

**Illinois Early Learning Council  
Workforce Development Committee  
James R. Thompson Center  
100 W. Randolph Street • Chicago, IL  
August 22, 2011  
10:30am–12:30pm**

**Attendees**

Amber Kirchhoff	Jan Maruna	Reyna Hernandez
Anne Wharff	Joanna Pierce	Rhonda Clark
Ava Harston	Johnna Darragh-Ernst	Samir Tanna
Cass Wolfe	Joni Scritchlow	Shannon Christian
Catherine Main	Joyce Weiner	Shannon Yeager
Christine Ryan	Kim Collins	Sheridan Turner
Christine Wilson	Luz Maria Solis	Shirley Morganthaler
Cindy Zumwalt	Lynette Chandler	Sue Moustakas
Diana Rosenbrock	Marie Donovan	Theresa Hawley
Eileen Carr	Marsha Hawley	Vanessa Rich
Harriette Herrera	Martha Arntson	Wendy Mertes

**Welcome—*Jan Maruna***

- The Workforce Development (WFD) Committee would like to welcome Cindy Zumwalt as the new Illinois State Board of Education (ISBE) Early Childhood Division Administrator.

**Minutes—*Jan Maruna***

- May 9, 2011 minutes were approved without change.
- **Question:** Can the Committee receive an update on the ISBE Type 04 Certification Advisory Group?
  - This group has not been yet convened. **Note:** The WFD Committee will be updated on future developments.

**Higher Education Faculty Institute—*Karen McCarthy***

- The Illinois Resource Center (IRC) is implementing the ARRA grant for higher education regarding professional development (PD) and cultural, linguistic, and ability diversity (CLAD).
- Faculty Webinars were held in July and August: Pat Chamberlain explained the new bilingual rules and John Hilliard presented on foundational and instructional consideration for English Language Learners (ELLs). Invitations to the Webinars were sent to a variety of groups identified from the National Professional Development Center on Inclusion (NPDCI) grant, higher education institutions, the Gateways to Opportunity Higher Education Institution faculty forum, etc.
- **Question:** How extensive was the invite list? How many participated on the Webinars?
  - Hundreds of faculty received an invitation for the Webinars. On average, there were 40 people in attendance for each Webinar.
  - **Question:** Were teacher educators included on the invite list?
    - Karen will review the list to see if teacher educators were included. **Note:** If anyone did not receive an invitation, or if they wish to be included on this mailing list for future notifications, please e-mail Karen McCarthy (kmccarth@isbe.net) or Brian Michalski (bmichalski@thecenterweb.org).

- During Webinar planning, staff considered how to present information to audiences with varying knowledge levels.
- A Webpage is being constructed on the ISBE's Website to post the Webinars and other resources.
- **Question:** How long will the ARRA funding last? How long will the Webinars be available?
  - The funding will end soon; therefore, we need to start considering sustainability. It would be beneficial to have a statewide discussion about an information repository.
  - Webinars will be posted on the ISBE Website indefinitely, but no future Webinars are planned at this time.
- The ARRA Grant required the convening of consultants and small work groups. Conversations were taken to the Linguistic and Cultural Diversity Committee and a small work group consisting of the following members: Aisha Ray, Brian Michalski, Camille Catlett, Harriette Herrera, Jana Fleming, Johnna Darragh-Ernst, Joni Scritchlow, Joyce Weiner, and Kathy Sheridan. The goal was to build on work that had already been developed before ARRA funds were available.
- Dates for upcoming faculty development conferences include:
  - Sharing a Vision (September 25–26, 2011)—Preconference Institute.
    - Following the model set by the NPDCI conference, the Preconference day will start on Sunday. Johnna Darragh-Ernst will present on the landscape of Illinois and Camille Catlett will share resources. The Monday key note speaker is Dr. Eugene García. Dr. García's expertise is in early care and education and dual language learners (DLLs), and he is the Vice President of Education Partnerships at the Mary Lou Fulton College of Education, Arizona State University. He is well published, with a suggested resource for review: *The Education of Hispanics in Early Childhood: Of Roots and Wings*. **Note:** For members who are interested in reading more of Dr. García's work, Harriette Herrera can send additional resources.
  - 35th Annual Statewide Conference for Teachers Serving Linguistically and Culturally Diverse Children (December 7–8, 2011).
    - Dr. Else Hamayan will be speaking.
  - Chicago Opening Minds (January 26, 2012)—Higher Education Forum.
    - The forum will have an ELL component. Dr. Carlos Cortes will be speaking—he developed a framework for understanding culture, supporting children through systems including language minority students. Dr. Cortes is well published, with a recent publication focusing on how the media shapes children's lives.
  - Gateways to Opportunity Higher Education Institution Forum (March 30, 2012).
    - Dr. Patricia Kuhl will be speaking at this event.
  - Illinois AEYC Conference (September 2012).
- A post card will be mailed to faculty in the next few weeks with all future conference dates.
- **Question:** How will decisions be made regarding stipends (covering hotel and meal costs) for faculty?
  - The general consensus is that there is enough ARRA funding to accommodate all higher education institution faculty that would like to attend these events. The ARRA Grant was written for faculty (first priority) even though others may be interested in attending.
  - **Note:** Faculty needs to be notified if stipends are available to them for these events.

