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**Illinois Early Learning Council
Executive Committee Meeting
October 5, 2020 - 1:00 PM – 4:00 PM**

Join via [Webex](#)

Meeting Number/Access Code: 133 777 1670

If joining by phone, dial: 1-312-535-8110

In attendance:

Jennifer Alexander, Karen Berman, Kristy Doan, Shauna Egeh, Gaylord Gieseke, Phyllis Glink, Cornelia Grumman, Dan Harris, Carisa Hurley, Jamilah R. Jor'dan, Kenya McRae, Cristina Pacione-Zayas, Laura Phelan, Sylvia Puente, Diana Rauner, Linda Saterfield, Sara Slaughter, Teri Talan, Josie Yanguas

Minutes

1. Welcome & Introductions – Phyllis Glink & Jamilah R. Jor'dan (5 minutes)

Phyllis Glink welcomed everyone to the meeting and opened with housekeeping items. Phyllis noted that everyone received an email regarding Deputy Governor and ELC Co-Chair Jesse Ruiz' mother, Mrs. Socorro Ruiz, who passed away last week. Our deepest condolences go out to Jesse and his family. Phyllis noted that Jesse is not here with us today due to his mother's services, but Jamilah R. Jor'dan, Executive Director of GOECD, will co-lead and facilitate in Jesse's stead. Jamilah R. Jor'dan asked that a member of the Executive Committee read the racial equity definition on the meeting agenda to ground us in our priorities. She then requested approval of the minutes; the minutes were approved as written.

2. Early Childhood Funding Commission Recommendations & Role of the Early Learning Council –

Theresa Hawley (40 minutes)

Phyllis Glink introduced Theresa Hawley, First Assistant Deputy Governor for Education in the Governor's Office, who provided an overview for the Commission conversation. Phyllis encouraged members to consider: a) what questions, concerns, and priorities that are not represented in the draft recommendations, b) the role the ELC could play in helping the State implement this work, and c) what other advisory councils could be rolled into the ELC to implement the recommendations?

Theresa Hawley gave an overview of the Commission, its charge, its scope, and the problems its seeking to solve. Phyllis Glink presented the Commission's draft recommendations thus far. Theresa and Phyllis facilitated a discussion on the recommendations. Question topics included: how the recommendations would impact the work of current State agencies; how early childhood care and education would be placed in relation to K-12; implementation of the KIDS Assessment; how to better integrate data systems; the intention for the incubation and start-up investments; and support for community systems. Time did not allow for the discussion of the ELC's role in the Commission's work; Phyllis Glink noted that we will have that conversation at a later date.

Racial Equity Definition: A racially equitable society values and embraces all racial/ethnic identities. In such a society, one's racial/ethnic identity (particularly Black, Latino, Indigenous, and Asian) is not a factor in an individual's ability to prosper. An early learning system that is racially equitable is driven by data and ensures that:

- Every young child and family regardless of race, ethnicity, and social circumstance has everything s/he/they need to develop optimally;
- Resources, opportunities, rewards, and burdens are fairly distributed across groups and communities so that those with the greatest challenges are adequately supported and not further disadvantaged; and
- Systems and policies are designed, reframed, or eliminated to promote greater justice for children and families.

Racial Equity Priorities:

- 1) Align and standardize race/ethnicity data collection and reporting;
- 2) Evaluate and identify whether processes for distributing resources exacerbate racial disparities, including agency contracting;
- 3) Address race/ethnicity disparities in terms of workforce compensation and advancement;
- 4) Eliminate racial/ethnic disparities for children participating in all programs that contribute to school readiness and life success by addressing racial disparities in enrollment in preschool for 3- and 4-year-olds and in prenatal to age 3 services.

