

**Early Learning Council (ELC)
Programs Standards and Quality (PSQ) Committee
September 14, 2015
Meeting Notes**

Alice Giordano	Dan Harris	Karen Zehnal
Allison Lowe-Fotos	Deb Widenhofer	Kate Ritter
Alethia Travis	Debbie Rogers Jaye	Lauri Morrison-Frichtl
Amanda Cardin	Faith Arnold	Marcy Mendenhall
Anne Wharff	Gail Conway	Pam Womack
Brynn Seibert	Gail Nelson	Rose Gallagher
Carol Morris	Holly Knicker	Sarah Sebert
Cathy Main	Isolda Davila	Tonya Glaze
Choua Vue	Jeanna Capito	Theresa Hawley
Chris Rosean	Joni Scritchlow	Valerie Krajec
Cindy Zumwalt	Judith Walker Kendrick	

Welcome – Jeanna Capito and Dan Harris, co-chairs

Review of the Meeting Notes

- Notes from May 18, 2015 were approved.

State Budget

- Allison Lowe-Fotos, Policy Specialist, with The Ounce.
 - A House bill was proposed that included restoring eligibility guidelines to child care and blocking the Governor from establishing emergency rules. The bill failed by one vote.
 - Senate bill passed that was an overall budget bill to restore several IDHS line items (e.g. home visiting, teen reach program, and some early intervention), it has not been brought to the House for a vote. The Governor has said he would veto it.
 - Early Intervention was not covered by Federal appropriations and is quickly running out of money. The Memisovski case has been reopened in Cook County but it only covers Medicaid reimbursement to providers in Cook County.
 - Stories about providers laying people off, people being turned away, classrooms not being full, and the effects on other funding streams (Head Start program etc.) should be sent to Theresa Hawley.

PSQ Ad Hoc Committees

- **Higher Education Learning and Professional Development (HELP) Work Group** – Cathy Main
 - The committee met on August 14, 2015 in Naperville.
 - The Early Childhood Educator Preparation Program Innovation (EPPI) grants are in progress.
 - Members of the HELP committee will present findings of the EPPI grant at the Illinois Education Research Council (IERC) conference in October.
 - The committee is considering forming a sub-committee to address the needs of teachers who need to have the ESL bilingual endorsement on their licensure.
 - The Illinois Articulation Initiative (IAI) has reconvened. One course has been approved, Child Growth and Development. In process of approving a second course, the Exceptional Child.

- The HERO website is a resource for Higher Education faculty in early childhood programs.
- PDAC is holding a series of webinars on the Institute of Medicine report on Transforming the Workforce.
 - A possible grant between the University of Illinois at Chicago and the Governor's Office Early Childhood Development from the McCormick Foundation to take a deeper dive into the report and the impact on Illinois and participation on a national level.
- The HELP Ad Hoc Gateways Higher Education Forum Committee held their first call in September to begin planning for the Forum on April 14-15, 2016.
 - A new strategy is to use an RFP process to present and share information from faculty in Illinois for the Forum.
 - Topics of interest for the forum include: How do we best prepare our teachers for English language learners, how to prepare teachers to work with and engage families including those that are highly stressed, utilization of assessments, data in terms of informing curriculum, and technology.
- **Quality Rating and Improvement System: ExceleRate® Illinois** – Gail Nelson
 - Data used in this report is through the end of July.
 - 1,875 programs are enrolled in the QRIS as of the end of July.
 - 1,034 of 1,875 are school based and 841 were licensed child care (reconciliation was still underway when the report was given).
 - 12 child care centers were at the Bronze Circle of Quality.
 - 628 licensed child care and school based programs were at the Silver Circle of Quality.
 - 1,235 were at Gold Circle of Quality.
 - Received a dozen licensed family child care home applications under the new ExceleRate standards.
 - ExceleRate Dual Enrollment from the old QRIS:
 - 174 licensed child care center applications (new to ExceleRate)
 - 125 successful – mostly came into the Gold Circle of Quality.
 - In the course of alignment, 36 centers moved up in the Circle of Quality.
 - 12 moved down (by choice).
 - First licensed exempt American Montessori accredited program into the Gold Circle of Quality.
 - 28 programs were accredited by National Early Childhood Program Accreditation (NECCPA) and did not move to the Gold Circle. These programs are engaged in a process with the statewide accreditation mentoring project.
 - Head Start pilot brought in 31 sites. Will start a second round of Head Start pilots within the calendar year.
 - Awards of Excellence:
 - All awards were in Inclusion.
 - 8 awardees:
 - 3 Rockford
 - 1 Champaign
 - 1 Urbana
 - 1 Prospect Heights
 - 1 Chicago Public Schools
 - 1 Carole Robertson Center for Learning

