

NOTES

Region 32 Action Council Meeting

Location: KCC North Extension, 450 N. Kinzie Ave., Bradley, Illinois

Date & Time: February 2, 2023, 9:00-11:00 am

Members Present: Cindy Luzeniecki, Chrissy Nojd, Carolyn Short, Rebecca Graham, Rhonda Showers, Jim Duggan, Cindi Schimmelpfennig, Ben Kindem, Mary Self, Rosemary Pistorius, Theodis Pace, Erin Goldenstein, Newcomb Mowrer, Rebecca Kroiss, Amanda Chorak

Members Absent: Pamela Powell, Christine Johnston, Marquita Cox, Rita Armstrong, Lovice Brinkman, Holly Knupp, Rhonda Pence, Amanda Parks, Sheree Sykes

Guests Present: Kerstin Rust, Pia Green, Sarah Winkel, Deb Baron

9:06: Welcome, Permission to Record

- Permission to Record granted.
- Liz welcomed our guests and had them introduce themselves and the local collaboration they are representing.
 - United Way/Success by Six- Kerstin Rust
 - Aunt Martha's- Pia Green
 - Project Sun- Sarah Winkel, Deb Baron, & Rhonda Showers
 - LIC (Local Interagency Council)- Cindy Luzeniecki

9:08: Community Agreements and Meeting Norms

- Liz reviewed meeting norms and added the "Parking Lot" where members can post questions in the meeting room and Google folder.
- Reminded members of the Google folder and the state website where Action and Family Council names are listed for our region as well as meeting notes for both Action and Family Councils.

9:10: Review Slot Gap and Summarize Findings

- Groups reviewed Publicly Funded Child Care Data including Licensed Child Care Centers, Licensed Family Child Care in the Home, and Licensed Exempt Child Care Centers with and without slots.
- Groups reviewed Publicly Funded Early Childhood Education Data including Early Head Start, Head Start, Prevention Initiative,

Preschool for All, Preschool for All Expansion, and IDHS Home Visiting Programs with and without slots.

- Slot Gap Data can be broken down for children ages Birth to Five, 0-2 years, and 3-5 years.
- Liz had members work in groups to answer Regional Scan questions on Slot Gap- focusing on three questions:
 - What are the possible drivers of the gap in care in our region?
 - What other indicators should be considered alongside the slot gap?
 - What information is missing or would be helpful to better understand this data?
- What are the possible drivers of the gap in care in our region?
 - A member asked how the numbers have changed since COVID. For example, local slots are 75, filled 75, and 7 are on the waiting list currently. Before COVID they were full, but the wait list was bigger- why are families not sending children to publicly funded programs now? Liz asked members to gather those thoughts and data locally if possible.
 - Another member said the public awareness of programs available is lacking and there needs to be more awareness among parents of programs available to them. For example, share on social media “we have X number of slots!”
 - There is a gap between newborns to age three, one member suggested that families need a connection to PI, EI, or family groups. Again, awareness of programs once the baby is born and services develop that relationship with a parent through kindergarten.
 - Member suggested more advocacy for wraparound ages, ages 3-5, after in-home visiting and before kindergarten.
 - Member said physical space and staffing are issues to serving those on waitlists.
 - Council agreed in the discussion that kindergarten needs to be mandatory in Illinois.
 - Member stated reasons for keeping a child out of publicly funded programs: “I wanted to influence my child, I didn’t want the school to influence her.”
 - Council discussed that relationships are most important in developing trust for programs. Liaisons are needed from birth to three.
 - Community buildings were recommended, “Make an EI building in the middle of the town where there are no boundaries.”
 - Focus Groups from homeschooled and Hispanic families are desired and council members can advocate for this type of

group, asking why they are choosing to not send their children.

- “Politics cannot be ignored.” There is a lack of teachers, not trained or skilled. “We have a ‘temporary band-aid’ happening right now where staff does not have the education, skill, or training in the mental health and needs of our children today.” It was asked, “would you want to send your kids to a center with this?”
- Kennilyn shared notes from the January Family Council meeting around positive and negative stereotypes noted by Family Council members about our local communities.
- Liz asked Council for one theme or recommendation from Slot Gap:
 - A need for wraparound service for ages 3-5.
 - To make kindergarten mandatory.
 - Funding for ages 3-5 services.
 - Connection/Relationships: more Parent/Child interaction for newborn-5 years and weekly programs with an emphasis on social-emotional learning and kindergarten prep.
 - Awareness needed for programs available and to utilize social media.
 - Avoid one-size-fits-all approach.
 - Do not build another high school until we have service for all kids from birth to 5 years.

9:55

Local Collaborations (Guest Speakers):

United Way/Success by Six- Kerstin Rust

- Challenge: Making sure collaborations are parallel (“not separate silos”), funding, leadership turnover

Aunt Martha’s- Pia Green

- Advocates for parents and strengthens parents’ skills through home visiting and group programs.
- Challenge: Getting home visiting into the child welfare piece, affordable housing, language barriers, mental health.
- Lacks support from the community.

Project Sun- Sarah Winkel, Deb Baron, & Rhonda Showers

- Advocates for mental health needs for birth to 21 years.
- Challenge: Kankakee County’s mental health need is twice as large “1 provider per 500 citizens.” “Almost no services for children below age three.”

LIC (Local Interagency Council)- Cindy Luzeniecki

- Cindy Luzeniecki will open our next meeting with her agency’s information as time ran out.

- 10:55: Preview Priority Populations and Establishing Local Focus Groups**
- Liz informed council members that we will be looking at Priority Populations during the next meeting.
 - Shared updated information on upcoming Focus Groups as well as a charge for other suggestions for local focus groups.

- 10:58: Reschedule Meeting**
- Next Action Council Meeting will be Friday, February 24th 9-11 am VIRTUAL only.

- 11:00: Family Council Updates (FACE- Kennilyn Hickory)**
- Kennilyn shared earlier quotes from the January Family Council meeting regarding stereotypes of our local communities.
 - Reminded Action Council members to suggest any events or individuals we should connect with locally as a Region 32 Birth to Five Illinois Team.

11:01: Adjourn

Next Meetings:	February 24, 2023	March 2, 2023
	9:00-11:00am	9:00-11:00am
	*Virtual Only	KCC NEC & Virtual