



Michigan Association for the
Education of Young Children

Candidate Name: Bonnie Bonifield

Employment Information: Program Coordinator, ECE Apprenticeships (Child Care Network)

1) *Why are you interested in serving on the Michigan AEYC Governing Board?*

A little over two years ago, I looked around at this field I've worked in for 25 years and decided it was time for me to start paying it forward. I've been lucky enough to benefit from the work others have put in to improve our programs, standards, pay, and working conditions—and it was time to do my own work in contributing to the field by serving as Treasurer for the Michigan AEYC Governing Board.

As I near the end of my term as Treasurer, I find that I'm not done yet. I have more to give, and there's so much more work to do. The best way I can think of do that work is to continue serving on the Michigan AEYC Governing Board — in a new role, as President Elect.

2) *Please share any relevant professional and/or volunteer experiences within the past five years; your knowledge, skills and abilities; and your experience related to governance and leadership that would contribute to serving on the Michigan AEYC Governing Board in this role.*

As the current Governing Board Treasurer, I am an active member of both the Governing Board and Executive Committee. I also serve as the Chair of the Finance Committee, leading committee meetings and presenting data from the financial review process I conduct each quarter with support from Michigan AEYC's Director of Accounting and Executive Director.

Also at the state level, I had the distinct privilege to lead the successful review and rewrite of the Michigan *Early Childhood Standards of Quality* (now *Early Childhood Standards of Quality for Birth to Kindergarten*), from 2021 to 2023. I recruited and led the intense collaboration of an amazing, insightful group of professionals from all areas of our field and all parts of our state.

In my current role as Child Care Network's Program Coordinator for Early Childhood Registered Apprenticeships, I partner with and support apprentice teachers as they earn both their CDA and Apprenticeship credentials. Building relationships with our apprentices often puts me in the position to share in their professional struggles and successes.

This level of trust has also taught me to watch for chances to ask, "What if?" Paying attention to the details, listening past the surface, I often find situations where creative, collaborative, or unexpected strategies will give the boost someone might need to move forward.

Intentionally approaching my work with this mindset brings with it a focus on continuous improvement in my projects, programs, and working relationships, and it's this skill more than anything else I feel will be invaluable should I be elected as President-Elect of Michigan AEYC's Governing Board.