Indiana Early Learning Advisory Committee

Attendees

Kim Hodge, Sarah Mihich, Eric McKeown, John Peirce, Brandon Myers, Sara Gropp, Amanda Lopez, Melissa Wall

Key Topics Discussed

A. Updates

1. Workgroup Updates
    i. A new representative from Indiana Youth Institute (IYI) is joining us, Sarah Mihich.
2. ELAC Updates
    i. Guidance was requested for the 2021 Annual Report at the February ELAC meeting. We will go over their responses when we get to that item in the agenda.

B. ELAC Annual Report

1. Background for the 2020 Annual Report
    i. The approach for the 2020 Annual Report is different from previous years because of the Preschool Development Grant (PDG) Needs Assessment completed in the Fall 2019. Our work is to take those findings and add some visuals and context for a scaled down 2020 Annual Report.
    ii. There have been some challenges with the data from Purdue University, especially to stay consistent with previous reports.
        a. One focus that is different from the PDG Needs Assessment is the addition of Indiana Department of Education (IDOE) data to the ELAC Annual Report.
    iii. Amanda feels this year's report is to inform community partners, and that next year would be a chance to change the report.

2. Review 2020 Annual Report Draft
    i. Young Children and Families
        a. An indicator was changed in the Young Children and Families section. Previously there was one indicating percent of income for child care. Since we added a section on affordability, we moved that indicator to that section and added another demographic indicator in its place.
        b. Trend charts have been changed to 10 year from 5 year, as it gives us a better picture of how things are or aren't trending.
        c. Amanda: It might be interesting to pull out Top 5 counties to show the disparity.
            i. Sara: Should we do the top and bottom 5?
            ii. Group: Look at just Top 5, to highlight the need.

    d. John: Maybe in next year's report we should look at poverty up to 125% federal poverty level (FPL) because of the new expanded eligibility for On My Way Pre-K (OMWPK)? What does IYI show?
       i. Sarah: We look at 185% FPL and also show the top 5 and bottom 5 counties. Also on charts that haven't had much change over time, we often break it out into race/ethnicity to show the disparities there.
      ii. Amanda: Maybe we should show the poverty rate of all children versus those under 6 to show that younger children are more likely to be impacted.
    e. Sara: We have this information, and I'm planning to include much of it on the dashboard. But we are planning for this report to be a bit shorter.
       i. Will add a line for children under 18 to the current graph of children living in poverty.
      ii. John: I've seen people confuse the two so it would be good to emphasize that.
  ii. Accessibility and Quality
    a. These sections are combined. This is where we chose to report the IDOE data separately.
    b. Amanda: Do we need to report the number of programs?
       i. Sara: I think that we had decided that wasn't a priority area.
    c. Amanda: I think we could add a little context about the different delivery models.
       i. Amanda: Want to add a disclaimer that this data is provided by programs reported to Early Learning Indiana.
    d. Amanda: Want to add the copy and donut chart about how many children need care and that we only know where a certain percentage are to connect to the previous section.
    e. Sara: Do we want to use Head Start's capacity data rather than enrollment data? Is that too in the weeds?
       i. Kim: I think that's something to consider.
      ii. Amanda: It might be a moot point this year too since this is reported differently from previous years.
      iii. Sara: We'll leave it as is then.
    f. Amanda: Want to add copy about the numbers not being unduplicated. You can't add the number of children from the ELI dataset with the IDOE dataset to get a total. Some of those children are duplicates.
    g. John: I remember Charlie Geier discussing conducting an analysis of IDOE data to better highlight the changes.

      i.   Amanda: We're still limited in what data we receive from IDOE. Perhaps we show a map of where the schools are or an analysis of changes in enrollment by county.

  h. Amanda: We might want to add a box of Top 5 counties with percent enrolled in a known program. Right now we just have percent enrolled in a high-quality program.

      i.   Add the percent enrolled from the top of page 7 to show the point on page 9 that enrollment in high-quality programs has been increasing but overall enrollment has been stagnant.

  i. Amanda: Remove the chart of general population in high-quality and instead show percent from known enrollment in high-quality.

