



MEETING NOTES

Region 49 Action & Family Council Meeting

Date & Time: Tuesday, March 14, 2023 – 12:30-2:00pm

Council Members present: Danen Busch, Melissa Gravert, Janet Hill, Tess Hurt, Cindy Mahr, Jess Lovera-Matter, Tammy Muerhoff, Jamie Nordling, Kristen Petry, Abigail Pritchard, James Richardson Jr., Marcia Seabolt, Antoine Smith Sr., Georgia Stear, Michael Terry, Amanda Wentler

Council Members absent: April Berthiaume, Jazmin Cervantes, Beverly Clark, Natalie Doyle, Andrea Flannery, Kate Jennings, Lindsay Meeker, Marcy Mendenhall, Tiera Teague, Ashley Tharp

Welcome, Introductions & Opening Question

Action Council and Family Council members introduce themselves and share their pronouns.

Small Group Discussion

- **Qualities of an Ideal Early Childhood Educator**
 - Has enthusiasm for families and students
 - Has appropriate education level
 - Has a positive reputation within the community
 - Understands child development and milestones
 - Trauma-informed
 - Patient
 - Empathetic
 - Compassionate
 - Flexible
 - Adaptable

- **Qualities of Children Fostered by Quality Early Childhood Educators**
 - Empathy
 - Imagination
 - Equitable
 - Kind
 - Respectful



- Self-regulating
- Healthy coping skills

- **Benefits to Draw Professionals to the ECEC Field**
 - Sharing benefits and values of ECEC – to staff, families, communities
 - Understanding of how ECEC helps community and future
 - Providing a welcoming work environment
 - Offer healthy work-life balance

- **Incentives to Promote Retention of ECEC Professionals**
 - Mental and emotional supports for staff and children
 - Acknowledgement or recognition of the work being done
 - Free or discounted child care for ECEC staff
 - Empathy and willingness to serve from leadership
 - Elevating the profession through pay equity
 - Offer financial bonus or stipend
 - Provide opportunities for career advancement
 - Employment benefits such as paid time off and insurance

Large Group Discussion: The True Cost of Care

- **Cost of Director & Staff Qualifications**
 - Director-qualified staff are required on-site at all times
 - Functional budget of child care centers falls short of obligation to employees

- **Cost of Child Care**
 - Cost of care far exceeds 7% of household income
 - Average annual household income in Rock Island County is \$57,895
 - CCAP reimbursement rates around 50% of true cost of quality care
 - Infant care is comparable in cost to annual tuition to University of Illinois
 - Some families cannot afford to choose the quality of care they desire for their children
 - \$1 invested in Early Childhood yields a \$16 return
 - Increased high school and college graduations
 - Increased personal income and economic development
 - Decreased special education services needed
 - Decreased dependence on social welfare programs



- Decreased crime and imprisonment

- **Increase Quality of Care**
 - Fewer children per teacher
 - Pay Early Childhood Educators in line with Kindergarten teachers
 - Provide retirement benefits
 - Increase health insurance contributions
 - Provide time for lesson planning
 - Bigger classrooms
 - Increase classroom materials

“As the requirements for quality goes up, the money doesn’t go up.” – Child Care Owner

“This shows that this can’t be an individual solution – this has to be a tax-based solution.” – Community Member

“The gap between male and female in ECEC programs is huge – let’s make it easier and welcoming! Pay those male ECEC providers homage – acknowledge and thank them!” – Parent

Next Meeting – Action Council

Date/Time: Wednesday, April 5, 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>

Next Meeting – Family Council

Date/Time: Tuesday, March 28, 2023 – 12:30-2:00PM

BridgePointe - 1 Montgomery Drive – Moline, IL 61265



Zoom link for virtual attendees:

<https://us06web.zoom.us/j/88486718868?pwd=TWREbUhkRDVhOGxvUkxhNHE1RCt5dz09>