ECEC Funding Design Workgroup:
**Child Care (0-5) /
Pre-K Subcommittee**

November 18, 2025

Meeting Expectations & Notes

Introductions (in the chat)

1. Name
2. Location
3. Role & Organization
4. Favorite Thanksgiving food

For Subcommittee Members:

- **Please be on video** as much as possible
- **Mute self** when not speaking
- Use **Chat feature or "raise hand" button** for questions or comments
- Technical issues can happen to anyone –**chat privately to Crystal Roman for any needs**
- If you are experiencing an unstable connection - **switch to phone call or close other applications**

For Public Participants:

- Attendees can provide input through public comment during discussions and at the end of the meeting, as well as contributing to Padlet

Note: This meeting has Spanish translation

IDEC

Subcommittee Norms

- Process is part of the solution

- Step Up, Step Back

- Questions seek to understand, be curious

- Prioritize parent experience and provider experience

- Act with courage and vulnerability

- Recognize the difference between intent and impact; *I might not intend to hurt or offend but the impact may be to hurt or offend*

IDEC

Today's goals and agenda

Goals

- Review key takeaways from Meeting 1 (10/28/25)
- Discuss costs associated with what families want and how those costs vary across settings
  - Key focus: Supporting children with disabilities and developmental delays and challenging behaviors in the classroom

Agenda

- Welcome & introductions
- Review of Meeting 1
- Context setting: Supporting inclusive practices and a continuum of supports
- Presentation and discussion on potential cost factors for supporting children and families, aligned with family-centered system
- Public comment, next steps & adjourn

IDEC

Background and Context for this Subcommittee

IDEC

Funding Design Goals

Develop a funding system for Illinois' early childhood education and care programs that:

Promotes an **equitable, inclusive, family-centered system** of quality choice for families of all races, home languages, incomes, and geographies

Works toward **fair resources for all types of providers**, responsive to family choice

Supports **opportunity, fair compensation, and high-quality working conditions** for the ECEC workforce

Improves **predictability** and **stability for families, providers, and the workforce**

Reduces complexity and burden on ECEC providers

Promotes long-term **system-wide sustainability** through clear and balanced priorities and effective use of all available funds (federal, state, local, and private)

IDEC

Emerging Design Principles – drawing on input from communities, working groups, and state leadership

1 **Reduce administrative burden** by streamlining current funding streams
- Combine state funds into fewer funding streams with similar purposes and recipients
- Reduce burden of managing multiple state and federal funding streams by aligning requirements wherever possible
- Simplify applications and reporting wherever possible

2 **Builds a transparent road map to full costs of early learning services that enables equity and efficiency**
- Ensures **operational funding** from all sources that is adequate to deliver services that meet licensing standards for all children and allows transparency in how much existing funding from all sources covers costs
- Enables a **family-centered definition of quality,** and is tied to the **services families want to see** based on children's needs, including for children with disabilities and developmental delays, multi-lingual learners, and historically underserved communities
- Promotes **competitive workforce compensation**
- Reflects the **different structure** of costs and services in centers, homes, and school districts across programs and requirements
- **Maximizes** federal funds

3 **Assess gaps** between current funding and need to inform equitable prioritization for future investments