#### **Clarifying Terminology**—Lynette Chandler and Rhonda Clark

- Jan Maruna and Ava Harston would like to extend a thank you on behalf of the WFD Committee to Lynette and Rhonda for all of their work on this document. It was created as a resource to lend clarity

around certifications, endorsements, and approvals in the state of Illinois. **Note:** This document is not meant to be all-inclusive.

- **Suggestion:** Include a date on the document (e.g., developed and revised).
- **Question:** The document lists a Special Education Endorsement and an ECE Special Education Endorsement. Is the ECE Special Education Endorsement no longer under the Type 04 Certification?
  - No—you can obtain a Type 04 Certificate without Special Education. This can be challenging for those who want a blended Special Education/ECE Special Education program.
- **Note:** Outstanding WFD Committee questions will be shared with Cindy Zumwalt.

### **Early Learning Challenge Race-to-the-Top Grant Initiative—*Theresa Hawley and Shannon Christian***

- The Early Learning Challenge Race-to-the-Top (RTT) Grant Application has not been released yet. Once the application is released, Illinois has 60 days to submit the application. Because much finalization needs to happen before submission, the state has a target completion date of the first week of October.
- The purpose of the RTT Grant is to provide more children from birth to age 5 from low-income families' access to high-quality Early Learning and Development Programs (ELDPs), and to support breakthrough work that dramatically improves the quality of ELDPs serving high-need children.
- Grant priorities include:
  - Early Learning Development (ELD) standards and kindergarten entry assessments.
  - Tiered Quality Rating and Improvement Systems (QRIS).
  - All ELDPs in the tiered QRIS (competitive priority).
- Additional grant priorities include:
  - Sustaining program effects in the early elementary grades.
  - Encourage private sector support.
- The RTT Grant is structured to enforce a standards-driven approach, which will focus on developing, implementing, and maintaining standards that support a quality system. There are many different standards and levels of standards: Early Learning, Family Competencies, Teacher, Program and school, Access to Services, and System Effectiveness. The ELD standards will be the central focus.
- Grant Criteria:
  - Develop great ELD standards for birth to age 5.
    - Revisions have been made to the K–12 standards, but the birth to age 5 standards are ongoing.
    - **Question:** Have committees to develop this work been established?
      - The birth to age 3 standards work is in progress. They have contracted with Erikson to review the standards and determine where adjustments need to be made. The work will be completed in a few weeks, and invitations to join this committee will be extended.
  - Implement effective child assessments that are aligned with those standards: (1) within programs (screening, formative assessment, etc.) and (2) kindergarten assessment.
    - Illinois needs to look at current program standards in the Pre-K programs for screening and formal assessment requirements.
  - Use those assessments to inform practice at all levels.
    - Teachers need to use the results of these assessments in intentional instruction.
  - Create a common, statewide system of tiered program standards.
    - This work is underway. Mapping has been completed, but the real work is to ensure cross-system consistency.

- Implement/Monitor program standards through QRIS.
- Define workforce knowledge and competencies and relate these to ELD standards.
  - Illinois is advanced in this area, but we may need to do more.
- Align a PD system for all ELD staff to the defined knowledge and competencies.
- Align higher education in ECE to the defined knowledge and competencies.
  - Illinois needs to consider how to expend these dollars to dive deep into the world of teacher preparation and professional development. The current instruction needs to meet quality standards.
- Develop the infrastructure needed to support the whole effort.
- The RTT Grant will provide \$70 million over four years; however, we need to think about additional funding to fully support these initiatives. The grant begins January 1, 2012.
- General consensus from researchers is that changing behavior is just as difficult as measurement. When we discuss potential ideas for this grant, we need to think about what clear answers we can provide as well as the process to get to the outcome—this could provide a competitive edge for Illinois.
- Discussion
  - **Question:** Do we need to define how we are evaluating the quality of teachers in classrooms? Is this part of the conversation? What we do to help teachers?
    - There are different levels here: pre-service which includes coursework, credentials, and competencies and in-service that supports staff.
    - Educators should be able to select quality student teaching sites.
    - We need to look at the processes of pre-service to in-service as a continuum. Teachers may need to obtain a credential. You can work without a degree, but teachers need to know the next steps in their career and what supports they will have.
  - **Question:** Can we require a third-party evaluation in a preschool classroom every-other-year?
    - This is part of the concern with integrating all early learning programs into QRIS. We need to look at each sector and determine what they need to support their own system. Different supports may be needed.
  - **Suggestion:** We need to think about a coach/mentoring strategy throughout programs.
    - When using a monitoring tool, a PD plan can be developed, which could be implemented by coaches/mentors. There are teachers going into classrooms who need to know how to manage a classroom or there will be no learning in that classroom.
    - The coaching/mentoring level could be supported by corporations. We need to talk to directors/managers/owners to help them understand the need to adhere to standards.
  - **Suggestion:** About 20 years ago, there was a grant from ISBE to the universities in the Chicago-land area, encouraging PD. Mentoring in classrooms was already an established idea. This was a working system of integrating coaches/mentors in the classroom environment.
    - **Question:** Is there a coaching workforce?
      - There are people who are interested in Illinois; however, there should be clear goals and requirements established to show improvement from coaching/mentoring.
      - The PD project, funded by CLASS, has very clear outcomes. Coaches used a CLASS outline, and it was their objective to have teachers proficient in “X” areas.
  - **Question:** Is mentoring/coaching a part of the RTT Grant application?

