

**Start at 11:02 am**

**Welcome- first childcare licensing advisory council meeting- last one was almost 1 year ago -first one in 8 months**

**Michael Kim- director of Policy at IAFC, co -chair for the advisory council and Edie Washington**

- Theenshina – with DCFS, will be helping assist with any questions today
- Beth- acting regional licensing administrator for central region
- Agenda pdf shared in chat- one item missing was inclusion of people from department of public health to talk about updates on COVID cases

<b>Members Present</b>	<b>Members Absent</b>	<b>Staff (DCFS)</b>	<b>Guests</b>
Michael Kim (co-chair)	Edie Washington (co-chair)	Theenshina Mayfield	Rebecca Livengood (INCCRRA)
Caroline Bires	Sheila Bauer	Elizabeth seggebruch	Kirsten Chernawsky (DEC)
Dara Munson	Dana David		Judy Kauerauf (IDPH)
Martina Rocha	Patricia Twymon		Shelby Dianel-Wayman (IDHS)
Sarah Stoliker	Faith Arnold		
Emnet Ward	Oni Austin		
Missy Brown	Kristi Boyson		
Donna Emmons	Laura Pleasants		
Maggie Keane	Emily Ropars		
Elizabeth Knight			
Denise Monnier			
Malia Owens			
Anita Rumage			
Stephanie Spanbauer			

### **Approval of August 12, 2021 Minutes Council**

Minutes from 8.12.21 are not available, do to transition from co-chairs and not knowing if minutes were taken during the last meeting in August. In addition, 11.18.21 meeting was cancelled.

### **Department Updates Edie Washington, Co-Chair**

Edie was not able to join today's meeting and therefore the Department update for the Council will come from Elizabeth Seggebruch (DCFS)and Theenshian Mayfield (DCFS).

- Major update on CCDBG as it pertains to background checks: prospective employees cannot work without clearance of either the FBI check or fingerprint check of ISP (Illinois State Police). It is effective immediately.

- Pending completion of the background check, the prospective employee must be supervised by an individual who received a qualifying result from a background check.
- Currently, this mandate only affects day care facilities
- This new policy change and respective forms are currently pending and being revised by the Office of Child and Family Policy.
  - It is the responsibility of the provider to check the DCFS Sunshine website for policy updates. Matters around COVID were mass emailed, but that does not guarantee all updates will be.
- Addressing the turnaround time for background checks: DCFS reps cannot say the process will become faster as the background check unit is a separate dept from licensing and it also works with the ISP and the FBI.
- Addressing the claim that providers do not have any input on any policy changes that affect them tremendously: There is a comment period for providers that gets posted with a set deadline for comments. Beth has seen every one of those comments/questions/opinions gone through by people in the department and in policy.
- Providers can always call local licensing office and get in contact with the supervisor, and they can let them know who the licensing rep is for their area.
  - Please go to [www.ILDOCC.com](http://www.ILDOCC.com) and get involved with our group.
- Any questions about the rules package proposed last year can be addressed by the Office of Child and Family Policy.
  - This package was proposed last year but expired and needed to be reissued.
  - New package of rules would be released for comments this month.
- The DCFS representatives on this call are not able to comment on any rule changes currently.
- The new information about background checks is going to be posted on the Sunshine website, they are not on there at this time.

## **Interim**

### **Teacher Policy guide follow up**

#### **What's happening in the field Edie Washington**

The "Interim Conditional Early Childhood Teacher" Policy Guide was created to address, in short term, the shortage of early childhood teachers. This policy was set to expire on Feb. 28, 2022 but has been extended to Feb. 28, 2023. What are additional updates to know regarding extension to the policy guidelines and are there any long term solutions to address teacher shortage?

- Was previously issued but extended for providers that were short staffed who will be utilizing it
- There are specific terms conditions and instructions that need to be followed if using the policy- not listed at this meeting, but they are in the policy.
- Any specific or additional questions can be asked of the licensing rep or supervisor in your specific area.

