

**Illinois Early Learning Council
Family and Community Engagement
All Families Served Subcommittee**

Illinois Action for Children

*** 4753 N Broadway ***

(Bridgeview Bank Building)

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Chicago, IL 60640

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August 18, 2015 • 10am – 12pm

Agenda

Toll-Free Dial-in Number: 1-866-802-6672

Participant Passcode: 247 437

- Welcome and Introductions
 - Attendees: Dawn Thomas, Madelyn James, Marianne McCorny (YWCA), Cyndi Vegas (Gads Hill), Carie Bires, Fiona Anderson, Renee Tetrick, Sandy de Leon, Janet Vargas, Gloria Harris, Debra Floyd, Julia Zhu, Bryan Stokes, Edna Vidaurre, Angela Bailey, Shauna Ejeh
- Approve minutes from 6/23/2015 AFS Subcommittee meeting
 - Approved
- Systems Change Discussion: ‘The Dawn of Systems Leadership’
 - Appreciated the 3 “core capabilities”, good reminder and sounding board, especially because this work is hard to explain:
 - Ability to see the larger system
 - Fostering reflection and more generative conversations
 - Shifting focus from reactive problem solving to co-creating the future
 - Nice that it focused on a leader like Nelson Mandela, but stressed that these are skills that anyone can build and develop, can be applied to any system, not just early childhood
 - Leader has to have a vision, our culture doesn’t always look at that broader framework, often focused on our individual agendas and organization’s agendas, rather than how society needs to be reshaped so children and families truly have best start in life. Setting aside these other agendas and developing a systems agenda
 - Easy to reduce perspective and thinking of diverse opinions, ex: rarely does early childhood engage the K-12 system, and often have same early childhood people around tables
 - Innovation Zone work captured by the “3 Openings needed to transform systems”:
 - Opening the mind (challenge our assumptions)
 - Opening the heart (be vulnerable and truly hear one another)
 - Opening the will (letting go of pre-set goals and agendas)
 - Can do better job at creating welcoming conditions, the space for change
 - Two questions for shifting from reacting to co-creating:
 - What do we really want to create?
 - What exists today?
 - Important to recognize other system leaders we’re working with. Especially if they don’t think/see themselves that way. Need to recognize, then support, then connect them with other system leaders.

- Systems leaders can be a quieter form of leadership, not always the focus of who's the loudest, and who has all the answers
 - Need to find common language. Early Childhood language, Public Policy language. Often intimidates or reduces a person's feelings that they can participate in the discussion. Need to think about our acronyms and terminology
 - Term "priority populations"
 - Is our language strength-based or deficit-based
 - Ex: Hard to Reach, under-resourced, families below poverty level
 - Challenge to acknowledge assets and also prioritize families that need services the most
 - The deficit language focuses on the family and not on the systems creating the deficits
 - Focusing on resiliency. Ex: moving from "preventing violence" to "building peace"
 - As leaders, need to develop ability to differentiate our language based on our context.
 - Inclusion and respect for/with people on the ground. Might be more important to be included in conversation, even if language isn't perfected. To a degree, the names (hard-to-reach vs. all families served) don't matter, especially if the families aren't being served. Most crucial thing is: are the families being served.
 - Once we find the research/results, are we moving forward and building on it, or simply measuring the problems again? Ex: COFI's data/reports, why don't we put money into strategies, instead of simply measuring the
 - Do we understand culturally/linguistically if this language has different meaning
 - In the Hard to Reach Report: Agencies that took programs out to the families were the most successful. Several IZ's are having successes worth celebrating in this vein.
 - Great reminder that effective system leaders are good at "Balancing task time with time for reflection, action, and silence".
 - Often we hop to the next project, grant, opportunity, without sufficiently gathering and disseminating the learnings
 - As we're all starting to learn more about systems leadership (ex: ABLE Change, IZ's, etc) need to think of how we share it
 - Hesitant to bring ideas to the table that aren't fully formed, because of fear of it getting shut down
 - Take-Aways:
 - Be thoughtful of our language
 - Focus on production: what are we actually changing, not just talking about change
 - Building in time for active reflection
 - Thinking about what inclusion means in this work
- Event Update: FACT Cross-Training
 - Had overview of the 3 main systems: Homeless Services, Child Welfare, Early Childhood
 - Attendees wanted to learn about current collaborations, had some examples (e.g., homeless services/developmental screenings in shelters) but in future would like to have more
 - 120 attendees, popular sessions: McKinney-Vento, Understanding child wellbeing, How to survive (court) testifying. Attendees asked for follow-up trainings for their agencies
 - This is first of several cross-trainings. DCFS planning to take this on the road to suburban Cook and Champaign/Danville areas. Will also establish local planning committees so local agencies represented at upcoming trainings, not merely state agencies coming in with presenters
 - Cross-Training Agenda will be sent out, most presenters open to being directly contacted to answer questions, give more info.
- Workgroup Updates
 - Child Welfare: AFS input on Statewide Provide Database (SPD) revisions
 - Strategy memo has been put on hold. Focus is on helping improve SPD database. Began by working on SPD Info (the public-facing website). Started organizing links, revising descriptions.

