models
 3. Monitor outcomes from partnerships to improve alignment and impact

G. Resources and Budget

20. What are the most critical resources needed to implement your program’s Action Plan in the next review period?

To fully implement our Action Plan and continue meeting student and workforce needs, our department requires ongoing institutional investment in the following critical areas. These resources are essential to sustaining program quality, promoting equitable outcomes, and supporting student completion.

Top Resource Needs

- 1. Ongoing Funding for a Part-Time Education Counselor (18 hours/week)**
 1. Counseling support has been instrumental in guiding students through course sequencing, permit requirements, and transfer preparation. However, the current position is grant-funded and not guaranteed long term. Stable institutional funding will ensure continuity of support, particularly for first-generation, working, and returning adult students.
- 2. Observation Lab Supervision at the Early Childhood Lab School (ECLS)**
 1. The ECLS Observation Lab is central to our practicum courses and hands-on learning model. To meet diverse student schedules, the lab must be open at least four days per week—including evenings and weekends. Sustained staffing and funding are needed to maintain this level of access and ensure students can complete required fieldwork.
 2. An additional note: We are actively working with IT to address the quality of audio in the Observation Lab. Pending their exploration, we may need to upgrade the microphones in the ECLS classrooms so students are better able to hear teacher-child interactions, an essential part of their coursework and learning.
- 3. Storage and Workspace Solutions at ECLS Campus**
 1. Our ability to fully transition out of the Bundy campus is limited by the lack of storage and office space at ECLS. Temporary storage solutions are needed to consolidate instructional materials, enhance access for faculty and students, and streamline operations until new space becomes available in the planned Drescher Hall facility.

21. If additional resources are needed to implement your Action Plan, what new funding sources and/or budget reallocations is your program exploring?

To address these needs, we are actively exploring a range of funding strategies:

- **Grant Funding**
 - We continue to pursue funding through Perkins, Strong Workforce, and other early education workforce initiatives to support counseling, lab supervision, and practicum learning.
- **Philanthropic Partnerships**
 - In collaboration with Institutional Advancement, we are identifying donors and foundations with an interest in early education and hands-on learning to support projects such as ECLS enhancements and pre-apprenticeship programming.
- **Internal Budget Prioritization**

- We will continue to advocate for strategic general fund investment in positions and infrastructure that directly impact student access, persistence, and completion.
- Community-Based Supplementation
 - We are exploring noncredit workshops and community partnerships that could generate small-scale revenue to support instructional resources or operational needs.
- Support for Student-Parents
 - We are advocating for funding that would allow subsidized or no-cost access to the Early Childhood Lab School for student-parents, enabling them to attend classes and persist in their studies while their children benefit from a high-quality early learning environment.

This form is completed and ready for acceptance.