

**Integration and Alignment Committee (IAC) Meeting
Illinois Early Learning Council (ELC)**

December 4, 2019

10:30am- 1:00pm

Meeting Minutes

1) Welcome and Introductions

Karen Berman

10:30am – 10:40am

Karen Berman- Co-Chair, Ounce of Prevention Fund

Shauna Ejeh- Co-Chair, Illinois Action for Children

Carmen Garcia- Ounce of Prevention Fund

Kayla Goldfarb- Ounce of Prevention Fund

Asia Canady- Ounce of Prevention Fund

Lauren Lansdale, Erikson Institute

Marquinta Thomas, Illinois Action for Children

Carie Bires, Ounce of Prevention Fund

Allie Zindl, Ounce of Prevention Fund

Alli Lowe-Fotos, Ounce of Prevention Fund

Chelsea Guillen, Early Intervention

Elizabeth Rothkoff, Illinois State University

Mark Valentine, Ounce of Prevention Fund

Carisa Hurley, Illinois State Board of Education

Kristy Doan, Illinois State Board of Education

Donna Emmons, Illinois Head Start Association

Kristina Rogers, Illinois Action for Children

Penny Smith, Illinois State Board of Education

Cynthia Tate, Governor's Office of Early Childhood Development (OECD)

Jenny Metcalf, Illinois State Board of Education

Kathy Villano, The Center Resources for Teaching and Learning

Kate Ulmer, Illinois State Board of Education

Vicky Hodges, Illinois State Board of Education

Nakisha Hobbs, Department of Human Services

Asunnette Garcia-Goyette, Irving Harris Foundation

Theresa Hawley, Governor's Office

Denise Dell Isola, Irving Harris Foundation

2) Review IAC Meeting Minutes from 09.05.2019

Shauna Ejeh

10:40am – 10:45am

- Minutes from 09.05.2019 IAC meeting reviewed and no changes were suggested.

3) Federal and State Updates

10:45am – 10:55am

- **Preschool Development Grant B-5 (PDG B-5)** *Dr. Cynthia Tate*
 - Two no cost extensions were granted through February 28, 2020 for the strategic plan and needs assessment. Engaging the ELC Executive Committee and a smaller group to support American Institutes for Research (AIR) reach the outlined targets.
 - OECD continues to work on closing other Year 1 projects. The Quarter 3 report will be submitted and posted on the OECD website.

- **Handouts:** IAC agenda 12.4.2019, IAC 9.5.19 Minutes-DRAFT; Illinois PN3 one page final; PDG recs 11.19.19 draft graphic; Recommended Strategies for Addressing Inclusion; 2019-11-21 Inclusion Minutes draft

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- Renewal grant submitted in November for Years 2-4. A decision is likely by the end of December 2019. The slides from the December 2 ELC Executive Committee meeting explain this information in deeper detail. Please visit the OECD website to see those slides.
- There is overlap between PDG and Prenatal to 3 (PN3) work. Both plans have goals on infant toddler care and financing. The Inclusion and the Data, Research and Evaluation (DRE) subcommittees have been engaged in supporting PDG.
- PN3 *Karen Berman*
 - PN3 materials are posted on the OECD website. Master templates are being put together now to understand what can be achieved by 2023 and then 2025.
- Finance Commission
 - At the ELC Executive Meeting, it was announced that the Finance Commission meets on December 16 from 1-4pm at the Carole Robertson Center. The commission will meet through January 2021.

