

TAC 2026 Final Report Outline

Revised Draft

April 2026 working group review

0. Acknowledgment page

I. Executive Summary

II. Introduction and Context

Describe the state's transition and creation of IDEC – with specific reference to the work and recommendations of the Funding Commission.

- Overview of the transition to IDEC
- Vision for the new agency: simpler, better, fairer
- Why this transition is a critical moment to enhance equity for children, families, and providers
 - [Insert parent/provider voice uplifting the need to enhance equitable outcomes for children, families, and providers]
 - Balance quotes from families and providers in the final report.

Provide a high-level overview of the importance of centering equity and lived experiences (with full equity framework in appendix).

- Why family and provider lived experience must shape the system's design
- How equity and family voice have been elevated across the transition (e.g. listening sessions, surveys, workgroups, etc.)
- Key takeaway: Moving forward, equity needs explicitly operationalized during decision-making [hold for a concrete example that makes this commitment explicit]

Address the central desired outcome for children (kindergarten readiness, developmental gains, child health and development).

- Outcomes around addressing family, provider, community needs all feed into this main outcome)

- The aforementioned points connect to continued advocacy, funding considerations, etc.
- Add additional points on research for child outcomes (specific to Multilingual Learners) that highlights findings in Chicago and Illinois [cite UChicago/IWERC data]

Address the key themes and elements that will weave throughout report.

- Equity, including who may benefit the least from the current recommendations
- 0-3, 3-5, Early Intervention, MLL, families with child welfare involvement, and other priority populations and the funding needed for these populations
- Research
- Different program settings & quality (also has its own report section)

III. Purpose, Charge, and Role of the TAC

- TAC Charge: “Seek and help the state make meaning of stakeholder input in preparation for the transition, with a particularly emphasis on understanding families’ goals and needs from a comprehensive ECE system for Illinois’ children”
- Overarching statement about the work of the TAC and also the values and guiding principles that directed the work. Should also include some context around funding, data informed decision making, and system cohesion/alignment.
- High-level overview of process and meaning making – workgroups and other engagement efforts (sprints, focus groups, ChiByDesign) (with detail in appendix)

IV. Purpose of the Final Report

- To connect and elevate the recommendations arising out the 2+ year TAC process with a focus on how to improve the EC system to equitably meet the needs of children and families, improve system function for providers, and set a path for future success.
- Report will outline the process for developing recommendations, though its purpose is to transform mechanisms to inform IDEC.
 - What are the big changes we are going to make regarding the major buckets as outlined, and what are the gaps that still exist

V. Topic Sections

0. Introduction

- Both rich detail and prevailing themes emerged related to each topic area as the TAC undertook their charge of seeking and helping the state make meaning of stakeholder input.
- TAC has used information across workgroups to inform analysis and recommendations.
 - [Hold to address timeline of implementing recommendations, indicating which recommendations are immediately actionable and which will take a longer period of time to fully implement]

1. Program Quality

What TAC heard: Initial challenge statement(s)/themes

- Research that informs what is needed for healthy early development and learning
 - [Hold for research that articulates the essential components of high-quality early childhood education, etc.]
- Challenges in the system: childcare/education deserts, service delays for EI, service gaps in home visiting
- [Insert parent/provider voice discussing disparities in access and quality within the current system]
- No common identification of English Learners and eligibility for Bilingual Programs
- Program standards and alignment
- Needs of priority populations are not addressed in the program standards (e.g., MLL, children with delays/disabilities, areas of concentrated poverty, children 0-3, families with child welfare involvement)

Key recommendations

- Include a definition of high-quality measures for staffing broken down by credentials, class size, and ratios
- Invest in technical assistance and create a structured “on-ramp for new programs, with an emphasis on supporting childcare centers, homes, and FFN providers in areas with the greatest community needs (i.e. childcare deserts)
- [Hold for specific considerations to address how recommendations will factor in children with disabilities and developmental delays, multilingual learners, Early Intervention, families with child welfare involvement, and priority populations]

2. Data, Technology, and Reporting

What TAC heard: Initial challenge statement(s)/themes

- Data siloes and fragmentation; insufficient to answer important systemic questions
 - [Insert parent/provider voice discussing the challenges with siloed data systems and limited data]
- Role of data in advancing equity
- Use of tech and data systems to make systems more efficient and easier to navigate for families and providers alike
- Role of data in ensuring equitable outcomes

Key recommendations

- Outline a process for achieving short- and long-term objectives, including how data priorities will address critical questions around service gaps and funding disparities.*
- Connect data from ECIDS to the state's other longitudinal data sets (i.e., ILDS) to identify overarching trends and answer deeper questions about child outcomes.*
- Establish a single, unified data portal for families, providers, administrators, and the early childhood workforce.
- Publish an annual, comprehensive report tracking key metrics, including system capacity, service levels, outcomes, workforce, and funding - displaying aggregate and disaggregated data when applicable.
- [Hold for specific considerations to address how recommendations will factor in children with disabilities and developmental delays, multilingual learners, Early Intervention, families with child welfare involvement, and priority populations]

3. Workforce

What TAC heard: Initial challenge statement(s)/themes

- Importance of a stable, highly skilled workforce
 - [Hold for research that emphasizes evidence-based rationale for a highly skilled workforce including knowledge of trauma informed care, how to support priority populations, importance of stability and continuity of care, etc.]
- Compensation issues
- Process barriers to hiring

