



EARLY LEARNING COUNCIL

ANNUAL REPORT

FY2018

TABLE OF CONTENTS

Contents

Letter from the Leadership _____	3
Governor's Office of Early Childhood Development _____	4
Early Learning Council Committee Reports _____	9
Access Committee _____	9
Quality Committee _____	11
Integration & Alignment Committee _____	13
Home Visiting Task Force _____	19
Appendix _____	24

LETTER FROM THE LEADERSHIP

Dear Early Learning Council Members and Stakeholders,

We are pleased to submit the Illinois Early Learning Council's Annual Report for FY2018 to the General Assembly, Office of the Governor, the Council's membership, and other stakeholders. During this year, the Illinois Early Learning Council (ELC), through its Executive Committee, standing committees, and subcommittees, moved the state's early care and education system forward toward its vision for a continuous and strong, high-quality system, providing greater, more equitable access to all children, especially those with the greatest needs. We thank all the members and partners who contributed to this work.

During this year, the state continued to be challenged to meet the needs of young children and families in immigrant communities. The Access Committee created early childhood specific guidance on how early childhood care and education providers can support immigrant, refugee, and undocumented families in accessing services.

The Illinois' State Board of Education (ISBE) conducted the re-competition of the Early Childhood Block Grant. Through monthly ad hoc and cross-committee meetings, the Integration and Alignment Committee worked collaboratively with ISBE to discuss recommendations for the program design and funding priorities for the Request for Proposals.

The Family Engagement Implementation Subcommittee began identifying the structure and make-up of the Family Advisory Committee (FAC), which will be made up of parents. The FAC will serve as a systematic vehicle for the voices of families in communities and programs to be raised up to the state level.

The ELC partnered with advocacy organizations, legislators, and state agencies to pass SB1829, which will enable significant progress to be made in addressing the early childhood workforce shortage.

And, through an *ad hoc* committee led by the Governor's Office of Early Childhood Development (GOECD), the ELC wrote the State's Child Care Development Fund plan, providing it to the Department of Human Services for approval and federal submission.

Data and research continued to be priorities for the ELC. Data resources were created, and the research agenda for the ELC was revised and updated.

The ELC Executive Committee, working with the BUILD Initiative, embarked on a path to creating greater racial equity in our early care and education system and in the ELC itself.

We have had a most productive year, building upon the expertise of our members, while reaching out to achieve our mission through public/private partnerships and cross-system collaboration. We look forward to the new year!

Phyllis Glink
Executive Director, Irving Harris Foundation
Co-Chair, Early Learning Council

Cynthia L. Tate, Ph.D
Executive Director
Governor's Office of Early Childhood Development

OFFICE OF EARLY CHILDHOOD DEVELOPMENT

The Governor's Office of Early Childhood Development (GOECD) leads the state's early childhood systems building by: coordinating the strategic vision for early care and education; advancing the knowledge of child and family serving agencies and organizations to ensure the achievement of the vision; building equity in systems to achieve the vision for every young child; and promoting system congruence by coordinating policies, resources, and service provision.

Major accomplishments for 2018 include:

PRESCHOOL DEVELOPMENT GRANT BIRTH THROUGH FIVE (PDG B-5) INITIAL AWARD

What was the accomplishment?

GOECD in partnership with the Illinois State Board of Education (ISBE), wrote the proposal and was awarded a Preschool Development Grant Birth Through Five (PDG B-5) initial grant award. Illinois will receive \$3,702,937 for the grant performance period between December 31, 2018, through December 30, 2019.

Why was it important?

The PDG B-5 grant will allow Illinois to develop an overarching statewide strategic plan, informed by a needs assessment, which will guide systemic efforts to coordinate Illinois' mixed delivery system so that all children and families have access to the services they need to thrive. We will also conduct activities to maximize parental choice and knowledge, to engage community voice as we share best practices, and to improve the overall quality of early childhood care and education throughout the state.

What was the impact?

The PDG B-5 grant will support Illinois in its effort to analyze the current landscape of our early childhood care and education mixed delivery system and implement changes to the system that will maximize the availability of high-quality early childhood care and education options for low-income and disadvantaged families across providers and partners, improve the quality of care, streamline administrative infrastructure, and improve State-level early childhood care and education funding efficiencies.

MATERNAL, INFANT, AND EARLY CHILDHOOD HOME VISITING PROGRAM (MIECHV)

What was the accomplishment?

MIECHV was awarded over \$45.5 million dollars over the last 4 years to support the delivery of coordinated, comprehensive, and high-quality evidence-based home visiting services to eligible families in 13 at-risk communities. In addition to service delivery, the dollars funded infrastructure building, research, and evaluation.

Why was it important?

Home visiting has been proven through research as an effective prevention strategy and a valuable intervention for helping families to be strong, healthy, nurturing, and successful.

OFFICE OF EARLY CHILDHOOD DEVELOPMENT

What was the impact?

