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Child Care Director –

Thank you for agreeing to take part in this survey. The purpose of the **Leadership to Integrate the Learning Continuum (LINC)** project is to discuss the issues related to aligning and coordinating the learning experiences for children from birth to K-12 schools. The project is exploring current practices that early childhood centers and programs (both public and private-based) and elementary schools in Illinois do to develop and sustain coordinated learning practices and experiences. By completing the survey, you are providing data that will better inform the work of this committee.

Several terms are used in the survey. Please review these terms so that you are able to answer the questions accurately.

- **Learning Continuum:** The aligned learning and developmental experiences of children from birth through K-12 schools.
- **Alignment:** Building a coordinated structure of standards, curricula, teaching practices, and assessments in which the knowledge and skills gained serve as a foundation for future learning.
- **Transition:** Activities and processes to ease children’s transitions from their environments prior to school into elementary school.
- **Educational Leaders:** Leaders in early care and education (e.g., center-based directors, family child care providers, public Pre-K program coordinator, lead teacher) and school leaders in K-12 schools (e.g., teacher leaders, principals, and district office administrators).
- **Learning Environments:** Include family child care providers and private and public early learning centers, school-based or non-school based (e.g., Head Start, Preschool for All, KinderCare). At the primary grade level, learning environments include public and private elementary schools.
- **Early Care and Education Providers:** Include family child care providers, as well as teachers and directors of school and non-school based early learning centers.

Thank you in advance for your willingness to complete the survey. By January 2009, survey results and policy/practice recommendations will be posted on the project website: <http://www.leadershiplinc.ilstu.edu>. If you have any questions about this project or the survey, please contact Lisa Hood at 309/438-3034 or lhood@ilstu.edu.

Background Information

1. In what type of early childhood center do you work? (check only one):
 For-profit—private proprietary or partnership
 For-profit—corporation or chain (e.g., KinderCare, La Petite Academy)
 For-profit—corporate-sponsored (e.g., Bright Horizons Family Solutions)
 Private nonprofit—-independent
 Private nonprofit—affiliated with a social service agency or hospital
 Public nonprofit—sponsored by federal, state, or local government
 College or university affiliated
 Military-sponsored
 Public school

2. If you said that your center is based in a public school, where is it located?
 In an elementary school
 In another school building, not an elementary school
 In a district owned stand-alone building
 Other (please specify): _____

3. Check all current sources of funding received by the center:
 Preschool for All, state-funded pre-kindergarten, or other ISBE early childhood block grants
 Head Start or Early Head Start
 IDHS or Chicago CYS child care subsidies (CCAP program)

4. Please choose the best descriptor of where your early learning center is located.
 Chicago
 Collar County (Cook, DuPage, Kane, Lake, McHenry, and Will)
 Large Town (population over 25,000)
 Small Town/Rural (population less than 25,000)

5. What age levels does your early learning center serve? (check all that apply)
 Infants Toddlers Preschoolers School-agers

6. Is your center NAEYC accredited? Yes No

7. What is your licensed status? Licensed License-exempt

8. In total, how many children is your center licensed to serve? _____

9. Estimate the percentage of children in each category: (The total should equal 100%)
 African American Asian/Pacific Islander Caucasian
 Hispanic Native American Multi-racial Other

10. In total, how many teachers does your center employ? _____

Policies and Practices

The purpose of the following questions is to identify policies and practices in your center aimed at coordinating and aligning your program to your local K-12 schools.

1. My center has a written policy or statement that recognizes the care and education children receive in our center affects how well our children are ready for Kindergarten.
 Yes No

2. My center uses specific criteria for measuring a child’s readiness for Kindergarten.
 Yes No

3. The curriculum in our preschool classes is aligned with the Illinois Learning Standards for Kindergarten.
 Yes No

Please rate the extent to which the following statements apply to your center (place a check in the appropriate box).

	To No Extent	To Some Extent	To a Moderate Extent	To a Great Extent
Our center uses the same criteria as our K-12 school system for measuring a child’s readiness for Kindergarten.				
I provide my teachers with information about professional development opportunities that address the alignment of early childhood with K-12 education.				
I work with the local school district to connect my teacher with their elementary school teachers for joint professional development.				
I work with the local school district and my own staff to promote child and family transitions (for example, inviting local Kindergarten teachers to our open houses, or joint staff planning).				