- The current policy guide can be found on the DCFS Sunshine website: [Welcome \(illinois.gov\)](https://www.dcf.gov/Welcome)

### Collecting Covid outbreak data IDPH

The department (Judy Kauerauf and Shelby Daniel-Wayman) gave updates on collecting Covid outbreak data: COVID tracking in Child Care centers:

- CDC daycare guidance and Community Levels and how daycares should be monitoring and considering re-masking staff in medium.
- Outbreaks are reportable to the LHD (define). Due to lack of case investigations, LHDs will not be able to identify all outbreaks so this notification is still very important.
- If time permits, update on the acute pediatric hepatitis situation for awareness.
- In January, in Illinois and nationwide, there was a pivot away from doing case investigations and contact tracings of all cases with a realization that at this point in the pandemic, this effort was not received in the same way as vaccines rolled out, COVID fatigue became more apparent, and funding that supported contact tracing was drying up. Attention shifted to those vulnerable and those in congregate care settings. There is a matching process in the surveillance system based on address, which allows IDPH to identify those in congregate care settings. This is to ensure that appropriate infection control measures are being put in place and treatment measures put in place to prevent severe disease.
  - This left daycares and schools in a position of not identifying clusters of cases anymore.
  - When facilities do identify an outbreak, that still needs to be reported to local health dept, so the facility knows how to deal with the outbreak, how to work with quarantining, how to use cohorts, and how to administer tests to help mitigate the outbreak. Also, to reinforce a mask mandate, despite them being polarized politically.
  - Masking can still be an important layer of mitigation when seeing surge and when there's an outbreak- can be reinstated as necessary
- Epidemiologists have found that contact tracing is not a good metric to monitor the pandemic anymore
  - Those that are doing testing don't need to report negatives as part of this pivot
  - The focus shifted from stopping all transmission to protecting healthcare institutions from being overwhelmed
- Community level metrics are now being used and are based on two types of data: Cases have been confirmed and reported as a COVID case and hospitalization numbers
  - This creates a community level metric of low medium and high
  - In Illinois, there are more medium/ more counties that are yellow in a medium level
  - Cases are increasing in this medium level. The recommendation is that those that are at high risk to continue masking in settings that are more crowded, especially those who are immunocompromised.

- Summarizing- the shift at community levels is something your facility should be paying attention to, rethinking mitigation based on cases in communities, the need to be reporting outbreaks to the health department which is two or more cases in a class or cohort. And Test to stay- a way to help keep kids and daycare children in daycare when they've been exposed
  - Once you've been identified as a close contact, you can remain in school but are tested twice- within first five days and at either day 5 or 7 post exposure
  - If they remain asymptomatic and test negative, they can stay in school
  - Have offered 3 types of testing- saliva base testing, home collection/drool test, home test
- Good results/feedback has been received from this pilot.
  - The benchmark to how well this is working is the number of close contacts that turn positive, which is 2-3 % of those that are staying in daycare have turned positive through this process.
- When reporting outbreaks to local health dept, they are still collected and sent up to IDPH still and analyzing those outbreaks. While they are not analyzing every single case IDPH is still looking at the data.
  - Case definition of an outbreak excludes home tests, but you should still report it.
  - It's positive and not punitive- it is an opportunity to reach out to experts and getting all tools needed to prevent further transmission
  - Reporting is required part Communicable Disease Act 690 and 69200 names daycares and anyone with knowledge to report cases to local health department and DCFS

### **Early Childhood Enrollment Campaign Rebecca Livengood (INNCCRRA)**

**Kirsten Chernawsky (IDHS)**

Overview of the campaign:

- Two problems needed to be addressed with this enrollment campaign-
  - Enrollment in Illinois was down in ECEC programs across Illinois' mixed delivery system- inclusive of HV, EI, Childcare, CCAP, Early Head start, Head start
  - The pandemic surfaced the need for state agencies to provide relevant, timely, and tailored information to families
- With support from GEER II funding, there are two strategies to address these issues –
  - Strategy 1:
    - To develop a childhood awareness enrollment campaign with a statewide reach, tailored locally, and that focuses on parent engagement strategies
    - To do a statewide rollout of Ready4K: an evidence-based text messaging curriculum
  - Strategy 2: Provide funding for a Spanish enrollment campaign that dovetails the English campaign, funding for a statewide saturation and reach for English marketing campaign, and funding for a community-based grant program to support local community outreach