Each year over the past four years, MIECHV has provided home visiting services to between 800-1,100 families. MIECHV works with families to improve maternal and child health, prevent child abuse and neglect, encourage positive parenting, and promote child development and school readiness.

In Federal Fiscal Year 2017 MIECHV had several accomplishments:

- Provided home visits using three evidence-based home visiting models to 1,100 children and 1,097 families in 16 at-risk communities across the state
- 92% of the families served received a parent-child attachment assessment
- 32% of infants were breastfed for at least 6 months
- 93% of children under the age of 1 were screened for safe sleep practices
- 79% received intimate Partner Violence screening within 6 months of enrollment
- 82% of children were screened for developmental delays according to the AAP guidelines
- 85% of mothers were screened for depression within 3 months of enrollment or delivery
- 66% of mothers received a postpartum care visit with a medical provider within 30 days after birth

PRESCHOOL DEVELOPMENT GRANT—EXPANSION, SUPPLEMENTAL, NO COST EXTENSION

What was the accomplishment?

In 2015, Illinois was awarded a federal Preschool Development Grant Expansion (PDG-E) of \$80 million over four years. This funding, supplemented by non-federal matching amounts, has allowed the state to provide more high quality early learning services for our most at-risk young children.

Why was it important?

The PDG-E model builds on the foundation of state-funded Preschool for All programs and provides full day, high quality early learning services. It allows the state to target these services to young children in priority populations, such as children experiencing homelessness, families living in poverty, children with developmental delays, and children involved in child welfare.

What was impact?

In the first year of implementation, Illinois partnered with 25 school districts and community-based organizations in 18 communities across the state to open 170 high-quality classrooms. Since then, there has been a 30% increase in the number of children served, totaling more than 4,000 in 2017, and of which 5% were children experiencing homelessness, 39.5% were from families below 50% of the federal poverty line, 13.1% were children with developmental delays, and 4.3% were children involved in the child welfare system.

Moreover, PDG-E has allowed for the provision of quality improvement activities. The state successfully applied for more than \$1 million in PDG-E supplemental funding in 2017. This additional award is being used through our current no-cost extension year to embed evidence-based social-emotional supports in nearly 80% of grantee sites and to provide intensive training and coaching supports on promoting racially equitable practices for program administrators.

PYRAMID MODEL FOR SUPPORTING SOCIAL-EMOTIONAL COMPETENCE IN INFANTS AND YOUNG CHILDREN

What was the accomplishment?

GOECD is leading two Pyramid Model efforts in Illinois. First, GOECD leads the Statewide Pyramid Model Leadership Team comprised of 19 early childhood cross-sector agencies to coordinate Pyramid Model training and technical assistance efforts through all state early childhood serving agencies. Second, GOECD in partnership with ISBE was awarded supplemental funds in December 2017 through the Federal Preschool Development Grant- Expansion (PDG-E) to implement the Pyramid Model with PDG- E programs.

Why was it important?

The Pyramid Model is a framework that uses systems thinking and implementation science to promote evidence-based practices; it was developed to help early educators build skills to support nurturing and responsive caregiving, create learning environments, provide targeted social-emotional skills, and support children with challenging behavior.

What was impact?

- Statewide efforts:
 - 77 early childhood professionals are trained to fidelity on the Teaching Pyramid Observation Tool
 - 2 communities are interested in pursuing community-wide implementation of the Pyramid Model
 - 400 staff completed the E-pyramid modules online including coaching the Summer of 2018
- As part of the Pyramid Model Pilot:
 - 24 early childhood professionals were trained in Pyramid Model to fidelity and became the first cohort of Pyramid Model Master Cadre (master trainers)
 - 22 PDG-E programs (80% of all federal funded programs) signed on for the pilot and receive monthly coaching from an external Process Coach
 - Over 300 educators trained in Practiced-Based Coaching, Positive Solutions for Families, Teaching Pyramid Observation Tool, Teaching Strategies for Inclusion, Prevent-Teach-Reinforce for Young Children, Strategies for Challenging Behaviors, and Culturally Sensitive Implicit Bias Training to Reduce Suspension and Expulsion
- Head Start Region 5 has agreed to provide Training and Technical Assistance and coaching to Head Start grantees who apply to implement the Pyramid Model

OFFICE OF EARLY CHILDHOOD DEVELOPMENT

GOVERNOR'S CABINET ON CHILDREN AND YOUTH—EARLY CHILDHOOD WORKFORCE PROJECT

What was the accomplishment?

GOECD formed a coalition of nine state agencies and a variety of stakeholders to develop and execute united strategies to develop the early childhood educator workforce, with the goals of building a pipeline of educators, providing a pathway to career opportunities, and enhancing cross-system data collection.

Why was it important?

The project fostered cross-system collaboration and communication in workforce development across a variety of funding streams and regulations to create a more cohesive discussion of how to support and improve the early childhood educator workforce.

What was impact?

The project supported passage of legislation to address the early childhood educator shortage, developed recommendations to align educator requirements and qualifications, and supported data analysis to better understand the workforce and its career pathways across funding streams.

