

Region 1-B-D Discussion Notes Cook North

General Comments

- Families living in poverty reside in specific areas.
- Skokie, Niles, Evanston, and Morton Grove have concentrations of low-income households with children under age 6.
- There appears to be an overlap between the areas with kids under age 6 and low-income areas.
- I'm surprised to see so few Black children reside in this area.
- A lot of children appear to be unserved.
- I'm not surprised by the lack of available seats or by the data in general.
- I am surprised by the distribution of poverty across the area.
- Families need support to find quality child care.
- Families shouldn't have to lie to get the financial help they need.
- There was concern that the data did not reflect or consider nonresidential areas.
- Lots of children miss the cut off for Early Intervention (EI) - we need more EI screenings.
- There is a need for more parent/family education.
- Too many children fall through the cracks.
- Many families feel lost in child development education.
- We need to be strategic about where to open new child care centers.
- There are inequities in affordable housing, affordable child care, food security, and access to quality care.
- Polish families feel left behind
- More support is needed for the unconnected families; students with disabilities; 0-3 slots, and low income families.
- It would be helpful to know the most common languages spoken at home.

- We need more support for bilingual families that don't speak Spanish.
- I'd like to see the enrollment numbers, data on children experiencing homelessness, and data on overnight/weekend care options.

Strengths/Assets

- There are many strong school districts.
- We have lots of slots available in licensed child care centers.
- There are many strong Head Start (HS)/Preschool For All (PFA)/Preschool for All-Expansion (PFA-E) programs in the region.
- There are lots of funded part day programs.

Needs/Challenges

- Affordable care for families not in poverty.
- Funding for private child care programs.
- We are in need of more standardized care options.
- We lack support for children with disabilities.
- Transportation.
- Strong PFA/PFA-E programs often have waiting lists.
- Not enough funded full-day slots.
- There is a need for more consistent mental health supports.
- We need more child care workers and equitable pay for teachers.
- We need a cross-program system/a better network for referrals.
- There are not enough slots to serve all eligible children.
- Access to technology.
- Need more Prevention Initiative (PI) providers.
- Need coaching and support for teachers; better training.
- Need to reach families living below the FPL that would benefit the most from Early Childhood programs, which requires trust and relationship-building.
- There are not enough infant/toddler slots.

- We need more opportunities for meaningful family engagement.
- We need improved collaboration with community colleges.
- Services for children with special needs are only available at district programs; we need more options.
- Publicly funded school therapies for children with disabilities are only offered during traditional hours.