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TAC 2026 Final Report Outline

Revised Draft

August 2026 TAC review

Last Revised: August 17, 2026

Principles throughout:

- Ensure the report is in plain language for families to understand
- Family/provider voice should show up in quotes AND should shape the narrative
- Final recommendations report should be action-oriented and detailed, including mechanisms for change and details on steps, decision points, feasibility, timeframe, urgency, lift, etc.

0. Acknowledgment page

I. Executive Summary

Throughout this report, we will be utilizing a Phase Framework to identify how we recommend priorities be sequenced in terms of timeline. Within each topic section of the report, we will notate which Phase we recommend IDEC implement the recommendation. This will enable IDEC and stakeholders to understand urgency and immediacy identified by TAC. As such:

- Phase I – by July 2026 (Day 1)
- Phase II – first year
- Phase III – longer term

II. Introduction and Context

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
 - Provide examples of and define these outcomes
- TAC defines quality as [placeholder – to be determined] and understands kindergarten readiness to mean [placeholder – to be determined]
- Given that child outcomes are the stakes, IDEC's creation is the opportunity, and inputs such as equity and family voice identify what has been missing and what needs to change.

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- How to structure IDEC as a system that provides the context for children and families to thrive. IDEC is the vehicle to support those conditions, and its metrics are putting in place the conditions.

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
- Reiterate the two chief recommendations of the Funding Commission beyond creation of IDEC: *commitment of more funding to the birth-to-5 system*, and *streamlining funding mechanisms*.
- Note the body's bipartisan composition. Similarly, it could prove helpful to stress the General Assembly's strong, bipartisan support of SB1, the legislation establishing IDEC in 2024; this bill received unanimous Senate approval and a 93-18 vote in the House, underscoring its solidly bipartisan nature.
- 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
 - Insert desired outcomes for a system that supports children and families
 - Balance quotes from families and providers in the final report.
- Add in legislative wins to date – sharing context around how IDEC started as a new agency and the bills that have progressed to enable IDEC's leadership. (Senate Bill 3907 and others)

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]
- Discussion of weaving priority populations throughout the work (MLL, children with disabilities or delays, high poverty, homelessness, child welfare, etc.)
 - Include how priority populations are defined using examples:
 - Early Learning Council (2021): [priority-populations-updated-2021.pdf](#)
 - All Families Served ELC Subcommittee (2019): [Approved Priority Populations Recommendation](#)

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- Early Childhood Funding Commission: [Early Childhood Funding Commission Full Report](#)
- TAC focuses on multilingual learners and children with disabilities and developmental delays
 - Be consistent with how priority populations are defined throughout the document.
- Create a clear definition for Early Care and Education (ECE) to be inclusive of the workforce.
 - TAC Member: How do we define ECE? Is it inclusive of child care/pre-k, home visiting, mental health consultants, early intervention, etc.?

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- The 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 early care and education (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

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V. Topic Sections

A. 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.
- Additionally, values emerged from the work groups that are critical to understanding the Transition Advisory Committee's recommendations at large. For example, TAC recommends that the new Department of Early Childhood's Data and Analytics function will promote a more equitable system that meets the needs of all children and families by sharing actionable data directly with families, providers and administrators. This commitment will be to put accurate and relevant data into the hands of key stakeholders being served by the system. This commitment also ensures accountability for the families of Illinois that every family can and will access quality education and care services.
- Note that this report could not address every single issue of importance to the future and improvement of Illinois' birth-to-5 system, and that some matters have are outside of TAC's current scope of research and recommendations. This omission is not indicative of the needs of these areas, nor is it necessarily reflective of IDEC's scope of priorities and work. Key examples include:
 - Capital concerns and needs of early childhood facilities.
 - Deep dives into Early Intervention and Home Visiting
- 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]

B. 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

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- [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)
- Considerations on program standards overlap with workforce to reduce silos (training, ratios, competencies, and credentials)
- Investments in the workforce are tied to quality for children and families.

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]
- Identifying the implications for aligning program standards on the workforce (e.g. what does this mean for credentialing)

Cite: IWERC’s recent report on Multilingual Learners

[Suggested examples be included in the outline to make it more relatable for parents and providers]

[Integrate relevant bills that have passed or are in progress]

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C. 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
- Discussion of the subcommittee on the ChildTrends data metrics – making sure this is captured in the observations or recommendations.

