



Collaboration for
Early Childhood
Strong Start, Bright Future

ChapinHall at the University of Chicago
Policy research that benefits children, families, and their communities

REPORT TO THE IGA GOVERNING BOARD

Abstract

The Collaboration for Early Childhood has a contract with the Village of Oak Park, Oak Park Elementary School District 97 and Oak Park River Forest High School District 200 to develop an integrated system of high quality early childhood programs and services to benefit all children birth to kindergarten age living in Oak Park and River Forest.

The Collaboration submits System Level Outcomes 2 & 3 as an addendum to the [September 28, 2016 Report to the IGA Governing Board](#). As we indicated in that report, the Collaboration conducted a new survey of the early childhood workforce in Oak Park and River Forest in the late summer and early fall of 2016. This report encompasses the results of that survey.

Submitted November 30, 2016

Overview

Through our professional development work, the Collaboration for Early Childhood fosters high-quality early learning at child care centers, preschools and family child care programs by providing training, workshops and an annual Symposium to local early childhood professionals. We also encourage providers to take advantage of learning opportunities hosted by other organizations, and to enroll in undergraduate and graduate college courses. For the past two years, we have conducted a survey of people working in early learning programs in Oak Park and River Forest to assist us in providing professional development offerings and to learn more about the early childhood workforce in our community.

Two hundred and twenty-one members of the estimated 400 people in the early childhood workforce in Oak Park and River Forest completed the survey. We met our goal of increasing the response rate by five percent over the 210 people who complete the survey in 2015. Of the 221 people completing the survey this year 96 (43%) also completed the survey in 2015.

System Level Outcome 2 measures the progress of the early childhood professionals toward exceeding minimum educational requirements through coursework in a degree program. System Level Outcome 3 monitors the professional development hours earned by the early child workforce through workshops, conferences, etc., in order to determine the extent to which they surpass the DCFS minimum requirements for their job level.

We have continued our commitment to improve data collection methods to ensure informative results. Additional survey questions were added to gather more detail on previous answers that will guide our training efforts. This year we also made adjustments from the previous year's survey to better track professionals at Montessori schools, faith-based schools and other license-exempt locations to provide a more robust profile of the early childhood landscape. Staff in license-exempt programs do not have the same requirements as those in licensed programs. They may choose to participate in training programs but are not required to do so.

The time period covered by the 2015 survey was calendar year 2014 and the period covered by the 2016 survey was the year from July 1, 2015 to June 30, 2016. The professional development committee recommended this change and it was accepted by the IGA Governing Board. This ensured that the time frame covered by this survey aligned with the way in which the early childhood workforce organized its training. They have planned to cover the one year period from July 1 to June 30 for the 2017 survey.

System Level Outcome 2: Percent of teachers and directors in Oak Park early childhood programs who have above minimum state educational requirements for their role.

Submeasure: Percent of teachers and directors who hold or who increase their level of an Illinois Early Childhood Certificate.

All survey respondents	2015 #	2016 #	2015 Above minimum requirements*	2016 Above minimum requirements*
Number (%) of directors	24	21	15 (63%)	14 (67%)
Number (%) of assistant directors	18	16	10 (56%)	10 (63%)
Number (%) of teachers	107	127	81 (76%)	95 (75%)
Number (%) of assistant teachers	61	57	51 (84%)	52 (91%)
Number (%) of early childhood professionals in Oak Park & River Forest responding to survey	210	221	157 (76%)	171 (77%)

Those who responded to survey in 2015 and 2016	Above minimum requirements* % change
2 of 10 directors increased qualifications	20%
5 of 10 assistant directors increased qualifications	50%
26 of 58 teachers increased qualifications	45%
7 of 18 assistant teachers increased qualifications	39%
Number (%) of early childhood professionals in Oak Park & River Forest responding to survey in 2015 & 2016	96

* We know there are people in all positions who hold bachelor's degrees in fields other than early childhood. These people must have 6-18 credit hours in early childhood coursework, depending on their position, in order to meet licensing standards. Some of these workers may have more than the minimum coursework required. We plan to enhance the 2017 survey in order to see if we can determine how many people exceed this minimum standard.

