



Frequently Asked Questions (FAQs) Professional Development Advisory Council

What is PDAC?

The Professional Development Advisory Council (PDAC) is a group of highly qualified practitioners, educators, organizational representatives, and advocates from around the state convened and established in December 2002 by the Illinois Department of Human Services (IDHS) Bureau of Child Care and Development. PDAC introduced Gateways to Opportunity, Illinois Professional Development System, for early care and education, school-age and youth development professionals in March 2005. In 2016 the Gateways Competencies were reviewed and vetted by state councils, committees and agencies including PDAC.

The role of PDAC: 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 values pertaining to professional development.

PDAC 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.

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

PDAC 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.

PDAC Committees, their goals and current tri-chairs.

Financial Supports Committee

Goals:

- Advance identified recommendations from the Illinois Achieving Compensation Parity Report.
- Identify advancement opportunities supporting workforce compensation strategies using intentionality with existing funding and new or increased funding.
- Identify and advance potential and future workforce funding opportunities.
- Identify non-compensation retention strategies.

Chairs: Marcy Mendenhall, SAL Family and Community Services, MMendenhall@alfcs.org

Laurie Rhodes, LLCC Child Development Center Laura.Rhodes@llcc.edu

Information and Trends Committee

Goals:

- Explore and identify intentional connections with partners to bring expertise to our work around equity/diversity and trauma-informed care, and implications for the field of ECE.
- Disseminate information through PDAC on the latest work as it relates to equity/diversity and trauma-informed care.
- Examine work happening nationally and in other states, as well as related fields, to identify promising practices that may be valuable in Illinois.

Tri-Chairs: Lauri Morrison-Frichtl, Illinois Head Start lfrichtl@ilheadstart.org

Dawn Thomas, Early Childhood and Parenting Collaborative, University of Illinois dthomas3@illinois.edu

M. Lynn Burgett, Illinois State Board of Education, mburgett@isbe.net

Higher Education Committee

Goals:

- Support the ongoing development and implementation of a competency based qualification system for the ECE workforce.
- Increase opportunities for the ECE workforce to advance proficiency in working with children who are culturally and linguistically diverse at different levels of credentials and degrees along the entire career lattice.
- Support increased use of technology tools for higher education advising, instruction and assessment.
- Demonstrate the need for increased capacity in early childhood education faculty and advisors at institutions of higher education (IHEs).

Tri-Chairs: Catherine Main, University of Illinois-Chicago, cmain@uic.edu

Kate Connor, City Colleges, kconnor@ccc.edu

Rebecca Pruitt, Lewis University, pruittre@lewisu.edu

Qualifications and Credentials

Goals:

- Ensure Gateways to Opportunity Credentials align with state and national initiatives, incorporate current research and validated practices, and are responsive to workforce needs.
- Guide the development and implementation of a Gateways ESL/Bilingual Credential to ensure workforce capacity in meeting the needs of Illinois' diverse children and families.
- Coordinate Illinois' response to national and local workforce development initiatives (e.g. Power to the Profession; i2I Innovation to Incubation).
- Promote and incentivize Gateways to Opportunity Credentials.

Tri-Chairs: Teri Talan, McCormick Center for Early Childhood Leadership, National Louis University teri.talan@nl.edu

Bela Mote, Carol Robertson Center, moteb@crcl.net

Elva DeLuna, IDHS Illinois Migrant & Seasonal Head Start Elva.DeLuna@illinois.gov

Workforce Development and Pathways

Goals:

- Develop and disseminate, in collaboration with stakeholders, strategies that support implementation of the comprehensive Gateways to Opportunity Early Childhood Educator Career Lattice.
- Analyze effectiveness of various pathways of the Gateways Credentials.

- Collect and analyze data evaluating how levers and supports including, but not limited to, Great START and Gateways Scholarship can be used to strengthen utilization of Gateways Credentials.

Tri-chair: Christi Chadwick, City of Chicago, Christi.Chadwick@cityofchicago.org Shauna Egeh, Illinois Act for Children, shauna.egeh@actforchildren.org , Jamilah R. Jor'dan, Governor Office Early Childhood Development, [Jamilah.R. Jordan@Illinois.gov](mailto:Jamilah.R.Jordan@Illinois.gov)

PDAC Governance

Goal:

- Maintain well-defined processes and protocols to support PDAC.

Tri-Chairs: Marsha Hawley, Ounce of Prevention Fund mhawley@ounceofprevention.org

Stephanie Bernoteit, Illinois Board of Higher Education, bernoteit@ibhe.org

Johnna Darragh Ernst, Heartland Community College, Johnna.Darragh@heartland.edu

PDAC Steering

Goals:

- Build and expand the diversity of Steering representation to maintain connectors to support and improve the quality and stability of early care and education and school age and youth development workforce.
- Set the strategic direction of PDAC in response to state and federal initiatives.
- Develop Leadership Plan and implement leadership that is reflective and supports Illinois' rich diversity of knowledge and experience.

Tri-Chairs:, Marsha Hawley, Ounce of Prevention Fund mhawley@ounceofprevention.org

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When does PDAC meet?

PDAC holds up to five statewide meetings a year: September, November, January, April and June. One meeting each year is an annual meeting, which serves to update all those who are stakeholders in PDAC but may not be able to attend other yearly meetings. The PDAC standing committees listed above schedule additional meetings as required by their committee's goals and objectives.