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.*
 - E.g. Using data to vet certain services/resources that many providers need to access such as interpretation.
- Connect data from Early Childhood Integrated Data Systems (ECIDS) to the state's other longitudinal data sets (i.e., ILDS) to identify overarching trends and answer deeper questions about child outcomes.*
 - Defining what ECIDS system
 - Does it connect to other datasets like the Illinois Early Childhood Asset Map (IECAM)?
- Establish a single, unified data portal for families, providers, administrators, and the early childhood workforce.
 - Is the unified data portal or system referenced Wonderschool or another?
- Publish an annual, comprehensive report tracking key metrics, including system capacity, service levels, outcomes, workforce, and funding - displaying aggregate and disaggregated data when applicable.
 - Standardize metrics across programs
 - Determine who benefits the most/least across the State
- Publish updated funding equity map, annual or biennial
 - Publish workforce staffing and compensation report that builds on DHS

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salary and staffing survey, accounting for labor supply and demand –
either annual or biennial

- [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]
- Include language around family rights and the connections to data privacy and interpretation.
- Addressing data governance such as by determining who will oversee data, how data be used in practice and implementation, using data in strength-based way, and data privacy for families.

[Suggested examples be included in the outline to make it more relatable for parents and providers]

[Integrate relevant bills that have passed or are in progress]

D. Workforce

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

- Inclusion of workforce perspective in analysis of workforce challenges and the design of solutions
- The need to recruit for programs, create a robust pipeline of ECE workforce and ancillary staff, and retain a skilled, committed, and diverse workforce in sufficient numbers/supply across program areas (childcare/pre-K, Home visiting, Early Intervention)
- Be clear that there is not a one size that fits all approach for the workforce. There are notable differences in each setting (child care, pre-k, family child care, Early Intervention, Home Visiting, etc.) that should be emphasized in recommendations.
 - *Some EI providers may not be affiliated with a program and eligible for work related benefits.*
- The need to increase compensation and benefits across the sector.
- Process barriers to hiring, including background checks
- Educator stressors and inadequate supports that impact retention, including adequate training on serving priority populations
 - [Hold for provider/workforce voice discussing the need for more adequate supports for early childhood workforce]
 - Along with workforce voice, include case studies/research on existing

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compensation/benefit initiatives that have proven to support retention. (An Illinois example is Childcare for Childcare workers. Give particular attention to shortage areas (e.g. special education and English Learners).

- Provide an overview of the need for specialized knowledge and preparation for priority populations, especially special education and English Learners. Considerations should be provided for professional development that applies to all educators in combination with pathways for upskilling the workforce for specialized credentials/approvals/endorsements. Discussions of upskilling should align with any recommendations regarding increased compensation and benefits for these specialized credentials.
- The need to elevate the profession. Chronic undervaluing of the ECE workforce as an equity and justice issue.
- Bolstering and supporting early childhood infrastructure systems and their workforce (CCR&Rs, etc.)
- Considerations for defining quality and the connection to the workforce
- Recommendation from public to grapple deeply and thoughtfully with the causes of the workforce crisis in Illinois and prioritizing strategies to address is: How to address feedback shared with TAC and IDEC by members of the workforce?

Structure for section consideration:

- Could approach section as:
- What applies to full workforce
- What applies to certain roles/programs/types of environments – in order to address diverse needs

Framing: While the TAC did not have a designated workgroup on the early childhood workforce, the following key themes were elevated across multiple workgroups. *[hold for short statement about the importance of recruiting, retaining a well-prepared workforce, the importance of stability/continuity of care, and the need for specialized educator preparation for those working with priority populations]*. With regard to being global and inclusive of all the workforce in the early childhood education and care landscape, let's be both universal and targeted. How might we be universal while also recognizing supports and resources needed for different roles? We want to embody a collective, a lens of abundance rather than competition.

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Key recommendations: Framing consideration – Conduct a full data and research-driven evaluation of the current state of the early childhood workforce (e.g. current shortages, turnover rates) to identify gaps.