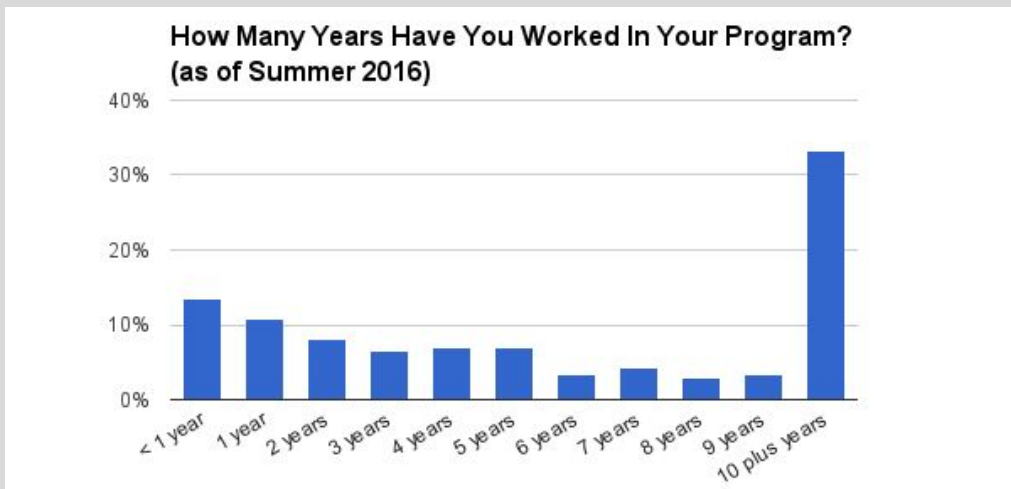
Calendar Year 2013 Results Completed by Site Directors*	2014 #	2014 Above minimum requirements	20 or more hours
Directors	21	15 (71%)	13
Teachers	12	8 (67%)	62
Assistant teachers	105	54 (49%)	24
Assistant directors	63	27 (43%)	<10
Number (%) of early childhood professionals in Oak Park and River Forest responding to survey	202	104 (52%)	107 (53%)

* The 2013 survey was completed by site directors, which was different from the 2015 and 2016 self-reported surveys.

Illinois Early Childhood Certificate	2015	2016
Have submitted a Gateways Credential Application	126 people 58%	136 people 59%
Have a Gateways Illinois Director's Credential	20 people Level 1 5% Level 2 3% Level 3 1%	21 people Level 1 5% Level 2 2% Level 3 2%
Have a Gateways Infant Toddler Credential	13 people Level 2 4% Level 3 1% Level 4 0.5% Level 5 0%	24 people Level 2 7% Level 3 2% Level 4 0.4% Level 5 2%
Have a Gateways Early Childhood Education Credential	48 people Level 1 7% Level 2 2% Level 3 1% Level 4 2% Level 5 7% Level 6 1%	86 people Level 1 10% Level 2 3% Level 3 6% Level 4 5% Level 5 13% Level 6 0.4%
Have an Illinois State Board of Education Professional Educators License (PEL)	62 people 28%	59 people 25%

System Level Outcome 2:

- The number of people responding to the surveys in 2015 or 2016 and reporting they have received an Illinois early childhood credential grew by 33%, from 143 to 190, exceeding the goal of a 20% increase.
- Being able to compare details on the level of various professional development credentials and certificates year to year is very informative to our ongoing work in planning trainings and coaching professionals. In particular, we can see there was a noticeable increase in the number of professionals who now have a Gateways Early Childhood Education Credential.
- We know that there are some early childhood professionals who increased their education towards a degree program and/or increased their staff position level but the numbers are too statistically small to report on publicly without compromising the respondents confidentiality.
- There were three fewer directors and two fewer assistant directors from last year due to position openings, illness and a center closing during the survey period.
- We are also learning more about length of time staff have been in their position. It's interesting to note that by far, most have been at their preschool or child care center for 10 years or more.



System Level Outcome 3: Percent of teachers and child care providers reporting more than the state-mandated 15 documented hours of continuing professional education each year.