- Have conducted research that started in June-August of last year.
  - The objective was to understand families' motivations and barriers to using local programs and services and to develop a directional consumer profile
- Results/findings summary discussed: Gathered through surveys, focus groups, and 1:1 interviews with those who've used services pre-COVID and pulled out their kids because of COVID
- Updates and next steps:
  - A person from the Governor's Office Communications team go through all approval processes on anything involving the enrollment campaign
  - This is key to having all approvals from the beginning.
  - In October, December, and February: The enrollment campaign got contracts in place, began to look at creative illustrations for the campaign
  - Received approval for lots of things in March and April
  - Shifted focus to fun/develop a Spanish statewide enrollment campaign. They will begin production on Spanish assets. Will have the same branding as English and released at the same time in English and Spanish
  - Focused on how the campaign relates to Spanish speaking community
  - Working on producing the same videos in Spanish- looking for Spanish voice talent
- The campaign will release in July/August 2022
- Ready4K: evidence-based text messaging curriculum offered to 157000 Illinois families
  - It was found during COVID that there was a loss in learning.
  - This platform provides messages to parents of what they can do with their children to support learning recovery
  - Allows the state to provide the state with a trusted vehicle to send custom messages to Illinois families
  - Soft launched in February
  - Currently has 765 individuals enrolled with soft launch, expecting a jump of 2,000 more in the next few weeks
  - More information: an automatic sign-up page on [illinoiscaresforkids.org/ready4K](http://illinoiscaresforkids.org/ready4K) in English, Polish, Spanish
  - Families can receive text messages in multiple languages
  - It gives facts and tips and focuses on one thing each week
  - Ready4k is being promoted on INCCRRA and state agency social media, through ISBE school districts, through email marketing through ISBE channel
  - Also promoting to childcare programs with a DCFS capacity of 200+ children
  - Will continue to do this outreach through the summer
  - It is ready to be shared with families and programs today!
- ECEC enrollment community outreach grant –

- IDHS Division of Early Childhood will be funding on ECEC Enrollment community RFP to focus on local family and community engagement strategies so the campaign can be tailored directly to the community
- 6 million in funding will be provided for local community outreach to increase enrollment (CCAP, HS/EHS, EI, HV, PRA/PR, Child Care), grants available to all 102 counties using Birth to 5 regions
- Priority given to CCAP, and largest enrollment decreases
- Funding based on number of children under 12 in each county and will range from \$25,000-2 million
- The grant add-ons are going to be applied to counties with high Social Vulnerability Index (SVI)
- SVI is a database that helps emergency response planners and public health officials to identify communities that will need support before during and after a public health emergency
  - Social factors of this include poverty, lack of vehicle access, crowded housing
- IDHS-DEC will be flexible in the RFP process to tailor grants to what local communities need most to increase enrollment
  - Can differ community to community
  - Funds can be used to: plan and host enrollment events, to create a one stop shop for families to gather resources, job fairs, training for childcare positions, distributing materials of information and enrollment steps, providing a needs service in an under resourced community (Ex: back to school haircuts, housing resources, etc.)
- RFP will be released shortly with funding to be awarded in early FY23
  - RFP posted on INCCRRA website
  - Will be alerted to local community organizations
  - INCCRRA will provide TA video for those interested in completing the RFP

#### Comments/Questions:

- Low enrollment is partly due to staffing crisis. Many providers can't open classrooms because they can't find qualified staff. Wondering how that's being addressed or if there is a plan in place for this?
  - Specific to this RFP, there's an opportunity to help incorporate that with this RFP. Division of Early Childhood is also creating measures to support the staffing crisis but there will be more to share in the future
- There is information on illinoiskids website specific to early intervention (to address care need therapies such as Speech therapy, Occupational therapy, Physical therapy) and how to access it. Lots of things posted on Facebook related to early interventions. They will continue to keep this a priority
- Information about RFP deadline to be released soon
- Funding is based on Bto5 regions and only requirement is that you serve all the counties in that region.
- Can any individual entity apply for the grant or is a collaboration from the county required to write the grant?
  - One entity from the region can apply

- If you would like a resource for families to understand inclusion and advocacy, this online module is free and available in in English and Spanish: <https://www.eclre.org/good-to-know/understanding-inclusion/>
- Here is a resource for families new to early intervention, along with tip sheets: <https://eicclearinghouse.org/resources/getting-started/>
- This RFP will be available for both non- profit and for profit orgs/collabs
- Family stories related to early intervention: <https://eicclearinghouse.org/resources/stories/>

### **Ethics, Sexual Harassment Training Michael Kim**

- Members of the advisory council should have received an email about this required training
- Reminder email will be sent to provide documents that need to be signed and returned.
- About half have completed and half still missing, reminder email will be sent out