- Establish a Workforce Transition Workgroup: Establish and facilitate a workforce-focused external workgroup that works with IDEC leadership to:
 - Develop a vision for a unified and robust, cross-sector workforce for IL.
 - Identify and prioritize key initiatives to build out this vision and begin implementation.
 - Continue to explore how other states are addressing workforce challenges systemically.
 - Include representation on the workgroup of those knowledgeable of workforce issues, including ECE professionals from all program areas, those with knowledge of priority populations like MLL, students with delays/disabilities, and higher education.
- Conduct a compensation analysis to determine how compensation can be increased across programmatic areas:
- Align compensation with years of professional experience and credential/educational attainment.
 - Ensure that specialized credentials are adequately compensated (e.g. bilingual certification).
- Examine inequities in pay structure across roles, race/ethnicity and sex.
- Move towards parity with public school districts
 - Be clear if it's a comparison with K-12 public school teacher salaries or ECE teacher public school salary structures (Cite: Tac Member)
 - TAC Member: Split out distinct alignment for parity for child care/pre-k, home visiting, and EI rather than the same logic for all the workforce.
- Utilize learnings from previous initiatives to increase compensation for the ECEC workforce (e.g., Great START, Smart Start) and build off previous work (e.g., [Achieving Compensation Parity: Illinois Goal for the Field of ECEC.](#)) to outline a long-term path toward pay parity
 - Are there corresponding initiatives in EI and HV to note?
 - [EI Cost IDHS Early Intervention Cost Model: November 2024](#)
- Determine how to achieve parity for different provider types (ECE, Early Intervention, Home Visiting)
 - Increase compensation among all staff, including ancillary support
- Lived experience in the workforce should be considered, not just credential/educational attainment.
- Support workforce well-being through clearly defined strategies for workforce retention.
- Identify the key factors beyond compensation that have been proven to help retain the existing workforce – across roles and needs. (e.g. benefits, retirement package, well-being programs, etc.)
- Embed subject matter experts across the ECE and Comprehensive Services workforce to reduce silos and build sector understanding

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- Address the supports to programs like: Infant/Early Childhood Mental Health Consultations, Pyramid Model, Inclusion Specialists, Health Consultants
- Bolster the early childhood infrastructure systems and their workforce (CCR&Rs, etc.)
- Increase training and professional development specific to serving priority populations, inclusive of higher education and other vetted opportunities
- Elevate the ECE sector and increase the educator pipeline to ensure that Illinois has a robust, highly qualified workforce that adequately meets the needs of young children through:
 - Prioritize compensation and upskilling the incumbent workforce: Assess current landscape of credentials of the current early childhood workforce across service areas and program types and compare recommendations about credential needs for the sector.
 - Do not expect more of the workforce if we don't increase our efforts.
 - Prioritize compensation more than upskilling (Cite: Public Member)
 - Integrate workforce pathways that explicitly address the needs of priority populations across service areas and program types
 - Build flexible pathways for educators and specialized service providers to attain the required qualifications and other eligibility requirements
 - Increase training opportunities and credential pathways to meet the needs of multilingual learners, children with disabilities, and other priority populations
 - Strengthen and leverage partnerships with higher education institutions to support seamless and supported pathways across the full suite of ECEC professions and pathways
 - Supporting the pipeline and upskilling of credentials through investments in higher education:
 - Scholarships
 - ECACE (support navigators)
 - Gateways
 - Apprenticeships
 - Cohort Models (highlighting onsite models as a bright spot in terms of increasing accessibility)
- Develop professional development opportunities based on the needs of early childhood educators and specialized service providers (Early Intervention, Home Visiting, et al) to elevate their impact on children and families.

Ongoing data reporting/research:

- Grow and support a more comprehensive supply and demand report that is co-created with participation from the field, including at the school district level
 - Utilize currently available data and assess data gaps
 - Move towards regular supply and demand reporting (i.e., establish a standard cadence)
 - Publish workforce staffing and compensation report that builds on DHS salary and staffing survey, accounting for labor supply and demand – either annual or biennial

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- Partner with ELC, direct service, and higher ed institutions to develop a research agenda specific to the state and needs of the workforce.
- Increase the utility of ECE workforce data by ensuring those providing direct services can access and understand to support their current needs (e.g. retention, recruitment, hiring).