EARLY CHILDHOOD INTER-AGENCY TEAM (IAT)

What was the accomplishment?

The Early Childhood Inter-Agency Team (IAT), convened monthly by GOECD, continues to work collaboratively on a statewide plan for the implementation of PA100-0105, the bill to prevent suspension and expulsion in preschool and child care settings.

Why was it important?

This is the first time, to our knowledge, that two agencies have engaged in joint rulemaking and policy development, an effort made possible by the ongoing, cross-agency facilitation provided by GOECD.

What was impact?

Aligning the rules and procedures between ISBE and DCFS Licensing, aligning the data systems for reporting as required by the legislation, and creating cross-system guidance including common definitions, transition planning, and shared resources will streamline the expectations of programs and simplify the experiences for children in care and their families.

SUPPORTING THE EARLY LEARNING COUNCIL (ELC)

What was the accomplishment?

GOECD guides and supports the efforts of the Illinois Early Learning Council (ELC) as it advances a comprehensive, statewide early childhood system that enables children to enter kindergarten and grow up safe, healthy, happy, ready to succeed, and eager to learn. Capacity support for the ELC comes from

OFFICE OF EARLY CHILDHOOD DEVELOPMENT

philanthropy and GOECD. Thank you to our partners in the field who help staff the committees and move this important work forward.

Why was it important?

The ELC, its committees, and subcommittees, make recommendations for the coordination of existing programs and services for children from birth to five years of age in order to better meet the early learning needs of children and their families. The goal of the Council is to fulfill the vision of a statewide, high-quality, accessible, and comprehensive early learning system to benefit all young children whose parents choose it.

What was the impact?

The ELC continues to serve as the voice of early childhood by calling for investment in critical components of the early childhood system, with a particular focus on high need, hard to reach children and families. In particular, GOECD brought together workgroups of ELC members to write the Child Care Development Fund plan and inform the rollout of the Early Childhood Block Grants. The ELC's FY2018 accomplishments and challenges follow.

Access Committee

The **Access Committee** increases access to high-quality early learning programs for children, families, and communities with the greatest need and supports early learning programs that are serving the highest need families and children.

Goals:

- Expand and improve state and community-based policies and practices that include language to support priority populations being served in early learning programs
- Increase the number of family and community engagement recommendations (including family input) that are ultimately adopted by the ELC
- Advance policies and system practices that include language to support family and community engagement in early learning programs
- Increase the number and percentage of children in priority populations enrolled in early learning programs
- Increase access for linguistically and culturally diverse (LCD) children to early childhood programs
- Assist in mobilizing around specific parent engagement and awareness in partnership with state agencies, such as the Illinois Department of Public Health (IDPH)

Accomplishments:

- Created guidance for center-based programs to authentically engage communities in which they operate, which was approved by the ELC and added to the resource section of the Family and Community Engagement section of the ExceleRate® Illinois website
- Created early childhood specific guidance (submitted to the ELC) on how early childhood care and education providers can support immigrant, refugee, and undocumented families in accessing services
- Provided recommendations to support the Illinois Department of Human Services (IDHS) with the new Child Care Development Block Grant (CCDBG) requirement to improve the supply and quality of child care for children with disabilities
- Established an implementation plan for Family Engagement recommendations that create an intentional system that supports authentic parent voice, input, and feedback to improve policies and systems at the statewide and community level
- Aligned and communicated the committee's Family and Community Engagement efforts across early childhood systems

Challenges:

- The capacity to collect enrollment, attendance, and other relevant data on various priority populations continues to be a challenge
- A lack of resources devoted to family and community engagement continues to limit the overall effectiveness of engagement efforts throughout the early childhood system

EARLY LEARNING COUNCIL COMMITTEE REPORTS

ALL FAMILIES SERVED SUBCOMMITTEE

Accomplishments:

- Partnered with refugee and immigrant rights agencies and experts to draft and recommend early childhood specific guidance to the ELC on how early childhood care and education providers can support immigrant, refugee, and undocumented families in accessing services
- Provided recommendations, in coordination with the Inclusion Subcommittee, to support IDHS with the new CCDBG requirement to improve the supply and quality of child care for children with disabilities

Challenges:

- Data capacity limitations on priority populations, especially a lack of data on the racial breakdown of families and children, continue to limit the ability of state and local systems to properly address the barriers faced by these populations and the ability to raise awareness of the racial inequities that exist

FAMILY ENGAGEMENT IMPLEMENTATION SUBCOMMITTEE

Accomplishments:

- Began identifying the structure and make-up of the Family Advisory Committee (FAC), which will be made up of parents. The FAC will serve as a systematic vehicle for the voices of families in communities and programs to be raised up to the state level.
- Through a coordinated effort, subcommittee members managed to get opinions and votes from across the state in making the decisions that would outline the FAC and its makeup
- Began conversations with other ELC committees, state agencies, families, and providers in an effort to align family engagement practices across the early childhood system

Challenges:

- A lack of resources devoted to family and community engagement continues to limit the overall effectiveness of engagement efforts throughout the early childhood system
- Overcoming the learning curve for parents who have never sat on a committee or are not as familiar with Illinois' early childhood care and education system as a whole

Quality Committee

The **Quality Committee** increases the comprehensiveness and effectiveness of early childhood services in supporting the healthy growth and development of all young children birth to age five, especially those with the highest needs. It ensures early care and education professionals have the knowledge and skills to effectively nurture and support the development and learning of all children in Illinois. It also ensures children are ready for school by providing a solid foundation for appropriate child development strategies in workforce preparation across all settings.

