

June 30, 2010

Dear Governor Quinn and Members of the Illinois General Assembly,

In accordance with the Illinois Early Learning Council Act (Public Act 93-380) we are pleased to submit a Fiscal Year 2010 report describing the Illinois Early Learning Council's accomplishments. The Illinois Early Learning Council has been committed to ensuring that all Illinois children are safe, healthy, eager to learn and ready to succeed by the time they enter school. Through collaborative efforts to coordinate, improve and expand upon existing early childhood programs and services, the Council is working to meet the early learning needs of all children from birth to age five and their families.

Since its inception seven years ago, the Council, in partnership with the Illinois General Assembly, has made significant contributions to raising the profile of Illinois as a national leader in the field of early childhood. The Preschool for All program, based on a blueprint created by the Illinois Early Learning Council, makes Illinois the first state in the nation with the goal of offering high-quality preschool to all three- and four-year-olds while expanding child development and family support services to at-risk infants and toddlers. The Council has also made recommendations that have strengthened the quality of all of Illinois' early childhood programs for children from birth to age five, continued to build a well-qualified workforce, and enhanced accountability through investments in quality assurance.

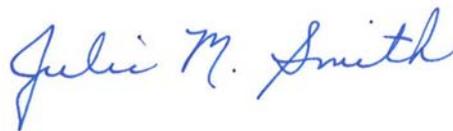
While we are working to advance what we know is the shared goal of strengthening Illinois' early childhood system, we must respectfully remind you that the state budget crisis has presented serious challenges to programs in the past year. The Council continues to create recommendations for improving access to and the quality of early childhood services in our state, but we realize that many programs' very existence is threatened by this fiscal environment. We ask all of you to consider budget solutions that will enable the state of Illinois to continue to serve its youngest, and in many cases, most vulnerable children in the high-quality programs they deserve.

Helping young children start school ready to learn is critical to their future success and to the well-being of society as a whole. We look forward to continue working with you to build a strong early learning system that supports the healthy development of Illinois' children and families.

Sincerely,

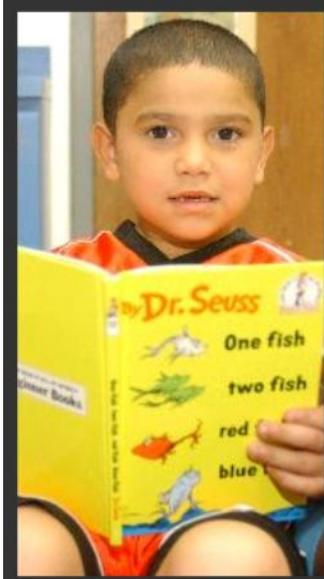


Harriet Meyer
President, Ounce of Prevention Fund
Co-chair, Illinois Early Learning Council



Julie Smith
Deputy Chief of Staff for Governor Quinn
Co-chair, Illinois Early Learning Council

Illinois Early Learning Council



**Annual Report
Fiscal Year 2010**

**Illinois Early Learning Council
Fiscal Year 2010 Annual Report**

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Background

The state of Illinois supports many early learning programs for children from birth to age five and their families. Legislation creating the Illinois Early Learning Council (the Council) was an instrumental step forward in establishing a statewide high-quality early childhood system. The Council is governed by Public Act 93-380 (the Illinois Early Learning Council Act), which was co-sponsored by all four legislative leaders and signed into law in 2003.

Vision

The vision of the Illinois Early Learning Council is that all children in Illinois start school safe, healthy, eager to learn and ready to succeed.

Mission

The mission of the Council is to meet the early learning needs of children from birth to age five and their families by establishing a high-quality, accessible, and comprehensive statewide early learning system. This will be accomplished by:

- Guiding collaborative efforts and making recommendations to coordinate, improve and expand upon existing early childhood programs and services, and
- Engaging in planning, coordination and linkages across programs, divisions and agencies at the state level as well as making use of existing reports, research, and planning efforts.

Membership

The Council is currently composed of gubernatorial and legislative appointees who serve on a voluntary, unpaid basis. Council members represent a broad range of constituencies, including schools, child care centers and homes, Head Start, higher education, state, local, and federal government agencies, the General Assembly, business, law enforcement, foundations, and parents. The Council includes representation from both public and private organizations, and its membership reflects regional, racial, and cultural diversity to ensure representation of the needs of all Illinois children. The Council as a whole meets a minimum of three times a year. Members are encouraged to participate on at least one committee of the Council. Both members who are formally appointed to the Council and early childhood stakeholders who serve on individual committees act as a collective advisory body, working collaboratively to develop advisory recommendations in keeping with the Council's vision, mission, and goals. The Council is co-chaired by Harriet Meyer, President of the Ounce of Prevention Fund, and Julie Smith, Deputy Chief of Staff for Governor Pat Quinn. The Council Co-chairs designate Council Committee Co-chairs. A full list of Illinois Early Learning Council members is included in Appendix A.

Committee Structure and Charges

The Council approves a committee structure to guide its work and to accomplish its priority goals. Committees strive to recruit members who represent a diverse array of constituency groups, as well as the regional, cultural and linguistic diversity in the state.

