**Key questions for sustaining cross-agency infrastructure developed or enhanced through
Race to the Top-Early Learning Challenge**

Alignment and coordination of early learning and development system
- What are the key cross-system functions that need to be in place to advance state's goals towards improved outcomes for children?
- How do issues around early childhood governance fit within HHS transformation efforts and the Children's Cabinet? If school readiness is a goal for our state, and we know the inputs to that goal require collaboration across education, human service, and health sectors, how do we organize and staff our agencies to progress towards shared outcomes?
- Federal funding for early childhood is increasingly requiring significant cross-system partnership at the state level. What policies, processes, and people need to be in place to comply and thrive in a changing funding environment?

ExceleRate
- ExceleRate has been built on systems developed for Quality Counts (an IDHS system for child care) and on the ISBE PFA monitoring system. How will the essential policies and processes of a *cross-sector* QRIS be maintained at scale? Or what will be scaled back? What processes can be streamlined?
    - Application and renewal processing and verification
    - Assessment
    - Training/coaching to support CQI
    - Data systems
    - Curriculum/accreditation crosswalks
    - What is the governance structure for ExceleRate? How and by whom are policy decisions made?
- How do we further integrate IL's QRIS with licensing to create a streamlined system that supports quality?
- How do our funding streams effectively and efficiently recognize and the higher costs associated with developing and maintaining higher quality care?
- How and by whom do we maintain and continue to enhance resources, training modules, and websites?
- How and by whom do we continue provision of more intensive supports (not just an online training, but coaching and CQI support), both for programs moving from "adequate to good" and for programs moving from "good to great"?
- How do we continue to embed Illinois' robust set of early learning standards and guidelines throughout all type

Workforce/Credentials

- How do we ensure that our system of credentials becomes more fully embedded within Institutions of Higher Education and State systems (e.g., IBHE and ICCB recognizing credentials and credentials as a part of the 60 x 2015 work.)
- Gateways Registry was originally developed by IDHS through INCCRRA for child care workforce. How does the full early childhood workforce (incl. licensed teachers, teachers aids, home visitors, etc.) fit into this structure? How are the essential policies and processes of a cross-sector workforce registry maintained at that scale? What can be streamlined?
  - Maintenance and enhancement of Registry
  - Issuance of credentials
  - Integration with DCFS program licensing and ISBE teacher licensure
  - Authorizing entities to provide registry-approved professional development
- Looking at the Early Childhood workforce holistically, not by program funding stream, are there opportunities for more effective and efficient professional development?
- How and by whom does alignment between IHE and the early childhood system continue?

Data

- What are the systems, policies, and processes that need to be in place for using school readiness data at state and local levels?
- What are the policies, processes, and people that need to be in place for cross-agency data sharing, data/evaluation projects, and analysis?
  - Agency leadership, program/content staff, IT and legal
- How and by whom do we continue to maintain, build out/populate data sets and dashboards?
- How can efforts underway with HHS transformation and the Children's Cabinet support and advance early childhood system data integration?
- How do we connect research organizations with policy makers to identify research priorities and opportunities?
- How do we get valid and reliable outcome data?
  - Cross-agency data sharing
  - Technology