Goals:

- Ensure early care and education professionals, including center directors and principals, have the knowledge and skills, and are fairly compensated, to effectively support the development and learning of *all* young children in Illinois
- Ensure a coordinated early childhood system of aligned standards, professional development, monitoring, and support through oversight of the ExceleRate Illinois Quality Rating and Improvement System
- Promote and advance the integration of continuous quality improvement policies and practices through alignment of early childhood services that support the healthy growth and development of all young children birth to age five, especially those with the highest needs
- Ensure early care and education educators, including program leaders, are professionally qualified and compensated, possessing the knowledge and skills to nurture and support the development and learning of *all* children in Illinois

Accomplishments:

- Provided key supports to realize the potential of Senate Bill 1829 (signed July 27, 2018) to mitigate the early childhood teacher shortage. Worked in partnership with Illinois Higher Education Institutions, Illinois State Board of Education and key advocacy groups to develop workforce pathways from the ECE Credential Level 5 to a Professional Educator License (PEL).
- Investigated strategies used in other states to address compensation inequity for the early childhood workforce (e.g. child care tax credit)
 - Identified compensation parity as a top priority for the Committee in FY2019
 - Working in partnership with the Early Childhood Workforce Development project, led by the Governor's Office of Early Childhood Development, and the Professional Development Advisory Council's (PDAC) Financial Supports Committee to identify and advance strategies to address compensation parity
- Endorsed recommendations from the Latino Policy Forum to provide supports for Illinois' linguistic and culturally diverse population of young children
 - Supporting PDAC in the development of an ESL/Bilingual Credential that aligns to standards in the Illinois State Board of Education ESL and Bilingual Endorsements, now in development

EARLY LEARNING COUNCIL COMMITTEE REPORTS

Challenges:

- The anticipated teacher shortage – predicted in 2013/2014 – is being felt throughout all early childhood and public school systems across Illinois
 - The Quality Committee is working closely with GOECD to identify strategies to retain, engage, and increase the number of those entering the early childhood workforce
- Compensation inequity is recognized on multiple levels throughout the state, as well as at a national level, as the most critical challenge facing early childhood. Low wages disincentivize professionals to advance their degrees/knowledge, create rapid turnover cycles, and discourage individuals from considering early childhood as a career opportunity.

EXCELERATE SUBCOMMITTEE

Accomplishments:

- Accepted the recommendation of the ExceleRate Validation Study Review Workgroup to propose a coordinated cross-sector approach to supporting program (site level) improvement based on Continuous Quality Improvement (CQI) principles
- Articulated a shared vision of CQI at the program site level in order to guide program leaders in establishing cultures of improvement and to guide the ExceleRate system in development of support services
 - Identified key concepts and drafted a list: “What does a Program Leader Do?” to develop a culture of caring, reflection, and improvement
 - Reviewed standards embedded in ExceleRate (PAS, NAEYC, NAC and HS/EHS) to determine to what extent they cover the key concepts
 - Constructed a structured interview for program leaders, asking how they lead cultures of improvement and what is feasible in programs at various resource levels. Subcommittee volunteers interviewed 15 selected leaders. The McCormick Center analyzed the interviews and wrote a report for the Subcommittee.
 - Finalized the document: “Components of Site-Based CQI Leadership: Creating a Culture of Caring, Reflection and improvement”
- Developed an inventory of current state supports for program leaders in the areas identified in the “Components” document, as a first step to recommending future supports

APPENDIX DOCUMENTS

You can find the Quality Committee’s appendix documents at www2.illinois.gov/sites/oeed/ in the “Early Learning Council” section under “Quality Committee.” The following document is located there:

- Components of Site-Based CQI Leadership: Creating a Culture of Caring, Reflection and Improvement

Integration and Alignment Committee

The **Integration and Alignment Committee (IAC)** successfully integrates and aligns early childhood programs and services to support program quality and seamless access for children and families. Through collaboration, the Committee maximizes efficiency and quality of infrastructure investments across all types of early childhood services and ensures the range of early childhood services and supports are connected so that families experience a seamless system.

