

Illinois Early Learning Council

February 25, 2019, 11am-2pm

Roosevelt University, Wabash Building Room 418, 425 S. Wabash Ave., Chicago, IL 60605

Conference Line: 888-494-4032, Access code: 6113045703

In attendance:

In person: Samantha Aigner-Treworgy, Karen Berman, John Borrerero, Barbara Bowman, Shauna Ejeh, Donna Emmons, Tasha Green Cruzat, Cornelia Grumman, Dan Harris, Nakisha Hobbs, Carisa Hurley, Dr. Jamilah R. Jor'dan, Dr. Kimberly Mann, Cathy Mannen, Janice Moenster, Lauri Morrison-Frichtl, Bela Mote, Tracy Occomy-Crowder, Sylvia Puente, Elliot Regenstein, Brynn Seibert, Sara Slaughter, Luz Maria Solis, Teri Talan, Dr. Cynthia Tate, Marquinta Thomas, Kathy Villano, Maria Whelan, Yolanda Williams (Gloria Harris), Josie Yanguas

Phone: Lynn Burgett, Tim Carpenter, Andrea Chua, Kristy Doan, Vicki Hodges, Andrea Palmer

Minutes

1. **Welcome and Updates** – Phyllis Glink and Jesse Ruiz (25 min)

Phyllis Glink welcomed everyone to Roosevelt University. Phyllis acknowledged that our new Early Learning Council Co-chair, Deputy Governor Jesse Ruiz, will not be able to attend; his First Assistant Deputy Governor, Irma Snopek, will be sitting in for him today. Council members at the table introduced themselves, then Council members on the phone, then non-members on the phone, and finally non-members in the room. Phyllis Glink thanked everyone for coming and thanked Roosevelt for their continued partnership. She acknowledged the budget address, noting a few key areas where increased funding was requested for early childhood, and encouraged members to join a subcommittee where most of the work of the Early Learning Council gets done.

Dr. Cynthia Tate sadly announced the passing of Gloria Harris. She described Mrs. Harris' contributions to the early childhood field and the room took a moment of silence to acknowledge Gloria's life and work. Dr. Tate then made a motion to approve the minutes from the November meeting. They were unanimously approved.

2. **State Department Updates** (30 min)

- DCFS – Dr. Kimberly Mann

For the DCFS State Department Update, Dr. Kimberly Mann gave a presentation on the Family First Preservation Act. Though Illinois has a small population of kids in care, they stay in care for a very long time. The goal of this legislation is to see what we can provide for families prior to their involvement with child welfare system. It's a historic paradigm shift to proactively strengthen families through primary prevention. In addition to prevention plans, there are efforts (all evidence-based and trauma-informed) targeting adoptive parents, teen parents, and children at risk of re-entry. There is

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an admonition to work collaboratively, and currently over 300 people are working on Family First across sectors. Dr. Mann noted the importance of training our systems to coordinate with each other for greater impact, acknowledging the bridging efforts in process as part of this work.

- DHS – Nakisha Hobbs

For the DHS State Department Update, Nakisha Hobbs started by reporting on the NOFOs for AOK and HFI. DHS has not hosted any public meetings to date and they won't until after the NOFOs are released due to GATA rules. For AOK, DHS is doing a full recompetete; priority will be given to existing providers and providers already operating AOK networks implementing their 5-year strategic plans. HFI will also be a full recompetete; DHS may identify target areas based on data for IECAM. Nakisha noted that DHS has begun conducting background checks of licensed centers and homes (30 randomly selected by the feds), as required by a new federal audit. Under their revised Homelessness Policy, children and families experiencing homelessness are now eligible for childcare for two 90-day periods (updated from one 90-day period), and there is no need to prove work activity or show immunization records. Nakisha also provided an update on the Intact Families Bill, which prompted a discussion of the importance of training program staff to better meet the needs of kids in care. Phyllis Glink acknowledged the appointment of Grace Hou, Secretary of DHS, and Linda Satterfield, special assistant to Grace.

- ISBE – Carisa Hurley

Carisa Hurley reported that on Feb. 22nd ISBE's Suspension and Expulsion rules were posted. Comments should be sent to Rules@isbe.net. The rules will be open for 45 days for comment. Carisa also noted that the KIDS data is all in. ISBE is preparing to release to districts mid-March, along with support materials. ISBE is also finalizing the RFSPs for ECBG, which should be released in a few weeks.

3. PDG B-5 Update and Activity – Dr. Cynthia Tate (30 minutes)

Dr. Cynthia Tate provided an update on the Preschool Development Grant Birth Through Five (PDG B-5), highlighting Illinois' strategic planning process as outlined in the grant proposal. Dr. Tate introduced an activity developed by ELC Committee Co-chair leadership to initiate stakeholder engagement for strategic planning under the grant. Everyone was asked to write down their answers and then break into groups to discuss:

1. *Where do you see our system doing a good job of fulfilling its vision?*
2. *What are some burning concerns you have about our system?*
3. *What are the largest hopes you have about our system for the next 5-10 years?*

A special thanks to The Ounce of Prevention Fund and Illinois Action for Children for agreeing to collect and analyze the data.

