



## MEETING NOTES

### Region 49 Action Council Meeting

**Date & Time: Wednesday, February 15, 2023 – 1:30-3:00pm**

Council Members present: April Berthiaume, Danen Busch, Melissa Gravert, Janet Hill, Tess Hurt, Kate Jennings, Cindy Mahr, Lindsay Meeker, Tammy Muerhoff, Marcia Seabolt, Michael Terry

Council Members absent: Beverly Clark, Andrea Flannery, Marcy Mendenhall, James Richardson Jr., Lisa Williams

#### Welcome & Opening Question

What is an important life lesson you've learned that have made you a better provider/parent/community member?

- Keep going when things get tough.
- Every day is a new day.
- Remember that everyone arrives to you with differing experiences.
- Stick up for yourself and others.
- Be persistent.
- It's ok to not know the answer or solution to a question or problem.
- Accept the things you cannot change.
- Pick your battles wisely.
- Practice self-compassion.
- Practice consistency and routines.
- Promote and foster being a lifelong learner.

#### ECEC Services: What is working vs. what is not working?

##### Early Head Start: Working

- 0-3 center-based and home-based care
- Smaller population of those that qualify
- Intensive services
- Help get dental, health, and additional needs
- Family Advocates
- Home Visiting



- Prenatal Services

#### **Early Head Start: Not Working**

- Difficult to qualify for CCAP and Head Start simultaneously
- Staffing struggle with additional qualifications starting with CDA

#### **Head Start: Working**

- Serving 3-5 years of age
- Center-Based or School District
- Kindergarten Readiness
- Partner with community entities for mental health (EveryChild)
- Home visiting twice a year builds relationships
- Full school days

#### **Head Start: Not Working**

- Staffing for qualifications are difficult to navigate
- Family Service Workers qualifications
- Staff transition to state-based versus federal-based programs (Union)
- Head Start part-day programming- some families need full-time care
- No summer care or care during winter/spring breaks
- After-school programs only available to children Kindergarten age and above

#### **Early Intervention: Working**

- Professionals come to child's home
- Children make amazing progress
- Services can be done in home and school
- Services be taken to the child's care arrangement

#### **Early Intervention: Not Working**

- Transition between EI and school district is difficult and scary for families
- Children don't receive services as quickly as they need to
- Need at least 30% delay in 2 domains
- Need more than speech intervention
- Provider shortage; specifically linguistically diverse
- ECEC providers need to be involved in discussion regarding services in order to complement them throughout the day
- Staff reimbursement for mileage/time for travel



## ECEC Program Types: What is working vs. what is not working?

### Child Care Centers: Working

- Accept CCAP
- Partnerships with Publicly Funded enhancements
- Different programs with curriculum
- Spread out over the county
- Dedicated Educators
- Committed to Quality and Continuing Education

### Child Care Centers: Not Working

- Staffing shortage
- New laws/changing laws
- “Supportive” agencies being both helpful and hurtful
- Not recognizing other states’ training
- Overly aggressive in regards to quality standards
- Cannot get a Director’s Credential without a completed degree
- Creates divides between CCAP and Private Pay
- Private pay are not eligible for grants or extra help
- Increase in minimum wage- wage compression gap
- Wanting things to look the exact same way in independent businesses
- Accrediting bodies being viewed through a narrow lens
- Nature-Based programming not fitting into DCFS safety parameters
- Licensing reps interpreting regulations differently

### Family Child Care Homes: Working

- More individualized care
- Smaller group of children
- “Feels like home”
- One or a few people providing care
- Serve infants and toddlers
- Extended hours (evening/weekend)
- Flexible scheduling
- Overnight care
- More family (multi-age) grouping of ages



- More open to taking medically specialized children
- Family Choice- choose and receive education based on what is best for their child

#### **Family Child Care: Not Working**

- One person providing care; must trust that person (more providers present at a center)
- No back up plan when provider is sick or goes on vacation
- Less access to community resources
- Capacity is limited to seek out resources
- Quality varies widely
- Lack of Accountability

#### **ECEC Workforce**

##### **What initiatives exist within the region to support and recruit providers?**

- CCCR&R system provides support; staffing and recruitment grant
- ECC Awareness campaign
- High schools – “Grow Your Own” program
- Great START

##### **What higher education, high school, or training programs are available?**

- Black Hawk College
- Western Illinois University
- Gateways Scholarship
- ECACE Scholarship
- Local High Schools
- Minority Scholarships
- WIU Parent Mentors
- Rock Island-Milan School District tuition assistance

##### **What age and retention issues are present?**

- ExceleRate staff requirements
- Credential requirements changing and rigorous
- Competency-based training
- Staff with dated college credit are being devalued



- Experience is viewed as meaningless

**What are the challenges with background checks (DCFS) or Fire Marshal visits?**

- Long wait times for background checks
- Unable to hire until background check is cleared
- Background check timelines add to the staffing crisis
- Unaffordable fire doors required by Fire Marshal

**Race and Ethnicity Representation in ECEC Staff**

- Closely representative of the race and ethnicity within Rock Island County
- Largely dominated by female staff
- 50% with high school education as highest level of education (12% with less than high school education)
- 11% of Family Child Care providers with Bachelor's degree
- Need to recruit bi-lingual and multi-lingual providers to serve bi-lingual and multi-lingual children and families

**Next Meeting**

Date/Time: Wednesday, March 1, 2023 – 1:30-3:00PM

BridgePointe - 1 Montgomery Drive – Moline, IL 61265

Zoom link for virtual attendees:

<https://us06web.zoom.us/j/81254094810?pwd=cjRsRktCMnVXUEx5VFhFTVhNV2FRZz09>