



GATEWAYS TO OPPORTUNITY

Illinois Professional Development System

PDAC Steering Committee

January 7, 2016: 10:00 AM – 5:00 PM

January 8, 2016: 8:00 AM – 2:00 PM

The Chateau Minutes

Anne Wharff
Beth Knight
Cerathel Burnett*
Christy Allen
Dawn Thomas
Deb Widenhofer
Diana Rosenbrock
Diane Scruggs*

Donna Emmons
Joellyn Whitehead
Johnna Darragh-Ernst
Joni Scritchlow
Joyce Weiner
Julie Lindstrom
Karen McCarthy

Lauri Morrison- Frichtl
Laurie Rhodes
Lisa Downey
Marsha Hawley
Sharyl Robin
Stephanie Bernoteit
Tammy Notter
*phone

Welcome – Deb Widenhofer and Marsha Hawley welcomed participants to the meeting and reviewed the agenda for the day.

- Stephanie Bernoteit and Joyce Weiner were introduced as new members of the PDAC Steering Committee.

Review and Approval of the Minutes (Attachment 1)

- December 16, 2015
 - Christy Allen moved to accept the minutes.
 - Dawn Thomas seconded the motion.

Opening Remarks – Deb Widenhofer

- These two days are an **opportunity** for Steering as we begin the New Year.

Institute Of Medicine (IOM) Report – 13 Recommendations – Dawn Thomas and Lauri Morrison-Frichtl

- Need to find ways to better support practitioners, staff, directors, and family child care providers in order to implement the proposed IOM changes.
- Top concerns from the Webinar:
 - Fragmentation of system is overwhelming
 - Need support related to collaboration
 - Compensation remains a critical issue
 - Need more birth to three professional development
 - Stressed workforce
- Illinois Higher Education does not know enough about the IOM report and the implications for higher education and students. ACCESS and ILAECTE need to be more aware of the recommendations in the report in order to inform faculty.
- INCCRRA staff will extract soundbites from the webinars to make a concise overview of information from the webinars. This abbreviated version could be used as a marketing tool with higher education instructors.

Summary of Workforce Data – Joellyn Whitehead

- Data comes from the Gateways Registry. (Attachment 2)
 - Nearly 100,000 people have joined the Registry with 77,000 active members.
 - In the fall of 2015 Maternal, Infant, and Early Childhood Home Visiting (MIECHV) home visitors and supervisors joined the Registry.
 - Chicago has the greatest diversity of race and ethnicity of teaching staff followed by suburban Cook County.
 - 74% of licensed center teachers have completed some type of a college degree.
 - 32% of Infant Toddler teachers have no degree compared to 19% of preschool teachers. Nationally 64% of infant toddler teachers do not have a degree.
 - The bachelor degree is the turning point regarding levers for salary increases. Compensation is tied to education and the role within the center. Potentially the gap in salary is reduced with the more education someone has and the amount of access to education or professional development opportunities.
 - 51% of licensed centers rated above the licensed circle of quality have an Administrator/Director.

Updates from Key State Partnerships

- Illinois State Board of Education, Donna Emmons
 - Preschool For All Grant reauthorization has been postponed for a year.
 - Preschool For All Expansion monitoring will begin in February.
 - Pre-K Expansion Program was included in the Federal budget at current levels.
 - No Child Left Behind is now known as Every Student Succeeds Act.
- Illinois Department of Human Services, Anne Wharff
 - The Illinois State Plan is due March 1, 2016.
 - On January 19, 2016 IDHS will announce the date and where the public hearings will be held for the State Plan.
 - The State of the State address will be held on January 27, 2016 and the state budget address will be held on February 17, 2016.
 - IDHS continues to have interim leadership.
- Illinois Head Start Association, Lauri Morrison-Frichtl
 - Federal 2016 budget included money for full-day/full-year for Head Start.
 - Money was allocated for Early Head Start and Early Head Start Child Care Partnerships.
 - The Every Student Succeeds Act included stronger language on collaboration for early learning and community.
- Illinois Board of Higher Education, Stephanie Bernoteit
 - ISBE rules for early childhood educator preparation licensure programs were adopted last fall.
 - ISBE is expecting programs to come before the board for re-authorization under the new rules beginning this week.

IOM 13 Recommendations – PDAC Steering Survey – Deb Widenhofer and Marsha Hawley

- Prior to the January PDAC Steering meeting, Steering Committee members were asked to respond to a survey to prioritize the IOM Report recommendations.

