

SECC/MWCC Nurturing High-Quality Early Learning and Leadership Across the Pre-K-3 Continuum

Introduction

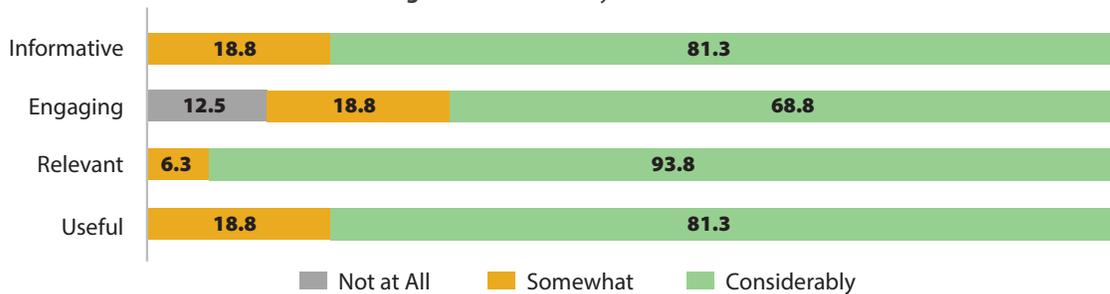
The Southeast and Midwest Comprehensive Centers (SECC and MWCC) cohosted a regional institute (the institute) on early childhood education in Atlanta (September 26–28, 2017). The institute offered state staff from the Southeast and Midwest regional comprehensive center (RCC) regions an opportunity to engage in discussions on evidence-based practices and resources on early childhood education. Participants from state education agencies (SEA) attended sessions led by experts in the field, networked to learn about ongoing efforts in other states, and discussed strategies for improving early childhood supports for Every Student Succeeds Act (ESSA) implementation planning. This brief provides a summary of the survey results from an online survey that asked participants to share their views about the institute’s panels and sessions.



Morning Panel. Every Student Succeeds Act (ESSA) in Early Childhood: Extending the Conversations

During the institute, the first panel focused on the inclusion of early childhood in state ESSA planning. Survey respondents (n=16) were asked the extent to which the panel was informative, engaging, relevant, and useful for your state. The scale ranged from 1 - Not at all to 3 - Considerably. The majority of participants highly rated the panel as informative (81.3%, n = 13), relevant (93.8%, n = 15), engaging (68.8%, n = 11), and useful for their state (81.3%, n = 13). See Figure 1.

Figure 1. ESSA in Early Childhood Panel



Concurrent Breakout Sessions

Round 1

After the panel on ESSA in early childhood, attendees were invited to attend breakout sessions. Topics included data literacy, kindergarten transition, safe and supporting learning environments, educator leadership, and family engagement. Due to the small sample, results from the session feedback are not disaggregated by concurrent breakout session. Overwhelmingly, survey respondents positively rated their experience in the concurrent breakout session. For example, 93.8% (n = 15) of participants found the information from the session to be relevant to their current professional responsibilities, and 87.6% (n = 14) reported that the session they attended met their expectations. See Table 1.

Table 1. Concurrent Breakout Session Round 1

	Strongly Disagree		Disagree		Agree		Strongly Agree		Mean
	n	%	n	%	n	%	n	%	
The information presented during the session is relevant to my current professional responsibilities.	1	6.3%	0	0.0%	8	50.0%	7	43.8%	3.50
The information was presented in a clear manner.	1	6.3%	0	0.0%	3	18.8%	12	75.0%	3.81
As a result of the session, I have a good understanding of how to use the information in my work.	1	6.3%	1	6.3%	8	50.0%	6	37.5%	3.38
Overall, the quality of this session met my expectations.	1	6.3%	1	6.3%	5	31.3%	9	56.3%	3.56

Round 2

In the second round of the concurrent breakout sessions, participants could choose from the same sessions offered in the morning round. In the afternoon round, participants once again rated sessions highly. The majority found the sessions to be presented in a clear manner (93.4%, n = 14) and as a result of attending, they had a good understanding of how to use the information in their work (86.6%, n = 13).

Afternoon Panel. National Association for Elementary School Principals (NAESP) and Pre-K-3 Leadership Development

The afternoon panel on NAESP showcased a new initiative to build early learning leadership competencies. Nearly all survey respondents found the panel to be considerably informative (93.8%, n = 15), relevant (93.8%, n = 15), and useful for work in their state (93.8%, n = 15), while 68.8% (n = 13) of respondents found the panel considerably engaging.