Goals:

- Work to recommend appropriate changes to early childhood systems and improve coordination and integration across early childhood programs and funding streams in order to address the comprehensive nature of children's healthy development and readiness for school
- Provide input and feedback on key federal and state early childhood initiatives that impact cross-sector early childhood systems
- Provide leadership on systems building efforts
- Continue to identify external tables and other ELC committees and workgroups to ensure work of the Committee is informed and coordinated as the work moves forward

Accomplishments:

- Continued partnership with the Illinois State Board of Education (ISBE) to inform and support the Early Childhood Block Grant (ECBG) re-competition. Through monthly ad hoc and cross-committee meetings, IAC Identified and elevated concerns and worked collaboratively with ISBE to discuss recommendations for the program design and funding priorities for the RFP.
- With generous contributions from the Irving Harris Foundation and the McCormick Foundation, technical assistance was designed and delivered to programs applying for the ECBG. Results and learnings from the technical assistance were shared out at IAC meetings and disseminated in an effort to positively influence future re-competitions.
- Discussions of early childhood education programs' ability to successfully blend and braid funds in order to offer comprehensive services to children and families served sparked the timely development of the Mixed Delivery Ad Hoc Committee. The creation of the Ad Hoc Committee proved to be opportune given the ECBG re-competition and the Preschool Development Birth through Five Grant (PDG B-5).

Challenges:

- Delayed release of the ECBG RFP
- ISBE's funding decisions reflected priorities not present in the original design of the RFP, which makes analysis of the priorities more attenuated
- Access to the ECBG data was delayed due to a second round of funding to agencies, an appeal process, and the need to make a Freedom of Information Act (FOIA) request for the information

EARLY LEARNING COUNCIL COMMITTEE REPORTS

- Programs, particularly community-based organizations, continue to face challenges in accessing the funds necessary to deliver full day comprehensive services

COMMUNITY SYSTEMS DEVELOPMENT SUBCOMMITTEE

Accomplishments:

- Identified two goals on which to focus the Subcommittee's efforts:
 - Inform funding and policy work to increase alignment of community systems within and across all state systems
 - Strengthen the understanding of local communities' data needs, particularly for systems development, and support efforts to make these data more accessible
- Created a data workgroup with the Data Research and Evaluation Subcommittee to assess data needs for collaborations
- Created a Guide for Funders workgroup to update the document and make it more practical for local communities
- Assisted with targeting Early Childhood Block Grant Training and Technical Assistance to communities with highest need. Helped to identify communities, via local collaboration feedback, that would benefit from additional supports to complete the RFP.

Challenges:

- We hope to address the challenge of chronicling the work of the Subcommittee by creating a clearing house/directory for all the work created and completed by the Committee since its inception
- We are proactively working with other subcommittees to align the work of this Committee with other committees and subcommittees of the ELC
- Leadership transitions: Julia Zhu, Community Systems Policy Director at the Governor's Office of Early Childhood Development and Trish Rooney, Director of SPARK Early Childhood Collaboration, both came on as Community Systems Development Subcommittee co-chairs in 2018. Jeanna Capito, previous co-chair, will continue to provide guidance and leadership. In addition, Kristina Rogers, Project Manager for the Community Systems Statewide Supports project at Illinois Action for Children, joined the subcommittee as staffer.

DATA, RESEARCH, AND EVALUATION SUBCOMMITTEE (DRE)

Accomplishments:

- Advanced needs of the early learning community:
 - Continued to progress the geo-mapping of the developmental screening data of the Child Find Project and created an accompanying narrative to the FY2018 Year End Developmental Screening Report

EARLY LEARNING COUNCIL COMMITTEE REPORTS

- Partnered with the Community Systems Development Subcommittee to generate recommendations to support local community data needs
- Created an avenue for feedback on the Illinois Data First Project—Early Childhood Return on Investment Project
- Continued to engage stakeholders in long-term thinking on connecting developmental screening data between the early childhood field and health
- Convened a special meeting for proposed new data fields at the request of the Illinois State Board of Education
- Provided input on the Teacher Preparation Project, Early Childhood Workforce Report, and new KIDS data
- Created data resources:
 - The “Data Systems Vision” document maps early childhood priorities to better understand where the early learning community currently is and proposes future projects and upcoming opportunities
 - The “Key Data Initiatives and Sources” document organizes key Illinois data initiatives, reports, and sources relating to early learning, to help inform the work of Illinois early childhood stakeholders
- Supported the Illinois Longitudinal System (ILDS):
 - Continued to engage the ILDS as a thought partner and served as an avenue for feedback for the early childhood data matching projects
 - Continue to contribute to the development of the early childhood data priority within the ILDS
- Updated the Research Agenda:
 - Collected input from ELC committees and subcommittees to update the priority questions of the research agenda
- The DRE has been represented on a task force of the P-20 Council studying Illinois’ data infrastructure. The task force will issue a report in early 2019 that will help to inform the DRE’s work going forward.