Illinois Early Learning Council

**Co-chairs: Harriet Meyer, Ounce of Prevention Fund
Julie Smith, Deputy Chief of Staff to Governor Quinn**

Oversight and Coordination

**Co-chairs: Judith Walker Kendrick, Chicago Coalition for Site-Administered Programs
Teri Talan, McCormick Center for Early Childhood Leadership**

Charge: Provide advice to the Early Learning Council to help ensure the effective implementation of Illinois birth to five services, program quality initiatives, and Early Learning Council recommendations.

Charge: Recommend systems focusing on standards, assessments, systems-level program evaluation, and quality assurance that support both individual children's learning and development and programs' continuous improvement.

Charge: Recommend strategies to improve coordination and integration across early childhood programs and systems to address the comprehensive nature of children's healthy development and readiness for school.

Workforce Development

**Co-chairs: Ava Harston, Illinois Federation of Teachers
Jan Maruna, IL Network of Child Care Resource and Referral Agencies**

Charge: Ensure an adequate and stable supply of highly qualified and diverse early childhood professionals to provide high-quality early childhood services.

Public Awareness

**Co-chairs: Kathleen Villano, ECDEC, Schaumburg, Palatine and Wheeling Townships
Joan Vitale, Voices for Illinois Children**

Charge: Increase participation in high-quality early learning programs by providing consistent, high-quality information, outreach and technical assistance to families, early childhood providers, and other stakeholders.

Space Capacity

**Co-chairs: Jose Cerda, IFF
Anthony Raden, Chicago Department of Family and Support Services**

Charge: Increase the space capacity in communities to serve children in high-quality preschool classrooms and infant-toddler care and education settings, especially where there are shortages.

Infant and Toddler

**Co-chairs: Jeanna Capito, Positive Parenting DuPage
Karen Yarbrough, Ounce of Prevention Fund**

Charge: Expand access to high-quality early childhood development programs for all at-risk children under three years of age.

Charge: Improve the quality of infant-toddler child care.

Charge: Improve coordination across infant-toddler programs and services at the state and local levels. Develop recommendations regarding the creation of an outreach system for all new parents to provide basic information and support and to identify and connect families who need more intensive services to appropriate programs and services.

Cross-Committees

Linguistic and Cultural Diversity

**Co-chairs: Awilda Adorno, Wheeling School District, retired
Josie Yanguas, Illinois Resource Center**

Charge: Develop strategies for meeting the varied needs of culturally and linguistically diverse families and young children to ensure that they are well-prepared for school.

Special Populations

**Co-chairs: Daniel Ibarra-Fitzgerald, Department of Children and Family Services
Donna Nylander, Valley View Early Childhood Center**

Charge: Expand access to high-quality early learning programs to children who face the greatest challenges, such as children with disabilities, children who are homeless, children involved in the child welfare system, children in domestic violence shelters, etc.

Work Groups and Task Forces

Data Work Group

Chair: Elliot Regenstein, EducationCounsel LLC

Charge: Develop recommendations for the establishment of a unified data collection system for public early childhood education and development programs and services throughout the state.

Home Visiting Task Force

**Co-chairs: Gaylord Gieseke, Voices for Illinois Children
Diana Rauner, Ounce of Prevention Fund**

Charge: Expand access to high-quality evidence-based home visitation programs for all at-risk children under three years of age.

Charge: Improve the quality of home visitation programs and services in Illinois.

Charge: Improve coordination between home visiting programs at the state and local level, as well as between home visiting and all the other services for infants and toddlers.

Charge: Serve as an advisory body to the Strong Foundations project.

The Council's Executive Committee is composed of Council Co-chairs, Co-chairs of Council committees, and at-large members who serve at the discretion of the Council Co-chairs. The Executive Committee sets the direction of the Council, coordinates work across committees, approves all formal recommendations for consideration by the Council, and coordinates efforts with relevant ongoing planning entities.

During FY2010, the Council convened three meetings. Minutes from those meetings can be found on the Illinois Early Learning Council website, <http://www.illinois.gov/gov/elc/minutes.cfm>. Council committees held a total of 59 meetings this fiscal year. A list of Council and Committee meeting dates for FY2010 is included in Appendix B.

COUNCIL ACCOMPLISHMENTS

Since working to develop a comprehensive plan for Preschool for All and releasing the *Preschool for All* report in the spring of 2006, the Council has worked to establish Preschool for All as the benchmark for high-quality early learning programs for all three- and four-year-olds in the state.

While this report is intended to provide for the Governor and General Assembly a summary of Council accomplishments this year, we must put our work into the context of the budget challenges that present real threats to the continued growth and improvement of the early childhood system in Illinois. The Early Childhood Block Grant, the funding stream that supports Preschool for All birth to five services, was reduced by ten percent for FY10. This, coupled with the delay in state payments experienced by many programs, creates a real risk of losing ground in the state's early childhood services. Schools, community-based organizations, and child care centers that rely on state funding to serve the young children of Illinois are faced with hard decisions regarding the feasibility of continuing their services. The Council continues to do the work necessary to support access to high-quality services in our state, fully aware of the toll exacted on early childhood programs due to the state's budget crisis.

As early childhood in Illinois was affected by our state's ongoing fiscal challenges, it also benefited from funding available through the federal government. The federal government provided funding for all states through the State Advisory Council on Early Education and Care grant program. The Governor's Office convened a working group of Early Learning Council members to develop a grant proposal based on priorities that were established by all Council members. Through this support, created through the reauthorization of the Head Start Act and funded through American Recovery and Reinvestment Act dollars, Illinois was able to secure \$3.58 million, to be used over three years, to advance the work of the Council.

