

Illinois Early Learning Council
Interim Executive Committee Meeting
May 6, 2020 - 1:30 PM – 2:30 PM

VIRTUAL MEETING

Call in: (888) 494-4032; Access Code: 611-304-5703

In attendance: *(non-members are in italics)*

Jennifer Alexander, Karen Berman, *Denise Dell Isola*, Kristy Doan, Shauna Ejeh, *Ireta Gasner*, Gaylord Gieseke, Phyllis Glink, Cornelia Grumman, Dan Harris, *Theresa Hawley*, Carisa Hurley, Jamilah R. Jor'dan, Kimberly Mann, Cristina Pacione-Zayas, Laura Phelan, Diana Rauner, Jesse Ruiz, Sara Slaughter, Teri Talan, *Rebecca Vonderlack-Navarro*, Maria Whelan, Josie Yanguas

Minutes

1. Roll Call – Phyllis Glink and Jesse Ruiz (5 minutes)

Phyllis Glink welcomed everyone to the meeting and took roll call of Executive Committee members and guests who were invited to join the call.

2. Child Care Policy Work Group – Theresa Hawley (5 minutes)

Theresa Hawley noted that COVID-19 is flattening across Illinois but we are still utilizing an Emergency Child Care System for the state. The Child Care Policy Work Group(s) was formed to inform state work as we transition into Phases 3 and 4 of the Restore Illinois Plan; these working groups are balancing health care needs with the societal need for child care in order for parents to return to work. Topics of consideration include: teacher qualifications; what new requirements we need (social distancing); how to support providers if there is another outbreak of COVID-19; how to transition to pre-COVID licenses; and funding, among others.

3. Discussion: Considerations of the State's COVID-19 Response for the ECE System (25 min)

1. Immediate Term

2. Mid and Long-term Implications

Jesse Ruiz noted that the silver lining of this pandemic is increased collaboration between state partners. He noted that today we are looking for input on the state's COVID-19 responses to date, and we want strategies that will lead to a more aligned early childhood system in Illinois in the future.

Phyllis Glink led the discussion with some key questions for consideration: how do we address systems beyond child care, such as home visiting and Early Intervention; how do we ensure we are addressing the needs of those hit the hardest by COVID-19; how do we keep children learning; how do we ensure care is available for children of working parents; and how can we ensure the system survives financially?

Immediate and longer term needs that emerged from the conversation included: supports for a possible shift in parental choice to FFN care; data and data sharing; deeper understanding of what is known/unknown to better target our efforts; strategies to prioritize with limited funding (can we focus on the most vulnerable children from our priority populations?); communications to raise awareness around childhood immunizations; surveys to capture pros and cons of remote home visiting/telehealth in order to define best practices; mental health supports for frontline workers; strategies for mental health consultation if social distancing measure are in place longer term; extra supports for children who are medically fragile (already worked so hard on inclusion); professional learning opportunities; embedding child development knowledge and best practices into all the work we do; and how to address the workforce crisis which has been exacerbated by the pandemic.

4. Discussion: Structure/Process for Advancing this Work (20 minutes)

Phyllis Glink again asked some guiding questions: how do we mobilize our existing committees and subcommittees to take on some of this work to address immediate issues; should we establish an ad hoc committee that can quickly respond to the needs of the state; do we need to establish work groups based on topics? Consensus: Some existing committees could easily be tasked with work. Other committees, if tasked with a specific directive, could take on a bucket of work. An ad hoc could also be established for faster paced input to the state. Next steps: Executive Committee leadership will decide upon a structure on the backend and update members at the next meeting on June 1, 2020.

5. Q&A & Public Comments (5 minutes)

There were no questions or comments.

6. Adjourn

Everyone was thanked for their participation and the meeting was adjourned.

Next Meeting (tentative):
Monday, June 1, 2020
1:00-4:00pm