



MEETING NOTES

Region 35 Action Council Meeting

Location: Ottawa, IL

Date & Time: 3/09/23, 1:00pm-2:06pm

Council Members present: Denise Garthe, Sara Markey, Melissa Mital, Jackie Blackburn, Lynn Sheedy, Kira Pfeffinger
Council Members absent: Rich Faivre, Derek Kilmartin

1:00pm Welcome and Overview of Agenda (5min)

1:05pm Early Childhood Education and Care (ECEC) Workforce (59min)

Notes:

- A brief explanation of ECEC landscape through PowerPoint leading to group discussion. The discussion was based on endorsements/credentials, ethnicity, special education endorsements, education itself, wages, and benefits.

Discussion:

What are we doing to recruit aspiring ECEC talent into the profession?

- Illinois Valley Community College (IVCC) is implementing tuition incentives and other initiatives to shed light on stepping into a career within ECEC. Outside of this only one suggestion was acknowledged of hearing about a sign-on bonus.

How well are our policies, practices, and efforts working and what challenges exist?

- IVCC has announced if you have worked in a preschool or child care center as a paraprofessional, they are allowing you to take classes online and skip prerequisites.
- Time is not available to obtain the bachelor's degree needed to grow in a career.
- ECEC interns should be paid for student teaching.
- There is no give for needing time off work to complete a bachelor's program and student teaching is crucial in establishing a qualified teaching staff.



What are we not doing, that we could be doing, to improve recruitment into the profession?

- Wages need to be increased.
- The stigma news media has cast on the ECEC field through active shootings diverts people to another career.
- The child needs to be met where they are at and remember it should be a child-first environment.
- Teaching staff needs resources so they can have a proactive referral system to counseling services or other needs and trauma knowledge training should be included.
- Add social workers for all groups of children.
- Increase benefits across the board from health insurance to time off.

2:04pm Wrap up and adjournment

- Jamboard will be shared with all.
- Resources for trauma information will be looked into. Provided title of next meeting, "Parents, Caregivers, and Families".