4 **Work for existing and new** programs and programs with a mix of children being served by **public and private funds**
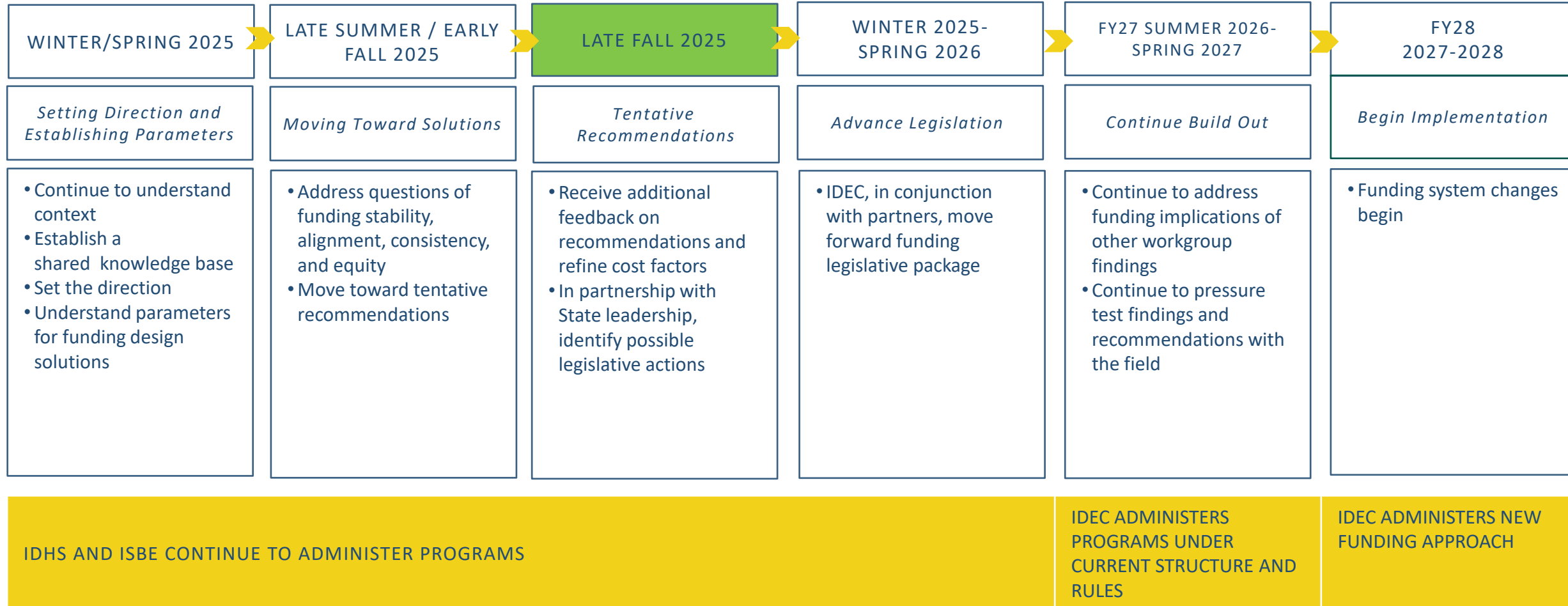- New programs can enter the system through a transparent process that assesses quality, capacity, and community need
- Funding design incorporates local funding and parent tuition alongside state and federal dollars while acknowledging the needs of providers who serve school-age children

IDEC

Fall Subcommittee Overview and Objectives

- **Overview**: Subcommittees will focus on **pressure testing and providing feedback on assumptions that will inform the development of IDEC's funding framework** for child care (ages 0-5)/pre-k , home visiting across the mixed delivery system and provider types*

- **Objectives**: At the end of this round of subcommittees, we will have a deeper understanding of:

  - A recommended initial set of **family driven cost factors** to consider embedding in definitions of adequacy targets

  - Qualitative input on **known and unknown cost factors** to inform development of adequacy targets

  - Input on variations required based on the experiences and **needs of different provider types**

  - Questions needing **further consideration and research** to inform funding framework

*EI and ECSE work is ongoing in separate workstreams

Anticipated Timeline

WINTER/SPRING 2025	LATE SUMMER / EARLY FALL 2025	LATE FALL 2025	WINTER 2025-SPRING 2026	FY27 SUMMER 2026-SPRING 2027	FY28 2027-2028
Setting Direction and Establishing Parameters	*Moving Toward Solutions*	*Tentative Recommendations*	*Advance Legislation*	*Continue Build Out*	*Begin Implementation*
• Continue to understand context • Establish a shared knowledge base • Set the direction • Understand parameters for funding design solutions	• Address questions of funding stability, alignment, consistency, and equity • Move toward tentative recommendations	• Receive additional feedback on recommendations and refine cost factors • In partnership with State leadership, identify possible legislative actions	• IDEC, in conjunction with partners, move forward funding legislative package	• Continue to address funding implications of other workgroup findings • Continue to pressure test findings and recommendations with the field	• Funding system changes begin

