

We envision Illinois as a place where every young child – regardless of race, ethnicity, income, language, geography, ability, immigration status, or other circumstance – receives the strongest possible start to life so that they grow up safe, healthy, happy, ready to succeed, and eager to learn.

**Illinois Early Learning Council
December 6, 2021, 1:00-3:00 PM**

Join via [Webex](#) | Meeting Number: 2452 598 5332 | Meeting Password: NjXQbsmG473

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

Minutes

In attendance: Chevelle Bailey, Cindy Bardeleben, Karen Berman, Stephanie Bernoteit, Barbara Bowman, Marcus Brown, Cerathel Burgess-Burnett, Dena Chapman, Carl Eggleston, Shauna Ejeh, Loretta Espeut, Ann Freiburg, Gaylord Gieseke, Phyllis Glink, Rochelle Golliday, Rey Gonzalez, Dan Harris, Sergio Hernandez, Gene Howell, Carisa Hurley, April Janney, Jamilah R. Jor'dan, Ruth Kimble, Dan Kotowski, Stacey Leatherman, Mitch Lifson, Camille Lilly, Kimberly Mann, Cathy Mannen, Kenya McRae, Marcy Mendenhall, Denise Monnier, Bela Mote, Sean Noble, Cristina Pacione-Zayas, Bethany Patten, Laura Phelan, Sylvia Puente, Diana Rauner, Elliot Regenstein, Martina Rocha, Trish Rooney, Brynn Seibert, Sara Slaughter, Bryan Stokes, Joanna Su, Teri Talan, Dawn Thomas, Martin Torres, Edie Washington-Gurley, Josie Yanguas.

Absent: Elissa Bassler, John Borrero, Jose Cerda III, Kristy Doan, Kim Engelman, Tonya Frehner, Courtney Hatcher, Vicki Hodges, Tameeka McFarlane, Lauri Morrison-Frichtl, Curtis Peace, Steve Reick, Ushma Shah, Jil Tracy, Yolanda Williams.

1:00 Welcome & Introductions (10 min)

Phyllis Glink called the meeting to order and introduced both herself and her co-chair, Martin Torres. Phyllis Glink reviewed several housekeeping items and turned it over to Dr. Jamilah R. Jor'dan who made a motion to approve the minutes from the November 2021 ELC meeting. The minutes were approved as written. Sergio Hernandez was invited to read aloud the ELC Racial Equity Definition and Priorities.

1:10 Build Back Better Status Update & Level Set (5 min)

Martin Torres shared that a proposed ELC Committee Structure would be presented and discussed for the next hour of the meeting. He noted the proposed ELC Committee Structure document includes pieces from the Build Back Better framework, subject to change, and then provided a status update on the federal legislation. Martin Torres also flagged the new [Build Back Better webpage on the GOECD website](#) that will be updated regularly to ensure the ELC, early childhood educators, and other key stakeholders have access to the most up-to-date information on the Build Back Better Act. Phyllis Glink made opening remarks, noting that the ELC strives to hold the whole early childhood system, not just Build Back Better. She also stated that the revised ELC Committee Structure, wherever it lands after today's meeting, will allow the Administration to receive the feedback and input it seeks from the Council, providers, and families.

Martin Torres invited Carisa Hurley, Director of Early Childhood, Illinois State Board of Education and Kirstin Chernawsky, Director, Division of Early Childhood, Illinois Department of Human Services to share their reflections about partnering with the Early Learning Council as Build Back Better hopefully moves forward. Carisa Hurley and Kirstin Chernawsky

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.

expressed their support for the proposed ELC structure and enthusiasm for the feedback it will allow ISBE and IDHS to gather.