Cite: IWERC's forthcoming paper on the ECE Workforce

[Suggested examples be included in the outline to make it more relatable for parents and providers]

[Integrate relevant bills that have passed or are in progress – i.e. Background Check Bill]

E. 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]
 - Families need a unified navigation and a signal point of entry when seeking available services.
 - Families expressed the need for simpler, more coordinated processes that reduce repetition and confusion. Families often navigate multiple referrals, evaluation, eligibility, and service systems that use different processes, timelines, and terminology.
 - Applications are challenging and information is not centralized, especially for multilingual families having to acclimate to dominant language and culture norms.
 - Families need active outreach and responsive follow-up after submitting forms.
 - Families need provider directory, dashboard and care team clarity
 - Families need multilingual access and integration of cultural relevance into programs and services.
 - Language and Culture is often a Gatekeeper to Services. Multilingual families may experience linguistic and cultural barriers with navigating referrals and eligibility processes.
 - Information shared with families is inconsistent across programs and services around multilingualism and child development. There is a lack of multilingual/multicultural staff leading to issues with

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inclusion and equity.

- *“Some time ago I requested speech therapy services and waited about 8 months and got a person who didn't speak our language, they would come and give toys to my child and they would chat, it was awkward and frustrating I didn't want to lose the services and wait a few more months. In the end I did and it only lasted a month because my child turned 3”- Parent*
- Better alignment across systems and clearer pathways of support would better address families' expressed needs. Fragmented systems and inconsistent transitions require families to coordinate services across multiple providers.
- Families emphasized peer to peer support and family navigators.
 - Families articulated the need more support in navigating services and understanding eligibility and it would be great to be able to speak to a live person.
- Burden increases when families must repeat their story, coordinate across disconnected programs, and manage transitions without a clear point of contact or warm handoff.
- Providers: blending and braiding requires balance of different program standards/expectations; some providers cannot access all funding streams; overload of monitoring visits and audits
 - Providers emphasized they need a unified data system to reduce manual errors when tracking their caseloads and to coordinate with families, service coordinators and providers.
 - Quote: *“we don't have a data system. The first thing is if we can implement a data system. I literally have to count on hand, we have 1400 children in our CFC its impossible to do manually. the human error is great if a service coordinator isn't recording their numbers to me them I have to go through each one of their file. It is very difficult to get a good number for people. I'd love to know how many people we need but I can never get it accurate ”- service coordinator*
 - Some communities use IRIS, but not all providers opt into using this platform.
 - The needs of priority populations are increasing without essential supports for providers.

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Key recommendations

Parent recommendations

- Utilize an accessible parent portal to streamline applications and minimize the need for duplication.
 - Integrate a provider directory to help families with juggling multiple providers
 - Integrate a dashboard that streamlines communications such as messaging to providers, calendar of appointments, and tracking for who is involved in their child’s care team.
 - Implement a “concierge” approach where the system reaches out rather than families doing repeated searching.
- Implement family navigators to help families understand their options and next steps when seeking available programs and services.
- Enhance the infrastructure of the CCR&Rs to support the continuum of service for families and improve communication.
- Empower families by providing clear information on their rights when accessing services (e.g. IDEA rights, Early Intervention timelines, and complaint processes)
- Build stronger coordination between state agencies, regional and local intermediaries and families enhance to transitions into and out of programs and reduce siloes.
 - Reduce unclear and contradictory messaging for families.
 - Strengthen local/regional touchpoints for families to get advice, guidance, parent peer-to-peer support, and information sharing on service types, eligibility criteria and rights.