IDHS AND ISBE CONTINUE TO ADMINISTER PROGRAMS	IDEC ADMINISTERS PROGRAMS UNDER CURRENT STRUCTURE AND RULES	IDEC ADMINISTERS NEW FUNDING APPROACH

IDEC

Child Care/Pre-K Subcommittee Agenda Plan

Discuss emerging recommendations with Funding Design Workgroup & Family Service Workgroups

Meeting 1- Oct 28

- Welcome, introductions, and level setting

- Discuss definition of adequacy target and cost factors

- Discuss family input on desired services, with a focus on children with disabilities/developmental delays and multilingual learners

- Preview potential cost factors associated with families' desired services

Meeting 2- Nov 18

- Discuss costs associated with what families want and how those vary across settings (FCC, center-based, and school-based).

- Key Focus: Supporting children with disabilities and developmental delays; mental health in the classroom

Meeting 3 – Jan 13

- Discuss unknown cost factors related to the family driven vision and how they vary across FCC, center-based, and school-based providers.

- Key Focus: Supporting Multilingual Learners; Nontraditional Hours Care

- Refine considerations and insights

IDEC

Key Takeaways from Meeting 1

IDEC

Our subcommittee will focus on an <u>overall definition of adequacy for child care (0-5) and pre-k programs</u>, building on the alignment recommendation from the summer subcommittee work.

Challenges

▶ ## Preliminary Recommendations

Challenge Definition:

- Current misalignment across funding streams creates confusion, frustration, and sometimes arbitrary barriers for both families and providers
- A majority of providers do not utilize multiple public funding streams, potentially due to the complexity and administrative burden

Proposed Criteria for alignment:

- Similar or highly connected purpose
- Common recipient pool
- Similar child/family and provider eligibility
- Enough flexibility in federal requirements, or ability to align state requirements to federal requirements

Across all state-managed funding streams, the following two groupings meet the criteria for alignment:

Cluster of early learning & care funding streams:

- CCAP/CCDF
- ECBG PFA/E
- ECBG PI-Center Based
- Smart Start Workforce Grants and Quality Supports

1 *Proposed:* One aligned funding stream for **child care and pre-k programs**

Cluster of home visiting funding streams:

