

We envision Illinois as a place where every young child – regardless of race, ethnicity, income, language, geography, ability, immigration status, or other circumstance – receives the strongest possible start to life so that they grow up safe, healthy, happy, ready to succeed, and eager to learn.

Integration and Alignment Committee of the Early Learning Council

February 23, 2024

10:30 AM – 12:00 PM

Join from the meeting link

<https://illinois.webex.com/illinois/j.php?MTID=m26c94d61d42017f05f3c967efa94ee28>

Join by meeting number:

Meeting number (access code): 2632 553 9368

Meeting password: ixJpHj3mn72

1. 10:30 AM: Welcome

Presenters: IAC Co-Chairs-Trish Rooney, IDHS/DEC and Shauna Ejeh, Illinois Action for Children

2. 10:35 AM: Early Learning Council Racial Equity Definition (IAC Member Volunteer)

3. 10:40 AM: Review and Approval of IAC Minutes

Presenters: IAC Co-Chairs-Trish Rooney, IDHS/DEC and Shauna Ejeh, Illinois Action for Children

4. 10:45 AM: Recap of the Recommendations for Aligning Regional Intermediary Functions

Presenters: Trish Rooney, IDHS/DEC and Shauna Ejeh, Illinois Action for Children

5. 10:55 AM: Brainstorming Session

Facilitators: Trish Rooney, IDHS/DEC and Shauna Ejeh, Illinois Action for Children

6. 11:50 AM: Public Comments

Facilitator: Shauna Ejeh, Illinois Action for Children

7. 12:00 PM: Adjourn

Racial Equity Definition: A racially equitable society values and embraces all racial/ethnic identities. In such a society, one's racial/ethnic identity (particularly Black, Latino, Indigenous, and Asian) is not a factor in an individual's ability to prosper. An early learning system that is racially equitable is driven by data and ensures that:

- Every young child and family regardless of race, ethnicity, and social circumstance has everything s/he/they need to develop optimally;
- Resources, opportunities, rewards, and burdens are fairly distributed across groups and communities so that those with the greatest challenges are adequately supported and not further disadvantaged; and
- Systems and policies are designed, reframed, or eliminated to promote greater justice for children and families.

Racial Equity Priorities:

- 1) Align and standardize race/ethnicity data collection and reporting;
- 2) Evaluate and identify whether processes for distributing resources exacerbate racial disparities, including agency contracting;
- 3) Address race/ethnicity disparities in terms of workforce compensation and advancement;
- 4) Eliminate racial/ethnic disparities for children participating in all programs that contribute to school readiness and life success by addressing racial disparities in enrollment in preschool for 3- and 4-year-olds and in prenatal to age 3 services.