

Illinois' Commission on Equity in Early Childhood Education and Care Funding
Office of The Governor, J.B. Pritzker

October 12, 2020

Dear Funding Commissioners & Staff,

The Illinois Early Childhood Funding Coalition is grateful for the Commission's efforts to envision a stronger future for early childhood education and care in Illinois, reflecting Gov. Pritzker's charge to help make ours the best state in the nation for raising a young child. With that in mind, we submit the following recommendations for stakeholders' engagement in the creation of, transition to, and implementation of a new state agency for child care and early education services.

For the following reasons, we urge the Funding Commission Co-Chairs to outline a clear process for stakeholder engagement after the Commission work ends and as the State moves from recommendations to implementation in the report to the Governor:

- The Governor's Commission cannot put every implementation consideration or guardrail into the final report
- Current recommendations are high-level, leaving a lot of room for (mis)interpretation
- Stakeholders will be more comfortable endorsing broad recommendations with additional clarity around ongoing stakeholder engagement in decision-making
- Implementation considerations may be the most controversial
- Implementation decisions will most impact children
- Implementation decisions will most impact providers
- Implementation decisions will most impact parents
- Implementation is where racial equity will be achieved or lost

We urge the Funding Commission to ensure that a public-private body advise the implementation and transition process, and that such a body should:

- Include a racial, ethnically, economically, linguistically, and regionally diverse group of parents on every implementation and/or transition committee
- Include a racially, ethnically, economically, linguistically, and regionally diverse group of providers, home, center, and unlicensed, on every implementation and/or transition committee. Additionally ensure that providers represent Latino and Black-serving providers.
- Ensure there is ample ongoing opportunity for stakeholders to provide public comments and feedback on major decisions related to implementation that will impact stakeholders, at least 60 days before finalizing decisions
- Commit to holding one or more hearings/meetings (in English and Spanish) for feedback on the near-final recommendations for implementation

In addition we recommend these best practices for stakeholder engagement:

- Bring different stakeholder groups to the same table to inform the design of policy solutions or resolutions and to help identify potential unintended consequences.
 - For example, decisions should be discussed by stakeholders that comprise the system such as parents, home/center/FFN providers, young people, advocates, educators, legislators, agency staff (e.g., ISBE's head of Finance to consider implications to EBF, ISBE head of multilingual services, DHS head of child care), English Learner directors, school district superintendents and possibly others.
- Bring data to the table to illuminate the system, allow for planning and the equitable allocation of resources, and inform decision making tradeoffs, even if data are imperfect

- Regularly evaluate and address barriers to racial equity in the current system that should be resolved in the new system as well as evaluating and addressing structural inequities in the new system, including detailed analysis for public review of
 - How structures established will ensure adherence to federal civil rights obligations for racial/ethnic groups and English learners.
 - How structures established will ensure compliance to article 14C of the school code with respect to EL instructional programming.
 - How priority populations fare under new oversight and management structure and in the funding mechanism employed to fund programs.
- Eliminate racial equity barriers in structures established for planning and decision-making

Finally, this memo is not an endorsement of the existing recommendations. It is a recommendations that stakeholder engagement processes be spelled out in the final commission report.

Sincerely,

The Illinois Early Childhood Funding Coalition

Incomplete Membership List (additional providers and parents not yet listed)

A Karrasel Child Center	Fight Crime Invest in Kids	Nurse Family Partnership
Advance Illinois	Florek-Hessel	One Hope United
Advance Preschool	Foresight Law and Policy	Unit 5 School District
Arc of Illinois	Goddard School	Prevent Child Abuse Illinois
Asian Human Services	Greater East St. Louis	Reading in Motion
Baby Talk	Learning Partnership	Ready Nation
Base Child Care	Hana Center	Rise n'Shine Child Care
Bright Start Home Daycare	Handprints & Kompany	Services
Carol Robertson Center	Harmony Emge School	Rockford Day Nursery
CCC Learning Center	District 175	SAL Family and Community
CCR&R John A Logan College	Hathaway Miranda LLC	Services
CCS Fundraising	IFF	Save The Children Action
Chicago Dia de los Niños	IL AEYC	Network
Chicago Urban Day School	ILAEYC - Chicago	SEIU
Chicago Urban League	Illinois Action for Children	Southern Poverty Law Center
Child Abuse Council	Illinois Developmental	Start Early
Children's Home and Aid	Therapy Association	Steans Family Foundation
Childs Place Day Care	INCCRRA	Step by Step Child Care
Circles of Learning	Katie's Kids Learning Center	Center, Inc.
Community Consolidated	Kids Above All	Summit Early Learning
District 62	Lake County Health	Superintendent East Moline
Jane L. Westerhold Early	Department and Community	Teach Plus Illinois
Learning Center	Center	The Little Scholars Club, Co.
Compass for Kids	Lake County, Early	Tot's House Day Care Home
Council for Strong America	Intervention	UCC Corporation
Cuddle Care Inc.	Latino Policy Forum	Under Carries Care
Day Care Macias	Leaders Academy Chicago	United Congregations of
Early Childhood Community	Learning Bridge Early	Metro East
Coalition of Lake County	Education Center	University of Chicago Booth
Early Intervention CFC2 Lake	Learning Disabilities	School of Business
County Health Department	Association of Illinois	We Are the World
El Hogar del Niño	Marillac St. Vincent Family	Words on Wheels
El Valor	Services	YWCA
Erikson Institute	McCormick Center	YWCA Chicago
Eyes on the Future	McCormick Foundation	
Faith Coalition for the	NAEYC	
Common Good	North Chicago Dist #187	