4) Early Childhood Block Grant

10:55 – 11:45 am

- FY20 and FY21 funding allocations and priorities
 - Nakisha Hobbs said the Department of Human Services (DHS) priorities are being discussed internally. DHS is working on reducing family co-pays to 7% of income, currently at 9%. Contracts with Service Employees International Union and home care and there are incremental rate increases for home providers.
 - There are broader conversations on increased eligibility for the Child Care Assistance Program (CCAP) but no decisions. Early Intervention (EI) caseload has increased and EI remains a priority, especially to reach and serve more.
 - Carisa Hurley said the appropriation for the FY20 Illinois State of Board (ISBE) wasn't enough to award all eligible programs. Regarding those awarded:
 - Preschool for All (PFA) there were 95 applications, 82 scored the 60+ threshold and 33 were awarded.
 - PFA-Expansion (PFAE) there were 26 applications, 24 scored 60+ and 14 were awarded.
 - Prevention Initiative (PI) there were 39 applications, 33 scored 60+ and 8 were awarded. 344 home visiting slots and 132 center based slots.
 - About \$35 million worth of requests were requested but not funded because of insufficient appropriations.
 - Of the FY20 money, 25% of those funds were given to currently funded programs to increase their per pupil amount per child.
 - For FY21 working with the Governor's Office to understand where the classrooms are across the state that need support to serve at least 80% of the children. The focus will be to close the gaps for FY21 and how to raise the per pupil amount. Slot gap analysis will inform the award for future years.
 - Theresa Hawley said in both of the awards, FY20 and in thinking of FY21, adequate funding and increasing access is a focus of the governor. Theresa asked for comments or stories from the field to help inform the process, particularly related to quality.
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- ISBE has recognized the additional supports community based organizations (CBOs) may need to apply. The Center Resources for Teaching and Learning (The Center) supported an in person meeting for the newly funded programs. Only new grantees were invited and 107 people attended.
- Karen asked if The Center could produce a summary of the main barriers and where supports are most needed, based on the convening. IAC can look at that during the recompetete conversations. It's also been mentioned that applicants wish for more up front supports.
- Theresa Hawley said input on prioritization would be welcome regarding home visiting and/or infant toddler care in center-based. The Mixed Delivery Systems (MDS) recommendations and work over the years have identified providers need to take steps over time before applying/being prepared to fully implement PI and PFA.
- Carisa said ISBE could support programs to apply between the Request for Proposals (RFP) process. ISBE could look at old RFPs and walk through them and help programs think on how they could prepare. Carisa can talk to DHS.
- DHS sends monthly memos to about 30,000 providers across the state. It can consider using those memos to advertise the ISBE RFP to CCAP providers.
- Shauna asked the group to consider how providers can draw down funds. She recently spoke to a provider that was able to apply for a certain level of funding because the provider had reserves in the bank to cover the costs should funding be delayed. It's clear there is a reluctance to apply for slots needed and organizations apply for what can be covered upfront. There are some programs that are very advanced fiscally and contract/have an accountant on staff. TA should be offered upfront on this fiscal component.
- In IAC's recompetition recommendations, it was less focused on cost modelling. But if it's beneficial for the finance commission, IAC can put together recommendations to advance that work in a more formal way.
- Karen suggested another conversation focused on the birth to 3. When there is an increase of allocations for the block grant, 25% of that goes to PI but we need to think of coordinating with DHS. Also, it's important to ask if a 25% increase in PI is enough since access keeps coming up. Possibly a smaller group of folks, including ISBE and DHS can convene those conversations. Nakisha agreed to speak to Carisa offline and can update IAC when a meeting is scheduled.
- Outreach related to largest slot gaps (5 minutes) *Karen Berman*
 - Theresa Hawley is looking at a slot gaps analysis to understand which communities need to reach at least to 80% of serving children 3 to 5. IAC will help outreach to those areas to both school districts and CBOs. First outreach will be done to let those communities know of the gaps and then a survey will ask about applications for slots and ask them to identify issues.
 - Carisa asked if the survey could include questions regarding PFAE since very few programs applied for that funding. Would like to understand what the issues were and is curious if the barriers are at all tied to the quality components.
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- Karen suggested after the surveying is complete, IAC could host a conversation with ISBE to review the findings and Theresa agreed to schedule time for further discussions on the survey.
- Mixed Service Delivery Recommendations/
Survey of best practices (5 minutes) *Shauna Egeh and Donna Emmons*
 - Surveying has begun but is not yet completed. Outreach to communities outside of Cook County has begun and so far, no program does things the same.
- Priority Populations (30 minutes) *Carie Bires and Marquinta Thomas*
 - All Families Served (AFS) subcommittee co-chairs would like to focus on access for kids in foster care and experiencing homelessness because there are systems in place, Department of Children and Family Services and ISBE, to support them. Would like to understand what is occurring with priority populations. For example, in the needs assessments for the ISBE RFP, do programs focus on priority populations? Or could they if it's not specifically outlined? Would like to lift the information for the RFP and awardees to understand who is being served of the priority populations.
 - Carisa said she'd follow-up with this group later to provide figures on usage and prioritization of priority populations in the ISBE RFP. She will also find out the frequency of reporting on priority populations to ISBE.
 - Jenny Metcalf said for PFA there is importance on priority populations and programs are required to serve at least one priority factor or two secondary priority factors. PFAE has a hard requirements whereas PFA has strongly suggested components.
 - Penny Smith said there is a weighted eligibility criteria and priorities on deep poverty, homelessness, and development delays. Programs are encouraged to grant more points to priority populations over other factors.
 - State agencies have made improvements on data collection and more data elements have been collected. Analysis remains limited because of agency capacity. Could a focused plan be coordinated to think about the issues and look at data?
 - Shauna said a few years ago there were conversations to change rules so slots would be open for children in priority population groups.
 - Molly Ulmer at ISBE said the slots are being taken up.
 - Karen suggested intentional lifting strategies for the upcoming block grant. From ISBE/DHS home visiting and Head Start point of view, is there something IAC can do moving forward for the new fiscal year to make sure we are clear on enrolling kids and identifying barriers to enrollment? Also thinking about reserving slots for priority populations and not penalizing programs for under enrollment as a result of reserving those slots. System disincentives programs to wait and find right kids for slots because of overemphasis on full enrollment.
 - Penny said in a meeting hosted recently, all PI programs leaders had a robust conversation on recruitment and enrollment. Programs were
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interested in strategies and professional learning opportunities like this are of interest.

