

Illinois Early Learning Council
November 21, 2016, 11:00 AM – 2:00 PM
Room 418, Roosevelt University
435 S. Wabash Ave., Chicago IL
Conference Line: (888)494-4032, Access Code: 6113045703

Minutes

Chicago: Karen Berman, Barbara Bowman, Tasha Green Cruzat, Shauna Ejeh, Donna Emmons, Gaylord Gieseke, Phyllis Glink, Diane Grigsby-Jackson, Cornelia Grumman, Dan Harris, Gloria Harris, Madelyn James, Janice Moenster, Lauri Morrison-Frichtl, Beth Purvis, Elliot Regenstein, Sara Slaughter, Luz Maria Solis, Kathy Stohr, Cynthia Tate, Judith Walker-Kendrick, Steven Vick, Cindy Zumwalt

Phone: Jim Applegate, Winona Bruester, Anna Ferry, Erika Hunt, Denise Monet, Teresa Nihil, Gail Nourse, Carolyn Newberry Schwartz, Rebecca Schwartz, Mindy Smith, Sheridan Turner, Maria Whelan, Granada Williams, Melina Wright

1. Welcome and Updates

Co-Chairs Phyllis Glink and Beth Purvis called the meeting to order. They thank everyone for making it to the meeting and thank Roosevelt University for hosting the Council.

Purvis then gave an update regarding various efforts going in the Governor's Office, including the HHS Transformation, the Children's Cabinet, and Pre-K-12 Funding. The heads of the agencies are running the HHS transformation process. The 1115 Waiver was submitted so that Illinois has the ability to gain more flexibility and leverage more funds so that agencies can shift towards focusing on preventative measures on mental and behavioral health. The hope is that we will get our waiver approved prior to the new administration take over.

Purvis then reported on the Children's Cabinet – an agency that brings together the heads of all seventeen agencies that oversee education and services related to children and youth in Illinois. This body was formed by Executive Order last January with the goal of creating a more aligned state government that works together to make sure all children in Illinois are healthy, safe, well-educated, and by the age of 25 self-sufficient. In September, the Cabinet adopted three projects to help them further these goals. The projects are: Reducing the Childhood Lead Burden, Illinois Apprenticeship Plus, and Early Childhood Workforce Development.

Cynthia Tate, Executive Director of the Office of Early Childhood Education provided an update on the Early Childhood Workforce Development Project. The project is trying to look at the workforce for all areas that young children are taken care of and educated in some

sort of way with the goal of raising the bar from both the top and the bottom. The project has currently adopted three goals: create a seamless set of pathways across the various systems serving young children; align and improve required competencies to make the workforce is highly qualified; and to attract and retain a diverse and linguistically proficient workforce.

Co-Chair Purvis then gave a brief update on the Illinois School Funding Reform Commission. At this point the commission has not really looked into changing funding for preschool. The 8th meeting of the commission was last week. The commission is made up of 25 members. 20 of which are from the General Assembly, 22 are elected officials, and the other three are there to do the grunt work. The goal of the commission is to determine how Illinois can come up with a formula that is more equitable, adequate, and improve outcomes over time. So far, the commission has discussed property taxes, defining adequacy, defining equity, hold harmless, English Language Learners, and Special Needs Students,

2. Director Update

Co-Chair Purvis then introduced Cynthia Tate as the newly hired Executive Director of the Governor's Office of Early Childhood Development (GOECD).

Tate then gave an update about the status of GOECD. GOECD is in a really great place having accomplished a lot with Race To The Top dollars, while working closely with Illinois State Board of Education and Department of Human Services. The next challenge is looking at how GOECD can move forward and be stable.

Kathy Stohr, Deputy Director of GOECD, gave an update on GOECD's Race to the Top grant. GOECD had their no cost extension approved through the end of 2017 as they still have some unspent funds. This no cost extension allows for slope rather than cliff with funding cut off. They recently had federal officers visit for onsite monitoring. Stohr claimed that the visit was wildly successful. She mentioned that they tried to show the good, the bad, and the ugly. The visit ended in East St. Louis and the federal officers were really excited to see the impact that the grant had there.

