

PDAC Steering Committee Minutes

October 9, 2024

Aja Owasoyo	Joyce Gronewold	Marcy Mendenhall
Bela Mote	Julie Lindstrom	Marsha Hawley
Beth Knight	Kate Connor	Rebecca Pruitt
Gabriel Holmes	Lauri Morrison Frichtl	Rosie Dorsey
Gwyn Moss	Laurie Rhodes	Sharyl Robin
Joellyn Whitehead	Lisa Downey	Shauna Ejeh
Johnna Darragh Ernst	Lynn Burgett	Toni Porter
	Marcus Brown	Trinita Winston

Welcome and Review of Minutes

- Marcy Mendenhall was welcomed as the new PDAC Tri-Chair.
- Sharyl Robin was welcomed as the new Qualifications and Credentials Tri-Chair, Elva DeLuna stepped back as a Tri-Chair but will continue to support the committee.
- Joyce Gronewold was welcomed as the new representative for the Illinois State Board of Education.
- August 7, 2024, Minutes
 - Bela Mote made a motion to accept the minutes.
 - Kate Connor seconded the motion.
 - Minutes approved.

Bilingual Compensation Recommendation (Attachment 1)

RECOMMENDATION: The program design for SMART Start Quality Supports FY25 and FY26 should reflect quality support lever for early childhood bilingual staff by engaging in the following:

- Link Gateways Bilingual/ESL credential to a pay increase of 6%. A percentage informed by both local and national cost models (see table below-*Attachment 1*). As an interim measure, this proposal creates a career pathway for bilingual staff who have obtained or are pursuing the Gateways bilingual/ESL credential. This initiative supports staff retention in the field and promotes a pathway for economic mobility, particularly for women of color.
- Amend Bilingual/ESL Gateways Work Verification Form to include a check box for the employer to confirm candidates' language skillset.
- Commitment/ability to demonstrate proficiency in a language other than English through a memorandum of understanding between the employer and employee outlining additional responsibilities. Development of this memorandum is at the discretion of the licensed center. A memorandum of understanding provides protection for both the employer and the employee. It ensures that compensation translates into meaningful classroom support, while also protecting the employee by defining their responsibilities to align with their level of expertise.

Bilingual educators carry out additional responsibilities at various levels, including:

- translation/interpretation services
- resource referrals for families
- providing families with help when filling out social service applications
- administering assessments
- creating instructional materials for students in their native language
- additional communication with families regarding immigration related questions
- supporting coordinating or running Bilingual Parent Advisory Council (BPAC) efforts

RATIONALE: (including financial impact/monetary breakdown this recommendation would have if applicable): Illinois is undergoing a transformation in the early childhood system by establishing a unified early childhood agency, accompanied by investments aimed at addressing workforce pay through SMART START Workforce and Quality Supports Grants. It is critical to recognize bilingual educators' linguistic skillset that play a significant role in Multilingual learners' early educational experiences and align compensation to language skills. While there are many terms used to describe children from diverse linguistic backgrounds, for the purposes of this memo, "Multilingual Learners (MLs)" will be used to describe English Learners (ELs). ELs are children with a home language other than English. They are learning multiple languages and require services like Bilingual Education or English as a Second Language. The term EL acknowledges and upholds the legal protections and educational support English learners are entitled to. recommendation to increase pay for staff who actively have the Bilingual/ESL credential or actively pursuing the Bilingual/ESL credential is necessary for bilingual educator retention. *The state's workforce compensation grants serve as a potential funding stream to pilot a bilingual pay initiative for early childhood educators in licensed centers.*

This recommendation is critical for laying the groundwork to develop a bilingual pay ladder for the state of Illinois and encourage staff to stay in the field and pursue various levels of bilingual specialization. While the initiative directly empowers center leaders to retain and strengthen their bilingual pipeline, it also enhances addresses the quality programming multilingual learners receive in center settings, and addresses pay parity between community-based organizations and schools. Given trends in the workforce, this is timely to prevent high turnover rates. Additionally, as new coursework and training options become available this will incentivize continuous professional development and provide stability in the field.