Challenges:

- Data quality, access, and limitations persist, and the DRE continues to engage stakeholders to continue elevating needs and gaps
- Data on developmental screening remains fragmented and not universally reported, yet many early childhood programs and the health system collect data on developmental screenings

HEALTH SUBCOMMITTEE

Accomplishments:

- Created matrices of possible points of engagement across early childhood and health, and identified key stakeholders to engage in the work in order to advance the goal of Managed Care Organization’s (MCOs) improved collaboration with and prioritization of early childhood

EARLY LEARNING COUNCIL COMMITTEE REPORTS

- The Subcommittee has continued to advance its new charge of strengthening the relationship between the health and early childhood provider sectors in order to promote increased awareness and enrollment in high quality childhood programs and services
- In order to develop actionable steps for the new iteration of work specific to MCOs, the Health Subcommittee developed and disseminated a member engagement survey to identify areas the Subcommittee members want to focus their efforts. In FY2019, the Subcommittee will direct its efforts to the subjects/areas identified by the member engagement survey in order to continue to promote collaboration between early childhood and health sectors.

Challenges:

- Leadership transitions: Kathy Chan, Director of Policy with Cook County Health, and Kathy Waligora, Interim Executive Director with EverThrive Illinois (interim co-chair) both came on as Health Subcommittee co-chairs in 2018. In addition, Iveree Brown, Policy Analyst for the Ounce of Prevention Fund, joined the subcommittee as staffer.
- Lack of clarity of the role of MCOs in the transition to Integrate Health Homes created confusion surrounding the transition and how it will impact early childhood
- Difficulty in identifying an MCO with which to partner in order to flesh out concrete work across sectors. We've also experienced difficulty in identifying an established early childhood education-health partnership to reference or model future work.

INCLUSION SUBCOMMITTEE

Accomplishments:

- Completed recommendations for how the state can address inclusion under the new requirements of CCDBG. Numerous collaborative conversations were held with IDHS and a joint presentation was delivered to the ELC in November 2017. The recommendations will hopefully be used as a “roadmap” for the state and have been incorporated into a Training and Technical Assistance opportunity through Child Care Aware that Illinois has participated in focusing on gathering data and mapping the supply and demand for high quality inclusive child care across the state.
- Participated in the planning and implementation of a joint convening between Early Intervention and Home Visiting in November 2017 and February 2018 in response to the joint statement from the U.S. Department of Education and the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services on collaboration and coordination between the Maternal, Infant, and Early Childhood Home Visiting program (MIECHV) and the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act Part C Program (EI). The stated meeting purpose was to:
 - Build cross-awareness of the home visiting and Early Intervention systems
 - Meet and enhance relationships with prenatal-3 colleagues from the different sectors
 - Hear effective and promising practices happening in Illinois

EARLY LEARNING COUNCIL COMMITTEE REPORTS

- Identify opportunities to improve coordination and collaboration to support our children and families
- Develop concrete ideas to move forward with a joint action plan
- The Subcommittee is reviewing the final report to determine work that could be elevated and carried out through the Subcommittee and the ELC
- Participated in a reconvene of the Illinois Early Childhood Inclusion Summit, a follow-up to the initial February 2017 Summit that was held in June 2018. The reconvene was held to review Illinois' progress to date on goals outlined in the initial Summit. The Subcommittee is assisting in disseminating the Illinois Early Childhood Inclusion Vision Statement through the ELC and the Early Childhood Interagency Team to help ensure that there is a common vision from all stakeholders and state agencies.
- Continuing work from FY2017, the Subcommittee collaborated with ISBE regarding the early childhood special education language in the evidence-based school funding formula. Through discussions, language was amended so that students are no longer required to receive special education for a minimum number of hours to be included in the formula.
- Understanding that supporting children with Individualized Education Plan (IEPs) in community-based settings is a challenge and understanding the importance of meeting and serving a child and family where they are already placed, the Subcommittee began drafting surveys for community-based programs and Local Education Agencies (LEAs) in order to identify challenges that children/families with IEPs experience in being served in community-based programs, as well as exemplar partnerships and best practices. The Subcommittee will partner with ISBE, INCCRRA, the IL Head Start Association, and The Center to distribute the surveys, and will disseminate results in order to increase awareness of LEAs of the expectations for community-based programs to enroll and support children within their program and to provide/develop guidance on operationalizing.

Challenges:

- Data collection continues to be a challenge:
 - The need for child-level data, particularly around developmental screening and referrals that was highlighted in the Subcommittee's Child Find data recommendations in FY2017 continues to be an identified need
 - Additionally, this year when developing the recommendations for Inclusion under CCDBG, the Subcommittee identified the need for improved data collection around children with special needs being served in child care
- Workforce issues are a challenge:
 - A current research project scanning Higher Education programs has highlighted that there is a lack of clarity as to the pathways in Illinois to be certified to serve children with special needs. Advocacy efforts with Higher Education should emphasize the importance of students pursuing both the general education and special education approval.

