

Illinois Department of Early Childhood Transition Listening Session

January 24, 2025

12:00 – 1:00 pm



Welcome & Purpose



- Please enter **questions into the Q and A feature of zoom webinar.**
- This meeting has Spanish translation
 - Please speak slowly and avoid using acronyms to help us ensure accessible translation
- Technical issues can happen to anyone – **use the Q and A feature and Liz Garza will provide technical assistance**
- If you are experiencing an unstable connection - **switch to phone call or close other applications**

Today's Goals

- ✓ Learn about the transition to the new Department of Early Childhood
- ✓ Meet Secretary Teresa Ramos

Agenda

Welcome	5 min
Getting to Know You: Who's in the Room	5 min
Conversation with Secretary Ramos <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Remarks• Q&A	40 min
Feedback poll	5 min
Next Steps & Close	5 min

Getting to Know You: Who's in the Room?



Poll: Who's in the Room?

Poll questions:

1. **What voice/perspective are you representing here today?**
2. What region of the state are you located in?
3. What is your race/ethnicity?



Poll: Who's in the Room?

Poll questions:

1. What voice/perspective are you representing here today?
2. **What region of the state are you located in?**
3. What is your race/ethnicity?



Poll: Who's in the Room?

Poll questions:

1. What voice/perspective are you representing here today?
2. What region of the state are you located in?
3. **What is your race/ethnicity?**





Illinois Department of Early Childhood

**Conversation with IDEC
Secretary Teresa Ramos**



OVERVIEW

January 2025



About Me

- ✓ **3 years as First Assistant Deputy Governor**
- ✓ **3 years as VP Policy, Research, and Advocacy at Illinois Action for Children**
- ✓ **7 years at Advance Illinois as Director of Community Engagement**



Mom



Professional



Organizer/
Advocate



Student &
Learner



Illinoisan





**Easier for
Parents**



**Simplicity for
Providers**



**More cohesive
and streamlined
for the state**

Section 1

DEVELOPING THE FUTURE OF SERVICE DELIVERY

Families with Young Children by the Numbers

There are over **861,000** children **0-5** in Illinois.

Over
420K

are age 0-2

Over
439K

are age 3-5



Less than half¹ of children under 5 can access licensed child care*



An additional **10,875 preschool slots** are needed in areas of the state with limited access to quality, publicly funded preschool.²



9.6% of children eligible for Early Intervention services experience service delays.³



Only **52% of children** eligible for home visiting receive services.⁴

¹IECAM Database, 2022 *includes licensed centers, licensed-exempt centers, and licensed family child care homes | ISBE preschool desert analysis 2023 | ³Council Packet, 2024 |

⁴GOECD's most recent HV cost modeling analysis

Centering and Designing the Future with Families

Illinois engaged ChiByDesign to facilitate a **co-design approach** that brought together parents, caregivers, early childhood providers, and other stakeholders to innovate early childhood service delivery based on the following objectives:



Convening diverse stakeholders to understand the conditions, policies, practices, and experiences that shape early childhood education



Co-designing anti-racist innovations with lived experts that can shape early childhood education services and practices



Building relationships between Illinois families, early childhood providers, and adjacent systems actors