- Steering or Financial Supports would join the planning and implementation process so that it can ensure omitting any unintended consequences or any inequitable practices.
- Suggested by Steering Committee to include in the recommendation or as an addendum to share cost modeling information from other states to give additional information to the Illinois cost model.
 - This recommendation was approved.

ECE Level 1 – Update – Beth Knight

- The ECE Level 1 Ad Hoc met from February through May to review the ECE Level 1.
- The Ad Hoc convened to address concerns and current uses by the field relative to Level 1.
- The Level 1 has evolved over time and has expanded its reach into various ECE systems and requirements.
- The Ad Hoc reviewed title and messaging for the ECE Level 1, to better communicate the purpose of Level 1 and eliminate confusion regarding the Level 1.
- Potentially looked at a name change for Level 1. If the name were to change this could add confusion to the field, when the Ad Hoc is looking at ways to make Level 1 less confusing.
- Will continue to evaluate the needs of the ECE Level1 for practitioners and system needs.

Reports

- Illinois Department of Human Services – Gabriel Holmes
 - Round 1 of SMART Start payments were sent out in September.
 - Round 2 of SMART Start payments will be sent out in December.
 - The Bureau of Home Visiting is working with INCCRRA to establish a work group to review the Home Visitor Credential Crosswalk Report and to identify the next steps for the criteria for a potential home visiting credential.
 - Head Start Collaboration grant new funding began on October 1st. A regional training will begin in October for implementation of updated Head Start programs performance standards.
- Illinois Community College Board
 - The next advisory meeting will be held on October 15th.
 - The allocation for the Early Childhood Access Consortium for Equity (ECACE) Scholarship went to state funding this year. The allocation is set at \$5 million dollars. Currently, developing

- recommendations on how to effectively move forward the qualifications and priorities for the scholarship.
 - More than 650 award recipients out of 3,000 applications before the application period was closed. The award amount was capped at \$7,500 per recipient.
 - Launched a working group centered around helping move forward recommendations that would help us with prioritization and eligibility around the scholarship given the size and scope of the scholarship. The goal is to have all recommendations and feedback final by the end of November to incorporate into the next budget request.
 - The next Consortium meeting is December 11, 2024.
 - Launched a new orientation for ECACE which will also help with phase two activities for the Consortium.
- Illinois Head Start Association
 - New Standards call for pay parity of the workforce with the K-3rd grade teachers. Will need to have this implemented by 2030.
 - Illinois Head Start and Early Head Start are currently serving 18,000 fewer children than a few years ago.
 - Head Start is mandated to be fully enrolled at 97% or better. If not fully enrolled for four consecutive months the program goes on the Full Enrollment Initiative if not fully enrolled at the end of twelve months they go into a six-month watch period. Programs are not fully enrolled as they cannot find qualified staff to be in the classrooms.
 - Asking for flexibility from the Office of Head Start or a pause on Full Enrollment until the number of qualified staff are increased.
 - Head Start cannot access the SMART Start Workforce grants. Many childcare partners have left Head Start to take part in the SMART Start grants.
- Illinois State Board of Education
 - Early Childhood Block Grant (ECBG) tentative award letters were sent out in August. The appeal process concluded with appeal letters being sent out on October 7, 2024.
 - Preschool For All (PFA) – 3,940 seats to be awarded.
 - Preschool for All Expansion (PFAE) – 1,142 seats to be awarded.
 - Preschool Initiative (PI) – 512 seats to be awarded.
 - Quality Dollars, approximately \$4.3 million dollars, is needed to bring current child care centers and other non- school districts to the minimum per child funding of \$3,900 for PFA and \$8,500 for PFAE. This is for child care centers and non-school districts such as ROEs and agencies.
 - Preschool Development Grant (PDG-B5) grant application notification was received, Illinois was not awarded/selected for the renewal program.