3. **PDG B-5 Year 1 Update & Year 2 Proposal** – Jamilah R. Jor’dan (25 minutes)

Jamilah R. Jor’dan provided an update on both the status of the PDG B-5 Year 1 projects and the proposal for Year 2 funds. She asked ELC members for suggestions for the unobligated carry forward PDG B-5 funds in the next year, noting that GOECD will not have a final number for those funds until the 2020 financial records are reconciled in early 2021. Jamilah also invited ELC members to submit their ideas for how the Administration should prioritize federal funding, should additional COVID-19 relief dollars become available.

4. **Implementing the PN3 Agenda & Alignment with State ECEC Initiatives** – Simone Santiago, Artiya Nash & Karen Berman (25 minutes)

Simone Santiago described the Illinois Prenatal to Three (PN3) Coalition, the group created to implement the PN3 Agenda, and presented on the Agenda’s goals and strategies. Artiya Nash explained GOECD’s role as the inter-agency coordinator to ensure that the State is uplifting priorities in the PN3 agenda; she also described how the PDG B-5 investments intentionally support the PN3 Policy Agenda. Simone asked several strategic questions of the ELC Executive Committee, including how this body would like to participate in and support the PN3 work. How do we want to deploy committees to advance this plan? Phyllis Glink noted the role of the ELC is to hold all these different bodies of work (PN3, PDG B-5, Commission, etc.), to ensure connectivity between initiatives, and build towards a full picture of what children and families need. Diana Rauner suggested ELC Executive Committee meetings are restructured to discuss this work and ensure its alignment, rather than having presentations. It was agreed that meetings would be restructured to support increased engagement, especially given the virtual environment, moving forward.

5. **Break** (10 minutes)

6. **Diversity, Equity & Inclusion Work of the Governor’s Office & Next Steps for the ELC** – Jamilah R. Jor’dan (10 minutes)

Jamilah R. Jor’dan provided an update on the Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion (DEI) work of the Governor’s Office. The Governor’s Office retained the Morton Group to conduct DEI trainings. Staff committees were convened to develop DEI plans within each State agency which will be updated annually. Additionally, the Governor’s Office has initiated a search for a Chief Diversity Officer.

7. **Racial Healing Circles** – Jamilah R. Jor’dan, Cristina Pacione-Zayas, Karen Berman & Maggie Koller (10 minutes)

Cristina Pacione Zayas reminded the Executive Committee that racial healing circles are the next step in the professional learning series proposed to the Executive Committee by the Illinois BUILD Team. The BUILD Initiative has graciously offered to fund two, 14-person circles, which will be led by the Woods Fund. Cristina described how racial healing circles bring people together to heal, transform, and engage in conflict mediation in a safe space. It’s an opportunity to facilitate trust amongst individuals and build

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authentic relationships as we address individual and systemic racism. The circle process occurs over three weeks; members are expected to join three, two-hour sessions. Maggie Koller and Karen Berman briefly shared their experiences in a racial healing circle. Phyllis Glink noted that scheduling information will be provided soon.

8. KIDS Data Discussion – Brenda Dixon & Elliot Regenstein (30 minutes)

Brenda Dixon presented an overview of major findings from the 2019 KIDS Assessment, as well as research around the KIDS assessment results and differences by population. Elliot Regenstein noted the KIDS Assessment results were discussed at the most recent DRE meeting. The findings are currently preliminary, but ISBE will let us know when the data can be released to the general public.

9. Questions: Follow-up from August Meeting, Committee Reports & State Agency Updates (15 minutes)

Jamilah R. Jordan asked if there were any questions or comments relating to several documents included in the meeting materials. There were none. Jamilah then asked if there were any updates State partners wanted to share with the Executive Committee. Carisa Hurley (ISBE) noted the advocates' report will be ready next month.

10. Q&A & Public Comments (10 minutes)

Phyllis Glink asked if there were any public comments. Tracy Occomy wondered if the racial healing circles would be beneficial for the new members of the ELC Family Advisory Committee once the parents are onboarded.

11. Adjourn

The meeting was adjourned.

Next Meeting:
Monday, December 7, 2020
1:00-4:00pm (subject to change)

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