- The Steering Committee members were to place the recommendations in a top, middle or lowest priority category. (Attachment 3)
 - Top Tier: Recommendation 1, Recommendation 2 and Recommendation 6. Still in the top tier, but with lower percentages are Recommendation 9, Recommendation 10 and Recommendation 3.
 - Middle Tier: Recommendation 4, Recommendation 12, Recommendation 5 and Recommendation 11.
 - Lowest Tier: Recommendation 7, Recommendation 13, and Recommendation 8.
- At the January meeting PDAC Steering members reviewed the rankings and then split into groups to review the tiers. New ranking was based on if PDAC could take the lead on a recommendation it would be the top priority. If PDAC could have a supporting role the recommendation would be in the secondary tier.
- The new ranking consists of a Top and a Secondary Tier.
 - Top Tier: Recommendation 1, Recommendation 2 and Recommendation 6 confirming the results of the survey.
 - Secondary Tier: Recommendation 9, Recommendation 10 and Recommendation 11.
 - Recommendation 11 moved up from the middle of the survey while Recommendation 3 is no longer in the priority group.

PDAC Strategic Plan – Connectors to the IOM Report – Deb Widenhofer and Marsha Hawley

- Qualifications and Credentials – Diana Rosenbrock
 - Credential Pilots:
 - Family Specialist and School Age and Youth Development Credentials ended their pilots in December.
 - Family Child Care Credential pilot will end in March and the Technical Assistance Credential pilot will end in December.
- Workforce Development and Pathways – Johnna Darragh-Ernst and Cerathel Burnett
 - A Workforce Development and Pathways Recommendation was brought forward for review.
 - Approval of increased teacher education requirements in the Illinois Department of Children and Family Services JCAR requirements for Licensure Part 407 Licensing Standards for Day Care Centers and Qualifications for Early Childhood Teachers and Assistants, and utilizations of gateways to Opportunity ECE Credential.
 - Following discussion regarding the levels, degrees, timelines, and the separation of teachers and teacher assistants the proposed recommendation was sent back to the Workforce Development and Pathways Committee for review and revisions.
- Information and Trends – Lauri Morrison-Frichtl and Dawn Thomas
 - No additional report.
- Financial Supports – Laurie Rhodes
 - Due to the state budget issues INCCRRA did not pay as much in DHS scholarships in the early fall as students were hesitant to apply since they didn't know if they

would be repaid for taking courses. No scholarship funds were released from Illinois State Board Education for the bilingual ESL.

Digital Badging –Joellyn Whitehead

- Digital badging is sometimes referred to as open badging.
 - The difference between a digital and an open badge is, an open badge is built on a free and open technical standard by Mozilla that any organization can use to create, issue, and verify digital badges. You can display the badges on different platforms. Practitioners apply for the Open Badge. Open Badge is stackable, transferable, evidence based, and allows real word achievements and skills to be displayed. Meta data for the badge includes name, description, criteria met, and who issued the badge.

Adjourn for the day.

DAY 2: January 8, 2016

Welcome and Recap Yesterday's Work – Deb Widenhofer and Marsha Hawley

- Initial Responses from the PDAC Steering Committee to the IOM report from yesterday. (Attachment 4)
 - Document should use the term “initial responses” in the title.
 - Recommendation 1: remove higher ed. coursework.
 - Recommendation 2: add offer supports to people who are on a career path.
 - Recommendation 10: add global review of policies to review potential challenges and roadblocks.

ELC PSQ Workforce Compensation Report – Joni Scritchlow

- The report summary was shared with the Steering Committee. (Attachment 5)
- The ELC PSQ Workforce Compensation committee's work has ended. The PDAC Financial Supports Committee will use the PDAC Strategic Plan to move work forward.
- The report “Achieving Compensation Parity: Illinois Goal for the Field of Early Childhood Care and Education” will be shared with the Early Learning Council Program Standards and Quality Committee on January 11, 2016 for approval. The report could be shared with the ELC Executive Committee and the full ELC committee.

Infant Toddler Cohort – Beth Knight

- The Infant Toddler Teacher Quality Initiative held its first training sessions this past fall.
- Almost 500 teachers have attended a training session or sessions. Each training session counts for 7.5 hours, or a point and a half training credit toward a credential.
- Topics covered included: basic health and safety, child development, essentials to building relationships.
- All trainings were targeted to Chicago teachers and were held in Chicago.
- Additional trainings will be offered in spring 2016 for an additional 200-300 teachers.
- Teachers who participated will be sent surveys to capture feedback and ideas for the spring trainings.

Erikson Institute: Town Square – Rebecca Livengood

- Town Square is a website that supports training specifically for family child care providers.
 - The website offers instructive videos, business insights, community message boards, and educational opportunities.
- INCCRRA has been promoting the website on the Facebook page and email blasts.