The activities to be supported through the State Advisory Council grant funds will help to forward Council priorities and the work of its committees and work groups. The overarching goals of the grant funds are to: (1) increase participation of underserved populations in high-quality early childhood education and care programs; (2) increase coordination across programs, services and administrating agencies; (3) develop a unified data system; and (4) advance the professional development system in our state. The full grant application can be found on the Early Learning Council website: http://www.illinois.gov/gov/elc/reports/Advisory_Council_application.pdf.

In addition to the specific activities to be supported by the State Advisory Council grant, the grant will also provide resources for the staffing of the Council's committees as well as the Governor's Office of Early Childhood Development. The Council recommended the establishment of the

Office last fiscal year in order to elevate early childhood issues and aid with coordination and implementation of Council recommendations.

Council Co-chairs are currently in the process of hiring a Director to lead the Office of Early Childhood Development. One of the first activities of the Office will be to engage the Executive Committee and full Council in a strategic planning process. The Executive Committee has begun to discuss this work, and plans to address both issues of strategic vision for the Council as well as governance issues as it moves forward with a strategic plan.

Some other accomplishments and recommendations offered by the Council this year include:

- Developing recommendations for components necessary for a comprehensive, high-quality, and cross-agency monitoring system for Illinois' infant and toddler programs.
- Creating detailed recommendations for strategies for expanding teacher preparation programs to specifically include pedagogy and practical experiences for working with very young English Language Learners. The Council also responded to new teacher credential and program service requirements for programs serving young English Language Learners created by statute by offering comments on those rules as they came before ISBE.
- Recommending that ISBE establish student identifiers for children in Early Childhood Block Grant-funded infant and toddler programs so that the youngest learners in Illinois can be included in the state's Student Information System. Illinois was awarded funding through the Institute for Education Sciences enabling ISBE to implement this recommendation.
- Working to provide background and rationale for the importance of reducing the match required of early childhood programs in the state's capital bill.
- Creating the *Community Systems Development Resource Toolkit: Supporting Local Communities in Collaboration and Partnership Building*, a toolkit for communities to use to engage in establishing or enhancing local early childhood partnerships. The toolkit was developed through the work of the Community Systems Development Work Group of the Infant and Toddler and Oversight and Coordination Committees, Home Visiting Task Force and the Government Interagency Team of the Birth to Five Project.
- Developing the *Resource Toolkit for Communities Considering and Implementing a Home Visiting Strategy: Identifying Program Models to Meet Community Need*. The toolkit was developed by the Community Systems Development Work Group in partnership with the IDHS Strong Foundations Project to help programs become familiar with and choose the research-based home visiting model that best fit the needs of families in individual communities.
- Designing and developing introductory training programs to address domestic violence and mental health with a specific focus on perinatal depression within the context of the home visiting relationship. Upcoming topics include substance abuse and developmental disabilities.
- Convening special work groups to research and identify opportunities for encouraging the attainment of the Illinois Director Credential.
- Reviewing and making changes to Child Care Licensing regulations regarding health, hygiene, safe sleep and medications for programs serving infants, toddlers and two year olds.

For a full description of Illinois Early Learning Council accomplishments, please see Appendix C. To access ELC Committee work plans, please go the Early Learning Council website:

<http://www.illinois.gov/gov/elc/>

APPENDIX A: ILLINOIS EARLY LEARNING COUNCIL MEMBERS

Awilda Adorno
Early Childhood Center Director, retired
School District 21

Ann Alvarez
President and CEO
Casa Central

Damon Arnold
Director
Illinois Department of Public Health

Martha Arntson
Executive Director
Childcare Network of Evanston

Carol J. Auer
Superintendent
Keeneyville School District #20

Lori Ann Baas
Executive Director
Christopher House

Barbara Bowman
Chief Early Childhood Education Officer
Chicago Public Schools

Jeanna Capito
Executive Director
Positive Parenting DuPage

Mary Ellen Caron
Commissioner
Chicago Department of Family and Support Services

Tim Carpenter
Director
Fight Crime: Invest in Kids Illinois

Martina Casey
Family Child Care Provider
Service Employees International Union

Jose Cerda
Vice President, Public Policy and Communications
IFF

George Davis
Executive Director
City of Rockford Human Services Department

Judy Erwin
Executive Director
Illinois Board of Higher Education

Jana Fleming
Director, Herr Research Center
Erikson Institute

Maricela Garcia
Director, Capacity-Building
National Council of La Raza

Gaylord Gieseke
Vice President
Voices for Illinois Children

Phyllis Glink
Executive Director
Irving Harris Foundation

Vinni Hall
Board Member
Illinois State Board of Education

Julie Hamos
Director
Illinois Healthcare and Family Services

The Honorable Don Harmon
State Senator
Illinois General Assembly

Gloria Harris
Parent
Community Organizing and Family Issues

Ava Harston
Education Issues Director
Illinois Federation of Teachers

Kay Henderson
Division Administrator
Illinois State Board of Education

Grace Hou
Assistant Secretary
Illinois Department of Human Services

Daniel Ibarra-Fitzgerald
Chief, Latino Affairs
Illinois Department of Children and Family Services

