



MEETING NOTES

Region 1-B-D Cook North Action Council Meeting

Location: Virtual or in person

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

Action Council members present: Agnieszka Moroni, Bettye Cohns, Clare Giuffrida, Kate Warach, Amy Cocorikis, Susan Cerza, Lisa Merdinger, Carrie Rafalski, Vikki Podlipni, Casche Knox, Cori Mohr, Chris Tokarski, Olga Khamichonak

Action Council members absent: John Ranieri, Kristen Ford, Natalie Wood, Edward Russell, Michele Ramsey, Tina Vanderwarker, Peter J. Smith

3:00 pm: Welcome/ Review of Community Agreements/ Regional Updates (10 minutes)

Notes: Ilinca welcomed the Action Council members and as an icebreaker activity she invited council members to share their favorite things to do to relax. Shared the community agreements for the council members to review.

Decision made: N/A

Next Steps: N/A

Facilitator(s): Ilinca Wallace

3:10 pm: Presentation from Dr. Marisha Speights (Northwestern) (20 minutes)

Notes: Dr. Marisha Speights is an assistant professor at Northwestern University and the director of the Pediatric Speech Technologies and Acoustics Research Lab (PedzSTAR lab). Her research focuses on testing automated methods for tracking acoustic vocal biomarkers for the early detection of speech disorders in young children.

Action Council members asked questions about the research, pilot program and the target age group, which is 3 to 5. Dr. Marisha Speights shared her information for anyone interested in collaborating marisha.speights@northwestern.edu

3:30 pm: Priority Population Discussion (38 minutes)

Notes: Ilinca shared Cook County Data → shared that the Risk and Reach report (all the cook county) on google drive



- 2,191 identified needing support from McKinney Vento (2022 annual report data) → not necessarily all the numbers of those who are in need of services just the students/families that were identified
- Shared link to DCFS report → Statistics for the last couple of years along with Year to Date data:
<https://dcfs.illinois.gov/content/dam/soi/en/web/dcfs/documents/about-us/reports-and-statistics/documents/ess-protective-services.pdf>
- Priority Population Data Scan and Resource Guide is available
<https://oecd.illinois.gov/content/dam/soi/en/web/oecd/documents/final-priority-population-data-scan-and-guide.pdf>
- Shared Early Intervention CFC 6 data (children w/ Disabilities) → In December 2022, in CFC 6, there were 2,156 children with an active IFSP; cases are now more complex as children are now qualifying for more than 1 service which was not as common in the past
- IEP data – Illinois report card ... shared 2020 all of the Cook County IEP numbers which was 10,760 children with IEPs
Shared “The Early Learning Center SD59” 3-5yr olds Illinois report card data on their website, and went over the options under the “students” tab such as Racial/ethnicity, students with IEPs, dual language learners

Two small groups were created for discussion.

Before going into small groups Ilinca showed and explained the IECAM map of “publicly funded programs overlaid with race and ethnicity” and “publicly funded programs overlaid with children living at or below the 200% PFL” and all Early Childhood Programs overlaid with children living at or below the 200% FPL”

Reflection Questions:

1. What community agencies do you utilize to support children/families in Cook North?

Group 1: Local Evanston Agencies: Child Care Network of Evanston and City of Evanston

Child and Family Connections #6, Connections for the Homeless (Evanston)
For families in crisis Community Alternatives Unlimited, Metropolitan Family Services
IDHS CCAP for families experiencing homelessness, Evanston Cradle to Career

Group 2: School Districts, Illinois Action for Children, Child and Family Connections, Child Care Centers, CITY of Support, Independent Therapy Providers, Libraries, Park District Programs, Early Head Start



2. What do you notice about the location of different racial/ethnic families, the location of early childcare providers, priority populations, etc.?

Group 1: Some community areas with lower incomes have no publicly funded childcare programs

Group 2: What's going on in Evanston? It seems that they have more resources...There are areas with high concentrations of priority populations that have little to no resources! Is there a way to find out more about data related to families coming from Ukraine?

3. COVID contributed to higher rates of unemployment and increased the number of people experiencing homelessness. What impact did it have on families in our Region? What services/supports were implemented to help those impacted? Have those services/supports remained in place?