Gateways Website – Rebecca Livengood

- The Gateways website will undergo a redesign over the next six months.

ECE Credentials – Stephanie Bernoteit

- Illinois State Board of Education (ISBE) and the State of Illinois are very invested in the Complete College America 60x25 Goal. The goal is by 2025 60% of Illinoisans will have worthwhile industry recognized post high school and/or post-secondary credential(s) and/or degrees for employment.
 - The early childhood field is a leader in the work of professional recognized credentials. These credentials rest on a sound base of important knowledge, skills and dispositions with administrative rules, and other mechanisms in place that make it both valid and desirable for people wanting to enter the profession.
 - Credentials play an important, across multiple disciplines, role in student access, employment opportunities, and the notion of completion.
- Early Childhood Educator Preparation Program Innovation (EPPI) Grants Work
 - The EPPI grant partnership presented by Johnna Darragh-Ernst (Heartland Community College) and Nancy Latham (Illinois State University) focused on the in-depth review of articulation. Illinois Valley Community College and Illinois Central College colleagues were also participants in the EPPI grant project. The Gateways Credentials and Benchmark were used as touch points during their work.
 - The EPPI grant partnerships focused on transfer between two- and four- year institutions.
 - System slow down. It is apparent that faculty at two- year institutions have concerns about “systems rubs”. This includes in the community college system and the approach of labeling certificates and counting certificates for completion for a type of credential. Develop a project that is launching technical assistance for two- year institutions that will help address the particular system rubs. May exist state level or individual higher education institutions.

Credential Competencies – Johnna Darragh Ernst and Nancy Latham

- Within the context of competencies are the knowledge, skills, dispositions, and assessments bundled together.
 - Common language, if we are not speaking the same language we are potentially creating obstacles.
 - Disconnects at a two- year college faculty use the term “courses” while four- year university faculty use the term “standards”.
 - Gateways competencies/benchmarks. Levels 2-4 are used at community colleges, and universities are delivered at Level 5.
 - Try to create common language and continuity. A lot of potential connectors.

- The grant process: (Illinois State University, Illinois Central College, Heartland Community College, and Illinois Valley Community College). With the second round of the EPPI grant decided, we will develop a partnership assessment.
- 347 benchmarks that make up ECE Levels 2 – 5.
- Step One: Employment positions (assistant teachers, teachers, lead teacher, master teacher, and administrator) were assigned as they relate to the benchmarks.
 - Anchor Question: At what level does this knowledge, skill, and/or disposition become essential for the position?
- Level 3 had the largest number of placements – yet it is the most neglected level in the career lattice.
- Step Two: The list was refined with the employment list using skills, knowledge or disposition, or policy level with the charts.
- Third Step: Benchmarks were coded according to their original Gateways to Opportunity Credential content areas. Content areas are leveled by their work area and by their levels, skills, and dispositions.
- Benchmarks were grouped into measurable 50 master “uber” competencies.
- These benchmarks were reviewed by team members for validation.
- Have begun to draft the rubric language using these competencies.
- The draft competencies were shared at the EPPI grant symposium in December 2015.
 - Initial feedback on “uber” competencies from higher education faculty have been favorable.

Elevator Speech –Beth Knight, Johnna Darragh Ernst, Joni Scritchlow and Joellyn Whitehead

- Each committee member visited the following topics for an overview of the program.
- Individual Professional Development Plan (IPDP)– Beth Knight
 - Available for face-to-face or online training.
 - IPDP is tied to ExceleRate.
 - Used as a road map for practitioners.
 - ExceleRate Bronze Circle of Quality minimum Administrator trained in IPDP need to take the training.
 - Pairs with the Continuous Quality Improvement Plan (CQIP). IPDP is staff centered while CQIP is program based.
 - IPDP is individualized, designed for a holistic perspective, scaffold learning, based on meaningful data, and is an ongoing learning tool.
 - Can use the plan to identify short term and long-term goals.
 - Barriers towards identified goals are also addressed.
- Directors Portal – Joellyn Whitehead
 - The Director Portal is part of the Registry website.
 - Everyone who is a Registry Member has access to the My Registry Portal.
 - Special access is given to the Directors Portal if you have administration responsibilities for your program.
 - Access is valid for one year.
 - Two main features of the Directors Portal:

- Staff Listing
 - Administrators review the staff listing that is on the Registry.
- Reports Include:
 - Report on current staff membership listing (can see who is a Registry membership, if they are current, when does their membership expire).
 - Report on the summary of training hours.
 - Report shows the highest level of education for each staff member, Gateways Credentials attained, when credentials expire, and pending Gateways Credentials.
- Higher Education Institutions/Teacher Preparation – Johnna Darragh-Ernst and Joni Scritchlow
 - Work of the Illinois Articulation Initiative (IAI)
 - The Illinois Community College Board (ICCB) established the panel to focus exclusively on early childhood.
 - The focus is on direct articulation of coursework.
 - Two courses have been articulated: Child Growth and Development, and Exceptional Child.
 - Child Family and Community will be the next course reviewed, followed by Human Growth and Development.
 - ICCB does not have the authority to require community colleges to package these models in a certain way. The colleges and universities are collectively deciding. It requires faculty to share information and agree to these changes.
 - iTransfer Website (www.itransfer.org)
 - The website offers assistance for Illinois students seeking transfer information between higher education institutions.
 - There is a growing need for online classes and opportunities for practitioners.

Wrap Up – Marsha Hawley and Deb Widenhofer

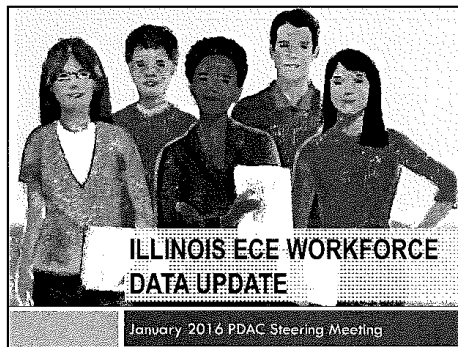
- Highlights from the meeting include:
 - The efforts happening around competencies is exciting. The Steering Committee is looking forward to hearing more about the next steps.
 - The Elevator speech exercise was very informative. Information should be shared with PDAC at an upcoming meeting.
 - PDAC needs to be part of the work of the IOM report in order to prepare the workforce for the changes outlined in the report.

Announcements and Adjourn

- The next Steering meeting will be on March 23, 2016 at INCCRRA from 10:00 -3:00PM.



3/21/2016



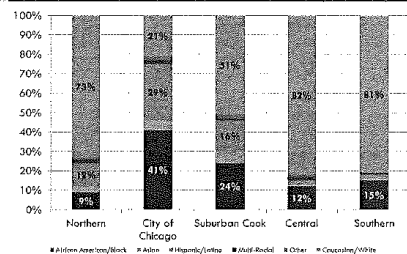
Gateways Registry

- Nearly 100,000 have joined since July 2009
 - DCFS mandated for licensed providers (Sept. 2012)
 - Majority of Head Start programs are licensed
 - Mandated for MIECHV home visitors/supervisors (Sept. 2015)
 - Working with ISBE to ensure school-based professionals are included
- Approximately 77,000 "active members"
 - 58,000 in group settings

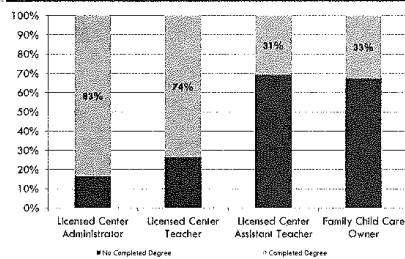
Demographics

	Licensed Center Administrator	Licensed Center Teacher	Licensed Center Asst. Teacher	Licensed Family Child Care
Gender	96.4% Female	97.5% Female	96.7% Female	96.3% Female
Age	42	37	33	46
Race/Ethnicity	63.7% Caucasian 22.7% African American 8.5% Hispanic/Latino	65.3% Caucasian 16.1% African American 10.1% Hispanic/Latino	52.3% Caucasian 21.6% African American 18.7% Hispanic/Latino	43.5% Caucasian 37.6% African American 15.7% Hispanic/Latino
Primary Language	94.3% English 3.0% Spanish	92.4% English 3.9% Spanish	89.0% English 7.2% Spanish	87.2% English 11.4% Spanish

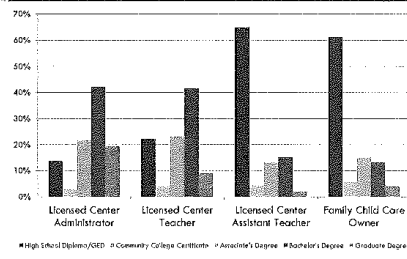
Are there regional differences in the race/ethnicity of teaching staff?



What percent of the workforce has completed a college degree?