- Work stress and inadequate supports for educators
 - [Hold for provider/workforce voice discussing the need for more adequate supports for early childhood workforce]
- Impact of workforce challenges and shortages on priority populations
- Chronic undervaluing of the ECE workforce as an equity/justice issue
- Bolstering and supporting early childhood infrastructure systems and their workforce (CCR&Rs)

Key recommendations

- Identify ways to expand the educator pipeline and increase the number of high-quality educators, with a particular focus on increasing the number of educators who are equipped to meet the needs of multilingual learners and children with disabilities.
- Upskill the credentials of the current early childhood workforce across service areas and program types, with a focus on increasing the supply of licensed early childhood educators.
- Align compensation with credential/educational attainment and move towards parity with public school districts.
 - Grow support for increased compensation through non-competitive funding such as SSWG.
- [Hold for specific considerations to address how recommendations will factor in children with disabilities and developmental delays, multilingual learners, Early Intervention, families with child welfare involvement, and priority populations]

4. Ease of Navigation and Administrative Burden

What TAC heard: Initial challenge statement(s)/themes

- Families: applications are challenging; info is not centralized
 - [Hold for parent voice discussing lived experience in navigating applications and finding high quality early childhood services]
- Providers: blending and braiding requires balance of different program standards/expectations; some providers cannot access all funding streams; overload of monitoring visits and audits

Key recommendations

- Utilize an accessible parent portal to streamline applications and minimize the need for duplicity.

- Align funding, program standards, and monitoring/reporting requirements.
- [Hold for specific considerations to address how recommendations will factor in children with disabilities and developmental delays, multilingual learners, Early Intervention, families with child welfare involvement, and priority populations]

5. Funding Streams

What TAC heard: Initial challenge statement(s)/themes

- Inefficiencies of braiding and blending approach, including administrative burden that discourages braiding/blending
 - [Hold for research about the number of providers who utilize multiple public funding streams, etc.]
- Inequities for providers with less capacity
- Funding does not match the true cost of care, especially so for serving priority populations
 - [Hold for research that highlights disparities between funding providers receive and the true cost of care to provide high-quality services]
 - [Hold for parent/provider voice discussing challenges with inadequate funding and lack of comprehensive support for children with disabilities, multilingual learners, etc.]
- No cohesive, system-wide process for equitable funding distribution
- Need to maximize different funding sources

Key recommendations

- Align state funding streams with common purposes
- Prioritize predictable and stable distribution strategies
- Expand and include relevant MLL supports and compare to K-12 system
- Multi-year analysis that examines the true cost of care
- [Hold for specific considerations to address how recommendations will factor in children with disabilities and developmental delays, multilingual learners, Early Intervention, families with child welfare involvement, and priority populations]

6. Governance

What TAC heard: Initial challenge statement(s)/themes

- Need for oversight and support
- Role of the Early Learning Council
- Data governance considerations

- Governance committee representation

Key recommendations

- Clearly articulate the goals of the advisory group and related sub-groups.
- At least one member should have expertise serving ML; develop guidance, data systems, and a research agenda specific to MLL/EL
- At least one member should have expertise serving children with disabilities.
- [Hold for specific considerations to address how recommendations will factor in children with disabilities and developmental delays, multilingual learners, Early Intervention, families with child welfare involvement, and priority populations]

VI: Transition from TAC to Advisory Body (must dos and haves)

Introduction

- Importance of and role of an advisory body, linking to the work of the TAC vis-a-vis focus on equity and provider and parent participation

What TAC heard: key takeaways

- Robust public/private partnership to support collaboration and coordination across the comprehensive early development field
- Meaningful participation from families, providers, and ECE workforce with equitable representation across different groups
 - [Hold for parent/provider voice discussing the need for meaningful representation and centering lived experience]
- Expertise and lived experiences reflecting priority populations
- Representation of other state agencies that provide overlapping or connecting services to understand the multi-system needs of families and children

Recommendations

[Hold for specific considerations to address how recommendations will factor in children with disabilities and developmental delays, multilingual learners, Early Intervention, families with child welfare involvement, and priority populations.]

VII: Conclusion

VIII: Appendices

Workgroup recommendations

- Program standards alignment
 - Include unified vision statement and guiding principles
 - Crosswalk outlining alignment, discrepancies, and gaps
- Supporting children with disabilities and developmental delays
- Supporting multilingual learners
- Child care/pre-K funding subcommittee
 - Cost of care – Personnel and non-personnel
 - Cost of care – Serving priority populations including MLL and children with disabilities
- Home visiting funding subcommittee
- Family, friend & neighbor funding subcommittee

Stakeholder engagement summary

- Sprints (e.g., licensing co-design, Wonder School, tech talks)
- Focus groups

Equity framework

Critical research references

Including emphasis on trauma-informed care, mental health, benefits of early childhood education and care to priority populations, benefits of bilingual education

TAC background and membership

Padlet Links for Engagement:

- Advocates: https://padlet.com/kristengarcia4/April2026_Advocates
- State and local agencies: https://padlet.com/kristengarcia4/April2026_StateLocalAgencies
- Service organizations: https://padlet.com/kristengarcia4/April2026_ServiceOrgs
- Families: https://padlet.com/kristengarcia4/April2026_Families_Familias
- Providers: https://padlet.com/kristengarcia4/April2026_Providers_Provedores
- All other roles: https://padlet.com/kristengarcia4/April2026_AllRoles_TodosRoles