- MIECHV
- MCHV
- IDHS-HV
- ECBG PI-Home Visiting

2 *Proposed:* One aligned funding stream for **home visiting programs**
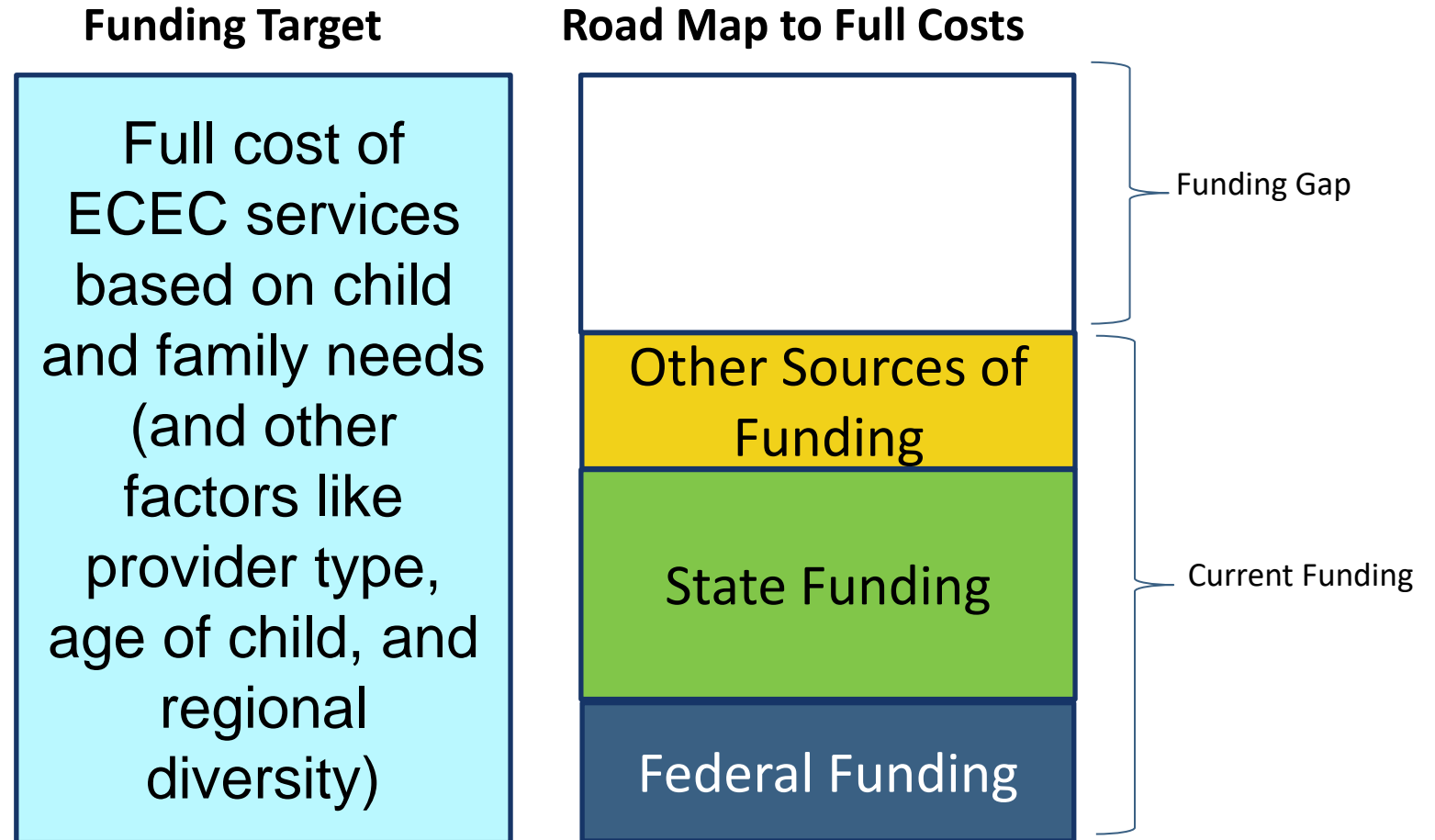
3 *Early Intervention*

