



Advisory Committee
August 22, 2023

Meeting Minutes

WELCOME AND HOUSEKEEPING

Brian Durham called the meeting to order at 1:02. Ginger Ostro explained that this meeting was conducted via videoconference pursuant to the Open Meetings Act and rules adopted by the Committee on May 23, 2023. Ostro reviewed the public comment procedure as well as the ground rules and norms of the Committee. Durham reviewed the meeting agenda and introduced First Assistant Deputy Governor Teresa Ramos.

STATE-LEVEL WORK

Teresa Ramos spoke about the goals of Smart Start Illinois in supporting more publicly funded preschool seats in areas that do not currently have capacity, which relies on the Consortium to meet these workforce needs by upskilling and preparing educators. Ramos expressed appreciation for the ECACE first annual report and the work that has happened to date. She noted that the report demonstrates the demand for higher education among early childhood educators. Ramos emphasized that direct outreach into the field and targeted intervention with workforce members must continue in order for workforce members to know about and take advantage of the opportunities that ECACE presents. She encouraged the Committee to participate in this effort.

Trish Rooney presented on Smart Start implementation at the Illinois Department of Human Services. She explained the increases in funding and planning efforts across child care, home visiting, and early intervention to continue and expand services and increase funding stability in the early childhood field. This includes efforts to transition from federal pandemic relief funding to state funding, utilizing contract-based funding, cost modeling that establishes a wage floor, and using the real cost of early intervention as a guide to fund services. She noted that planning and implementation are collaborative, engaging the field and collaboration across IDHS and the Illinois State Board of Education. She introduced Michelle Wood to continue the presentation.

Wood highlighted ECACE higher education navigators, the Smart Start Quality Support Program (formerly the ExceleRate Pilot), and the Illinois Early Childhood Educator Apprenticeship Program. The Apprenticeship Program is currently a pilot program engaging four providers in Illinois and will include analysis on expanding and scaling the program.

Marcus Brown engaged the Committee in discussion on Smart Start and related, parallel work. The group moved into discussion.

Advisory Committee members asked questions about the IDHS presentation. Wood noted that all apprenticeship locations are DCFS licensed. Rooney answered that child care contracts are based on the provider's license and not educational background.

Nyssa Westermeyer from the Illinois Community College Board introduced the opportunity for Advisory Committee members to highlight partners whose work they appreciate. Ashley Harms highlighted

Highland Community College and their local navigator, and Avis Proctor celebrated staff at Harper College.

HIGHER EDUCATION ADDRESSING NEEDS

Marcus Brown introduced Amy Kilgus Chamley and Joseph Walwik from Parkland College, who discussed their journey into rebuilding their ECE program because of ECACE. Walwik described how that helped them understand the demand for an ECE program in their local community. Chamley has been leading ECACE at Parkland, and she reviewed their enrollment increase over time. Beyond the scholarship, the opening of a program that is accessible to working adults in the ECE field also attracted enrollment. Chamley emphasized that her local ECACE higher education navigators have been critical to Parkland’s enrollment increase, especially without a full-time recruiter at the college, and that program modifications and intentional advising have made the program more accessible to workforce members. She described some of the supports in place for students, structures implemented at the institution, and outreach efforts to connect with the field.

Ginger Ostro introduced Marie Donovan and Melissa Clucas Walter, who presented on the Consortium Four-Year Program Redesign Community of Practice. This group and its subgroups are made up of faculty from four-year institutions who are sharing and learning practices for adjusting their academic programs to meet the needs of incumbent members of the early childhood workforce. This work is a continuation of existing work of the Consortium, including bolstering AAS transfer pathways. Walter and Donovan explained the upstart of this group and its subgroups, the topics they cover, and the innovation this collaboration has been spurring.

AGENCY UPDATES

Jamilah Jor’dan announced that the Governor’s Office of Early Childhood Development is sunsetting in September and that this was her last Advisory Committee meeting. She reflected on the work of GOECD through the Preschool Development Grant and thanked GOECD’s partners. The Committee expressed their appreciation for Jor’dan and GOECD.

Brown announced that the ECACE Scholarship has seen 3,800 applications this year so far since it opened at the end of May. Brown shared [a link to the first annual ECACE legislative report.](#)

PUBLIC COMMENT

There was no public comment.

REVIEW AND APPROVE MEETING MINUTES

In the absence of a quorum at this time in the meeting, the vote to approve the minutes was tabled.

Overall meeting attendance was recorded as follows:

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|------------------------------|-------------------------------------|
| 1. Alicia Geddis, absent | 12. Jennifer Buchter, absent |
| 2. Ashley Harms, present | 13. Jason Helfer, absent |
| 3. Avis Proctor, present | 14. Jill Andrews, present |
| 4. Brian Durham, present | 15. Jim Reed, absent |
| 5. Carolyn Beal, present | 16. Joi Patterson, present |
| 6. Dale Fowler, absent | 17. Joni Scritchlow, present |
| 7. Emnet Ward, absent | 18. Kate Connor, present |
| 8. Evelyn Osorio, present | 19. Ken Trzaska, absent |
| 9. Francis Godwyll, present | 20. Lauri Morrison-Frichtl, present |
| 10. Ginger Ostro, present | 21. Laurie Elish-Piper, present |
| 11. Jamilah Jor’dan, present | 22. Leslie Mckinily, present |

- 23. Lisa Downey, present
- 24. Martina Rocha, present
- 25. Maurice West II, absent
- 26. Meredith Palmer, present
- 27. Michael Kim, present
- 28. Michael Marron, absent
- 29. Mike Shackelford, absent

- 30. Rebecca Vonderlack-Navarro, absent
- 31. Rochelle Golliday, absent
- 32. Stephanie Neuman,
- 33. Stephanie Schmitz-Bechtler, present
- 34. Susan Orozco, absent
- 35. Tom Phillion, present
- 36. Trish Rooney, present

PUBLIC COMMENT

There was no public comment.

NEXT STEPS

Durham concluded the meeting ending with acknowledgements of Jor'dan.