



AGENDA

Region 1-B-D Cook North Action Council Meeting

Location: Virtual or in person

Date & Time: January 23rd, 2023, 3:00 pm-5:00 pm

Council Members present: Susan Cerza, Kristen Ford, Clare Giuffrida, Casche Knox, Chris Tokarski, Lisa Merdinger, Agnieszka Moroni, John Ranieri, Vikki Podlipni, Tina Vanderwarker, Ed Russell, Cori Mohr, Kate Warach, Natalie Wood

Council Members absent: Olga Khamichonak, Bettye Cohns, Amy Cocorikis, Sandra Alvarez, Peter Smith, Michele Ramsey, Nancy Mendez, Carrie Rafalski

3:00 pm: Welcome/ Introductions & Review of Community Agreements (15 minutes)

Icebreaker: "If you could have a superpower, what would it be and why?"

Introduction of new Action Council Members

Facilitator(s): Ilinca Wallace

Notes:

- Introduced and welcomed 3 new action council members- Ed Russell, Cori Mohr, & Tina Vanderwarker
- Members answered the icebreaker question.

Decision made: N/A

Next Steps: N/A

3:15 pm: Family Council Update (35 minutes)

Takeaways from the demographic data discussion

What families shared about Early Childhood Education and Care (ECEC) system for Action Council discussion

Facilitators: Irene Di Minervino and Ilinca Wallace

Notes:

- Reviewed Family Council response to the demographic data
 - Action Council members echoed the family council's observation of having linguistic diversity in the region
- Feedback from Family Council on ECEC programs



- Action Council members were in agreement that many families find out about ECEC programs by word of mouth
 - There is an opportunity to share with families that Early Childhood Education begins prenatally; not as much focus on the importance of early childhood education from birth to five as there is K-12
 - Early Childhood programming offers children an opportunity to develop confidence, learn routines, learn to enter groups, develop relationships and supports their social and emotional development.
 - Cultural beliefs impacts enrollment into Early Childhood programs ie. that child should be home with mom for the first few years of life and understanding different perspectives and how to accommodate them.
2. How are you deciding where to enroll your child? Family Council answers were shared.

Themes that emerged from Action Council Members: families with children with disabilities need different type of care/accommodations and need transportation between services and the early childhood programming; cost of equipment, challenge for caregivers or parents to time to take off from work because of needing to accommodate children's needs and schedule; quitting their job to care with children with disabilities – how can I work if I need to help my child get special needs Why is public programming only 2 or 2 ½ hours?

3. What are the barriers that exist for families? Family Council answers were shared.

Themes that emerged from Action Council members: there would be more option if opening a childcare or a family childcare home wouldn't be so complex; some licensed home daycares are waiting a long time to have their DCFS visit to get re-licensed; it is challenging to pay a mortgage for a building while waiting to get licensed and the process can take 9-12 months; there are some language barriers.

Decision made: This information will be used in the Regional Scan and serve as a starting point for collecting information from families.

Next Steps: Input information into the Regional Scan and schedule Focus Group and Interviews with others in the region.

3:50 pm: Break (10 minutes)



4:00 pm: Map Exploration of Early Childhood Education and Care Programs (30 minutes)

Resources: Handout with Early Childhood Programs and Descriptions
IECAM Regional Report/Illinois Action for Children Asset Map/IECAM Early Child Care and Education Services FY2021, with Federal Poverty Levels

Facilitator: Ilinca Wallace

Notes: Explored the IECAM live map and how to navigate all options via the layers and legend

Ilinca asked members "What are your initial reactions/ideas when you look at this map?" The map showed ECEC programs across region with an overlay of children living under the 200%FPL

It was asked if there was a way to see the population density- demonstrated how by clicking on the census tracts in Wheeling.

Questions regarding the data from Action council members:

Would love to see all children 200% under FP enrolled in any publicly funded programs

Can see funding capacity but doesn't show what the actual enrollment is- would be interesting to know enrollment numbers for programs

An observation was made that of the 69,387 children under 6 in the region → half are 0-2yr ... there's a huge need for care for 0-2yr

Turnover and workforce are impacting enrollment even if program has licensed capacity

Curious about Part C and Part B numbers in the Cook North region.

Members discussed PFA and HS programming; discussion about having a PFA program and requirements

Members would like to know how many child care centers in the region are accepting CCAP funds

Challenges with transportation were discussed and a variety of ways districts provide transportation.

Ilinca shared the IECAM Regional report and how to navigate the live maps and use the attribute tab to create an excel sheet with program information. Reviewed publicly funded programs FY2021 (Head Start, Early Head Start, Prevention Initiative, Preschool for All)

Decision made: N/A

Next Steps: Share CCAP data at future meeting for Cook North Region



4:30 pm: Large group discussion about the ECEC landscape (20 minutes)

Facilitators: Ilinca Wallace & Irene Di Minervino

Notes: Ilinca shared PowerPoint slides with data on Early Childhood Education and Care programs in the region.

In the PowerPoint, the Action Council explored the number of sites and capacity by publicly funded program type. Members elevated a lack of capacity for children birth to 3.

Next the # of sites and capacity by childcare type data was explored: There were some questions regarding what qualifies a program to be licensed exempt. Some examples were shared: Montessori, before and after care, parents' day out; Ilinca will bring information to the next Action Council meeting.

An opportunity was elevated for family childcare homes being a way to meet the needs of communities especially where there is less programming available.

A need for support was elevated. Providing support for licensing and receiving mentorship.

Currently many providers are retiring or changing careers due to lack of support and not being treated well by the system.

Payment delays and how it's impacting programming was discussed. Action Council members shared how this is impacting programs that serve children that qualify for CCAP. A need for a modern, reliable payment system for IDHS was elevated.

Decision made: N/A

Next Steps: Include opportunities shared in the recommendations section of Regional Scan. Revisit with Action Council members in the spring.

4:50 pm: Brainstorm activity (10 minutes)

What additional questions or discussions would you like to have regarding the Early Childhood Education and Care landscape?

Facilitator: Ilinca Wallace



Notes: This was a short discussion due to time limitations. Some questions were around the number of children receiving Early Intervention and Part B services in the region. Further, in the areas where there are no publicly funded programs, but there are children that would qualify, where are the children receiving services. Are families feeling supported?

More information on license-exempt programs.

Decision made: N/A

Next Steps: Ilinca will send a follow-up email with reflection questions to Action council members.

4:55 pm: Questions/Comments/Reflections (5 minutes)

Facilitator: Ilinca Wallace

Next Meeting:

Date: February 6th, 2023

Time: 3:00- 5:00 pm

Location: Virtual or in-person