4 *Early Childhood Special Education*

continue to be funded separately
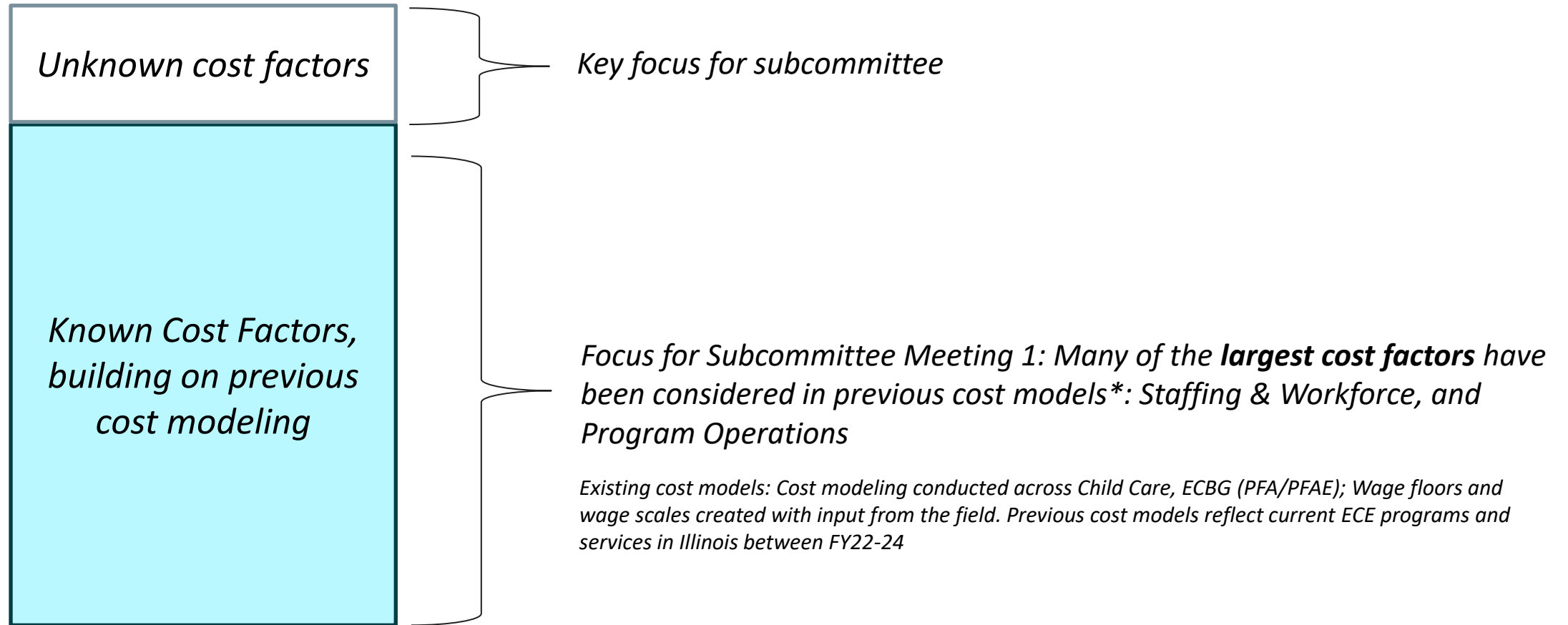
IDEC

Creating an Adequacy-based Approach for ECEC

One of the design principles for ECEC funding is to *"build a transparent road map to full costs of early learning services that enables equity and efficiency, using all available sources of funds."*

Visualizing the Funding Target & Road Map to Full Costs (Illustrative):

Funding Target

Full cost of ECEC services based on child and family needs (and other factors like provider type, age of child, and regional diversity)

Road Map to Full Costs

Funding Gap

Other Sources of Funding

State Funding

Federal Funding

Current Funding

IDEC

What cost factors comprise an adequacy target?