During the no cost extension period, the office will continue to spend down. They will focus on moving program from license level to bronze training level. They will also focus on building a pipeline for bilingual educators as a priority.

3. Agency data report

Cindy Zumwalt provided the Illinois State Board of Education's (ISBE) Data Report. She provided a hand out with data from fiscal year 2012-2016 and with estimates for fiscal year 2017. For fiscal year 2016 an additional 4.5 million was used for operating cost for early learning. A significant amount of fiscal year 2017 estimates is paying for part of fiscal year 2016. ISBE has asked all their grantees how much they are putting into local contributions,

as funding at the local level has gone down and ISBE does not know the full reason. During the past year enrollment went down in Preschool for All and Prevention Initiative. This may be because ISBE has been pushing more for quality in the Prevention Initiative, which results in serving less children but at a higher quality.

Currently ISBE is running the following programs for Early Childhood: Preschool for All Monitoring and Coaching, the Prevention Initiative Monitoring and Training, Early Learning guidelines and Early Learning Development, the Early Learning asset map, individual development survey, training and implementation, managing the Gateway to Opportunity scholarship, E-grants, Electric RFPs, Student Information System, maintaining 3-5 data elements, and maintaining birth -3 data elements. ISBE is funding to restore Preschool For All to their previous levels. ISBE received 52 proposals for the Prevention Initiative funding this year and was able to fund 46 of them. Preschool For All received 32 proposals, and 25 were funded. ISBE thought they would get more proposals than they did. In order to get more applications, ISBE is hoping to develop electronic RFPs and have a longer time period until proposals are due.

Chris Ro from the City of Chicago gave a data report on Chicago Public Schools. Their data report provides actual numbers from 2016 and projections based on capacity for 2017. In 2017 there will be a reduction in half day programs in favor of full day programs for Kindergarten. CPS will expand their infant and toddler capacity. They are looking at other ways to leverage Early Childhood Block Grant Funding to enhance services for children.

Diane Grigsby-Jackson gave the Data Report from the Department of Human Services (DHS). She mentioned that her report would focus on Childcare and Home Visiting care. The Child Care Assistant Program (CCAP) served 127,708 children per month in fiscal year 2016. DHS projects they will serve between 132,00-138,00 per month in fiscal year 2017 or serving families earning 162% or less of the Federal Poverty Level. Once Illinois has balanced budget DHS will aim to move to 185% or less of the Federal Poverty Level.

4. Break

5. Subcommittee Updates

Maria Whelan gave the Access Subcommittee Update. Their last meeting was on September 21st and they will meet again on December 12th. Their goal is to increase access to high quality early learning program, and to support those providing support to highest needs students

The Principle and Practices subcommittee has completed a scan of professional development opportunities, which has been shared with INCCRRA under resource section. They also created an exhaustive list of resources for effective family engagement practices. They are now creating recommendations to improve access to priority populations.

The Family Engagement Subcommittee provides an authentic parent voice on a statewide and community level. This is an ad hoc committee that is time limited. They received an extension to January 1st, but Whelan then asked for final extension to June 30th of 2017. Whelan moved for 6-month extension. Barbara Bowman seconded this motion. The Council approved the motion unanimously.

Dan Harris provided the Quality Committee's Update. They last met on October 5th, and reviewed the Committee charge and new membership. The committee plans to revise their work plan and finalize it at their January meeting. A subcommittee created a set of recommendations on the advancement of dual language learning and culturally responsive practices in Early Childhood. The Committee is now reviewing that, and is taking comments and feedback.