  j. Amanda: Would like to add the number of programs split out into each Paths to QUALITY (PTQ) level.

  iii. Workforce

  a. The workforce data was kept separate this year since we kept enrollment data separate from FSSA's Office of Early Childhood and Out-of-School Learning (OECOSL) and IDOE.

  b. John: Thinks it would be an interesting conversation to look at pay parity, maybe in a future study of preschool teachers in schools versus centers and homes.

      i.   Brandon: We could ask the Office of School Finance if they have such information, pay of paraprofessionals (and all staff) in Pre-K classrooms. He expects it may be a total dollar amount with not much detail to their classroom assignments.

  c. Kim: Any partnership we could make with Indiana Association for the Education of Young Children (INAEYC), perhaps invite a member of their staff to the workgroup to help with the workforce piece would be helpful.

      i.   Amanda: Also a staff member from Early Learning Indiana would be helpful as they're also focused on workforce.

  d. Amanda: Do we have the Department of Workforce Development data at a county-level for workforce projections? It could help show the issue of a lack of workforce being a problem especially in the Top 5 counties.

  e. John: Is the graph showing workforce projection to maintain the current workforce, not taking into account the number of children still not receiving care?

      i.   Amanda: Yes. That could potentially be something to look at in the future. What percent of students would we like to get into care, and what would the needs be for the workforce?

  iv. Affordability

a. John: Can we have a call out box or somehow a way to stress that 7% of income threshold?
   i.   Sara: Yes, we can plan to do that.
b. Sarah: Could we do the calculations next to the center and the home data so people don't have to think through it?
   i.   Sara: Yes.
c. Sara: We will be receiving additional TANF/SNAP data to add to CCDF data sometime this week.
d. John: What is the takeaway we want the audience to have in this section?
   i.   Amanda: For policymakers, it is to expose that much of the funding is federal, and we don't know how many kids are being served with the funding. I think the idea in the statute is how to better coordinate and report these funding streams.
   ii. John: I agree those are the messages. Is there a way for us to better say it?
   iii. Amanda: Perhaps a breakout by funding. A takeaway that is pleasantly surprising is the number of children with CCDF, enrolled in a high-quality program.
e. Sara: I know we talked about the Indy Preschool Program (Indy PSP) is going away, but I haven't been able to find that information.
   i.   Amanda: The city-county council didn't renew the funding.

v. Recommendations
   a. John: When it comes to legislators, we've always been told to tell them the one thing we want them to do. So if we have five of them, that might be too many. Maybe even three to a section might be an improvement.
   b. Amanda: I agree that we should have 3-5 in total.
      i.   Sarah: I think once we make the 3-5 recommendations, we should then order them in order of priority.
      ii. Amanda: In the past we've also included who should be in charge of each of these recommendations.
   c. Amanda: Backing up, what is it we'd want to recommend?
      i.   John: I wonder if we can condense the data recommendation down to one sentence.
   d. Sara: Do we talk about alignment between the three documents (ELAC annual report, PDG needs assessment, and the Strategic Plan)?
      i.   Amanda: I think we include the PDG strategic plan goals as they're supported by the data we share. And we discuss the need for data systems care and changes to make these happen.

  e. John: What I hear from professionals is that we need to better compensate the workforce to get them more knowledge and keep them in the workforce.

 vi. What about an executive summary?

  a. Kim: I think if we have the time that would be great. Also that 16 indicator sheet we've had in previous years would be helpful.

  b. John: What do you think about having the executive summary in a separate piece (separate file) so legislators can receive just that?

   i. Workgroup: Thinks it's a good idea.

 vii. Next steps

  a. Timeline for next review

   i. Next draft with design: April 1

   ii. Dashboard: April 1

3. 2021 Annual Report

 i. We are off a little from our traditional timeline. Many years ago it was decided to submit the report in the fall rather than summer so that legislators could see the report before the legislative session. The purpose of the report was to be a neutral source of data, but as more and more community organizations have found value in the report, it's possible that we need to reevaluate the audience and format of the report.