- Members suggested group look at Illinois Early Childhood Program Inventory (on Partner Plan Act website). Also should consider making a simple version grouping programs by child age group (look at OECD table/graph).
 - Homelessness: Progress update, Research summary
 - Focusing on Strategy Memo. Group has chosen to look at data issues in homelessness. Have finished Section 1 (discussing problem, proposing solution) and starting Section 2 (compiling existing info). Julia Zhu has been compiling background research and analyzing survey data. Looking for more info.
 - Poverty/Deep Poverty: Progress update
 - Group primarily comprised of COFI members and BPI staff. Lots of focus on enrollment recently, however attendance is a bigger need in many communities. COFI and BPI have both had University of Chicago research teams working with parents to measure these issues. Work group will look at these new results and begin to craft a Problem Statement for Strategy Memo.
- Innovation Zone (IZ): Year End Report and Discussion
 - (Summary report will be sent out following meeting)
 - IZ are design laboratories for the state, each identified target populations, developing strategies, with two main goals of: enrolling kids in EC programs and improving quality
 - Strategies that emerged: cross system efforts to engage high needs families
 - Examples of Impacts:
 - Aurora: developed partnership with 3 partner agencies to develop a shared intake system. Have taken in 38 families, facilitating ASQ training for partner agencies
 - Cicero: developed 4 pop-up preschools, delivered in high poverty and EC areas. Planning 2 new ones. To date 100 families have participated. Use parent ambassadors for most of work
 - East St Louis: ASQ certified, 265 children have received developmental screenings, 6 professional learning practices
 - North Lawndale: 97 referrals: 34 to HV, 64 to PreK, 9 CPS schools as enrollment sites (up from 1), 45 families have gone through Community Connections program, 19 mothers/28 children from shelters connected to services, over 200 referrals to other community services
 - Pilsen/Little Village: COFI trained, knocked on 1,089 doors, referred 89 families to programs, resource directory for parents, make connections from Early Intervention to EC programs. Over 600 families indicated interest in learning about EC programs, developing an outreach plan for follow-up. Many motivated families wanting to engage, urgency
 - Thornton Township: engaged 12 programs in ExceleRate, 15 programs in Community of Practice, ABLE partner
 - Williamson County: working on screenings, currently 1,106 children screened. Have developed K5 readiness survey to go to all local schools
 - Altgeld/Riverdale, Austin, Englewood, Elgin: new cohort of IZ's working on developing their step by step action plan, one more training left, but already starting to test some strategies, learn by doing.
 - Across the IZ's will be important to see what inputs lead to what results
 - Interesting to see how IZ's using same approach (e.g., Parent Ambassadors) in different ways

- Outreach is one of the most important resources we have. Challenging programs' own outreach staff assumptions and model

- Next Steps: Google docs, shared meeting planning
 - Important to develop a system for tracking the reports, surveys, etc., that are emerging from Work Groups.
 - Co-chairs actively seeking input on planning meetings, upcoming topics/speakers
 - This can be streamlined by using Google docs. Links to Google docs will be sent out following meeting
 - Next meeting October 13th, 10am-noon

- Adjourn