TRANSFORMING EARLY CHILDHOOD EDUCATION AND CARE IN ILLINOIS

Emerging Future of Service Delivery



**Continuity
of care**



**Guaranteed
access to high-
quality
early learning**



**Economic
security**



**Harmonious
relationships**

TRANSFORMING EARLY CHILDHOOD EDUCATION AND CARE IN ILLINOIS

Initial Outcomes for New Agency



**Information
navigation and
accessibility**



**Cross-
collaboration and
communication**



**Holistic
well-being**



**Professional
development and
support**



**Dynamic learning
environments and
diverse learning
needs**

Over 4,100 Touchpoints

**Bi-monthly
Listening
Sessions**

**CHIBYDESIGN
Family/Caregiver
Design Sessions**

**Transition Advisory
Committee**

**Full Early
Learning Council**

**Early Learning
Council Committees**

**Child Care
Advisory Council**

**Illinois Interagency
Council on Early
Intervention**

**ECACE Consortium
Advisory Council**

Workgroups

**Other Regional or
Program Specific
Advisories**

**Listening Survey on
IL ECE Governance
Transition**

**Regional Listening
Sessions**

**More to
come!**

**THERE ARE MULTIPLE OPPORTUNITIES TO ENGAGE
AND GATHER INPUT FROM DIVERSE PERSPECTIVES**

Section 2

IDENTIFYING BARRIERS

Understanding current state of service delivery
from parents and providers

“

I have had a hard time finding an opportunity to allow my child to interact with other children and struggle with figuring out what I should be focusing on for her development.

**Parent in
Jo Daviess County**



“

I've found that navigating the system can be confusing, with unclear communication about resources and eligibility.

**Parent in
DuPage County**



“

Long waitlist, insufficient information sharing among providers for available resources and complex enrollment processes [have been a challenge].

**Parent in
Cook County**



“

Early Intervention Services, never enough therapists available for your child and waiting for months to be able to start services. Not enough Daycare Centers, always having a waiting list.

**Parent in
Lake County**



Service delivery is inequitable and inefficient at supporting what families want and need

- One size fits all doesn't work for the racial, linguistic, regional, and economic diversity of the state
- Child care is expensive
- Too few infants and toddlers equitably access and receive Early Intervention
- Not enough publicly funded preschool seats to serve children in the area
- Illinois is unable to identify how children are being served by programs at different agencies or how much funding is going to providers
- Too few communication channels with parents and providers



For Families this means Barriers, Redundant Efforts, Gaps in Services:

- Families are often asked to provide the same information repeatedly
- Program eligibility is unclear
- It's too hard to transport child(ren) multiple times a day between locations to receive necessary services and keep a job
- It is unclear how and where to access resources
- Long waitlists or strict eligibility requirements for critical programs such as Early Intervention, the Child Care Assistance Program, and Home Visiting
- Subsidies difficult and confusing for families to navigate
- Emerging middle class families struggle with high child care costs as they are often found ineligible for subsidies
- Home languages as language barriers significantly hinder their ability to navigate the system
- Not enough professionals or services to meet diverse families' needs
- Lack of culturally responsive services such as mental health or behavioral service

For the Provider this Means:

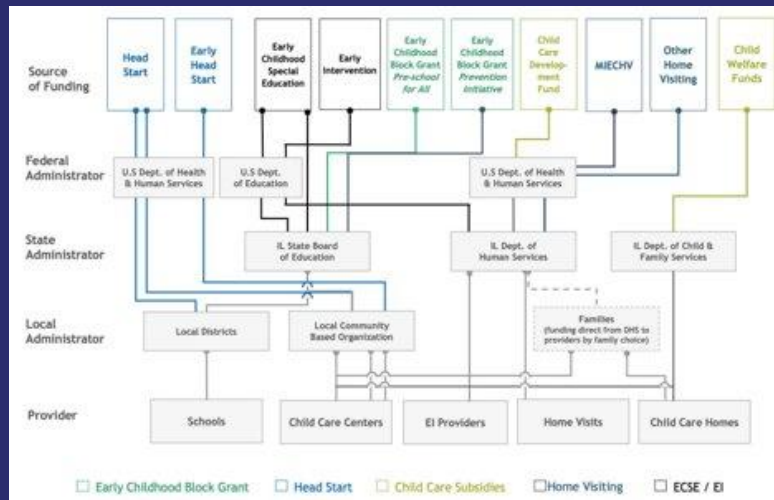
- Providers enter the same information repeatedly or in different formats, which takes time away from children and families
- Faxing paperwork is sometimes required and required to send in paper copies
- Complex and unclear requirements across services and supports causes confusion or disconnect with program and licensing administrators
- It is difficult to braid and blend funding streams, especially for smaller providers
- Complicated or cumbersome applications processes that hinder small businesses or certain provider types
- Mismatch of incentives to serve hardest to reach populations and communities
- Funding assumptions that do not keep up with true costs of services and needs
- Limited resources and supports for multilingual families
- Lack of a diverse workforce pool
- Challenges for multilingual providers in accessing state supports and services
- Insufficient access to training and resources to support the workforce in areas like trauma-informed care, mental health supports, culturally responsive practices, among other priorities