- Curriculum has been cross walked and an application process has been put together that will make it easier for individual practitioners to apply for their curriculum to be aligned. Many centers cannot afford to purchase an aligned curriculum, this way they can articulate and align with the Illinois Early Learning Guidelines and the Illinois Early Learning and Development Standards. Two programs are currently experimenting with the process.
- INCCRRA held a successful outreach to centers that were 50% to 70% on their way to achieving the Bronze Circle of Quality. Centers that finished the Bronze Circle of Quality by the end of calendar year 2015 were given a special incentive. Sixty-one percent (83 centers) of the centers that were contacted followed through with the application (75 centers by the deadline, the others are wait listed).
- **Workforce Compensation Work Group Report** – Valerie Krajec and Joni Scritchlow
 - The committee was charged with:
 - Review state and national workforce data.
 - Develop ranges for compensation parity.
 - Identify strategies to secure and retain a highly-skilled and professionally compensated workforce.
 - The committee reviewed salaries, benefits, and workplace conditions.
 - A summary report was created as a supplement to the 30 page report.
 - Have identified ways to move compensation parity forward.
 - The committee noted that a variety of strategies and data sources establish parity with a high degree of consistency.
 - The primary focus of the committee was a teacher with a bachelor’s degree with documented early childhood competencies.
 - The average annual salary for all categories of work requiring a bachelor’s degree in the U.S. is \$57,000, while the average salary for all ECE jobs in the U.S. is \$31,000. In Illinois, the average salary for all jobs requiring a bachelor’s degree is \$53,000 and the average annual salary for all ECE jobs is \$32,000.
 - To achieve compensation parity, an early childhood teacher with a bachelor’s degree and specialized competencies should receive \$53,000-\$57,000 per state and national comparison.
 - A handout on a data for calculating assistant teachers and administrator wages was reviewed.
 - *Following the ELC PSQ September meeting, the report was adjusted to include a three step process to achieve compensation parity with public school teachers, (1) the committee recommends establishing an entry-level salary at \$15.000 per hour; (2) increase the entry-level salary to \$17/hour to establish parity with Head Start teachers; (3) to achieve parity with public school teachers by setting the entry-level salary at \$24.00 per hour or \$49,000 annually.
- **US Department of Health and Human Services: Child Care Development Block Grant Reauthorization, State Plan and Illinois Department of Human Services** – Holly Knicker
 - No updates since our last meeting. The committees are meeting to come up with their recommendations for the changes to the Child Care Assistance Program due to the CCDBG reauthorization and new requirements.
 - Committees are meeting regularly to develop recommendations.
 - The PIC Task Force met in June and reviewed and accepted recommendations.
 - The next advisory council meeting is in November. The State Plan has to be submitted in March 2016. Final recommendations that are coming in through committees need to

be brought forward before November. These recommendations will be reviewed by the PIC Task Force in December. These recommendations will inform the writing of the State Plan.

- **US Department of Health and Human Services: Administration for Children and Families Office of Head Start – Proposed Rule on Head Start Performance Standards** – Lauri Morrison Frichtl
 - All comments on the proposed rule changes are due on September 17, 2015.
 - Encourage others to make comments before comments close.
 - One of the proposed changes is a move to a full day (6 hours) or more.
 - Currently 33% are all day sessions.
 - Estimate that 12,000 children will lose placement.
- **US Department of Education: Preschool for All Expansion, Approval of Part 25 and Part 26 by Illinois State Board of Education** – Cindy Zumwalt
 - The Education bill signed in June included funding for the Preschool Expansion grant.
 - Twenty-five grants were awarded in 18 communities.
 - Grant programs are up and running. Currently working on building more statewide supports.
 - Birth to Third Grade Institute in June for the first cohort of communities to look at building the continuum from birth through 3rd grade. We are looking at additional quality supports and monitoring.
 - The Illinois team will attend the national meeting with US Department of Education and Health and Human Services for the preschool development and expansion grantees.
 - Approval Part 25 and Part 26
 - Part 25 looks at making endorsement from birth through second grade and requires early childhood education and field experiences in at least 2 of the 3 early childhood age grouping and settings.
 - Part 26 includes the requirement that Early Childhood Education Preparation programs become entitled by the Gateways to Opportunity Illinois Professional Development System, aligning coursework to the benchmarks in the Gateways ECE Credential Level 5.
 - These were brought to the board for initial review in May and were approved by the board and put out for public comment until the middle of July. They were taken back to the board in August and approved by the board and go to JCAR on September 16, 2015 for final approval.
 - Part 1 of the Kindergarten Individual Development Survey will be going to JCAR on September 16, 2015.
- **National Governors Association Grant** – Theresa Hawley
 - Illinois received a National Governors Association Grant, which is designed to help new governors to develop their early childhood strategic plan. The grant looks specifically at the issue of governance in our early childhood system and the structure of early childhood within our state government as well as the relationship between state government and the Illinois Early Learning Council. There is an additional grant from the Grand Victoria Foundation to the Early Learning Council for a sustainability plan and a reorganization of the Early Learning Council.
 - Hope to bring the work/update that has been ongoing to the Early Learning Council meeting in October.

