

**Illinois Early Learning Council (ELC)**  
**Programs Standards and Quality (PSQ) Committee**  
**January 20, 2015**  
**Meeting Notes**

Ann Freiburg	Cynthia Zumwalt	Kate Ritter
Brett Czekaj	Gail Nelson	Lauri Morrison-Frichtl
Carol Morris	Isolda Davila	Linda Saterfield
Cass Wolfe	Janet Maruna	Penny Smith
Catherine Main	Jeanna Capito	Valerie Krajec
Choua Vue	Joni Scritchlow	Vanessa Rich
Chris Rosean	Judith Walker Kendrick	

**Welcome** – Jan Maruna and Jeanna Capito, co-chairs

**Review of the Meeting Notes**

- Notes from September 15, 2014
  - Notes approved.

**PSQ Ad Hoc Committee Reports**

- **Higher Education Learning and Professional Development Work Group (HELP)** - Cathy Main
  - Early Childhood Innovation Grant funding for 2- and 4- year institutions to partner together to build articulation between 2- and 4- year institutions. Round One of the grant is completed. Twenty-one partnerships applied, final reports from the projects are due January 20, 2015.
    - A white paper is being written by the Illinois Early Research Council.
  - A second round of grants is focused on rural areas of the state. Applications have been submitted and are under review.
  - Applicants from Round One were asked to submit new applications focusing on sustaining the work developed in Round One. Applications are due on February 10, 2015.
  - The Illinois Education Research Council (IERC) will be presenting work from the grant at the Illinois Gateways Higher Ed Forum.
    - Information has been shared with the Illinois Association for Early Childhood Education Credential meeting, Illinois Articulation Initiative Panel, Illinois Association of Early Childhood Teacher Educators, and the Early Learning Council.
  - The HELP committee is developing an Illinois faculty resource website at <http://ilfacultyresources.org/resources>.
  - A professional development webinar series is being developed by the HELP committee for content and ideas.
    - Nine to ten webinars are being developed centered on the standards and support for Higher Education on how to integrate the standards into their programs. Standards for children (the Common Core Standards and the Illinois Early Learning Standards) as well as standards for preparing educators.
- **Workforce Compensation Work Group** – Valerie Krajec and Joni Scritchlow
  - Three sub groups have convened to discuss workplace conditions, benefits, and compensation.
  - Face-to-face meeting will be held on February 5, 2015 to focus on the development of a white paper that highlights findings.

- **Quality Rating and Improvement System – Gail Nelson**
  - ExceleRate for Licensed Family Child Care – Kate Ritter
    - Standards and evidence were finalized and published on the ExceleRate website in October 2014 for family child care.
    - Prior to the publication on the website a series of webinars were held with directors, quality specialists at the CCR&R's, and licensing representatives from DCFS to discuss the standards, requirements, and answer any questions they might have regarding the information.
    - INCCRRA has posted the information on the Quality Counts website to direct family providers to the ExceleRate page. The current Quality Counts QRIS orientation ended in December 2014. QRIS applications will still be accepted up until the end of February 2015. After February it will turn over to ExceleRate. The applications for Licensed Family Child Care ExceleRate have been posted on the ExceleRate website for providers, but they won't be accepted until March 2015.
    - Currently working with National Association for Family Child Care (NAFCC) on their accreditation alignment with ExceleRate. Expect to have their application back sometime before the end of January 2015.
    - INCCRRA is working on the Family Child Care ExceleRate orientation. Timeline: online as well as a face-to-face orientation will become available in February and March 2015.
    - Incentives for Family Child Care are still under discussion.
  - Awards of Excellence – Brett Czeka
    - Working with three official sub-grantee awardees to provide supports for the awards.
    - Currently 40 programs are committed to working with those supports (enrolled in cohorts, working on self-assessments).
    - Programs can apply in spring of 2015: ideally being able to present programs with awards in the summer. Materials are being developed, performing checks and balances, solidifying programs so they can go through the process.
  - ExceleRate and Illinois's Race to the Top Annual Performance Review – Gail Nelson
    - Licensed Child Care as of January 2015, had 771 centers in the system, 3 of them are new programs who entered at the Gold level.
    - A significant number of applicants are in various stages of the pipeline. At this time we have about half of the centers at the Gold level.
    - All of the Silver alignments are coming in January and February. We had a rush of applications at the end of 2014: 51 programs applied.
      - Three have made it.
      - Three were denied as they applied for the Bronze level but had not completed the training.
      - Forty-five are still pending.
    - Eleven programs moved up to Gold, 17 moved down primarily due to a number of NAC programs chose to align with Silver rather than Gold.
    - The National Early Childhood Program Accreditation (NECPA) did not have sufficient alignment to be recognized by ExceleRate. There are 29 programs who were in QRIS and were transitionally Gold. IDHS and INCCRRA worked to come up with an alignment plan for those programs through the assessment path, or with another approved accreditation route.