EARLY LEARNING COUNCIL COMMITTEE REPORTS

- There is also a shortage of certified teachers as well as differing data within the state agencies and Higher Education as to the number of certified teachers
- Professional learning and in-service training continues to be a challenge in that the various professional development providers rarely collaborate to reach all workforce members who are implementing or could be implementing inclusive practices

APPENDIX DOCUMENTS

You can find the Integration and Alignment Committee's appendix documents at www2.illinois.gov/sites/oeed/ in the "Early Learning Council" section under "Integration and Alignment Committee." The following documents are located there:

- Data Systems Vision
- Key Data Initiatives and Sources

Home Visiting Task Force

The **Home Visiting Task Force (HVTF)** advances a comprehensive vision for home visiting that includes improving the quality of and access to evidence-based home visiting programs for all at-risk families; increases coordination between home visiting programs at the state and local levels, as well as between home visiting and all other publicly-funded services for families; and serves as the advisory body for Illinois' federal Maternal, Infant, and Early Childhood Home Visiting (MIECHV) grant program funded by the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services.

Goals

- Improve quality of and access to evidence-based home visiting programs for all at-risk families
- Continue to encourage legislative support for and implementation of the federal and state funding streams
- Increase coordination between home visiting programs at the state and local levels as well as between home visiting and all other publicly-funded services for families
- Continue to provide strategic guidance on the implementation of the Illinois Family Connects program, analyze preliminary evaluation findings in order to determine the next steps for the program, and identify ways in which the program can be expanded within the current pilot communities and to additional communities in Illinois
- Maintain the number/percentage of families served through home visiting in the 13 communities funded through the MIECHV grant and continue to leverage opportunities for continuous quality improvement among the programs

Accomplishments:

- The HVTF continued to support the entire statewide home visiting system by collecting, analyzing, and sharing data from all of the funding streams on the status of the system in order to support it by aligning strategies and decision making. This included sharing information about the status of the state budget, expansion planning for ISBE funding, and planning across funding streams.
- The HVTF engaged members in myriad advocacy efforts to extend the MIECHV program, which expired in October 2017, including organizing an organizational sign-on letter to Congress, distributing updates, and informing members of opportunities to advocate. In February 2018, Congress reauthorized the MIECHV grant program for 5 years at flat funding of \$400 million per year. Illinois was notified that it is eligible to apply for approximately \$8.7 million for its FY2018 formula grant, which began on October 1, 2018. Congress included additional funding in the grant for an updated statewide needs assessment to determine which communities were in most need of the funding and would benefit the most, which had not been conducted since the beginning of the program in 2010. The HVTF began a process to establish a vision and plan for the home visiting system previous to this development and will ensure these efforts are aligned with those of the Risk and Reach report and Title

EARLY LEARNING COUNCIL COMMITTEE REPORTS

V Needs Assessment also under development, and that the findings are disseminated and inform strategic decision making.

- The HVTF continued the innovative projects launched in prior years to improve collaboration between home visiting and other systems in order to better support young children and their families, ensuring members remained informed about them and allowing for discussion to identify opportunities to improve and expand upon them. In FY2018, the HVTF also developed a new initiative to offer home visiting to incarcerated fathers and launched the collaboration between home visiting and Early Intervention.
- The HVTF continued to bring timely information about issues and topics of relevance to the home visiting field, including maternal mortality and morbidity, the early childhood court initiative, and national data on home visiting, and discussed the potential role of home visiting and the HVTF in these areas.

Challenges:

- Until MIECHV was reauthorized in February 2018, there was a great deal of uncertainty about the future of MIECHV and its implications for Illinois, particularly since various bills were introduced in Congress that would have changed the program both in terms of funding levels and in terms of policy. The HVTF managed this uncertainty by providing consistent updates to key stakeholders and members and staying up to date on the system as a whole.

HOME VISITING TASK FORCE—EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE

Accomplishments:

- In FY2018, the HVTF Executive Committee expanded its membership to include representation from DCFS as well as Prevent Child Abuse Illinois in recognition of the need to support the entire home visiting system as well as ensure its connection to other systems
- With the passage of the FY2018 state budget, including funding for all home visiting funding streams, the Executive Committee collected and analyzed data to examine the status of the home visiting system and engaged in a strategic discussion about how to support all programs across funding streams

Challenges:

- The Executive Committee faced the same challenge as the full HVTF as described above, around MIECHV reauthorization, and supporting the entire system during a time of uncertainty

HOME VISITING/EARLY INTERVENTION COLLABORATION SUBCOMMITTEE

Accomplishments:

- In partnership with the Integration and Alignment and Committee and the Illinois Interagency Council on Early Intervention (IICEI), convened two large meetings of key stakeholders from the home visiting

EARLY LEARNING COUNCIL COMMITTEE REPORTS

and Early Intervention systems in November 2017 and February 2018, which focused on learning more about both systems and identifying strategies for increasing collaboration between them

- Issued a report outlining all of the recommendations and action steps identified through the convenings, which was presented to multiple statewide advisory committees, including the IICEI, the HVTF, and the ELC
- The partnering bodies of the ELC and IICEI created two groups to move forward with the action steps outlined in the initial phase of implementation in the report. One group was tasked with developing two surveys, one for home visitors and one for early interventionists, to identify any perceived or in-reality barriers to collaborating, and to develop recommendations for improving collaboration based on the results. The second group was tasked with developing recommendations to create regional points of entry for home visiting across the state similar to what the EI system has.