- The QRIS and the state monitoring system for Preschool for All are using a common monitoring tool and assessors from National Louis University. The goal is to build on what has already been invested.
- **Question:** Can we rely on the Professional Development Advisors (PDAs) through the Gateways professional development system?
  - There needs to be a difference between those who monitor and those who suggest change. We need to build in a piece that after the monitoring takes place there is a different team that has problem solving skills.
  - We can expand the PDA program to meet (anticipated) future need for PD for staff
- **Question:** Is the focus of the grant to have a single contractor? Will they analyze instruction, school-readiness, and academic success? Will they use supporting data to make changes?
  - There will be a committee to review and revise QRIS as well as CLASS.
- **Comment:** QRIS needs to allow for a level playing field in the private sector. Areas such as staff benefits, consumables, and taxation, should be considered in the Quality Counts—Quality Rating System revisions.
  - **Suggestion:** Send comments to Theresa to include in the QRIS revisions.
- **Question:** The portability of student’s coursework from two- to four-year institutions is an ongoing issue (articulation). Can we focus on why this does not work and how we can fix it?
  - Most students are not receiving correct guidance from counselors. They are taking core courses, which transfer as electives to a four-year institution.
  - DePaul is reviewing why articulation is failing. There were panels that met from several institutions to ensure articulation between schools, but once they stopped meeting, the system stopped working.
  - **Question:** Why did faculty stop meeting? Was it due to the lack of travel stipends?
    - Four-year schools need support to make articulation happen. Four-year schools need to start lobbying with department chairs, admissions, etc. Two- and four-year schools need to work together.
  - Different programs have different requirements. The Community Trust Grant started to work on articulation to develop a model/career pathway from a CDA to a Master’s Degree in ECE (allowing practitioners to come in/out at different levels). Not only does coursework need to be reviewed, but the workforce holistically.
  - The Gateways PD system has standards and a career pathway outlined through credentials. Community colleges and four-year institutions aligned their courses with this system, which should positively impact articulation.
- **Comment:** Another piece to consider for the RTT Grant application is the development of credentials. Gateways is making progress in the School-Age and Youth Development Credential as well as the Family Worker Credential, but the Family Child Care sector has been asking about a credential that meets their needs.
  - The Level 1 ECE Credential is an entry-level credential that also available through high schools. The RTT Grant funding could expand opportunities to obtain the Level 1 ECE Credential through the CCR&Rs and/or high schools.
- **Question:** When thinking about the assessment piece of the RTT Grant, how are we going to build this into our system? Is this being discussed?
  - Observation systems are about focusing the teacher’s attention on what the child is doing in the day-to-day work. Teachers could receive feedback through an online system about how to address classroom issues (a system of integrated support through a community board). iTeach is a system that currently allows for this, but we can definitely build on this concept.

- Next Steps
  - **Action:** WFD Committee members will be asked to respond to a list of priorities from this meeting. Ideas will be consolidated and sent to Theresa Hawley.
  - Feedback can be provided through the Early Learning challenge Webpage on the Office of Early Childhood Development Website:  
<http://www2.illinois.gov/earlychildhood/Pages/EarlyLearningChallenge.aspx>.
  - For members who did not receive the Early Learning Challenge Presentation handout, it is posted on the above link under the “Illinois’ Approach to the Early Learning Challenge Grant Opportunity” heading.

### **Next Steps**

- Illinois Early Childhood Summit
  - The Illinois Early Childhood Summit, held at Heartland Community College on April 17–18, 2011, had 84 participants representing the bilingual, special education, and two- and four-year institution sectors. A second summit will be held in April 2012. More details will follow. The presentation resources are available online at:  
<http://community.fpg.unc.edu/resources/presentations/illinois-early-childhood-summit>.
- NAEYC/NACCRRA Definitions
  - These definitions were provided to the Committee at the May 9, 2011 meeting.
- Federal Pell Grant Guidelines
  - Information is provided as a follow-up from the previous meeting (see handout).

### **Meeting Adjourned**

### **Next Meeting Dates**

- December 5, 2011
- April 23, 2012