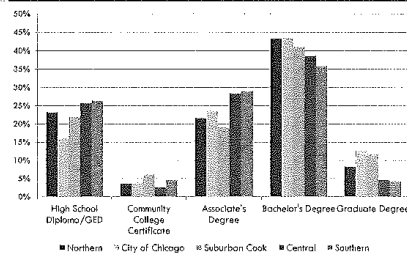
What is the highest level of education attained by role in licensed settings?

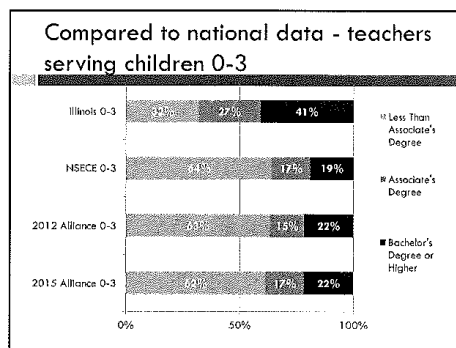
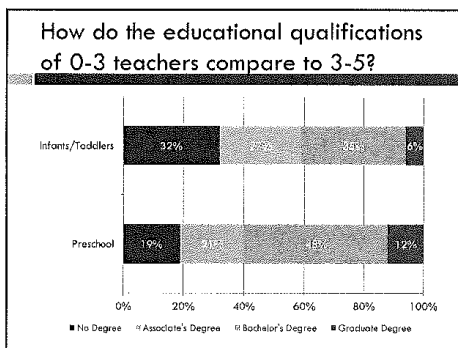
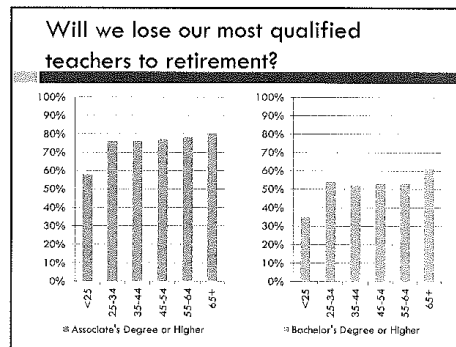
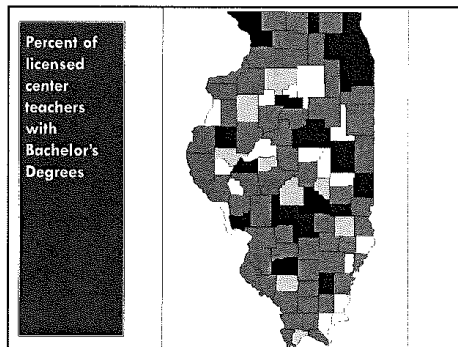


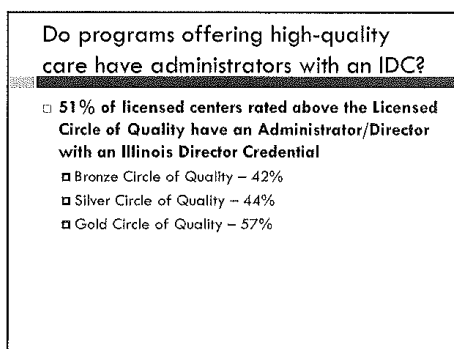
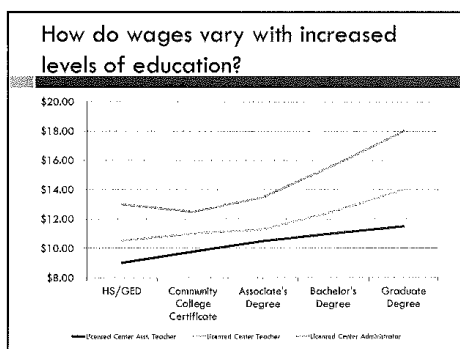
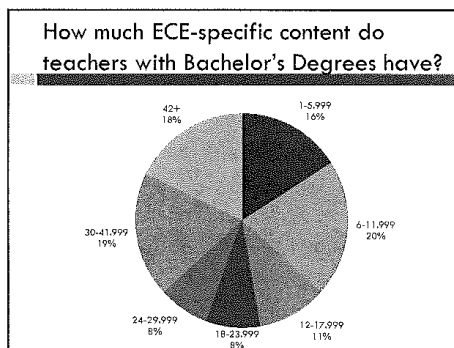
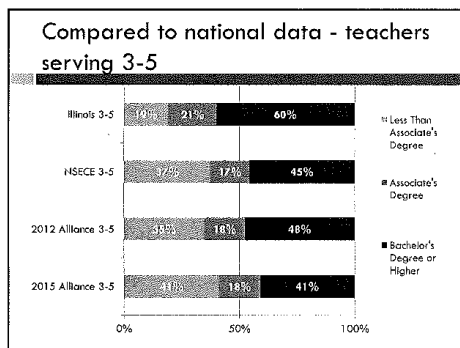
Comparing to national data...