Program Adequacy Target

Unknown cost factors

Key focus for subcommittee

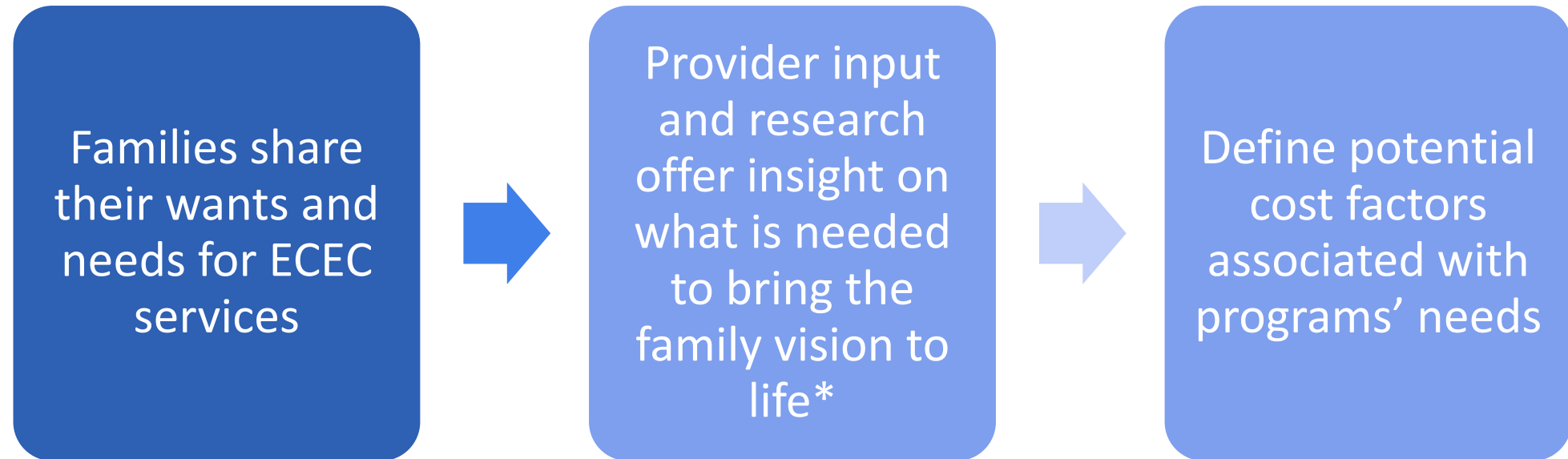*Known Cost Factors, building on previous cost modeling*

*Focus for Subcommittee Meeting 1: Many of the **largest cost factors** have been considered in previous cost models*: Staffing & Workforce, and Program Operations*

Existing cost models: Cost modeling conducted across Child Care, ECBG (PFA/PFAE); Wage floors and wage scales created with input from the field. Previous cost models reflect current ECE programs and services in Illinois between FY22-24
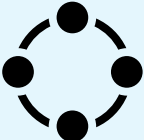
IDEC

*Not a comprehensive list of costs

Discussion from Meeting 1: "Known" Cost Factors for Child Care/Pre-K – including staffing/workforce & program operations

- **Staffing**: Staff costs have continued to rise. There is often a need for more staffing to support the needs of children in the classroom. In addition, high turnover is costly.
- **Benefits**: Healthcare costs have increased significantly.
- **Operations**: Costs related to snow removal, facility insurance, facility maintenance (especially for playgrounds), have risen significantly.
- **Contracted Services:** Services such as Teaching Strategies Gold, Child Plus, and others have risen and are outside of providers' control.

What were your key takeaways from Meeting 1?

IDEC

Family Driven Cost Factors

Turning our focus to "unknown" cost factors related to achieving a family-centered system for ECEC

Program Adequacy Target

Unknown cost factors

Known Cost Factors, building on previous cost modeling

Key focus for subcommittee Meetings 2 and 3

Focus for Subcommittee Meeting 1: Many of the **largest cost factors** have been considered in previous cost models*: Staffing & Workforce, and Program Operations

Existing cost models: Cost modeling conducted across Child Care, ECBG (PFA/PFAE); Wage floors and wage scales created with input from the field. Previous cost models reflect current ECE programs and services in Illinois between FY22-24

IDEC

*Not a comprehensive list of costs

The process of moving from family centered system to modeling cost factors requires iteration with those working in the system.

Families share their wants and needs for ECEC services

→

Provider input and research offer insight on what is needed to bring the family vision to life*

→

Define potential cost factors associated with programs' needs

*Intersections with Workforce and Program Standards Alignment workstreams

IDEC

Themes from Family Input: Focus Areas for Meeting 2

Theme	What should the system do?		Potential Classroom/Program Costs Associated

Inclusion

- Families are **educated about inclusion**, why it matters, and their child's right to receive special education services in the least restrictive environment
- Keep children in **programs of their choice** (rather than moving them around because of staffing issues, behaviors, etc.)
- Access to **developmental screenings** at a variety of accessible sites within communities (e.g., child care)

