

# MEETING NOTES

## Region 1-B-D Action Council Meeting

**Date & Time: Monday, December 5<sup>th</sup>, 3:00-5:00 pm**

Council Members present: Clare Giuffrida, Kate Warach, Bettye Cohns, Kristen Ford, Carrie Rafalski, Amy Cocorikis, Lisa Merdinger, Agnieszka Moroni, John Ranieri, Susan Cerza, Vikki Podlipni, Olga Khamichonak  
Council Members absent: Natalie Wood

### **3:00 pm: Welcome/ Introductions & Review of Community Agreements Icebreaker: “What is one thing you are looking forward to during the holiday season?”**

Notes: Ilinca welcomed the Action Council members to the second meeting and introduced herself and the Cook North team. There was an introduction of two members. All Action Council members participated online. Irene led the group in reviewing the community agreements. Ilinca invited everyone to subscribe to our newsletter and to sign a photo and video release form if they hadn't already done so. Ilinca shared that the Action Council members' information will be listed under the regional webpage and asked everyone to confirm their title and sector. Members of the Action Council answered the icebreaker question.

Decisions made: N/A  
Next Steps: N/A

### **3:20 pm: Training Available to Council Members**

Notes: Ilinca introduced the on-demand Illinois Action for Children training to members. The website for on-demand training is:

<https://www.partnerplanact.org/rcs1/foundational-trainings616>

The trainings cover various topics and have been pre-recorded. These are optional to Action Council members. Ilinca shared information for series 7 of live training. Ilinca demonstrated how to register on the Illinois Action for Children webpage.

Decisions made: Action Council members can choose which training to complete. These are optional.  
Next Steps: N/A

### **3:35 pm: Visioning Activity- Two Groups**

The Action Council completed a visioning activity in 2 small groups. The prompt was “It’s year 2032 and you’re looking at the Early Childhood Education and Care (ECEC) system in Cook North...” For the activity, there were 2 groups, 1 note taker and 1 person who shared with the large group. The vision was that there would be affordable care, accessible and right for all children. The goal would be to work together. The vision would include a change in mindset and birth to five education would be valued as the early years are just as, if not as important as K-12. Compensation for Early Childhood Educators would be higher. In the second group, the vision would have robust funding for Birth to Five programming. The system would be more interconnected and there would be more communication. A vision for pediatricians to have a deeper knowledge of development versus just medicine. Group members shared the idea of kindergarten excitement vs. Kindergarten readiness and the idea that schools should be ready for children. There is a vision for more teachers to learn to support children with special needs.

The large group discussion highlighted:

- System is prepared for our children and educators have a more wider education prep.
- Bring in all stakeholders to collaborate to bring a voice to this big system and dream for young children and families
- We need to treat ourselves as professionals, so others see us this way... not just home daycare (Early education programs)
- Outside of the field preschool is looked as superior to childcare ... but there are IL daycare standards just like there are standards for pre-k

#### **4:10 pm: Break (10 minutes)**

#### **4:20 pm: Introduction to Demographic Data/ Large group discussion**

**Notes:** Ilinca introduced demographic data and shared this will be a 2 meeting dialogue. A PowerPoint was used to show data for Region 1BD (IECAM). Ilinca introduced IECAM data and the data sources. The IECAM data sources include the American community survey (Demo survey done by the census bureau), INCCRRA, ISBE, IDHS, HS, DCFS. Ilinca also shared we are using Illinois Action for Children data. As the Action Council explores data, the team is also starting to plan focus groups and interviews. Ilinca invited Action Council members to share any ideas with the team. Based on IECAM data there are 69,387 children, about half being 0-2 and the other half 3-5 (2020 data). Ilinca showed a graph of the distribution: 50/50 0-2 AND 3-5 (2017-2020) ... totaling 69,387

Further, members were presented with a map of Cook North showing where the children 6 years old and under are located throughout the region.

A Race and Ethnicity chart & map & data graph were explored. Ilinca shared the information for the Federal Poverty Line at the 200%, 185% and 100% level.

Action Council members were surprised some areas don't have as many children under 6 years old. Council members reflected on how low the Federal Poverty level really is and that the areas with a high density of children were areas where families were living below the 200% Federal Poverty line. The discussion also highlighted that Cook North is a diverse region with wealth and areas of poverty. The data left members wondering if there are enough early childhood education and care centers in the areas where many children under the age of 6 living.

Decisions made: Action Council members will further discuss demographic data at the next meeting.

Next Steps: Ilinca will share data needed for the meeting a week before along with the agenda and discussion questions.

#### **4:50 pm: Next steps**

Notes: Further demographic data will be explored focusing on priority populations and early childhood education and care programs.

In order to best plan for activities, discussions and space accommodations, the Action Council discussed the hybrid option and took a poll to see who would participate in person or via Zoom.

Three Action Council members and Ilinca discussed the selection process for the remaining interest forms. The subcommittee will meet on Monday, December 19<sup>th</sup> @ 4:00 pm for review.

#### **Open for Additional Questions**

Notes: No additional questions were asked.

Decision made: N/A

Next Steps: N/A

#### **Adjourn**

**Next Meeting: January 9<sup>th</sup>, Time 3pm to 5pm**