- Kathy Villano said The Center can share the types of trainings conducted done over the past 4 years or so. Parent educators are doing a lot of the work. There are other challenges like family and staffing turnover. The Center is thinking about scaffolding training and working with Illinois Action for Children to ensure services and offerings aren't duplicated.
- Carie encouraged the group to think beyond recruitment but the actual supports and implementation before and after enrollment.
- Carie suggested a Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) in the long term, but suggested in the larger IAC surveying, asking questions to learn more about priority populations. There are locations doing a wonderful job to enroll priority populations, but need ideas on how to replicate these partnerships and enrollment further.
- If programs aren't enrolling priority populations because of full enrollment, are they keeping those children on the waitlist for the next opening or even next year? What does the community referral systems look like?
- Carie and Marquita will follow up to learn what could be included in the survey and likely convene another meeting to explore the findings ISBE needs to capture on the RFP and data.

5) Child Care Collaboration 2020 Recommendations

Nakisha Hobbs

11:45am – 12:15 pm

- Child Care Collaboration Program 2020 Proposal was informed by representatives of DHS, ISBE, OECD, City of Chicago and Illinois Head Start Association resulting from the MDS recommendations. No new collaboration applications have been approved in 5 years and there is an opportunity to reimagine the program. There are several benefits of becoming an approved Child Care Collaboration program, such as the following child care rule exceptions:
 - Family eligibility periods coincide with eligibility in ISBE or Head Start (HS) programs (up to 24 months for HS & PFA, and up to 36 months for Early Head Start and PI)
 - The child's care schedule will be decoupled from the parent's activity schedule to allow care full time
 - No family share deduction (copays) will be assigned to families.
 - DHS is already reviewing how it would fill the gap as copays wouldn't be collected under this model. The average co-pay is about \$90/family.
- There is a lot of support for the new outlined priorities of the collaboration program, but concerns on how to hold programs accountable to increase quality. DHS is thinking about this as model will need to improve quality of staffing patterns, qualifications and really build community partnerships. DHS could ask for baseline salaries and a plan towards the recommended salaries. This piece will be difficult if the program is only getting Head Start and CCAP funding, but easier to attain with the additional funding of PFA. The group is open to feedback on accountability and please send those to Carmen
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or IAC can consider hosting a special meeting if folks are interested in a deeper conversation.