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Provider Recommendations

- Establish equity-driven standards for how data is collected, used and prioritized to help guide providers (Cite: DAI Workgroup)
- Establish standardized data collection processes to ensure accuracy, comparability, and equitable understanding across programs and settings. (Cite: DAI Workgroup)
- Streamline licensing and monitoring/reporting requirements by standardizing processes, eliminating duplication, and making the process more user friendly.
 - Conduct a full review and streamline licensing standards to reduce complexity for providers and reduce delays.
- Prioritize clarifying, aligning, and simplifying program standards that have different federal or state requirements to make it easy to understand and apply consistently, and to ensure compliance across programs.
- Prioritize aligning and consolidating overlapping funding streams requirements so programs can meet expectations through a single, unified set of guidelines, reducing duplication and administrative burden.
 - Do not minimize quality in the pursuit of lessening administrative burden (Cite: TAC Member)
- Develop clear guidelines, expectations and implement supports for providers to meet the diverse needs of priority populations.
 - Increase capacity for the workforce (e.g. infant/toddler teachers, bilingual interpreters and providers with specialized training, early intervention providers/professionals, culturally responsive navigators, etc.)
 - Consider how to make implementation efficient and avoid duplicating reporting or data collection 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]

[Suggested examples be included in the outline to make it more relatable for parents and providers]

[Integrate relevant bills that have passed or are in progress – i.e., HB5099 Background Checks Bill and HB3595 Licensing Redesign Bill]

F. Funding Streams

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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.]
 - Note that it's important to call out administrative burden of blending/braiding – but any funding change should maintain high standards and necessary data collection practices to maintain compliance and best practice. Do not minimize quality in the pursuit of lessening administrative burden. (Cite: TAC Member)
- 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]
 - Acknowledgement of smaller programs serving children with disabilities and developmental delays where the cost per child could be more
 - [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
- Current lack of funding adequacy targets; current funding does not reflect the true cost of care
- Federal considerations – highlight the fragility of federal funding and its impact on IL (perhaps call out specific impacts like Head Start, Medicaid, and SNAP)

Key recommendations

Foundational Recommendations

- Funding Adequacy
 - Define long-term targets for full funding that cover the services that families want and need. i.e. Here's what we are trying to reach → the distant target
 - Leverage Equity Map and CELFE work, identifying if the money is getting where it needs to go.
 - Define long-term targets for full funding that cover the services that families want and need
 - Address the funding needs of different provider types.

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- Account for revenue/local funding contributions.
 - Include quality factors into the funding formula.
 - Embed weighted cost factors for priority populations, including children with disabilities, multilingual learners, infants/toddlers, and low-income families.
 - Establish a “hold harmless” provision to ensure stability for existing programs.
- Recommendation to continue to update adequacy/cost factors – something like Professional Review Panel (PRP) or dedicated group to do this ongoing work of reviewing implementation of funding formula, inclusive of:
 - Family and local contributions components
 - Additional revenue/local funding contributions
- Develop an equitable and transparent strategy to prioritize the “next dollar in”
 - Utilize a data-informed framework to prioritize how additional funding is distributed based on system needs and funding adequacy targets.
 - Establish an advisory body to evaluate and monitor the roll-out and implementation of the state’s changes to the early childhood funding system.
 - Annually update and publish the Funding Equity Map (FEM) to identify current disparities in funding and inform the state’s approach to prioritize the “next dollar in.”
- Revisit priority populations definitions and ensure these groups are not treated as an afterthought in funding, including revisiting early archives of priority populations definitions.
 - Consideration for legal protections for special populations.
 - Considerations for how to make childcare subsidies more broadly affordable, especially for kids with disabilities and developmental delays (e.g., parents who may be above FPL to enroll in CCAP).
 - Take into account how much parents spend out of pocket for services and support providers/staff to meet the needs of kids with disabilities and developmental delays.
 - Review the ISBE English Learner supplemental funding within EBF and Title III for preschool (currently an estimated \$32.8 Million)
 - Propose a carve out if a child receives special needs services, but parent(s) do not meet income threshold
- Federal considerations – highlight the fragility of federal funding and its impact on IL
 - Call out Head Start and Child Care – state relies on both to keep costs down
 - Additional systemic impacts are also affecting family and child well-being – Medicaid, SNAP, etc
 - For Consideration: Assemble a task force to consider revenue sources and solutions

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to address the gap to full funding in Illinois' ECEC system

- Establish a “hold harmless” provision to ensure stability for existing programs
- Tie in equity piece here – if we don’t have additional funding to fill in federal holes.
- Recommendation around state affordability threshold