Region Type	Illinois	National Average	North America	South America
Any degree	74%	53%	42%	47%
2-year degree	23%	18%	14%	17%
4-year degree	42%	24%	25%	26%
Graduate/professional degree	9%	9%	3%	4%

How does education vary by region? (For licensed center teachers)







PDAC Steering Tier Survey Results Regarding The IOM Report

(1.7.16)

Top Tier

Recommendation 1*

Recommendation 2*

Recommendation 6

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Recommendation 9

Recommendation 10

Recommendation 3

*Recommendation had no votes in the lowest tier

Middle Tier

Recommendation 4

Recommendation 12

Recommendation 5

Recommendation 11

Lowest Tier

Recommendation 7

Recommendation 13

Recommendation 8

Initial Responses from the PDAC Steering Retreat 1.7.16

Recommendation 1: Strengthen competency-based qualification requirements for all care and education professionals working with children from birth through age 8.

Responses to Recommendation 1:

- Maintain strategy/strategies for/to have the benchmarks tie into higher ed. coursework/and or licensure
- Continue comprehensive competency framework
- Comprehensive - health, mental health and social services etc.
- Consider related research agenda - develop key questions and partner with higher ed. to accomplish research

Recommendation 2: Develop and implement comprehensive pathways and multiyear timelines at the individual, institutional, and policy levels for transitioning to a minimum bachelor's degree qualification requirement, with specialized knowledge and competencies, for all lead educators⁴ working with children from birth through age 8.

Responses to Recommendation 2:

- DCFS Rule to require a BA degree with specialized knowledge (credential) for lead teacher
 - Workforce resources: WDP recommendations
- Need resources to help finance and academically support teacher candidates and to prioritize those seeking degrees.
- Outline model pathways (cohort model/EPPI Grants)
- Focus on articulation to build the pathways
- Compensation/funding

Recommendation 6: Support the consistent quality and coherence of professional learning supports during ongoing practice for professionals working with children from birth through age 8.

Responses to Recommendation 6:

- Identify and address inequities in access to services and supports
- Strengthen /build/increase quality assurance for professional learning
- Incentivize quality assurances through licensing – encourage more quality assurance
- Coaching and mentoring count for hours
- Better alignment between needs assessments and professional planning

Achieving Compensation Parity: Illinois Goal for the Field of Early Childhood Care and Education

The Problem

To achieve the best outcomes for children and their families, high-quality programs must employ a professionally prepared and compensated workforce. Federal and state investments and private support for early childhood services are indicative of the value that we place on young children and their families. The individuals that make up the workforce must be able to effectively work with young children, engage families in their healthy development, and coordinate with support services. As a state and nation we have taken great strides in improving program quality and practitioner qualifications, yet minimal progress has been made over the past 25 years in achieving compensation parity for comparable qualifications.

While education-related salary schedules have been in place for decades for elementary and secondary teachers, the early care and education (ECE) workforce continues to suffer from low wages. A 2015 Georgetown University study, *What It's Worth: The Economic Value of College Majors*, found early childhood education to be the major with the lowest average pay (Carnevale, Strohl, and Melton, 2015). National and state data indicate that early care and education professionals leave the field at nearly twice the rate of public school teachers (U.S. Department of Education, 2014; Illinois Department of Human Services, 2013). Despite the tremendous increase in the demand for child care that has occurred as mothers of young children have increased their labor force participation, the wages of the ECE workforce have remained relatively flat over the last two decades. Furthermore, most members of the early care and education workforce have financial worries that can lead to both mental and physical health issues and impact their interactions with children (Whitebook, Phillips, and Howes, 2014).

Annual average wages for members of the early childhood workforce with a bachelor's degree are about half of the average wage for members of the general workforce with bachelor's degrees. 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 (READYNATION, 2015; US Department of Human Services, 2013). 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.

Salary

Recommendations

The Early Learning Council Program Standards and Quality Workforce Compensation Subcommittee recommends that the field move toward a beginning salary of \$24 per hour for early care and education teachers who hold bachelor's degrees with specialized competencies.

To achieve compensation parity with public school teachers, the committee recommends these steps: 1) establish an entry-level salary at \$15.00/hour; 2) increase the entry-level salary to \$17/hour to establish parity with Head Start teachers; and 3) achieve parity with public school teachers by setting the entry-level salary at \$24/hour.

Wages can be adjusted regionally using standard multipliers. Current data systems already in place would be updated to verify and track average salaries.