> "As a caregiver raising a 4-year-old with autism, I struggled to navigate early intervention, individual family service plans, IEPs, developmental therapy services (ABA, Speech, OT) and being denied access to "regular" day care centers because their staff weren't trained to support children with autism."
> *- Parent*

- Staff to provide push-in services and support for children and teachers in community-based settings
- Materials, training, and substitute coverage for program staff to conduct developmental screenings

Mental Health

- Adequate **mental and behavioral health** training and supports
- Social/emotional support

> "Communication needs and their related social emotional regulation skills are "core components to child success" but it seems so distanced from all other EC services. Part of the key is preparing teachers to develop communications and self regulation skills in children."
> *- Participant at Regional Listening Session, Rock Island*

- Training on mental/behavioral health and social/emotional support
- Family support staff

IDEC

*Potential cost factors are illustrative examples; actual cost factors will depend on implementation decisions

Context Setting: Children 0-5 with challenging behaviors & disabilities and developmental delays in Illinois

In recent listening sessions, parents, educators, and providers have shared their experiences and needs to support children with inclusive practices.

As a caregiver raising a 4-year-old with autism, I struggled to navigate early intervention, individual family service plans, IEPs, developmental therapy services (ABA, Speech, OT) and **being denied access to "regular" day care centers because their staff weren't trained to support children with autism.** I ended up paying to send a BCBA and RBT to the daycare centers. - *Parent/Caregiver*

"The **needs of the children themselves seem to have changed** a lot in recent years." - *ECEC Workforce Member*

[We need] SEL development, not just the 15hrs but something deeper than that to help especially this **new group of children entering early learning coming out of pandemic, and immigrants**. These trainings would be in place of a work day. **Home cares need development days** where we can close and still get paid. It shouldn't be in the evening and on weekends. - *FCC Provider*

"**Especially with some more difficult children, being able to have that available staffing to have those hands on with those children, especially since COVID.** [We've] had to do things differently. That's also what's helped my program." - *Center-based Provider*

IDEC

Recent research describes families' and providers' experiences with supporting children with disabilities and developmental delays & children with challenging behaviors

Families shared:

- **Very difficult to find child care** for their children with disabilities or developmental delays
- Felt positive about their most recent child care arrangement, but **over half had at least one experience where they had to leave a program**
- Experienced **financial hardship and mental and physical health challenges** because of child care difficulties
- Felt **child care and therapy services could work better together**

Providers shared:

- **Programmatic challenges include:** not having enough staff; balancing staff time among all children in care while managing children's behavior; lack of access to training, difficulty coordinating with EI and ECSE
- **Financial challenges include:** cost of training; lack of staff coverage during training; purchasing materials or modifying facilities; lack of staff
- **Potential promising practices include** intentional partnerships between community-based programs and districts to facilitate trainings and transitions; universal screening tools as part of a robust Child Find system; shared referral training and practices across all ECEC settings, including pediatricians; access to trainings and assistive devices, equipment, and services

NOV_Branded-IDEA-State-Policy-Opps.pdf
CPS_HS-Inclusion-Y2-Evaluation-Overview_Sept-2025.pdf
Child_Care_Disabilities_Brief_2024.pdf

IDEC

How do these findings resonate with your experiences?

Identifying potential cost factors to support a continuum of supports by child care (0-5) / Pre-K providers

IDEC

Overview of potential cost factors _child care (0-5) / pre-k providers would experience_ with supporting a family centered system for children with disabilities & developmental delays and children with challenging behaviors.