For the State of Illinois this Means:



- Burden, inefficiencies, inequities and gaps in service
 - Policies, systems and supports are addressed in pieces and driven by funding streams
 - Insufficient of culturally and linguistically responsive supports
 - No single place for truth of current state- different data systems, data definitions, and transparency expectations
 - Different processes and systems across agencies resulting in inefficiencies and inconsistent or no clear accountability
- Inequities in resource allocations - service deserts & oversaturated communities
 - Inefficiencies in accessing federal resources (e.g., Medicaid reimbursement) and private pay reimbursement
 - Misaligned policy incentives or expectations across programs and services (hindering ability to target and serve hardest to reach populations and communities)
 - State staff inefficiencies and redundancies

Early Childhood Services are Split Across Multiple Agencies, Divisions, and Teams.



IL Dept. of Human Services

- Child Care Assistance Program (CCAP)
- Child Care Resource and Referral (CCR&R) System
- Gateways to Opportunities
- ExceleRate
- Child and Family Connections (CFCs)
- Migrant & Seasonal Head Start
- Head Start Collaboration Office
- Early Intervention
- Home Visiting
 - State Home Visiting
 - MIECHV
 - Maternal Child Home Visiting

IL State Board of Education

- Early Childhood Block Grant
- Preschool for All (PFA)
- Preschool for All
- Expansion
- Prevention Initiative (PI)
- KIDS Assessment
- Early Childhood Special Education (IDEA Part B)
- Regional Offices
- PreK Educator Licensing
- Birth to Five Illinois

IL Dept. of Child & Family Services

- Child Care Licensing
- Background checks
- DCFS Childcare subsidy



Section 3

PROCESS FOR REDESIGNING ILLINOIS' APPROACH TO SERVICE AND SUPPORTS

Unpacking transition process

Macro Steps in the Transition Innovation Lifecycle

Identify
Families'
Wants/Needs

Identify what
providers need
to deliver
services to
families

Identify how to
align state
policy
operations,
grants,
contracts, etc.

ILGA/GOV/
Agency Action
on Budget/
Policy

Implementation
& Continued
Improvement

Innovation doesn't always mean new ideas!

Developing a Strategic Vision & Plan to Redesign Service Delivery

A one-size fits all services delivery model will always be both inequitable and inefficient in a state as regionally, racially, linguistically, and culturally diverse as Illinois.

1

Vision: What do families want and need?
What do providers want and need to deliver to families?

3

How do we get from current state to our vision?
What infrastructure is needed to make the vision possible?

2

Current state: what are the pain points in family services?

Further Informing the Redesign for Service Delivery

- Family Service Work Groups
- Co-Design Workshops
- Focused Discussion
- Surveys and Interviews
- Listening Sessions

Vision: What do families want and need?
What do providers want and need to deliver to families?

- Support Work Groups
- Focused Discussions
- Surveys and Interviews
- Interagency Team

How do we get from current state to our vision?
What infrastructure is needed to make the vision possible?

- Family Service Work Groups
- Focused Discussion
- Surveys and Interviews
- Co-Design Workshops
- Listening Sessions

Current state: what are the pain points in family services?

TAC

TRANSFORMING EARLY CHILDHOOD EDUCATION AND CARE IN ILLINOIS

Initial Drivers To Enable Equity



Bridge digital and physical infrastructure divides



Advance communication and information exchange



Strengthen cross-sector collaboration



Prioritize holistic family well-being



Invest in workforce excellence

Senate Bill 1 (Public Act 103-0594) Received Overwhelming Bipartisan Support and was Signed into Law in Summer 2024.

Introduced in Senate Committee

SB1 passed out of Senate committee with bipartisan unanimous support.



Introduced in House Committee

SB1 passed out of House committee with bipartisan unanimous support.