Achieving Compensation Parity: Illinois Goal for the Field of Early Childhood Care and Education

Why Compensation Parity is Important

Without compensation parity with public schools and other fields, we will continue to lose our best and brightest early childhood teachers and administrators to professions that offer better salaries, benefits, and working conditions. Continually high rates of those leaving the field are compounded by increased demand for a highly-skilled workforce, a result of new federal grant awards and changes in federal policies. The Illinois Department of Employment Security's predicted need for 806 new preschool teachers between 2014 and 2016 adds urgency to the mandate. Unless Illinois establishes compensation parity now, our youngest children will continue to suffer from our teacher deficits – deficits in numbers of teachers and teaching expertise caused by continuous, rapid turnover.

In 2015, Illinois' early childhood services received over \$18 million in new Early Head Start-Child Care Partnerships Grants (awarded annually for up to 5 years) and \$80 million in federal Preschool Expansion Grants (\$20 million per year through 2018). With this funding comes increased requirements in staff qualifications and demand for more teachers, administrators, and support staff. By 2018, Preschool for All is estimated to add 24,000 new spaces for children, 1100 new lead teachers, and 1100 assistant teachers. Additionally, there are increased training requirements and a focus on quality from the 2014 reauthorization of the federal Child Care and Development Fund. Also, under the Race to the Top-Early Learning Challenge funding, ExceleRate® Illinois has set the standards for program quality and workforce qualifications that apply to all early childhood sectors and settings (<http://www.excelebrateillinois.com>).

Given the increased investment in early childhood education at the state and national levels it is clear that Illinois needs a robust and talented workforce to secure our future on two fronts: to meet increased demand for early educators in this decade and to support student success in the decades to come. The U.S. Department of Labor indicates that child care as a field is expected to have a 14% growth rate over the next decade. According to ReadyNation, by the end of the current decade, Illinois will face a shortage of bachelor's level workers – across all occupations - leaving a gap of 150,000 unfilled skilled positions. "To reverse Illinois' skills-gap troubles, ReadyNation urges greater, research-proven investments in supports for young children's learning and development" (ReadyNation, 2015).

Methodology

In the fall of 2014, the Workforce Compensation Subcommittee of the Program Standards and Quality Committee, Illinois Early Learning Council was charged with developing ranges for compensation parity aligned with qualifications and roles using the most recent and reliable state and national data. The Subcommittee also explored benefits that make up typical and expected compensation packages and workplace conditions (the practices, supports, and environmental elements that contribute to job satisfaction and effective practice).

Achieving Compensation Parity: Illinois Goal for the Field of Early Childhood Care and Education

The Subcommittee chose to examine compensation parity in line with educational level, not experience, focusing on wages for teachers with bachelor's degrees. This approach assumes that a degree with its specialized knowledge and competencies is a marker for the skills and qualifications needed for various roles. This approach also assumes that those with greater leadership and management responsibilities and those with less classroom management responsibilities will be compensated accordingly.

For the purpose of this report and as a starting point for a broader consideration of compensation, the wage, benefits, and workplace conditions that we explore in the full report focus on licensed center-based staff. We see the field of early care and education as a career with many roles, pathways, and educational levels. The Work Group recognizes that administrators, assistant teachers, family support workers, home visitors, social workers, early interventionists, paraprofessionals, and many more also compose the early care and education workforce. We chose the current focus of licensed center-based teachers with a bachelor's degree and documented early childhood competencies for the sake of brevity and as a starting point for further discussions and investigations of compensation parity among all roles within the field.

Although compensation is the primary focus of this report summary, the Subcommittee also explored benefits that make up typical and expected compensation packages and found that the early childhood field provides paid holidays, sick leave and medical insurance benefits at average levels comparable to those paid across all fields. This fact does not negate the need for increased benefits or more standardized practices within the field of early childhood, as explored in the full report. In general, however, the benefits issues are not unique to early childhood. A third area of examination was "workplace conditions" – the practices, supports, and environmental elements that contribute to job satisfaction and effective practice.

STRENGTHENING THE WORKFORCE

Changes ... are needed to strengthen the early care and education workforce through supports that include informed leadership; access to high-quality degree-granting programs; ongoing professional learning opportunities; practice environments that enable and reinforce the quality of their work; and attention to their working conditions, well-being, compensation, and perceived status or prestige.