### **Public Comment Council**

- Sending/receiving background check forms to and from other states has been an issue since every state has different protocols.
- This is problematic for people in the field because of lack of awareness/transparency about the policy update and staffing prices.
- In the past providers would receive a letter stating rules changes and to comment, is the department not providing that anymore?
- How can people in the field speak into rules? It'd be nice to have more collective interest in the field. This advisory board council is a good place to talk about these rule changes.
- I agree home daycares are also different and every different home daycare may need a different way to follow a policy
- Do the DCFS background checks have to come from DCFS, or can it come from other forms of background checks to get these people cleared quicker?
  - They need to come through DCFS- they have a clearance screen that shows all employees that are employed at the center.
- Other clearances aren't valid? It's a long process, so the fear is that a class is out of compliance and the safety issue of how we can make sure the children are safe. Then they may have to close a classroom because there's not enough supervision. Are there any remedies to help us through this process while waiting for clearance?
  - Unfortunately, no. we don't control the process of the clearance. It can be used as supplemental if chosen, but it's required to go through the department. That is per the federal mandate.
- George Vandercandum from DCFS was previously on this committee. He was always very interested in hearing the struggles with background checks and took a personal interest in helping to make sure they got completed faster. Is he gone? The background checks are a big problem that's hit Head Start, too. Sometimes it's months long wait, and they do lose staff because of it.

- He has retired. No one is there at this time to fulfill his footsteps yet, will have to defer everything to Ms. Washington who's taking that role on now
  - As soon as someone comes in to fulfill the obligation, they are sure to send out a direct contact
- What communications should be given to providers to give to families? There's an elephant in the room that no one is addressing. This does not make sense to the ECEC field. A lot of people will be out of compliance, and it is out of the control of the providers.
  - Unfortunately, they can't tell the providers how to respond. The mandate was given to DCGS and they by law must enforce it
- That was a fair question. This council has not met as a group for a year now, and there are people missing from today's meeting that should be there. Ms. Washington is going to get a lot of phone calls from the field because they have a lot of unanswered questions. There are a lot of misinformed representatives in the field now regarding this.
  - Questions are to be deferred to Ms. Washington
  - Some providers in the area reach out to rep or supervisor to troubleshoot and get those minor mistakes in the background check (wrong address, wrong SSN, etc.) handled in background check, which helps move things along.
- We hope all comments and questions move somewhere. Where will the minutes of this meeting go?
  - Edie will receive them, questions and comments will be addressed and reviewed
  - There will be a follow up for these comments
- These meetings will meet quarterly- May, August, November 10<sup>th</sup>, 11-1 pm
  - We will figure out a time for the council to get together to revisit some charges and areas that haven't been talked about in the past

## **Adjourn**

Follow up questions to address:

- When did the new background check policy go into effect?
- How can we request to modify Rules 407 to have the Interim Teacher be permanently added to Rules 407? – will need to go to Ms. Washington for a response
- With the new legislation of HB4242 passing with families involved in welfare extending CCAP and EIs- is there a sense of how DHS and DCFS will implement this?
  - Not received any information
  - No information currently
- Question about Psychology 101: It was not announced that it's no longer a qualifying class for teacher qualifications
  - Would like someone from DCFS to address this. To understand how classes are taken on and off this secret list



- DCFS reps were unsure of a secret list. Said that it wasn't only DCFS that makes these requirements but also the governor's office
- This needs to be answered and resolved because there's a huge issue out in the field and this course can help the field. We used to be able to use this course and not anymore, but the director qualifications keep going up as well
- When will the CCAP add-on for Circles of Quality begin?
- Question for Rebecca from INCCRRA: Are there metrics in place on the enrollment campaign to check if enrollment is going up and how things are going?
  - We can follow up with her and ask her what kind of metrics/data they will start collecting.
- Are separate subcommittees going to come back for this committee? There used to be separate committees within this one- one that focused on education, or policy issues, and they'd have certain amount of people in the larger committee on those committees, where they'd meet separately and report to the larger group to bring up issues they want to address. This helped move things forward between DCFS and other programs and build bridges.
  - Edie Washington is cochair for DCFS- have talked about the idea of doing this, will figure out what committees were formed in the past and will work on starting those up again
- Can we revisit and meet as a group of what the process is, what the charge is, and meet with DCFS to address comments/concerns/questions
  - We will make sure to have a time to meet in between the next August meeting.

**Next Meeting(s):**

August 11, 2022 – 11:00 am – 1:00 pm

November 10, 2022 – 11:00 am – 1:00 pm