Karen Berman provided the Integration and Alignment Committee Report. Berman acknowledged the staffers of all the subcommittee meetings. The Quality Group continues to look at whether we are supporting the workforce that is supporting kids with special needs. They have been working with the Office of Early Childhood Development to create webinars with a quality support specialist. The Health Subcommittee began work on a progress chart on health subcommittee recommendations. The Subcommittee is also working on engaging with health providers to teach them how to support families. There has also been a lot of work across Inclusion subcommittee and Illinois Longitudinal Data System on developmental screening with the goal of getting child level data in the next year or so.

Gaylord Gieseke gave an update from the Home Visiting Task Force (HVTF). The taskforce has been busy with the pressing issue of the reauthorization of the Maternal, Infant, and Early Childhood Home Visiting (MIECHV) grant. People are very concerned. There is a goal nationally to increase the grant from \$400 million to \$800 million. We have begun the process by making a draft letter to the State Representatives from the Early Learning Council Executive Committee. The HVTF will also be sending a request to sign on and endorse that letter – stayed tuned.

The Universal Newborn Support Pilot is moving ahead nicely. The Taskforce settled on a model called Durham Connects. This model is based on nurses doing a single home visit right after birth – whether born in hospital or at home. They are hoping to launch a pilot in six months.

They are also trying to see if the Medicaid 1115 Waive has any space for Home Visiting to try to make it a more sustainable system. DHS and the Governor's Office will have a pilot on how to offer specialized home visiting to babies born with substance abuse as target population. The Committee is looking forward to moving forward and designing and tweaking home visiting to address the needs of that population. On October 3, the Committee launched a child welfare home visiting pilot process for young/teen moms. They are engaged with eight organizations that are providing Healthy Families Home Visiting.

6. Parent Engagement Efforts

Cornelia Grumman from the McCormick Foundation gave a brief update on efforts that starting to happen regarding parent engagement.

Last year McCormick funded a philanthropic landscape scan to better understand who was funding what. Through this they discovered three key strategy areas – leaders, teachers, and families. Decided to focus on families.

Alberto Morales put together information on family engagement strategies from across the country. Trying to bucket it into different categories. With in that there is a flurry of interest and movement in the built environment and thinking about what kinds of changes and additions in every day spaces can we make that create opportunities for parents to engage in meaningful interactions with their young children.

McCormick is also separately working on a public awareness part with the help of Ron Ferguson, a Harvard Professor who created the Boston Basic, a public awareness campaign where Boston was saturated with the Five Basics. They are also working on a family engagement effort around early math with three different national foundations to bring together researchers, marketing, and communications experts.

7. ESSA Update:

Elliot Regenstein gave an overview of The Every Students Succeeds Act (ESSA) which was passed a year ago, and the State are now developing their own state plans now. Illinois' first draft plan was released a month ago. The major accomplishment of ESSA was moving more decisions to state and local level. Many of the decisions about funding are going to be made at local level. ISBE is not going to be prescriptive, but give recommendations.

Co-Chair Purvis reminded everyone that there will be many tough decision that need to be made during this process. The State of Illinois will receive \$10 million less dollars for Title II. Very difficult decisions will have to be made. Likely in the future the state will need to get ready for Title I cuts. She reminded the council that we need to think strategically because there are things that are not going to make it into final plan.

Regenstein then gave a summary of the ELC recommendations. These recommendations will go to the P20 council for their consideration, and then to Illinois State Board of Education. The ELC has the opportunity to add other factors into the accountability structure instead of just test score growth and graduation rates. They are recommending for their will be a focus on accountability to the early years. They are recommending having a separate K-2 indicator for chronic absenteeism. The Council hopes that this will encourage

ISBE to look at the early years when deciding where to focus support during the School Improvement Process.

For the section on Supporting Excellent Educators the focus for recommendations has been on articulating how early learning connects to larger K-12 system with a focus on transitions.

There is a separate subcommittee working on Title I and Title IV recommendation guidelines on how school districts can choose to spend this money on early childhood at their discretion.

The Executive Committees will be considering these recommendations on December 6th.

8. Exit Ticket
9. Adjournment

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