Governor Signed Bill into Law (June 25)

Senate Bill 1 officially became Public Act 103-0594



Floor Debate and Vote in Senate Chamber

SB1 passed out of the Senate with bipartisan unanimous support.



Floor Debate and Vote in House Chamber

SB1 passed out of the House with bipartisan support.



This will not be “Lift and Shift”, we Must Redesign.

We must innovate and redesign how the state does this work. This includes:

- ✓ Engaging stakeholders throughout the design process- particularly those least well served currently by the state
- ✓ Shifting the burden of the system from families and providers to state and simplify
- ✓ Reimagining our service delivery structure, including our regional footprint
- ✓ Aligning funding streams (revising how we allocate and distribute funds)
- ✓ Updating and leveraging technology (including how we integrate artificial intelligence)
- ✓ Streamlining and improving reporting and transparency



Redesign will Take Capacity and Innovate Change

- ✔ Big changes to existing statute, regulations, and operational structure are forthcoming
- ✔ Implementation of redesign will not be complete in FY27, it will be early stages





About Me

- ✓ **3 years as First Assistant Deputy Governor**
- ✓ **3 years as VP Policy, Research, and Advocacy at Illinois Action for Children**
- ✓ **7 years at Advance Illinois as Director of Community Engagement**



Mom



Professional



Organizer/
Advocate



Student &
Learner



Illinoisan





Illinois Department of Early Childhood

Q&A

Hearing from you

Use the Padlet to share:

1. What are you **most excited** about?
2. What is one thing you are **walking away hopeful** about?



Padlet links:

- Advocates: <https://padlet.com/ssmillie2/january-transition-listening-session-advocates-871uda4wftton7y>
- Families (English) // Familias (Español): <https://padlet.com/ssmillie2/january-transition-listening-session-families-english-famili-a3r93660k4of935b>
- Providers (English) // Proveedores (Español): <https://padlet.com/ssmillie2/january-transition-listening-session-providers-english-prove-1hemj5mcl28ofiy5>
- Service Organizations: <https://padlet.com/ssmillie2/january-transition-listening-session-service-organizations-krqqfzyf3zntlh68>
- State and local governments: <https://padlet.com/ssmillie2/january-transition-listening-session-state-and-local-governm-qhw5s7mj8zhvubke>
- Español (todas las demás roles) // Spanish (all other roles): <https://padlet.com/ssmillie2/january-transition-listening-session-espa-ol-todos-los-dem-s-49m0vkk9ahm1law>

Additional Opportunities for Engagement and Communication

Upcoming Transition Advisory Committee Meetings

- Tuesday, February 11, 2025, from 5:30 – 7:00 pm
- Tuesday, March 11, 2025, from 5:30 – 7:00 pm
- Tuesday, April 8, 2025, from 5:30 – 7:00 pm

Upcoming Bi-Monthly Listening Sessions

- Friday, March 14, 2025, from 12:00 – 1:00 pm
- Friday, May 16, 2025, from 12:00 – 1:00 pm

Website & Surveys

- Explore the Early Childhood Transition website for updates and meeting summaries: <https://idec.illinois.gov/>
- There are open surveys for stakeholders to share ongoing feedback and questions they have about the Transition and the TAC meetings

Workgroup meetings:

- Learn more about attending or expressing interest to join any of the various workgroups: <https://idec.illinois.gov/idec-education-care-transition-planning/engagement-opportunities-and-listening-sessions.html>

Next Steps & Close



- Transition Advisory Committee
 - Tuesday, February 11, 2025, 5:30 – 7:00 pm
 - Tuesday, March 11, 2025, 5:30 – 7:00 pm
- Please complete and share the Listening Session Survey on Illinois' ECE Governance Transition
 - You can also indicate here if you want to receive more information on an ongoing basis about the Transition and new agency.
- Please contact Ann Whalen (Awhalen@isbe.net) if you have any questions.
- Next Meeting:
Friday, March 14, 2025, from 12:00 – 1:00 pm

Thank you!

Section 4
APPENDIX