Advisory Body Accomplishments and Timelines related to completing PSQ Work Plan

- **Advocacy** – Choua Vue

- IDHS is holding public hearings regarding the impact of cuts to the Child Care Assistance Program on October 6th and 7th in Springfield and Chicago.
 - Stories about the impact of the CCAP changes on Preschool for All programs, schools, and child care centers can be sent to Choau Vue at Illinois Action for Children.
- Senate Bill 570 was defeated. The bill could be called again.
- **Chicago Public School – Chris Rosean**
 - Enrollment is at 20,100 students, and will meet its allocation within the next few weeks.
 - Three additional sites received the Awards of Excellence. Three new ECE sites will be trying to achieve the Awards of Excellence.
 - Opened two new child/parent centers. One of the child/parent centers will be going for an Award of Excellence.
 - Summer institute held for almost 1,000 teachers. Operations meeting and a full day preschool expansion grant with almost 800 teachers participating.
 - Focus is expanding full day preschool programming (last year 100 programs this year more than 200). Setting up teams to support our Preschool for All programs in meeting monitoring requirements.
 - Looking at our bilingual ESL endorsements for teachers as well as what the needs are for bilingual students to make sure that they are getting services by qualified teachers.
 - District as a whole is interested in setting up professional learning communities as the focus for professional development this year.
- **City of Chicago – Isolda Davila**
 - Working on collaboration project, Infant Toddler teacher Quality Initiative, with INCCRRA for infant toddler teachers to attain the Gateways Infant Toddler Credential. Will target approximately 800 infant toddler staff. Through this public/private partnership the first cohort will start on October 1, 2, and 9th.
 - In October we will begin infant toddler class assessments of every infant toddler program funded by DFSS. Will start with early Head Start child care collaboration sites.
 - Out of 217 ExceleRate sites 85 are Gold Circle of Quality, 31 are Silver Circle of Quality and 2 are Bronze Circle of Quality, with 99 in process.
- **Illinois Department of Children and Family Services (IDCFS) Licensing Advisory Committee – Carol Morris**
 - Last meeting held on August 2, 2015.
 - Spent time on communication and how to be more efficient using electronic communication with providers, email distribution lists, and publishing announcements.
 - Conference call with National Association for Regulatory Administration (NARA) regarding the pilot projects.
 - Discussions regarding pending legislation and legislation that has been past for smoking and mandatory vaccinations/immunization for child care workers.
 - Annual report for the General Assembly is due at the end of September.
 - Next meeting will be December 17, 2015.
- **Illinois Head Start Association**
 - No additional report.
- **Illinois Interagency Council on Early Intervention**
 - No report.
- **Illinois Department of Human Services (IDHS) Child Care Advisory Council**

- No additional report.
- **Professional Development Advisory Council – Deb Widenhofer**
 - Marsha Hawley is the new PDAC Co-Chair.
 - Currently implementing the PDAC Strategic Plan Phase VII.
 - Meeting will be held on September 18, 2015 with PDAC, Associate Degree Early Childhood Teacher Educators (ACCESS) and Illinois Association of early Childhood Teachers (ILAECTE).
 - Annual Meeting will be held on November 13, 2015 with Albert Wat of the National Governors Association.
 - Transforming the Workforce Webinars will be held, September 22, October 19, and November 23, 2015.
- **Adjourn**

FY 16 ELC PSQ Meeting Dates:
January 11, 2016

May 9, 2016