Transforming the Workforce for Children Birth Through Age 8 A Unifying Foundation, Report Brief, 2015, Institute of Medicine

Findings

The Subcommittee determined that the average statewide salary for early childhood teachers with bachelor's degrees and specialized competencies working 40 hours per week, 49 weeks per year should be \$49,000 or \$24 per hour. Twenty-four dollars per hour would establish parity with beginning licensed public school teachers with bachelor's degrees who earn a statewide average of \$37,000 annually for 190 8-hour days (\$24 an hour). This figure remains below the average Illinois salary for bachelor's degrees across all fields (\$53,000).

Achieving Compensation Parity: Illinois Goal for the Field of Early Childhood Care and Education

Health insurance is the benefit of greatest value to all employees. The lower the income the more important it is. Some employees are willing to take a lower hourly wage for better health coverage (Monster.com, 2015). Providing information about and technical assistance on the Affordable Care Act could increase employee access to health care coverage and potentially lower administrative costs that would allow more program assets to be targeted to wages.

Strong leadership and management skills are linked to compliance with health and safety regulations (child and adult), effective classroom practices and ongoing professional development, parent engagement in their children's development, and connecting families and staff to support services. Strong leaders who attend to these critical program characteristics set the conditions in which high quality teaching and learning is optimized. Requiring that ExceleRate programs meet standards related to program management, work environment, and staff supports could improve job satisfaction, teacher practice, and child outcomes.

Good stewardship of public, private, and family funds requires us to look at the costs to society for paying substandard compensation to the ECE workforce. If Illinois is to secure a workforce capable of achieving the lasting outcomes society demands then it is imperative that we employ innovative approaches to current and potential sources of both public and private funding.

Suggested Strategies to Attract and Retain a Highly-Qualified Workforce

The following strategies build on existing initiatives as a method for achieving compensation parity using current sources of funding and existing infrastructure. These strategies require both public and private support at the local, state, and federal levels for successful implementation. Additional strategies are detailed in the full report.

- ✦ Develop or require ExceleRate program standards that meet the compensation levels outlined in this summary. For example, PAS indicators rate wage scales, pay increases, and benefits, but are not currently required. Standards could be adjusted to align with the subcommittee's recommendations and then be incrementally required for quality ratings.
- ✦ Require 80% of current rate enhancements and quality incentives, regardless of funding source, be budgeted for compensation. For example, 80% of enhanced rates for quality, paid directly to programs, would be targeted to internal wage scales aligned with ExceleRate requirements (staff qualifications and PAS Indicators).
- ✦ Prioritize Great Start Wage Supplements to those who meet ExceleRate staff requirements. Target the highest rated programs and prioritize staff with ECE bachelor's degrees/ExceleRate staff qualifications. Or transition the Great Start program from a wage supplement to the individual to higher contract or reimbursement rates to the program based on ExceleRate level, specific ExceleRate wage/benefit standards and staff qualifications, and number of qualified staff employed. Because Great Start eligibility is income-based and is not available to individuals who make above a certain wage, the program may actually be keeping wages in some centers artificially low to ensure that staff qualify for the wage supplement.
- ✦ Ensure that all new requests for federal early childhood funding include allocations for bachelor's level teaching and administrative staff salaries at a minimum of \$49,000/\$24.00 an hour (regionally adjusted).

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Technical assistance efforts that focus on ExceleRate standards and improve management skills and classroom practices can also help both retain and attract a highly-qualified workforce. The following are a few examples of technical assistance that can support compensation parity.

- *Provide technical assistance on the Affordable Care Act to ExceleRate program administrators and staff.*
- *Align coaching and mentoring opportunities to program improvement or individual professional development plans that address ExceleRate standards related to workplace conditions.*
- *Provide opportunities for peer interactions and relationship-based professional development to improve instructional practices and enhance job satisfaction.*

Summary

There is no person, program, or funding source – public or private - that can singlehandedly achieve compensation parity for the ECE workforce. Just as there is no simple solution to achieve parity, there is also no finite marker of success as compensation and workforce supports will need to adjust with changes in society and advances in research. It will take public and private partners, families and practitioners, representatives of higher education and technical assistance providers, along with business leaders and early childhood advocates coordinating efforts over a number of years to achieve the goals of compensation and benefits parity and a supportive work environment. In that period of time, new research will continue to inform best practices and drive us to be ever more effective and efficient in how we support ECE services - but even with an eye to that long term and ongoing work, Illinois' immediate needs are undeniable. Illinois needs highly skilled early childhood teachers now. We must start moving toward parity this year, even as we work to achieve a sustainable long term solution to the problem of compensation parity. We must start moving toward parity this year. Collectively, with determination to find a viable solution, commitment to a common vision, and the fortitude to change the status quo, we can realize a fairly-compensated, professional workforce for Illinois' children.

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