- Wrapping up a Head Start pilot program in partnership with Shauna Egeh at the Head Start Collaboration Office. Thirty sites participated from across the state to test a blended, expedited path for Head Start.

### Federal and State Landscape

- **U.S. Department of Health and Human Services: Child Care Development Block Grant (CCDBG) Reauthorization** – Linda Saterfield
  - Federal Office of Child Care is hosting a national meeting the week of January 26, 2015, in Washington, D.C. to review the CCDBG reauthorization bill, the timeline for implementation, and interpretation on the provisions. Illinois will have five representatives attending the meeting.
  - The Illinois plan is due on July 1, 2015. It will be a three year plan, which will include the timelines Illinois will use for implementing the various provisions as well as responses as to why we are unable to comply with any timelines that they have laid out.
  - Based on what the Feds have released at this time, Illinois will be able to comply with the timeline.
    - The first date for compliance is the beginning of the Federal fiscal year, October 1, 2015. The first qualifier is to make sure you are spending at least 7% of your Child Care Development Fund (CCDF) on quality incentives (Illinois already exceeds that target). We will have to review the target spending for Infant Toddler, may have to revise our reports.
    - We will review all of the elements of the bill to make sure that everything is in place at the beginning of the Federal fiscal year. Illinois will need to move to twelve months of eligibility, this will have a significant budget impact.
    - Health/safety training for and monitoring of all child care providers who receive CCDF.
    - The financial implications of the bill in Illinois are quite significant.
- **U.S. Department of Health and Human Services: Head Start** – Lauri Morrison Frichtl
  - Early Head Start Child Care Partnerships Preliminary Awards
    - 234 preliminary grantees were named.
    - A quarter of the grants were less than \$1 million, half were for \$1 and \$2 million, with the remaining more than \$2 million.
    - 203 agencies on the list already operate Head Start and/or Early Head Start.
    - Grantees with fewer than 500 children are underrepresented.
    - 31 agencies are new to Early Head Start.
    - Illinois Grantees:
      - City of Chicago \$14,900,000; Child Care Resource & Referral – Joliet \$1,400,000; Proviso Leyden Council for Community Action, Inc. – Maywood \$1,200,000; City of Rockford, Human Services Dept. \$600,000.
    - Office of Planning Research and Evaluation (OPRE) has completed their review. Considering how these partnerships move forward, including challenges and barriers.
    - Zero to Three will be providing supports for effective implementation to the new Early Head Start Child Care Partnerships across the country.
- **U.S. Department of Education: Preschool for All Expansion and Teacher Preparation** – Cindy Zumwalt
  - Illinois was awarded a Preschool for All Expansion Grant of \$20,000,000 each year for the next four years (January 2015 – December 2018).

- Governor's Office of Early Childhood Development is the lead agency with Illinois State Board of Education acting as the fiscal agent.
- Ninety-five percent of the funding goes to sub-grantees with 5% for administration and infrastructure.
- Focus is on highest needs: 4- year olds, at or below the 200% poverty level.
- Full day program with comprehensive services.
- 2,600 new slots with 680 enhanced slots (1/2 day programs expanding to full day).
- 18 communities were identified with highest concentrated poverty and greatest lack of services.
- Must provide full day kindergarten. Must work collaboratively with community based organizations and must use Kindergarten Individual Development Survey (KIDS) assessment.
- No more than 20 children per classroom; ratio of 1 to 10.
- On site or accessible comprehensive services must be provided. Instructional coordinator (1 per 10 classrooms) for embedded professional development.
- Ensure continuity for children from preschool to 3<sup>rd</sup> grade.
- Support was built into the grant for the Awards of Excellence for Inclusion.
- Commitment that the Early Childhood Block Grant (ECBG) will be increased by \$50,000,000 each year starting in state FY16. Part of the funds will go to preschool expansion, but a larger part will go for general Preschool For All expansion and for the Prevention Initiative Program.