Long-Term Planning and Equity Frameworks

- Address the funding needs of different provider types (duplicated entry preserved)
- Include quality factors into the funding formula
- Embed weighted cost factors across the board, including considerations for
 - ‘weight’ of priority populations, including children with disabilities, multilingual learners, infants/toddlers, and low-income families
 - Family and local contributions
- Utilize a data-informed framework to prioritize how additional funding is distributed based on system needs and funding adequacy targets – state will need to develop a long-term strategy for updates and monitoring
- Establish an advisory body to evaluate and monitor the roll-out and implementation of the state’s changes to the early childhood funding system
- Annually update and publish the Funding Equity Map (FEM) to identify current disparities in funding and inform the state’s approach to prioritize the “next dollar in”- needs to be an equitable and transparent strategy that discusses quality and quantity tensions.
 - Revisit priority populations definitions and ensure these groups are not treated as an afterthought in funding, including revisiting early archives of priority populations definitions (duplicate retained)

Overarching Recommendations and Framework Considerations

- When framing the approach to funding intent vis a vis quality and/or quantity goals, note that funding will and should be iterative. For example, there will be a push towards quality and then an intentional focus on quality and then back to quantity and access, etc.
 - Include quality factors into the funding formula [see May Funding Design Work Group meeting for details]

Funding Stream + Alignment

- Align state funding streams with common purposes, simplifying from 12 to 4 core funding streams.
 - One aligned funding stream for childcare and pre-k programs: CCAP/CCDF, ECBG PFA/PFAE, PI CB, SSWGs, and SSQS.
 - One aligned funding stream for home visiting programs: MIECHV, MCHV, IDHS-HV, ECBG PI HV.
 - Continue to fund Early Intervention and Early Childhood Special Education separately.
 - Ensure there’s not conflicting requirements and that there is uniformity

Green Highlights: Sections that were recently updated. (Ease of Navigation and Administrative Burden)

Yellow Highlights: Comments, considerations or questions for TAC.

Blue Highlights: Citations

across funding streams.

- Awareness of how these funding streams interact, and the dependencies families/providers have on funding streams.
- Development of checkpoints as it relates to funding streams and the needs families have communicated. Monitoring should support improvement of programming, not be punitive or exclusionary.
- Clarify funding types and mechanisms among contracts, grants, vouchers and hybrid [see May Funding Design work group deck vis a vis inclusion of multiple mechanisms]

Stability, Predictability, and Funding Structure

- Prioritize predictable and stable distribution strategies, providing base funding through non-competitive grants and contracts wherever possible.
 - Utilize a multi-year analysis and/or informed averages, looking at past enrollment trends and child/family demographics, to refine the true cost of care for each program.
- Expand use of non-competitive grants or contracts for providers serving priority populations.
- Continue to use vouchers to maximize family choice.
- Clarify funding types and mechanisms among contracts, grants, vouchers, and hybrid
- Reserve use of competitive grants for short-term or specialized funding.
 - Ensure Requests for Proposals (RFPs) and grant-making processes allow providers to share community context and unique attributes.
 - Aligned with workgroup proposals, propose utilizing competitive grants only for very niche use cases, not for core programmatic funding.
 - Provide capacity building for proposal writing where needed.

Support for Priority Populations and Special Considerations

- Revisit priority populations definitions and ensure these groups are not treated as an afterthought in funding, including revisiting early archives of priority populations definitions
 - [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]
 - Consideration for legal protection for special populations
- Considerations for how to make childcare subsidies more broadly affordable, especially for kids with disabilities and developmental delays (e.g., parents who may be above FPL to enroll in CCAP)
- Account for how much parents spend out of pocket for services and support providers/staff to meet the needs of kids with disabilities and developmental delays

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- Propose a carve out if a child receives special needs services but parent(s) do not meet income threshold

Provider Types and System Implementation Needs

- Address the funding needs of different provider types (e.g., providers in school districts who come in through EI or have not received EI services causing districts to play catch up)
- Development of checkpoints as it related to funding streams and the needs families have communicated
- Monitoring should support improvement of programming, not be punitive or exclusionary

[Suggested examples be included in the outline to make it more relatable for parents and providers]

[Integrate relevant bills that have passed or are in progress]

G. Advisory

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

- Highlight the need for oversight and support for the advisory body
 - Using data and key performance indicators to lift the work of the advisory body
 - Create a clear definition of priority populations
- Identify ways to integrate direct input from communities to the advisory body
- Lift the role of the Early Learning Council and continuation
- Data, funding, and parent governance considerations