1:15 ELC Structure Review & Discussion (60 min)

Dr. Jamilah R. Jor'dan reviewed the proposed ELC Committee Structure included in the meeting materials. She shared that we seek a structure that is fluid and positions the ELC as a high-performing and inclusive Early Learning Council. She also noted that the original structure was reviewed by the ELC Co-chairs, the Co-chairs of the Quality, Home Visiting Task Force, and Integration & Alignment Committees, and members of GOECD Team. Feedback was then gathered during the Council meeting in June and incorporated into the document. Interviews as part of the Erikson Institutes consultation work has informed the updated structure, which has been additionally vetted by the GOECD Team, as well as the ELC Co-chairs and Theresa Hawley (Early Childhood Transformation Team) before being presented today for feedback.

Martin Torres reviewed the plan for the breakout sessions. Members and guests were put into breakout groups, facilitated by members of the GOECD Team, for discussion.

Discussion Questions:

- Does this proposed ELC Structure work? o Are any major initiatives missing?
 - o Do the committee names adequately describe the key initiatives they are to hold?
 - o What adjustments, if any, would you recommend?
- Do you feel the anticipated planning work for Build Back Better is integrated in a way that makes sense and will allow the ELC to advise the State in a meaningful way?

After 20 minutes, all were returned to the main room to share and discuss. Phyllis Glink and Martin Torres requested group #5, #4, #3, #2, and then #1 share what was discussed in response to the discussion questions. Major discussion topics included: the importance of family representation and stakeholder input on every committee; the need to move meeting times to better accommodate families and early childhood providers; questions around governance and protocol (which are covered in the Bylaws); requests for Spanish translation, both live and for all meeting materials; questions around how priorities within each committee will be established; the importance of integrating the Funding Commission recommendations into committee workplans; how the Family Advisory Committee members will be integrated into the work of other committees; the importance of developing a shared definition and vision of success; how the work of the ELC fits in with other early childhood advisory bodies; how health and home visiting (newly merged) will work together; and whether quality and workforce initiatives should be split apart or serve as a single committee.

Martin Torres thanked everyone for their contributions, noting it appears the committee structure is “on the mark”. The details are yet to come, but it seems as though the ELC is in a great position to move forward.

2:15 Update: Consultation for the ELC (10 min)

Dr. Jamilah R. Jor'dan transitioned to an update on the consultation work Erikson Institute is doing for the Early Learning Council. Dr. Tonya D. Bibbs, Associate Professor, Erikson Institute and Christy Cashman, Research Assistant, Erikson Institute provided an update on their work. To date, 35 interviews have been completed. Data analysis is expected to

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.

conclude in early 2022, at which point a final report will be developed. Additional work to support the ELC through the establishment of its new structure is planned for 2022.

2:25 Regional & Community Systems (25 min)

Phyllis Glink transitioned to an update on the State’s regional and community systems work. She reminded everyone that one of the recommendations of the Early Childhood Funding Commission that has been approved by the Governor is the build-out of regional- and community-level systems across the State. The newly launched Regional & Community Systems Department is housed at INCCRRA under the direction of Cicely Fleming, the Director of the new Department.

Cicely Fleming gave a presentation on the status of the work, noting: they are centering parent, community, and provider voice, which looks different depending on the needs of each community; local community collaborations are being leveraged, not replaced, as part of these efforts; a kick off is anticipated in February to get the word out about this work across the State; Illinois Action for Children has been contracted to provide T&TA; they are centering racial equity in the work; the goal is still to have 39 councils up and running by the end of 2022; and these efforts will move forward regardless of what happens with the Build Back Better Act.

2:50 Public Comments & Announcements (10 min)

Martin Torres transitioned to Public Comments and Announcements portion of the agenda. No announcements or public comments were made. Martin flagged that included in the materials were written updates on the Needs Assessment and Strategic Planning work currently underway and funded by the Preschool Development Grant Birth through Five (PDG B-5).

3:00 Closing Comments and Adjourn

Martin Torres thanked everyone for their time and participation. He noted that the next official ELC meeting will be on Monday, February 28, 2022; however, given the need to stand up the committee structure in anticipation of the Build Back Better Act, more meetings will undoubtedly be scheduled. ELC members will be notified about any upcoming meetings, and all additional meetings will be posted to the [ELC Meeting Schedule](#) on the GOECD website. With that, the meeting was adjourned.

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.