Michael Johnson
Executive Director
Illinois Association of School Boards

Colleen Jones
Executive Vice President and COO
Metropolitan Family Services

Christopher Koch
Superintendent
Illinois State Board of Education

Terri Lawrence
President
Illinois Head Start Association

Candace Lewis
Owner
Yellow Brick Road Kids

Suzanne Logan
President
PSO Illinois Child Care Association

Trinita Logue
President
IFF

Teresa Martin
Past President
Illinois Principals Association

Janet Maruna
Executive Director
Illinois Network of Child Care Resource & Referral Agencies

Erwin McEwen
Director
Illinois Department of Children and Family Services

Mark McHugh
Executive Director, Northern Region
Kids Hope United

Cordelia Meyer
Vice President
Civic Committee of the Commercial Club of Chicago

Harriet Meyer (Co-chair)
President
Ounce of Prevention Fund

Janice Moenster
Professional Development Advisor
Children's Home + Aid

Lauri Morrison Frichtl
Executive Director
Illinois Head Start Association

Carolyn Newberry Schwartz
*The Oak Park Collaboration
for Early Childhood Care and Education*

Donna Nylander
Principal
Valley View Early Childhood Center

Geoffrey Obrzut
President
Illinois Community College Board

Sylvia Puente
Executive Director
Latino Policy Forum

Claudia Quigg
Executive Director
Baby TALK

Barbara Quinn
President
Illinois Congress of Parents and Teachers

Anthony Raden
Deputy Commissioner for Policy
Chicago Department of Family and Support Services

Diana Mendley Rauner
Executive Director
Ounce of Prevention Fund

Elliot Regenstein
Partner
EducationCounsel, LLC

Angela Rudolph
Education Program Officer
Joyce Foundation

Gina Ruther
Director
Head Start State Collaboration Office

Kathy Ryg
President
Voices for Illinois Children

Michelle Saddler
Secretary
Illinois Department of Human Services

Linda Saterfield
Bureau Chief
*Bureau of Child Care and Development, Illinois
Department of Human Services*

Jodi Scott
Regional Superintendent
ROE 27

Adele Simmons
Vice Chairman and Senior Executive
Chicago Metropolis 2020

Unita Sims
Vice President, Children and Family Services
CEDA

Sara Slaughter
Education Program Director
McCormick Foundation

Julie Smith (Co-chair)
Deputy Chief of Staff
Office of Governor Pat Quinn

Luz Maria Solis
Administrator, Early Childhood Programs
Chicago Public Schools

Teri Talan
Director of Research and Public Policy
McCormick Center for Early Childhood Leadership

Sheridan Turner
President and CEO
Kohl Children's Museum

Kathleen Villano
Project Director
ECDEC, Schaumburg, Palatine and Wheeling Townships

Joan Vitale
Director of Community Engagement
Voices for Illinois Children

Judith Walker Kendrick
Director
Chicago Coalition of Site-Administered Child Care Programs

Maria Whelan
President and CEO
Illinois Action for Children

Kay Willmoth
Regional Administrator
*Region V Administration for Children and Families
U.S. Department of Health & Human Services*

Cass Wolfe
Executive Director
Infant Welfare Society of Evanston

Josie Yanguas
Director
Illinois Resource Center

Karen Yarbrough
Senior Manager
Ounce of Prevention Fund

APPENDIX B: FY10 COUNCIL AND COMMITTEE MEETINGS

July 1, 2009 – June 30, 2010

July

- 20** Linguistic and Cultural Diversity Committee, DePaul University, 2320 N Kenmore, Room 471, Chicago, 9:30 – 12:00
- 21** Director Qualifications Work Group of the Workforce Development and Oversight and Coordination Committees, Ounce of Prevention Fund, 33 W Monroe, Suite 2400, Chicago, 10:00 – 12:00
- 21** Research and Evaluation Workgroup of the Home Visiting Task Force, Ounce of Prevention Fund, 33 W Monroe, Suite 2400, Chicago, 1:00 – 3:00
- 29** Special Populations Committee, Learning Point Associates, 20 N Wacker, Suite 1231, Chicago, 3:00 – 5:00

August

no meetings scheduled

September

- 2** Special Populations Committee, Learning Point Associates, 20 N Wacker, Suite 1231, Chicago, 3:00 – 4:00
- 3** Workforce Diversity Workgroup, Ounce of Prevention Fund, 33 W Monroe, Suite 2400, Chicago, 9:00 - 11:30
- 14** Oversight and Coordination Committee, Ounce of Prevention Fund, 33 W Monroe, Suite 2400, Chicago, 11:00 - 1:00
- 14** Community Systems Development Joint Work Group, Ounce of Prevention Fund, 33 W Monroe, Suite 2400, Chicago, 1:30 - 3:00
- 17** Workforce Development Committee, Ounce of Prevention Fund, 33 W Monroe, Suite 2400, Chicago, 1:00 – 3:00
- 23** Linguistic and Cultural Diversity Committee, Erikson Institute, 451 N LaSalle, Room 204, Chicago, 9:30 – 12:00
- 23** Home Visiting Task Force, videoconference, Ounce of Prevention Fund, 33 W Monroe, Suite 2400, and 1 Old State Capitol Plaza, Suite 716 Springfield, 10:00 – 12:00
- 29** Public Awareness Committee, Voices for Illinois Children, 208 S LaSalle, Suite 1490, Chicago, 11:00 – 12:30