 ii. The workgroup wasn't provided clear direction from the Committee when asked who the audience of the report should be. Historically it has been pretty broad. Should it be for policymakers or a broader report for the community? So the Committee asked that the workgroup discuss further.

 iii. Since we've typically pulled data at this time (spring), and we're behind on that timeline, there was discussion to pursue a more focused report this fall.

 iv. The format of the report was also discussed with the Committee, specifically the possibility of having an executive summary or one-page pull outs. The Committee saw value to both shorter deliverables as well as the full report.

  a. Having a larger report when it is a budget year with shorter "off-year" reports was also discussed.

  b. Committee left it open to determine focus area(s) and audience for our next report. Pivot opportunity to forge the new path.

  c. Plan was to connect with the Committee this morning to discuss the focus areas but that was postponed.

 v. Potential focus areas:

  a. John: One issue could be concerns with state revenue given COVID19, but the situation is also highlighting the need for child care. Things to keep in mind.

b. If you look at OMWPK as it stands now, for the extended eligibility people who rely only on state funding, that there are limits on how much they pay providers. And in some places, it will not be enough. The cost of childcare needs to be emphasized.

c. If we're not doing county-level data or dashboards, I think that's too bad.

d. Indiana statewide coalition has changed from a Pre-K coalition to an early childhood coalition because of the PDG work and funding. Those groups have an interest in all of ECE but still expects a focus on improving Pre-K.

   i. Most people see the pinch point being capacity, but it's also workforce.

   ii. Also need to search for a way to assess quality outside of PTQ Level 3 and 4. That might not be an emphasis for next year, but something to keep in mind.

   iii. With the Northeast coalition, from an employer's point of view, quality is important but really, it's all about seats. Spots for children of their employees.

e. Kim:

   i. Comment on the county level data is a concern of all of ours. For this report we've had some challenges, but I'm hopeful that ELI has some plans in place to get their data where we need it to be for our next report.

   ii. There's a lot of unknowns with COVID19, but we can see it highlights what we've been advocating for at a foundational level. It could easily be something in terms of economic recovery, discussing access and affordability of child care.

f. Amanda:

   i. The other thing I've been thinking about around access and lack of spots is pulling in data from the childcare deserts project from the Indiana Business Research Center (IBRC). I don't know if they plan to update that data, but it would be something interesting to share, the gap at those local levels and describing how it impacts workforce.

   ii. I think we need to make that workforce connection stronger. Knowing that you need child care to support a workforce.

   iii. Also with the assessment data, the state is rolling out the new Kindergarten Readiness Instrument this spring. I'm not sure about how that will go, but it's possible there would be enough data collected to show where children are.

   iv. I think Purdue is also wrapping up their longitudinal study of kids in Pre-K that would be something to consider looking at.

   v. John: What do you know about Purdue's timeline and who are the cohorts?

1. Amanda: The first cohort is in third grade. I'm not sure after that. Challenge is the control group isn't a pure control group. They are kids enrolled in a Level 0 or Level 1 program.
2. John: I don't know if there's a way for us to frame it, but that could be an opportunity.
3. Amanda: You're right, that could be an opportunity. It could also be a way to discuss systems and how we define quality.

g. John: I think employers are interested in whether this is freeing up adults to enter the workforce. Before changes to CCDF, it was something like 30% said child care keeps them from working.

h. Amanda: One of the charts in the last report showed the trends of funding over the last 5 years, so while there's been a focus, we haven't seen an increase in funding. Without unique identifiers, we don't know if more children have been served. With the statute saying to look at children served, that could be an area to pursue as well.

i. Any consensus on where we'd like to see the next report go? Areas of focus for a shortened report completed in the Fall.
  i. Kim: I'll take all of this back to the Committee and see if these are areas they are also interested in and see from there.
  ii. Amanda: Yeah, I think that'll be a good start to the conversation with them.

Action Items
1. Workgroup to review report draft and dashboard before next meeting in April.

Next Meeting
April 13th, 2020 | 1:00pm – 3:00 pm Eastern Time | Virtual Only