Group 1: School districts provided at-home learning packets

School districts provided lunches for home

School districts provided at-home supplies (diapers, baby food)

School District's Housing Resources The above are specific to Evanston

Impact: Family mental health due to stress about paying rent

Impact: Families living with relatives - stress on how long families can stay

Impact: Families who lost relatives and close friends to COVID, families reluctant to send children back to congregate care

Impact: Children behind in immunizations and doctor's visits - families could not schedule appointments

Impact: Children with special needs missed appointments even with virtual options

Impact: Children lost gains due to remote learning

Impact: Children were not identified as having special needs

Group 2: The childcare agency noticed moms lost their jobs due to COVID and then didn't need child care.

Hotels opened to house families displaced due to COVID/job loss (Evanston - is this still in place?)

Increase in families who are homeless due to COVID - Journeys shared that some of those supports are ending/have ended. Once the relief dollars end we anticipate an increase in families needing resources.



4. What other information has been gathered about priority populations from talking with organizations and agencies?

Group 2: Families can get lost in transitions in services between organizations. (Family is given information on services but the family does not or cannot make the connection to services.)

Not enough intentional partnerships between organizations to connect families to services

Families often have to complete various applications, with the same information, answering the same questions, when they are referred to additional agencies for support which is frustrating for them.

Events on resources available to families are helpful to learn about services available in communities.

5. What data is missing or unavailable on these priority populations?

Group 2: How many children have developmental delays? What types of developmental delays

6. Are there programs in place to support migrant, immigrant, and refugee families? If so, what are those? Are they located in a place that can easily reach these families/communities?

Group 2: Center in Palatine (Sum) and Ukrainian churches supporting families fleeing the war.

7. What does the data tell us about what our Region might need in the future?

Group 2: We need to address/fill those huge gaps to provide services, support, and resources where they are needed most! Des Plaines, Wheeling, Hoffman Estates, etc. DCFS regulations prevent more people from opening/offering licensed child care. We need better collaboration with DCFS - who is our DCFS Rep?

Decision made: N/A

Next Steps: N/A

Facilitator(s): Ilinca Wallace



4:08 pm: Break (7 minutes)

4:15 Workforce (15 minutes)

Notes: Overview of the data

- Ilinca shared that we met with Harper College and briefly introduced Early Childhood Access Consortium for Equity (ECACE)
- Shared Cook North workforce 2021 data (from INCRRA) on: All Licensed Center Positions, licensed Center Directors, Licensed Center Teaching Staff, All Licensed Family Childcare providers (FCC) Positions

Ilinca shared that the team is meeting with the ECACE Navigators on 4/10 and will share more detailed data at the next meeting

Individual Reflection (Google Form) → open-ended questions as a way to gather individual reflections will be shared via email

Decision made: Individual Reflection (Google Form) will be sent via email

Next Steps: Reflection Questions from the individual reflection form will be used for large group discussion at the next meeting

Facilitator: Ilinca Wallace

4:30 pm: Updates from the Family Council (10 minutes)

Notes: Questions from the Family Council to the Action Council

Irene asked the Action Council members to share how are families informed about collaborations in the community and what the role of the families is within the collaborations. Action Council members shared different ways that families are engaged and informed.

Recruitment Support -> Family Council members are supporting to recruit families to participate in Focus Groups and Interviews

Community Events -> Shared that we will be attending the Week of the Young Child Event with the ECDEC/FIND program on April 5th, Wellness Fair in Palatine on April 29th and the Evanston is Family Strong even on April 30th

Decision made: N/A

Next Steps: N/A

Facilitator: Irene Di Minervino

4:40 pm: Reflection on Regional Scan (10 minutes)



Notes: Action Council members reviewed the Cook North regional boundaries section of the regional scan.

Action Council members:

- Not all districts have Early Learning programs → make mention something like “the majority have a Preschool program while others have it embedded in their elementary program “

Decision made: N/A

Next Steps: N/A

Facilitator: Ilinca Wallace

4:50 pm: Questions/Comments/Reflections (10 minutes)

Notes: Ilinca shared with the Action Council members the revised schedule of topics.

Next meeting we will finish Workforce and discuss families and caregivers.

Decision made: N/A

Next Steps: N/A

Facilitator: Ilinca Wallace

Next Meeting: Monday, April 17th, 3:00 pm- 5:00 pm

Date: April 17th, 2023

Time: 3:00- 5:00

Location: Virtual or in-person