October

- 5** Space Capacity Committee, Ounce of Prevention Fund, 33 W Monroe, Suite 2400, Chicago, 11:00 – 1:00
- 5** Executive Committee videoconference, Ounce of Prevention Fund, 33 W Monroe, Suite 2400 Chicago and 1 Old State Capitol Plaza, Suite 716, Springfield, 11:00 – 12:30
- 8** Data Work Group of the Executive Committee, conference call only, 10:00 – 11:00
- 9** Infant and Toddler Committee, videoconference, Ounce of Prevention Fund, 33 W Monroe, Suite 2400, Chicago, and 1 Old State Capitol Plaza, Suite 716 Springfield, 1:00 – 3:00
- 26** Early Learning Council, National Louis University, 122 S Michigan, Chicago, 11:00 – 1:00

November

- 12** Workforce Diversity Workgroup, Ounce of Prevention Fund, 33 W Monroe, Suite 2400, Chicago, 9:00 – 11:30
- 16** Community Systems Development Joint Work Group, conference call only, 2:00 – 3:00

December

- 2** Linguistic and Cultural Diversity Committee, St Augustine College, 1345 W Argyle St, Chicago, 9:30 – 12:00
- 3** Home Visiting Task Force Strategic Planning Retreat, Hilton Lisle/Naperville, 3003 Corporate West Drive, Lisle, 10:00 – 3:00
- 9** Space Capacity Committee, Ounce of Prevention Fund, 33 W Monroe, Suite 2400, Chicago, 12:00 – 2:00
- 10** Licensing Workgroup of the Infant and Toddler Committee, Ounce of Prevention Fund, 33 W Monroe, Suite 2400, Chicago, 1:00 – 3:00

2010

January

- 20** Workforce Diversity Workgroup, Ounce of Prevention Fund, 33 W Monroe, Suite 2400, Chicago, 9:00 – 11:30
- 25** Workforce Development Workgroup, Ounce of Prevention Fund, 33 W Monroe, Suite 2400, Chicago, 10:00 – 12:00
- 26** Public Awareness Committee, Voices for Illinois Children, 208 S LaSalle, Suite 1490, Chicago, 11:00 – 12:30
- 27** Community Systems Development Joint Work Group, Ounce of Prevention Fund, 33 W Monroe, Suite 2400, Chicago, 9:00 – 11:30

February

- 1** Licensing Work Group of the Infant and Toddler Committee videoconference, Ounce of Prevention Fund, 33 W Monroe, Suite 2400 Chicago and 1 Old State Capitol Plaza, Suite 716, Springfield, 11:00 – 1:00
- 1** Infant and Toddler Committee videoconference, Ounce of Prevention Fund, 33 W Monroe, Suite 2400 Chicago and 1 Old State Capitol Plaza, Suite 716, Springfield, 1:30 – 3:30
- 3** Linguistic and Cultural Diversity Committee, Columbia College, 33 E Congress, Room 402, Chicago, 9:30 – 12:00
- 8** Executive Committee videoconference, Ounce of Prevention Fund, 33 W Monroe, Suite 2400 Chicago and 1 Old State Capitol Plaza, Suite 716, Springfield, 11:00 – 12:30
- 22** Early Learning Council, 33 W Monroe, 21st floor, Chicago, 11:00 – 2:00
- 24** Workforce Diversity Work Group of the Linguistic and Cultural Diversity and Workforce Development Committees, St Augustine College, 1345 W Argyle, Chicago, 9:30 – 11:30

March

- 1** Special Populations Committee videoconference, Learning Point Associates, 20 N Wacker, Suite 1231, Chicago, 2:00 – 4:00
- 3** Home Visiting Task Force, Ounce of Prevention Fund, 33 W Monroe, Suite 2400, Chicago and 1 Old State Capitol Plaza, Suite 716, Springfield, 9:00 – 11:30
- 15** Oversight and Coordination Committee, conference call only, 11:00 – 12:30
- 19** Data Work Group of the Executive Committee, conference call only, 10:00 – 11:30

April

- 7** Linguistic and Cultural Diversity Committee, University of Illinois at Chicago, 1040 W Harrison, Education Building EPASW, Conference Room 3008, Chicago, 9:30 – 12:00
- 8** Licensing Work Group of the Infant and Toddler Committee videoconference, Ounce of Prevention Fund, 33 W Monroe, Suite 2400 Chicago and 1 Old State Capitol Plaza, Suite 716, Springfield, 1:00 – 3:00
- 8** Oversight and Coordination Committee videoconference, James R. Thompson Center, 15th floor, Chicago and State Capitol Building, 2nd floor, Springfield, 2:00 – 4:00

- 12 Workforce Development Committee, Ounce of Prevention Fund, 33 W Monroe, Chicago, 10:00 – 12:00
- 12 Special Populations Committee videoconference, Learning Point Associates, 20 N Wacker, Suite 1231, Chicago, 2:00 – 4:00
- 15 Workforce Diversity Work Group of the Linguistic and Cultural Diversity and Workforce Development Committees, St Augustine College, 1345 Argyle, Chicago, 9:30 – 12:00
- 20 Data Work Group of the Executive Committee, conference call only, 1:00 – 3:00
- 23 Community Systems Development Work Group, Ounce of Prevention Fund, 33 W Monroe, Chicago, 10:00 -12:00