Challenges:

- The initial challenge, and one of the catalysts for creating this collaboration, was an identified lack of knowledge of one another's systems, processes, procedures, and policies. This challenge was mitigated significantly by dedicating time during the first convening in November 2017 to sharing this information.

SUSTAINABILITY SUBCOMMITTEE

Accomplishments:

- Representatives from the Subcommittee continued to engage HFS in discussions about securing Medicaid reimbursement for home visiting in Illinois, through the State's application for an 1115 Medicaid waiver as well as the possibility of a State Plan Amendment. Representatives met with HFS Director Norwood and communicated with her staff, including sharing information about home visiting as well as analyses of how Medicaid might support home visiting, and advising national experts to inform the work.
- The federal government approved the State's application for an 1115 Medicaid waiver, which included approving a pilot program to offer home visiting to families of children born with withdrawal symptoms from opioid addiction. Representatives from the Sustainability Subcommittee are participating in the advisory group the State has convened to develop the pilot program, which extends into FY2019.

Challenges:

- Establishing a shared understanding of the home visiting system and the Medicaid system among key stakeholders in order to inform the development of the 1115 Medicaid waiver pilot

EARLY LEARNING COUNCIL COMMITTEE REPORTS

IL PREGNANT AND PARENTING YOUTH IN CARE HOME VISITING (I-PPYC-HV) SUBCOMMITTEE

Accomplishments:

- Identified and trained one additional Healthy Families site to join the previous ten sites in the pilot
- Pilot was able to exceed the original goal of opening 30 families by opening 41 families into home visiting within the 11 Healthy Families sites
- Pilot held 2 “IPPYC Days” where pilot sites came together to discuss success and challenges. These meetings played integral role in helping to guide next steps, resources needed, and qualitative research for overall pilot research data
- Pilot data was presented at national and local conferences

Challenges:

- Limited communication between the home visitors and the legal case managers
- High rates of DCFS allegations, investigations, and child removal within pilot families. Consideration needs to be given to the very at-risk nature of the target population and to the fact that these very vulnerable families are often in contact with multiple service providers.
- The target population is highly mobile and establishing and maintaining engagement can be very challenging

UNIVERSAL NEWBORN SUPPORT SYSTEM/FAMILY CONNECTS ILLINOIS SUBCOMMITTEE

Accomplishments:

- Monitored, supported, and provided technical assistance for the ongoing implementation of the model in the two initial pilot sites in Stephenson and Peoria counties, addressing their successes and challenges
- Provided strategic guidance and input on creating a formative evaluation of the project, including the key questions to be asked, which was completed by UIC in early 2018
- Hosted a statewide convening for providers, advocates, funders, and community organizations to learn about the Family Connects model and our work in Illinois
- Built on the participation at the convening to provide strategic input and guidance on developing criteria for expanding the model to additional communities in Illinois
- Initiated targeted outreach to identify and engage new communities as potential locations for Family Connects expansion
- Ensured linkages between Family Connects Illinois and other family-serving systems at the local, including the City of Chicago, state, and federal levels to create effective alignment among programs

Challenges:

- It took some time to ensure that the data system required by Family Connects was established and aligned with other data systems used by the community providers

EARLY LEARNING COUNCIL COMMITTEE REPORTS

- Turnover among staff at the implementing organizations and partner hospitals caused slight delays in providing services to all families
- Expanding the private and public funding base for program expansion

INFANT/EARLY CHILDHOOD MENTAL HEALTH (I/ECMH) BACHELOR'S LEVEL CREDENTIAL SUBCOMMITTEE

Accomplishments:

- Completed the expanded infant/early childhood mental health competencies. These will be used in the pilot with supervisors of home visiting programs
- Continued to refine the reflective practice process to be used in the pilot project
- Reviewed the results of the focus groups and identified other programs to interview prior to recruiting the pilot participants

Challenges:

- Pursuing funding sources continues to be a challenge. We will continue to look at both public and private opportunities for funding.

APPENDIX DOCUMENTS

You can find the Home Visiting Task Force's appendix documents at www2.illinois.gov/sites/oeed/ in the "Early Learning Council" section under "Home Visiting Task Force." The following documents are located there:

- HVTF FY18 Charge, Priorities, Metrics
- HVEI Full Report
- HV Preliminary Evaluation Report
- IFC Evaluation Executive Summary

APPENDIX

You can find committee appendix documents at www2.illinois.gov/sites/oeed/ in the “Early Learning Council” section under the committee name. The following committees have documents located there:

QUALITY COMMITTEE

- Components of Site-Based CQI Leadership: Creating a Culture of Caring, Reflection and Improvement

INTEGRATION AND ALIGNMENT COMMITTEE

- Data Systems Vision
- Key Data Initiatives and Sources

HOME VISITING TASK FORCE

- HVTF FY18 Charge, Priorities, Metrics
- HVEI Full Report
- HV Preliminary Evaluation Report
- IFC Evaluation Executive Summary