Committee Updates on Strategic Plan

- Workforce Development and Pathways
 - The Committee is prioritizing goals from the Strategic Plan.
 - Next steps include requesting data on the Registry, credential attainment numbers, request Joellyn Whitehead to attend our next meeting to review state and national reports on the ECE workforce.
 - The Prior Learning Assessment (PLA) recommendation was approved by IDHS.
- Financial Supports
 - The Committee has been prioritizing the SMART Start recommendation and has now brought that forward for the Steering Committee to review and vote on.
 - Will be monitoring the Gateways Scholarship numbers as it relates to our Strategic Plan goals.
- Higher Education
 - The Committee will focus on Goal 1 and Goal 3.

- Goal 1: Developing systems for identifying, sharing, and promoting flexible and innovative higher education early childhood/child development program models.
 - Goal 3: Gather and disseminate information on approaches to support new and/or incumbent early childhood professionals in entering or sustaining the field and/or workforce.
 - Will gather data and information from higher education institutions on their on-going work to highlight their efforts regarding innovations.
- Qualifications and Credentials
 - The Committee has prioritized Goal 2 Objective 1 and Goal 3 Objective 1.
 - The Committee will review badging as part of these goals.
 - The Committee is also reviewing the work of the Transition Advisory Committee in order to stay informed of their activities and any correlation to the work of the QC Committee.
 - An Ad Hoc will be convened to develop the renewal requirements for the ESL & Bilingual Credential.
 - The Committee will also devote time to reviewing the School Age and Youth Development Credential.
- **Transition Advisory Council**
 - Members were invited to join the work groups using the link in the chat that Marcy provided. Members were invited to share the link to ensure a large distribution of the information and hopefully participation as well.

Adjourn



FY25 Smart Start Quality Supports Wage Scale + Bilingual Pay Increase

Salary Increase

Gateways Level 1-4

Purpose of Language skillset: demonstrating proficiency of speaking a language other than English necessary for various ECE positions. Candidate does not necessarily have to demonstrate high levels of English proficiency if it is not required by the position.

Position	Base Salary	Credential Only	Earned Credential + Work Verification Form (demonstrating proficiency in a language other than English)	This recommendation lays the groundwork to develop a bilingual pay ladder for the state with various levels of bilingual specialization.
Gateways Level 2, 3, 4 + Bilingual/ESL Credential				
Teacher	\$42,120.00	3% increase (\$1,263.60)	6% increase (\$2,527.20)	
Gateways Level 3 + Foundational Training for Bilingual				
Teacher	\$40,040.00	2% increase (\$800.80)	5% increase (\$2,002.00)	
Gateways Level 2 + Foundational Training for Bilingual				
Teacher	\$39,520.00	2% increase (\$790.40)	5% increase (\$1,976.00)	
Assistant Teacher	\$36,920.00	2% increase (\$738.40)	5% increase (\$1,846.00)	
Gateways Level 1 + Foundational Training for Bilingual				
Teacher	\$38,480.00	2% increase (\$769.60)	5% increase (\$1,924.00)	
Assistant Teacher	\$35,880.00	2% increase (\$717.60)	5% increase (\$1,794.00)	

**Foundational training development underway, not yet available.*

Gateways Level 5

At this level, the assumption is that once candidates reach a certain level of credentialing at the Illinois State Board, they have demonstrated proficiency in a language other than English. However, the level of proficiency can vary.

Position	Base Salary	Earned Credential
Gateways Level 5 + BA PEL with Bilingual Endorsement (requires target language exam)		
Teacher	\$44,200.00	10% increase (\$4,420.00)
Gateways Level 5 + BA PEL with ESL Endorsement (not bilingual)		
Teacher	\$44,200.00	9% increase (\$3,978.00)
Gateways Level 5 + BA PEL with Bilingual Approval Letter (requires target language exam)		
Teacher	\$44,200.00	8% increase (\$3,536.00)
Gateways Level 5 + BA PEL with ESL Approval (not bilingual)		
Teacher	\$44,200.00	7% increase (\$3,094.00)