May

- 3 Infant and Toddler Committee, conference call only, 3:00 - 4:00
- 10 Licensing Work Group of the Infant and Toddler Committee, Conference call only, 11:00 – 12:00
- 10 Special Populations Committee videoconference, Learning Point Associates, 20 N Wacker, suite 1231, Chicago, 2:00 – 4:00
- 18 Hard to Reach Work Group of the Oversight and Coordination Committee, conference call only, 10:45 – 12:30
- 19 Infant and Toddler Committee, Ounce of Prevention Fund, 33 W Monroe, Suite 2400, Chicago, 10:00 – 12:00

June

- 7 Executive Committee videoconference, Ounce of Prevention Fund, 33 W Monroe, Suite 2400, Chicago, and 1 Old State Capitol Plaza, Suite 716, Springfield, 1:00 – 2:30
- 7 Special Needs Work Group of the Special Populations Committee, Ounce of Prevention Fund, 33 W Monroe, Suite 2400, Chicago, 3:00 – 5:00
- 9 Linguistic and Cultural Diversity Committee, St Augustine College, 1345 W Argyle, Chicago, 9:30 – 12:00
- 10 Licensing Work Group of the Infant and Toddler Committee, Ounce of Prevention Fund, 33 W Monroe, Suite 2400, Chicago, 2:00 – 4:00
- 16 Director Credential Work Group of the Workforce Development and Oversight and Coordination Committees, Ounce of Prevention Fund, 33 W Monroe, Chicago, 1:00 – 3:00
- 17 Workforce Diversity Work Group of the Linguistic and Cultural Diversity and the Workforce Development Committees, St Augustine College, 1345 W Argyle, Chicago, 9:30 – 11:30
- 17 Space Capacity Committee, Ounce of Prevention Fund, 33 W Monroe, Chicago, 3:00 – 5:00
- 21 Early Learning Council, Holland & Knight, 131 S Dearborn, Chicago, 11:30 – 2:30
- 28 Home Visiting Task Force videoconference, Ounce of Prevention Fund, 33 W Monroe, Suite 2400, Chicago, and 1 Old State Capitol Plaza, Suite 716, Springfield, 10:00 – 12:00

*Videoconference where indicated
All meetings include audioconference access*

APPENDIX C: TIMELINE OF ACCOMPLISHMENTS

The Illinois Early Learning Council History and Related Accomplishments

- Spring 2003* Senate Bill 565 is unanimously approved by the legislature, which creates the Illinois Early Learning Council (the Council) to establish a high-quality, accessible, and comprehensive statewide early learning system.
- Summer 2003* Public Act 93-380, the Illinois Early Learning Council Act, is signed into law by Governor Rod Blagojevich. The Council is charged with guiding collaborative efforts to coordinate, improve and expand upon existing early childhood programs and services.
- January 2004* The Illinois Early Learning Council is convened. The Council's vision, key areas of focus, and committee structure are introduced.
- Spring 2004* The Council approves goals and objectives for five committees: Program Quality and Quality Assurance; Evaluation and Assessment; Expansion; Linkage and Integration; and Workforce Development. The Executive Committee, consisting of committee Co-chairs and at-large members, is established to guide and coordinate the work of the Council.
- Spring 2004* Several Executive Committee members meet with the Deputy Governor to discuss the Governor's goals and Council priorities. The Deputy Governor requests that the Council develop a plan to offer high-quality preschool to all three- and four-year-olds whose parents choose to participate as well as expand child development and family support services for at-risk infants and toddlers.
- Summer 2004* The Council approves the *Essential Elements of Preschool for All* to describe critical components of a proposed Preschool for All program. Council committees begin to develop detailed recommendations for inclusion in the Council's Preschool for All plan. Additionally, the Council approves the *Framework for High Quality Services for Expecting Families and Families with Infants and Toddlers through Preschool for All (Framework for High Quality Services)* which recommends specific evidence-based program models to be funded by ISBE through the infant toddler set-aside of the Early Childhood Block Grant.
- Winter 2004* Council members affirm the importance of and recommend adoption of the IDHS Bureau of Child Care and Development's *Comprehensive Plan to Revise the Child Care Provider Reimbursement Rates*, including implementation of a quality rating/tiered reimbursement system to provide financial incentives for higher quality child care services as a critical step toward improving a family's access to – and the quality of – early care and education.
- Fall 2005* The well-attended *Spotlight on Collaboration Seminar* is convened by ISBE, IDHS, and HHS to highlight successful early childhood collaboration models in Illinois communities. The conference is well-received and written materials, including a *Collaboration 101 Guidebook*, are disseminated. This effort was supported by a recommendation from the Council's Linkage and Integration Committee.
- Spring 2006* The development of the *Illinois Early Childhood Asset Map (IECAM)* website (<http://iecam.crc.uiuc.edu/>) begins based on recommendations generated by the Linkage and Integration Committee. This web-based database, which combines information about early childhood services with demographic information, is a key tool for establishing a comprehensive early childhood development system serving young children and families statewide. The data that IECAM collects, displays, and makes available for analysis

contributes to our understanding of how children are served and where resources are most needed.