All License Categories, Self Reported	Number		Less than 15 hours		15-19 hours	15 hours	16-19 hours	20 or more hours	
	2015	2016	2015	2016	2015	2016	2016	2015	2016
Directors	24	21	<10	<10	<10	<10	<10	14	14
Assistant directors	18	16	<10	<10	<10	<10	<10	<10	<10
Teachers	107	127	29	37	30	22	25	48	43
Assistant teachers	61	57	24	25	20	10	<10	17	19
Number (%) of early childhood professionals in Oak Park & River Forest responding to survey	210	221	63 (30%)	68 (31%)	59 (28%)	37 (17%)	34 (15%)	88 (42%)	82 (37%)

Licensed Centers Only, Self Reported	Number	Less than 15 hours	15 hours	16-19 hours	20 or more hours
Directors	19	<10	<10	<10	14
Assistant directors	15	<10	<10	<10	<10
Teachers	109	26	20	24	39
Assistant teachers	44	12	<10	<10	19
Number (%) of early childhood professionals in Oak Park & River Forest responding to survey	187	42 (22%)	34 (18%)	33 (18%)	78 (42%)

All License Categories, Self Reported, Those Responding Both Years	Number	Less than 15 hours	15 hours	16-19 hours	20 or more hours
Directors	10	<10	<10	<10	<10
Assistant directors	10	<10	<10	<10	<10
Teachers	58	11	<10	12	26
Assistant teachers	18	<10	<10	<10	10
Number (%) of early childhood professionals in Oak Park & River Forest responding to survey in 2015 & 2016	96	18 (19%)	16 (17%)	15 (16%)	47 (49%)

Those who responded to survey in 2015 and 2016	Above minimum requirements* % change
6 of 10 directors increased qualifications	60%
2 of 10 assistant directors increased qualifications	20%
24 of 58 teachers increased qualifications	41%
10 of 18 assistant teachers increased qualifications	56%
Number (%) of early childhood professionals in Oak Park & River Forest responding to survey in 2015 & 2016	96 (44%)

Calendar Year 2013 Results Completed by Site Directors*	Number	15 hours	20 or more hours
Directors	21	<10	13
Teachers	105	16	62
Assistant teachers	63	20	24
Assistant directors	12	<10	<10
Number (%) of early childhood professionals in Oak Park and River Forest responding to survey	202	42 (21%)	107 (53%)

* The 2013 survey was completed by site directors, which was different from the 2015 and 2016 self-reported surveys.

System Level Outcome 3:

- The minimum requirement for DCFS licensed centers and homes is 15 credit hours per year. Staff at centers who have ExceleRate Silver or Gold ratings must have 20 or more credit hours per year.
- The percent of our workforce that meets or exceeds the professional development requirement of 15 hours decreased slightly, 69% in 2016 compared to 70% in 2015.
- Of the 193 people who attended workshops of some kind, 153 of them (79%) attended at least one workshop hosted by the Collaboration. In fact, the Collaboration was the sole source of workshops for 47% of early childhood professionals who work in Oak Park or River Forest. The Collaboration has tried to schedule workshops to fit times when many early childhood professionals are available to attend. This, combined with the decrease in availability of state supported professional development offerings, may be a reason for a high attendance rate. While it's clear we are a main source of local professional development, providers' professional growth has been hampered by the lack of state-required training for ExceleRate that is under the purview of state agencies only.
- The largest group responding to the survey both years, 58 teachers, achieved a 41% increase in their professional development hours over the previous year. Fifty-six percent of the 18 teaching assistants who responded to the survey both years increased their professional development hours.
- The professional development hours earned by employees in licensed programs exceeded those earned by license-exempt programs. The differences between the two groups ranged from 9% for those who earned less than 15 hours to 4% or 5% for all other categories.
- Many people with less than 15 hours have been employed by their center for less than one year and may not have had opportunities to attend workshops. There were 31 people employed by their program for less than one year, and an additional 25 people employed for 1 year.
- We improved the workforce survey for 2016. The "15 credit hours" now stands alone so that we have a more accurate picture of the number of people who exceed the minimum. A comparison of 2015 and 2016 can be made by combining the categories of "15 hours" and "16-19 hours".
- This year one of our new questions informed us that 8% of the 2016 workforce is enrolled in college coursework, using those credits toward their DCFS-required 15 to 20 hours of professional development. This was higher than expected and helps us to understand how people are meeting requirements.

- Fifty-three percent (53%) of people who attended the Collaboration's February 2016 Symposium live or work in Oak Park or River Forest.