	Screening	Instruction	Coordination
Applicable to all children	• Developmental screening tools • Training for educators and staff on conducting screenings • Staff release time to conduct screenings • Time and staff for family communication	• Training for staff on best practices on behavior regulation • Training/mentoring (i.e. Pyramid Model, IECMH, etc)	• Family support staff
Applicable for children with challenging behaviors and additional needs, but no IFSPs and IEPs	• Additional time and staff for family communication	• Additional staff in classrooms and/or lower enrollment • Updated materials	• Staff release time to coordinate with therapeutic and other service providers • Additional family support staff time
Applicable only for children with IFSPs and IEPs	• Additional time and staff for family communication • Time for coordinating additional screening with other services	• Additional staff in classrooms and/or lower enrollment • Updated materials • Training for staff on best practices on inclusion • Modifying facilities	• Additional family support staff time • Staff release time to participate in meetings, including IFSP and IEP meetings • Staff time to manage logistics for students that are participating in ECSE services in another location

IDEC

Potential cost factors associated with family vision for continuum of supports

Screening

Applicable to all children	• Developmental screening tools • Training for educators and staff on conducting screenings • Staff release time to conduct screenings • Time and staff for family communication
Applicable for children with challenging behaviors and additional needs, but no IFSPs and IEPs	• Additional time and staff for family communication
Applicable only for children with IFSPs and IEPs	• Additional time and staff for family communication • Time for coordinating additional screening with other services

IDEC

- What other cost factors should be considered for conducting screenings?

- In your experience, how much time do each of these steps take per child/per classroom?

- How do these cost factors vary across settings?
  - Child care centers
  - Family child care homes
  - Schools

- How do these cost factors vary by child age?
  - Infants/toddlers
  - Preschool age

Potential cost factors associated with family vision for continuum of supports

Instruction

Applicable to all children	• Training for staff on best practices on behavior regulation • Training/mentoring (i.e. Pyramid Model, IECMH, etc)
Applicable for children with challenging behaviors and additional needs, but no IFSPs and IEPs	• Additional staff in classrooms and/or lower enrollment • Updated materials
Applicable only for children with IFSPs and IEPs	• Additional staff in classrooms and/or lower enrollment • Updated materials • Training for staff on best practices on inclusion • Modifying facilities

IDEC

- What other cost factors should be considered?

- In your experience, what staffing patterns are best to support children with challenging behaviors &/OR children with disabilities and developmental delays in inclusive classrooms?

- How do these cost factors vary across settings?
  - Child care centers
  - Family child care homes
  - Schools

- How do these cost factors vary by child age?
  - Infants/toddlers
  - Preschool age

Potential cost factors associated with family vision for continuum of supports

Coordination

Applicable to all children	• Family support staff
Applicable for children with challenging behaviors and additional needs, but no IFSPs and IEPs	• Staff release time to coordinate with therapeutic and other service providers • Additional family support staff time
Applicable only for children with IFSPs and IEPs	• Additional family support staff time • Staff release time to participate in meetings, including IFSP and IEP meetings • Staff time to manage logistics for students that are participating in ECSE services in another location

- What other cost factors should be considered for supporting coordination with other providers engaged with children with challenging behaviors &/OR children with disabilities and developmental delays?

- In your experience, how much staff time is needed per child for these activities?

- How do these cost factors vary across settings?
  - Child care centers
  - Family child care homes
  - Schools

- How do these cost factors vary by child age?
  - Infants/toddlers
  - Preschool age

IDEC

Public Comment, Next Steps & Adjourn

IDEC

Public Comment

To join the line to provide public comment, please raise your hand via Webex.

Next Steps

Upcoming Meetings:

- **Next Funding Design Workgroup Meeting**: November 19 at 5:00PM – Focus will be on Home Visiting & overall funding design updates

- **Next Child Care / Pre-K Subcommittee Meeting:** January 13, 2026 at 1:00PM

Please complete the feedback survey here: https://forms.gle/83cuZUNYxKdb2PoLA

Thank you!

IDEC

ILLINOIS
DEPARTMENT OF
EARLY
CHILDHOOD

@idec_illinois

@IllinoisDepartmentofEarlyChildhood

@Illinois Department of Early Childhood

www.idec.illinois.gov

IDEC