- Fall 2006 The Council recommends that IDHS issue new rules to administer *Gateways to Opportunity* early childhood credentials (<http://www.ilgateways.com/>). *Gateways to Opportunity*, the single statewide support network to provide guidance, encouragement, and recognition to individuals and programs that serve young children and families, offers a variety of professional development credentials that can be awarded to individuals who achieve specific educational or training milestones in early care and education. A credential is a document validating an individual's qualifications and is issued based on a variety of achievements in field experience, knowledge and skills, educational attainments and/or training accomplishments.
- 2003-06 *The Governor and the General Assembly increase investments in the Early Childhood Block grant by \$90 million and the Child Care Assistance Program by \$80 million over three fiscal years, FY 2004 – FY 2006.*
- Spring 2006 The Council releases the *Preschool for All* report. The Illinois Early Learning Council's *Preschool for All* report is available for download at the Illinois Early Learning Council website, <http://www.illinois.gov/gov/elc/>.
- Spring 2006 *Preschool for All legislation is approved by both chambers of the General Assembly with strong bipartisan support to make Illinois the first state in the nation with the goal of offering voluntary, high quality preschool to all three- and four-year-olds. Young children who are at risk of school failure are the first priority as Preschool for All expansion builds up, followed by middle-income children and, finally, all other children whose parents choose to participate.*
- The FY 2007 state budget includes \$45 million in new funding for early childhood education, for total spending of \$318 million, with 11% of early childhood funding targeted to birth-to-three programs serving at-risk infants and toddlers and their families. Funds also support quality and accountability enhancements recommended by the Illinois Early Learning Council. An additional \$34 million is added to the Child Care Assistance Program. Over a four-year period, the Early Childhood Block Grant grows by 73% or \$135 million and the Child Care Assistance Program by 18% or \$112 million.*
- Spring 2006 Based on the work of the Council's 0-3 Quality Committee, the *Research Toolkit for Programs Serving Infants, Toddlers and Their Families: Implementing a Research-Based Program Model* is created and disseminated. Two day-long workshops on implementing research-based infant and toddler program models are provided by the Council's 0-3 Quality Workgroup & ISBE.
- Spring 2006 *The Illinois Early Childhood Collaboration website, www.ilearlychildhoodcollab.org, is launched by the IDHS Head Start State Collaboration Office to offer stakeholders a range of information about collaboration models & resources. This effort is supported by the IDHS Child Care & Development Advisory Council and the Council's Linkage and Integration Committee. The Program Collaboration Profiles available under the website's Models section describe some of the most common service delivery approaches through which early childhood providers use Early Childhood Block Grant Prevention Initiative and Preschool for All, Head Start, Child Care, and other funds and resources to provide high quality, comprehensive, full-day, full-year services.*
- Spring 2006 ISBE releases Requests for Proposals for a birth to three training and technical assistance institute and for mental health consultation for programs serving at-risk infants, toddlers and

their families. These efforts implement recommendations made by the 0-3 Quality Committee.

- Fall 2006 *Preschool for All implementation begins.*
- Fall 2006 The *Governor's Summit on Early Childhood: Making Preschool for All a Reality in Communities*, funded by the National Governors Association, is convened to bring together Council members and other stakeholders to develop action plans to address challenges in implementing Preschool for All over the next three to five years. The Summit targeted four key issues: 1) Expanding space capacity in communities; 2) Using best practices to meet the needs of linguistically and culturally diverse children and families; 3) Enrolling new children through effective outreach strategies; and 4) Expanding access to high quality early childhood development programs for at-risk children under age three.
- Winter 2006 ISBE releases a Request for Proposals for Social Emotional Consultation funds and Early Childhood Teacher Preparation Assistance Grants, which were included in the Council's Preschool for All recommendations.
- Spring 2007 The Council undergoes a strategic planning process, and changes its committee structure. Seven committees are formed, including two "cross-committees" focusing on special populations and issues of linguistic and cultural diversity. The cross-committee structure ensures that issues relating to vulnerable populations and language-minority children and families will be infused within all committee work.
- Summer 2007 The Council approves a process through which it reaches out to early childhood planning bodies around Illinois, both sharing its own priorities and asking for information on the strategic plans of the other entities, enabling the bodies to work collaboratively on shared goals. This process will be undertaken annually, and is created in response to the Council's charge to engage in planning, coordination and linkages across programs, divisions and agencies at the state level.
- Fall 2007 Early Learning Council committees create new work plans and submit their goals to the Council for approval.
- Spring 2008 The Illinois team is selected, through a competitive process, to participate in the National Symposium on Early Childhood Science and Policy.
- Summer 2008 The Council creates the Early Childhood Data Work Group to design a comprehensive data collection system for early childhood programs serving children birth to age five.
- Summer 2008 The Space Capacity Committee creates a set of principles for awarding early childhood capital funding that can be used as the basis of future requests for proposals when funds are appropriated.
- Fall 2008 A joint Work Group of the Infant and Toddler Committee and the Workforce Development Committee creates new recommendations for qualifications for practitioners in Early Childhood Block Grant funded center-based programs working with children aged birth through three.
- Fall 2008 The Council creates the Home Visiting Task Force. Task Force goals include expanding access to high quality evidence-based home visitation programs for all at-risk children under three years of age, improving quality of home visiting programs in Illinois, improving coordination among home visiting programs and among all other services for infants and toddlers, and serving as an advisory body to the Strong Foundations project.

