



MEETING NOTES

Region 54 Action Council Meeting

Date & Time: Tuesday, April 18, 2023, 1:00 PM

Council Members present: Cynthia Smith, Elizabeth Cannon, Lisa Abdelghani, Lisa Langellier, Mary Surprenant, Melissa Hollingsworth, Mia Harrier, Odette Hyatt-Watson, Tamera Forthenberry, and Tim Dudley

Council Members absent: Chris Rice, Cindy Montgomery, Kathy Vines, Michael Marron, Niah Hamilton, and Tamara L Red

Icebreaker (25 minutes)

Notes: This meeting was a virtual meeting and council members attended via Zoom. A couple of fun Icebreaker questions were visually presented, and council members answered them as they logged on.

Easy Transition from Early Intervention to Head Start/PreK (45 minutes)

Notes: Council Members stated that it is important for there to be an easy transition from Early Intervention to Preschool/Head Start without any breaks in services. There is a small "window of time" for children to learn certain skills and they may miss that window of opportunity if there is a break in services.

Next Steps: To begin to put this recommendation into action would involve educating parents and caregivers about the next steps of the transition process.

- Involve Parents/Caregivers/ PreK/El staff/ Pediatricians/Doctors
- Having pamphlets to pass out to families
- Have a slot available in PreK for children already obtaining El services

Decisions made: Council Members have decided to use this recommendation in the Regional Needs Assessment.

Transportation to and from Early Education Services (20 minutes)



Notes: Council Members stated that transportation to and from Preschool is important because there are children that are not being served due to transportation issues.

Next Steps: To begin to put this recommendation into action, Council Members would like to involve:

- Danville Mass Transit (DMT) / First Student
- Head Start/ School Districts
- Grant Writers / Legislation

Council Members would like to put the recommendation into action by starting the following:

- Ask parents to help with transportation
- Start a program for gas cards for those who transport
- Hire a transport service
- Work with the Chamber of Commerce
- Add transportation to rural areas in Vermilion County

Decisions made: Council Members have decided to use this recommendation in the Regional Needs Assessment.

Full-Day Preschool and Head Start (20 minutes)

Notes: Council Members stated there to be full-day Preschool and Head Start Programs for the children entering Kindergarten the following year. This is important because this would help children avoid falling through the cracks, help better prepare the child(ren), and would assist parents with child care needs.

Next Steps: To put this recommendation into action, Council Members say the following parties need to be involved:

- Parents/Caregivers
- Providers/Centers/School Districts

This is a recommendation that Council Members are aware it will take a bit longer to fully accomplish. For time being, due to the staffing shortage, the Council Members understand that getting the word out about the ECACE grant (for those currently in the Early Childhood Education workforce) and encouraging people to go into ECEC workforce to obtain the staff that is needed for this recommendation.



Decisions made: Council Members have decided to use this recommendation in the Regional Needs Assessment.

Other Recommendation Topics (10 minutes)

Notes: Other recommendations that were discussed include:

- Spots are filled before children are waitlisted
- Adjust income eligibility guidelines
- Create a racially diverse community collaboration
- Create a one-stop-shop of ECEC programs

Decisions made: Council Members have decided not to use these recommendations in the Regional Needs Assessment at this time as they were not able to come up with obtainable next steps to carry out the recommendations process.