#### **Advisory Bodies**

- **Advocacy – Choua Vue**
  - Policy Caucus to be held in Naperville on January 22, 2015, and in Bloomington on January 29, 2015.
  - The State of the Union message from President Obama will be held tonight (January 20, 2015).
    - Slated to talk about expanding child care and dependent tax.
  - Need to make sure there is federal money for the Child Care Development Block Grant (CCDBG) and for Maternal Infant Early Childhood Home Visiting (MIECHV) which is set to expire on March 30, 2015.
  - State of Illinois shortfall of \$300,000,000 for the Child Care Assistance Program. Money could start to run out as early as the end of January.
  - The Illinois State of the State address will be held on February 4, 2015.
  - February 9-13 is a week of action – encourage programs and families to contact their representative's district offices.
  - Plan to hold a rally day once a month. The next rally will be on February 19, 2015 in Springfield. Spring to Action will be a combination of a conference and lobby day. The May rally will be focused on the FY16 budget.
- **Chicago Public Schools – Chris Rosean**
  - In the planning stages for applications for FY16.
    - Open enrollment will begin on March 2, 2015, and will run until May 1, 2015. There are twenty-four sites across the city.
    - Four roaming teams will do onsite applications, at schools and will host preschool fairs on April 18 and 24.
    - On-spot registration will begin in July 2015 for placement.
  - Social Impact Bond Program

- Social Impact Bond classrooms have opened. We are working with investors and other partners to ensure successful implementation of this expansion of Child-Parent Centers.
    - Adding a child parent center at Hanson Park School.
    - Northern Trust, Goldman Sachs, and the Pritzker Foundation are investing in the CPS preschool program (in the child services).
  - Preschool Expansion
    - Fifty-five classrooms are involved in the expansion.
      - Forty-five Head Start or Pre-School for All classrooms will be converted to full day 4-year olds classroom, while 10 are new classrooms.
    - Expansion will be in high needs areas. Currently working on locations for these classrooms.
  - Established a cohort with National Louis University and INCCRRA to assist teachers in gaining an ESL or bilingual endorsement by July 2016. Thirty teachers are participating in the cohort. The majority are from the Community Partnership Program and some from Chicago public schools.
- **City of Chicago** – Vanessa Rich
  - Work on the Federal requirements for the Early Head Start Partnership Grants is underway.
  - Head Start Grant requires a health and safety check on every space (classrooms, play grounds etc.).
    - The next grant round will look at converting Head Start slots into Early Head Start slots.
  - Twenty-five teachers are enrolled with City Colleges to get their Level 4 Credential in a partnership with INCCRRA.
- **Illinois Department of Children and Family Services (IDCFS)** – Carol Morris
  - Day Care Licensing Advisory Council meeting scheduled for January 15, 2015, was cancelled due to changes in the department.
  - Dr. Cynthia Tate is the new interim director.
  - National Association for Regulatory Administration (NARA) has provided the preliminary results of the weighted violations survey.
  - Kate Ritter and Carol Morris finished a powerpoint of FAQ's for the "QRIS roadshow" to use to increase provider involvement in ExceleRate.
  - Invitations were sent to multiple agencies to start a workgroup to revamp the Sunshine Project.
- **Illinois Interagency Council on Early Intervention** –Ann Freiberg
  - Guidance documents are being developed to help explain ExceleRate to local offices.
- **Illinois State Board of Education (ISBE)** – Cindy Zumwalt
  - Early Childhood Block Grant Administrative Rules are currently out for public comment. Proposed changes include adding ExceleRate and the Illinois Early Learning Guidelines Birth – Three.
  - Part 26 (standards for Endorsement in Early Childhood Education) have been through JCAR and will be filed shortly.
  - The State Board is meeting tomorrow (January 21, 2015) with a focus on budget recommendations. The Superintendent is recommending a \$50 million dollar increase due to the Early Childhood Block Grant.
- **Illinois Department of Human Services (IDHS) Child Care Advisory Council** – Judith Walker Kendrick
  - Information regarding CCDBG reauthorization was shared earlier in the meeting.

- The Child Care Advisory Council will be meeting on March 11<sup>th</sup> and will take a closer look at the CCDBG reauthorization.
- **Professional Development Advisory Council (PDAC) – Cass Wolfe**
  - To inform legislators, practitioners, Higher Education counselors and other stakeholders on specific topics regarding the ECE field the PDAC Workforce Development and Pathways Committee developed informational sheets known as infographs.
    - The infographs “Follow Your Passion” and “Educate Young Children” were shared with the committee.

**Adjourn**

**Dates for FY15 ELC PSQ meetings**

- May 18, 2015