- Fall 2008 The Council recommends that activities to engage hard to reach children and families by Early Childhood Block Grant programs be supported through increased funding awards.
- Fall 2008 In order to assist programs in engaging families and children that are hard to reach but would benefit from early childhood services, the Oversight and Coordination Committee creates two tool kits. The provider tool kit, *Engaging Hard to Reach Families*, offers strategies for providing transportation, innovative programming, and family involvement activities. The *Preschool for All Outreach Toolkit* is designed for use by social service providers outside of early care and education and enables agencies that work with families with young children to provide messages about the benefit of early childhood education and program availability. Both toolkits are posted to the Illinois State Board of Education website.
- Fall 2008 The Public Awareness Committee creates a flier for programs to use with parents that is posted on ISBE's website. English and Spanish versions are available.
- Fall 2008 Four committees (Oversight and Coordination, Infant and Toddler, Linguistic and Cultural Diversity, and Special Populations) create recommendations for revisions to the Preschool for All and Prevention Initiative Request for Proposals. The recommendations are approved by the Council at its October meeting.
- Winter 2009 The extended timeline and qualifications for staff education and training requirements for staff working in Early Childhood Block Grant-funded center-based programs for infants and toddlers are approved by the Council.
- Winter 2009 In response to the opportunities created through the American Recovery and Reinvestment Act (ARRA), the Council creates a set of recommendations for ways that Local Education Agencies (LEAs) can use ARRA funding to support early childhood programs and services in their communities. The recommendations are offered to the Illinois State Board of Education for use in their guidance to LEAs.
- Spring 2009 *The P-20 Longitudinal Education Data System Act (Public Act 96-0107) was passed unanimously by both chambers of the legislature and signed into law by Governor Quinn. The Act specifically references the work of the Early Learning Council, connecting its work on unified early childhood data systems to the state's efforts on longitudinal data.*
- Spring 2009 *Legislation is passed that increases the infant-toddler set-aside to not less than 20% by FY 2015 through a multi-year phase-in.*
- Spring 2009 The Executive Committee of the Council recommends that an Office of Early Childhood Development be created by the Governor and be housed in his office. Creating an Office of Early Childhood Development would serve to elevate early childhood issues and signal its importance to both the members of the General Assembly and the administrators of state agencies, and aid with coordination and implementation of Council recommendations.
- Summer 2009 *Governor Quinn signs Illinois Jobs Now! The bill creates the first capital funding stream for early childhood, allocating \$45 million for renovation and construction projects for early childhood facilities.*
- Fall 2009 A working group of Early Learning Council members assists in the development of the State Advisory Council on Early Care and Education federal grant.
- Fall 2009 A joint work group of the Infant and Toddler and Oversight and Coordination Committees develop recommendations for components necessary for a comprehensive, high-quality, and cross-agency monitoring system for Illinois' infant and toddler programs.

- Fall 2009 The Linguistic and Cultural Diversity Committee creates detailed recommendations for strategies for expanding teacher preparation programs to specifically include pedagogy and practical experiences for working with very young English Language Learners. The Council and Linguistic and Cultural Diversity Committee continue to respond and offer suggestions as rules for implementation of a new law regarding services to preschool English Language Learners are considered by the Joint Committee on Administrative Rules.
- Fall 2009 The Data Work Group recommends that ISBE include in its grant application for the Institute for Educational Sciences funding necessary to establish student identifiers for children in Early Childhood Block Grant-funded infant and toddler programs so that the youngest learners in Illinois can be included in the state's Student Information System.
- Winter 2010 *The Governor submits Illinois' application for State Advisory Council on Early Education and Care funding, enabling Illinois to apply for over \$3.58 million from the federal government.*
- Winter 2010 The *Community Systems Development Resource Toolkit: Supporting Local Communities in Collaboration and Partnership Building*, a toolkit for communities to use to engage in establishing or enhancing local early childhood partnerships, is developed through work of the Community Systems Development Work Group of the Infant and Toddler and Oversight and Coordination Committees, Home Visiting Task Force and the Government Interagency Team of the Birth to Five Project.
- Spring 2010 The Space Capacity Committee of the Council works with advocates and state agency personnel to provide background and rationale for the importance of reducing the match required of early childhood programs in the state's capital bill.
- Spring 2010 *Illinois is awarded \$3.58 million through the State Advisory Council on Early Care and Education federal grant. Funds from the grant will support Council and committee staffing, as well as funding a number of projects addressing underrepresented populations, enhancing the early childhood work force, developing a comprehensive, unified early childhood data system, and improving coordination among programs.*
- Spring 2010 *Governor Pat Quinn establishes the Office of Early Childhood Development by Executive Order. The Office will coordinate the work of the Council as well as work across agencies to ensure collaboration among early childhood systems.*
- Spring 2010 *Illinois is awarded \$11.9 million through the Institute of Education Sciences State Longitudinal Data Systems (SLDS) grant, enabling the state to design and implement a longitudinal data system. Funding necessary to include infants and toddlers in the Student Information System is included in the grant, as recommended by the Data Work Group.*
- Spring 2010 The Resource Toolkit for Communities Considering and Implementing a Home Visiting Strategy: Identifying Program Models to Meet Community Need was developed was developed by the Community Systems Development Work Group in partnership with the IDHS Strong Foundations Project to help programs become familiar with and choose the research-based home visiting model that best fit the needs of families in individual communities.
- Summer 2010 The Infant and Toddler Committee, in a joint work group convened with the Department of Children and Family Services Child Care Licensing Advisory Committee, recommends changes to licensing standards for center-based infant, toddler, and two-year-old child care programs.

Council accomplishments in regular font. Related accomplishments in italics.