4. Break (20 min)

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5. Workforce (35 min)

Phyllis Glink reminded everyone of the public comments made by providers at the November ELC meeting about how stressful it has been to keep and retain qualified early childhood staff. She noted that the backbone of EC system is workforce capacity. This is the beginning of an ongoing discussion, and workforce will be central issue in PDG B-5.

○ i2I Report – Catherine Main

Cathy Main gave an overview of the *Transforming the Workforce: A Call to Action for the State of Illinois* report and described the i2I (Innovation to incubation) cross-systems core team that took the report and made recommendations for Illinois policy. This group conducted outreach and designed a survey to capture the practitioner's voice and to gather information on problems and challenges. Cathy discussed how compensation drives turnover, which is bad for kids. Furthermore, having a uniform qualification system is hard across the system. People can't seem to come together and agree, and it's getting in the way of the work we're doing to prepare the workforce.

○ Compensation – Bethany Patten

Bethany Patten discussed the Early Childhood Educator Workforce Development Project. The project was under Governor's Cabinet of Children and Youth; we now are continuing the work through GOECD. All of the work is done through ELC Quality Committee; this is a collaborative effort that is aligning state efforts with the *Transforming the Workforce: A Call to Action for the State of Illinois* report and aligns with Quality Committees charges. Executing the recommendations will require greater engagement from other bodies. The National Governor's Association funded the initiative to help with the compensation issue. Bethany then introduced Dan Harris and Marcy Mendenhall, who were asked to speak to the consequences of workforce challenges, the effect of minimum wage, and what should the ELC be doing.

○ Panel Discussion – Dan Harris and Marcy Mendenhall

Dan Harris discussed the impact of minimum wage legislation, which was signed into law last week. The rates will increase from \$8.25 - \$9.25 starting 1/1/2020. Preliminary analysis: 1/3 of licensed centers have at least one person that makes less than \$9.25 right now. In metropolitan areas most people are making \$9.25 or more already. In rural counties 40-60% of workforce is making less than the increased amount of \$9.25. Having to raise up people already making above minimum wage will be a struggle for providers. Dan also discussed how professional engagement by the provider community the past few years has been great; there have been huge efforts by CCR&Rs throughout state. Currently 32.2% of teachers (6,700) currently working have a BA and are already working in licensed center. However, based on the data, their median hourly wage is \$13.64 per hour; a person with two kids at this salary is 130% of poverty level. Dan closed by noting that while we've made great strides in PD, there is still a compensation issue. We need broader efforts

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to reengineer the structure through which this is funded and governed. It's not enough to just continue the supports we've been offering.

Marcy Mendenhall referenced the analogy, "If you build it, they will come," noting that we've built an early EC education system, but we haven't built in compensation. We don't need more pieces of the pie cut up, we just need a bigger pie. We now pay employees with a BA \$15, which is great, but how do we change that ladder since the maintenance staff will soon be making the same amount?

6. Committee Reports (30 Min)

- Quality Committee – Dan Harris and Teri Talan

Teri Talan reported that the last Quality Committee meeting December focused on addressing workforce issues. The ExceleRate Subcommittee, which meets monthly, is working hard on the quality improvement piece of the ExceleRate system. Recommendations will be working their way through the committees moving forward.

- Access Committee – Maria Whelan and George Davis

Maria Whelan noted that the Access Committee finalized and presented the outline of Family Advisory Committee proposal to the Executive Committee for approval this month. Maria noted that she recognizes that the PDG B-5 grant has elements of family engagement. Access will work with GOECD to align their work and approach. The updated priority populations definitions (put together by the All Families Served subcommittee) were also approved by the Executive Committee earlier this month.

- Integration & Alignment Committee – Shauna Ejuh and Karen Berman

Shauna Ejuh reported that all of the IAC subcommittees are working on equity and will bring their work to IAC and then up to the Executive Committee. Mixed Delivery Ad Hoc: Completed a draft report. The IAC Committee will provide input and then the report will be brought to the Executive Committee for review and approval. The ECBG Ad Hoc is working to bring in data. We hope to see more saturation in communities who need it. The Community Systems Development Subcommittee is looking at data and supporting community collaborations throughout the state in identifying where data is, how to use it, and where data is lacking. Inclusion Subcommittee: Survey recently conducted with CBOs to see challenges with children with special needs. They are compiling the data now. Health Subcommittee is working to help MCOs prioritize enrollment to benefit the overall health of children and families. A new research agenda from the Data, Research, and Evaluation Subcommittee will be coming out soon.

7. Announcements and Public Comments (10 min)

- ELC FY18 Annual Report

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Phyllis announced that the FY18 ELC Annual Report is live on the GOECD website.

8. Adjourn

Phyllis made a motion to end the meeting. The meeting adjourned.

Next Meeting:
Monday, June 17, 2019
11:00am-2:00pm

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