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- Diverse advisory body representation (should reflect priority populations, parents, diverse provider types, medical staff, etc.
- Considerations for the breadth of advisory councils across IL
 - Mapping the current advisory infrastructure in IL
 - Building strong relationships between all advisories – maximizing feedback loops and information sharing
 - Add an appendix for the current list of advisories in IL

Key recommendations

- Maintain the Early Learning Council as the advisory body to IDEC and clearly articulate the goals of the advisory group and related sub-committees.
- Implement term limits and rolling membership for ELC members to continue integrating diverse voices into the work.
 - Cite: Current ELC Bylaws don't have term limits
<https://idec.illinois.gov/content/dam/soi/en/web/idec/events/documents/exec-committee/2024/ELC%20Bylaws.pdf>
- Ensure the ELC is adequately staffed to support the committee and ongoing work.
- Ensure ELC membership is inclusive of the diverse experiences and expertise in early childhood.
 - At least one member should have expertise in serving ML; develop guidance, data systems, and a research agenda specific to MLL/EL. That expertise is defined through competencies gained through a PEL and bilingual/ESL endorsement along with actual experience teaching ELs in a preschool classroom.
 - At least one member should have expertise in serving children with disabilities.
 - Ensuring a parent with experience in policy-making is present on the advisory body and the addition of a parent advisory council.
 - Consideration: Some parents may not have policy expertise. Based on the emerging recommendation, is this a requirement?. Should there be considerations for parents who lived experience, but not formal policy experience?
 - At least one member should have medical expertise – e.g. pediatricians – and can speak to the needs of young children from a health perspective. (Source: *Member of the Public at Advisory Meeting*)
- Develop processes to onboard and support participation of new advisory members. (Source: the Advisory Workgroup)
- Consult with current ELC members and other advisory body leads as the agency undertakes advisory reorganization (Source: the Advisory Workgroup)
- Reevaluate the ELC definition of “priority populations” to ensure it reflects the evolving

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needs of children, families, and communities.

- Develop a report card or assessment tool that is updated twice a year to support continuous quality improvement for the advisory body and IDEC.
 - Create clear goals and key performance indicators for the advisory body and related subcommittees, including regular checkpoints with IDEC.
 - Create clear goals and key performance indicators to assess IDEC's policy and programmatic efforts.
 - Map existing ELC subcommittees to examine what should continue be dissolved or is aligned with the future state of the ELC. (Source: TAC Workgroup and Civic Leaders for IL)
 - Map external state or regional advisory councils to determine alignment with the ELC, if current advisory councils are statutorily mandated, channels to increase communications across advisories, and what should continue or be dissolved.
 - Scans of ELC subcommittees and advisory bodies should assess the effectiveness of the committee in current early childhood system and communication/information sharing amongst stakeholders.
 - Establish a parent advisory, data governance, and funding advisory bodies (Source: TAC Workgroup, Funding Design, and Data, Reporting and Technology sections)
 - Establish feedback loops to build strong relationships between advisory bodies and the early childhood community to lift evolving work. (Source: the Advisory Workgroup and TAC Workgroup)
 - The early childhood community has clear information on how feedback is or isn't being integrated through regular communications with the agency.
 - Develop a process for formal and informal ways to integrate direct input into the from parents or caregivers, providers community collaborations, park districts, school districts, or out-of-state funded groups. (Source The Advisory workgroup, TAC Workgroup, and Member of the Public)

[Suggested examples be included in the outline to make it more relatable for parents and providers]

[Integrate relevant bills that have passed or are in progress]

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Blue Highlights: Citations

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.]

[Integrate relevant bills that have passed or are in progress]

VII: Conclusion

Parking Lot Recommendations

- Understanding when the workforce workgroup will be running
- Defined accountability structures within IDEC for priority populations
- A request to see IDEC's organization chart.

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Blue Highlights: Citations

VII. 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

Glossary of Key Terms

- Early Learning Council (ELC)
- Multilingual Learners (MLL)
- Early Care and Education (ECE)
- Early Childhood Integrated Data Systems (ECIDS)