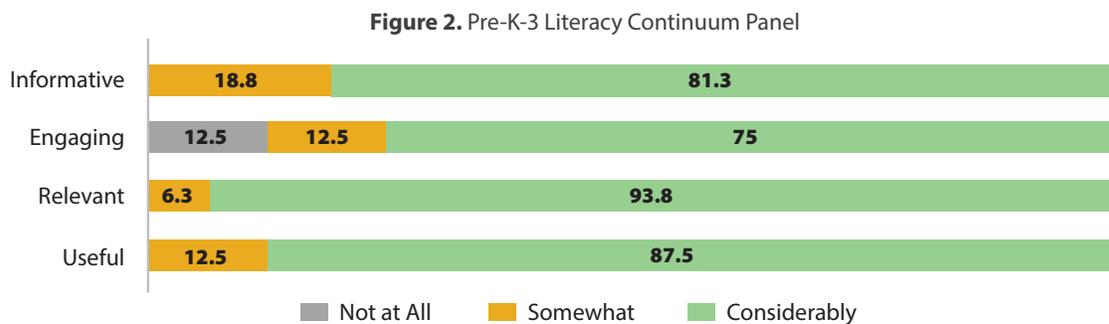
Day Two

Morning Presentation. High-Quality Early Childhood Education: Pathway to Kindergarten Readiness and Academic Achievement

On Day 2, Carey Wright, superintendent of education in Mississippi and incoming president of the Council of Chief State School Officers (CCSSO), presented on current early learning initiatives in Mississippi. Results revealed that all survey respondents found her presentation relevant (100.0%, n = 16), and an overwhelming majority found it informative (93.8%, n = 15), engaging (86.7%, n = 15), and useful to work in their state (86.7%, n = 15).

Morning Panel. Pre-K-3 Literacy Continuum

Following Dr. Wright’s presentation, early childhood panelists addressed questions on early learning literacy as well as questions submitted during the event registration. Survey respondents rated the morning panel session positively, 93.8% (n = 15) found it relevant, and 87.5% (n = 14) found it useful for work in their state. See Figure 2.



Working Lunch

During lunch, attendees heard a panel discussion titled Using Geographic Information System (GIS) to Connect Early Childhood with K-12 Systems. All survey respondents rated the panel as informative (100%, n= 16), and 93.8% (n = 15) found it relevant.

Table 2. Using GIS to Connect to Early Childhood with K-12 Systems

	Informative		Relevant		Engaging		Useful for Work in Your State	
	n	%	n	%	n	%	n	%
Not at All	0	0.0%	0	0.0%	2	12.5%	0	0.0%
Somewhat	0	0.0%	1	6.3%	2	12.5%	3	18.8%
Considerably	16	100.0%	15	93.8%	12	75.0%	13	81.3%

Institute Objectives

The final two items on the survey asked survey respondents to rate if the institute met its objectives. The majority of survey participants agreed the objectives were met. The mean scores reveal variation in agreement on the institute created opportunities for states to network, collaborate, and share lessons, including topics such as ESSA (mean = 3.56, n = 16) and built an awareness of NAESP pre-K-3 leadership competencies (mean = 3.50, n = 16). When asked whether quality of the institute met the survey respondent’s expectations, all agreed (100%, n = 16).

Table 3. Institute Objectives

	Strongly Disagree		Disagree		Agree		Strongly Agree	
	n	%	n	%	n	%	n	%
Highlighted practices and strategies needed for high-quality pre-K-3 transition and alignment.	1	6.3%	0	0.0%	4	25.0%	11	68.8%
Illustrated how states and early learning providers can use data to inform early learning programs and practice.	1	6.3%	0	0.0%	3	18.8%	12	75.0%
Created opportunities for states to network, collaborate and share lessons, including topics such as ESSA.	1	6.3%	2	12.5%	3	18.8%	10	62.5%
Promoted the use of evidence-based early learning curricula and interventions.	1	6.3%	0	0.0%	6	37.5%	9	56.3%
Built an awareness of NAESP pre-K-3 leadership competencies.	1	6.3%	1	6.3%	6	37.5%	8	50.0%
Overall, the quality of the institute met my expectations.	0	0.0%	0	0.0%	4	25.0%	12	75.0%

Conclusion

Overall, the institute was well received by survey respondents. Participants consistently rated the panels, concurrent sessions, and presentations as considerably informative, relevant, engaging, and useful. Comments also revealed that a number of respondents enjoyed their time collaborating within their teams and with other states.

Thank you so much for inviting us. This opportunity to meet people and make connections was invaluable. I would have liked even more days at the institute! I hope you do more, on more topics related to literacy, as well as another early childhood one.

- Institute Participant