Early Childhood Symposium Series: Disability Policy and Advocacy
Discussion Summary and Recommendations for Next Steps

1. **Focus on family integration & interaction**
   Define what a successful partnership would entail from all sides; create ombudsman positions; maximize opportunities to engage with parent resource centers or recruit and train parent leadership to liaise with services and supports

2. **Communicate accessibly**
   Improve communications with parents by simplifying messaging using lay language; familiarize families with professional jargon through providing examples and explanations in lay language; take time to tailor information to the individual’s child and family circumstances

3. **Embrace advocacy role**
   Do not expect families to be the only bridge between their child and services and supports; create ways for professionals to embrace their role as parent/child advocates

4. **Commit to building trust**
   Identify observable and measurable actions or behaviors of practitioners or families that can be used to define trusting partnerships; for the best long-term results, start with the early years

5. **Focus on training**
   Develop and implement anti-bias, human dignity and cultural awareness training for professionals to achieve steps 1-4

6. **Create a common language and standards around the core concept of “dignity”**
   Develop a working definition of “dignity”; identify observable and measurable actions or behaviors that reflect the definition of dignity; develop measurement tools and strategies that operationalize dignity; develop accountability standards focused on dignity

7. **Review existing laws through the lens of dignity**
   Audit current legislation with a dignity lens, and look for opportunities for improvement or change