Curriculum and Teaching Practices

The purpose of the following questions is to explore the current practices of your center in coordinating and aligning the curriculum and teaching practices in your center with K-12 schools.

Please rate the extent to which you do the following (place a check in the appropriate box):

	To No Extent	To Some Extent	To a Moderate Extent	To a Great Extent
I include elementary teachers and/or school administrators in planning with early childhood teachers in my center				
I meet with district administrators (for example, principals or superintendents) to talk about aligning our center curriculum with Kindergarten curriculum in the district(s).				
I invite elementary teachers and/or administrators to observe our classrooms to learn about the curriculum and classroom expectations of our early childhood program.				
I encourage my teachers to observe Kindergarten classrooms in the local school district to learn about the Kindergarten curriculum and learning expectations.				

Student Assessments

The purpose of the following questions is to explore your center’s current practices in using screening and assessments to document and follow each child’s development.

Please rate the extent to which your center does the following: (place a check in the following box).

	To No Extent	To Some Extent	To a Moderate Extent	To a Great Extent
We provide developmental screening of every child upon three months of program entry.				
We expect teachers to use individual child’s assessment data to inform curriculum, individualized teaching, and program development.				
We expect teachers to document each child’s developmental strengths and needs through a portfolio that is shared with the parent/guardian.				
We expect teachers to prepare documentation of each child’s strengths and weaknesses that can be shared with elementary school teacher(s) to facilitate an aligned transition.				
We follow the progress and development of each child after they leave our center and matriculate through the K-12 schools.				

After assessing your students, do you have access to resources to support families if you identify a particular learning or development issue?

Yes No

Barriers to Aligning and Coordinating Learning Experiences

The purpose of the following questions is to identify those issues that serve as a barrier to your center’s work with K-12 schools to align and coordinate teaching and learning experiences for children as they move from birth to K-12 schools.

Please rate the extent to which the following issues are barriers in your work with the K-12 schools.

	To No Extent	To Some Extent	To a Moderate Extent	To a Great Extent
Differing philosophies between your early childhood program and the K-12 schools (for example, curriculum, pedagogy, purpose)				
K-12 community is so vast that I do not know where or how to start building partnerships				
Not enough time to build partnerships				
K-12 school districts do not provide follow-up data on progress of our center graduates when they enter and matriculate through the K-12 system				
Lack of awareness of the Illinois Learning Standards for Kindergarten and elementary grades				
Incompatibility of schedules between my center and elementary schools				
Language and/or cultural barriers between my center and the school district(s)				
Our local K-12 school district(s) have not been interested in receiving our child assessments or data				

Please list any other barriers not listed above:

What policies (state and/or local) would reduce the barriers that inhibit your center’s ability to work with the local K-12 school system(s)?

Your Preparation and Professional Development

The questions on this page ask for information about the context and content of the education and professional development in which you have participated.

1. How many year have you been an early childhood center director? _____

2. What is the highest degree you have earned?

___ Associates degree

___ Bachelors degree

___ in Early Childhood Education

___ in an Education-related field (for example, elementary education, curriculum & instruction)

___ in a Non-education related field

___ Masters degree

___ in Early Childhood Education

___ in an Education-related field (for example, a principal endorsement)

___ in a Non-education related field

___ Doctorate (please specify): _____

3. Have you earned the Illinois Directors Credential (IDC)? ___ Yes ___ No

a. If so, at what level? ___ Level I ___ Level II ___ Level III ___ I'm currently pursuing the IDC

4. Have you earned the Type 04 certificate for teaching in early childhood? ___ Yes ___ No

5. Have you earned the Type 75 (Illinois General Administrative endorsement)? ___ Yes ___ No

6. What could colleges do to prepare early childhood administrators like you so that you could better understand and partner with K-12 schools to coordinate and align curriculum, pedagogy, and transitions? _____

7. Within the past five years, have you received professional development on these issues (check all that apply):

___ Standards and curriculum alignment between early childhood and K-12

___ Building coalitions of partners across educational sectors

___ Using data to track students as they enter and matriculate through the K-12 schools

___ Other (please specify):

