



**GATEWAYS TO OPPORTUNITY**  
Illinois Professional Development System

## **Professional Development Advisory Council (PDAC)**

### **MISSION**

#### **Who We Are:**

The Professional Development Advisory Council (PDAC) is a group of highly qualified practitioners, educators, and advocates from around the state. PDAC was created in December 2002 by the Illinois Department of Human Services (IDHS) Bureau of Child Care and Development, and introduced Gateways to Opportunity statewide in March 2005. Gateways to Opportunity is the Illinois professional development system for early care and education, school-age, and youth development professionals. PDAC's overall strategy is to improve the stability of the workforce through increased professional development and improved opportunities for career advancement. PDAC members accomplish this goal through their dedicated efforts and involvement in PDAC committees.

#### **What We Believe**

The partners involved in this collaborative effort are committed to developing an integrated statewide professional development system. Additional goals are to promote professionalism within the early care and education, school-age, and youth development fields and provide opportunities and compensation for professionals to further their education and training. The system is accessible and affordable to practitioners across Illinois working in these fields. PDAC partners recognize that these goals are achievable only through collaboration with statewide, regional, and local organizations and funding entities (private and public) committed to this common purpose.

#### **Our Role:**

The role of PDAC through its membership is to act as a collective advisory body made up of stakeholders who work with and for children, youth and families that collaborate to develop recommendations in keeping with PDAC's vision, mission and goals pertaining to professional development.

#### **Our Vision:**

Illinois early care and education, school-age, youth development, and family support practitioners are well-qualified professionals who nurture and support the development and learning of children, youth, and families.

#### **Our Mission:**

To develop, support, and promote a professional development system for all early care and education, school-age, youth development, and family support practitioners.

#### **Our Values:**

We believe an effective professional development system is inclusive of practitioners in all settings serving children, youth, and families; service providers and program staff; and educators and trainers.