- DHS is interested in getting the CCAP caseload back up but also wanting to ensure children are retained. The retention piece could be the most costly under this model, but DHS is determined to sort that out.
- Really looking at ways to reduce harm to parents, families and communities. Providers have left the system and are closing programs. There are short term strategies that don't cost very much to be implemented.
- The benefit would not follow the family but is linked to the collaboration program.
- Shauna appreciates the collaboration with PFA and Head Start, but encouraged the consideration of equity. This model would continue to reward the same programs that have access to quality indicators. We need to think about other programs, outside of the system or using CCAP only, and how we can elevate the quality of those programs.
- Karen suggested with so many concurrent strategies and demonstration projects, at some point it would be helpful if an agency partner could create a one-pager or visual to help display the work that state is doing. We could then consider who we reach, what or who is being left out. We could consider items like geography representation and racial equity. Connecting the dots among strategies would be helpful.

6) IAC Subcommittee Updates

12:15pm – 12:50 pm

- Inclusion *Kristy Doan*
 - MOU webinar on building relationships to support inclusion and early childhood was launched and the group has provided input on PDG B-5 recommendations. *Inclusion in Illinois Birth to 5 Across Systems* infographic was created to highlight the buckets of work and also identify work areas. Looking for feedback on the infographic as it will be updated to fix the typo and spell out the acronyms.
 - A survey about financing went out and there are huge questions regarding inclusion. Inclusion will do a scan of what other states are doing and if there are resources. Looking at what kind of guidance can be put out.
 - Kayla Goldfarb will check in with Kristina Rogers of the CSD workgroup to ensure Community Systems Statewide Supports (CS3) isn't duplicating work.
 - Karen said there hasn't been much work with school districts to ensure they can support kids in programs. The state is working on improving inclusion but need to reach out to school boards, special education administrators and others. If folks have experience working with school districts and CBOs, please let this group know. An Early Choices doctoral student is conducting interviews.
- Community Systems Development *Kristina Rogers*
 - Funders work group is interested in how collaborations are funded. The goal is to understand what collaborations need to be successful. The CS3 team is surveying collaborations and will have funding questions in the survey. CS3 will aggregate findings on funding and share. The CS3 conference is in June and looking for presenters.
- Health *Carmen Garcia*

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- The Managed Care Organization (MCO) ad hoc workgroup is wrapping up after the early childhood resources desk reference was crafted. There are opportunities for data sharing and/or using data to better target health and early childhood.
- The Health Subcommittee met last month and featured a presentation on Illinois Department of Public Health on Maternal and Child Health Title V Block Grant, and heard updates on WIC and Medicaid from committee members.
- Data, Research and Evaluation *Carmen Garcia*
 - DRE has convened meetings tied to PDG and recently heard presentations from AIR on the needs and strategic plan. On December 19, the DRE will host a meeting to discuss indicators and metrics of success for the PDG B-5 statewide strategic plan. In this meeting, the DRE will draw on goals, action steps, intended outcomes, and draft metrics identified by the Early Learning Council and will expand and validate indicators and metrics of success for the strategic plan. DRE input will guide the final development of the strategic plan.

7) General Updates and Input

12:50pm – 12:55pm

All

Shauna Ejuh

8) Adjournment and Reminders

12:55pm-1pm

- **Early Learning Council (ELC) Executive Committee Meeting:** Monday, February 3, 2020
- **ELC Full meeting:** Monday, February 24, 2020
- **IAC Meeting:** Wednesday, March 4, 2020

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