



MEETING NOTES

Region 33 Action Council Meeting

Date & Time: 2/7/23- 9:30am

Council Members present:

Pam Gaither, Peter Schwartzman, Jodi Scott, Anthony Law, Josh Gibb, Roy Van Meter

Council Members absent:

9:30am: Welcome

Notes:

Data available for Review:

- *ECEC workforce and teacher data (number, demographic data, etc.)
- *List of training courses available through INCCRRA (in development)
- *List of early education programs throughout Illinois (in development)
- *Information about early educator supplemental pay (in development)
- *Provider and teacher focus groups, interviews, etc.

1:10pm: Questions & Discussion (20 minutes)

Notes:

1) What is the early childhood education and care workforce landscape in the region?

- *Most Employers are lacking workers and seeking more employees
- *Preschool programs that are trying to expand opportunities- can't find workers.
- *Causes of employee shortage:
 - The amount of education doesn't justify the wage
 - +Licensing for preschool requires a bachelor's degree
 - +ECEC Centers- require an associate's degree
 - Wages for DayCare= minimum wage without benefits
 - There are many jobs available with too few applicants
 - The 0-3 age group is less cost effective to serve
 - Families can't find providers



2) What initiatives exist within the region to support/recruit providers?

- *Congolese immigrants working with CCR&R
- *Galesburg Area Vocational Center offers Childcare credentialing
- *Area High Schools receive an EdPathway's Grant
 - There are 10 students in the Region working toward ECEC
 - Coursework completion provides credentialing
 - Coordinating programs to provide resources to interested individuals
 - Funding only lasts 3 years for each school (Delabar Grant)
 - State funding for Pathways is very important
- *Job Fairs were conducted in 3 Counties
- *Funding is available for ECEC coursework for interested individuals

3) What higher education, high school, or training programs are available for early childhood educators?

- *Western Illinois University is the only college offering ECEC in our area.
- *Carl Sandburg College will offer coursework for ECEC if the ROE and community recruit enough students.
 - Discussions have taken place with CSC administration to restart the ECEC program.
- *Questions raised by Council members:
 - Regarding Regulations/Credentialing- does the State understand how restrictions are creating immovable obstacles?
 - Will the State continue robbing down state programs to pay for Chicagoland programs?
 - Will the decision-makers continue to see the value in funding Regional solutions to ECEC problems?
 - Will the state continue taking money from existing programs to pay for new programs?
 - Will decision-makers see the futility in Grant funding as a solution to ECEC and realize a competitive funding source only widens the gap for families seeking quality ECEC services?
 - What State Agency will be in control of ECEC funding and initiatives?
 - +IDHS? ISBE? Birth to Five Illinois? Other?
- *Solutions from Council members:
 - The State decision-makers should:
 - +Continue the Regional approach to solving ECEC problems.
 - +Allow local expertise to solve daycare issues.



- The State should not be a grant maker
 - +The State thinks it is- but it is not
- The Funding Commission recommended a NEW structure
- The Funding Commission did **not** recommend using an existing structure such as IDHS or ISBE.
- The Grand Victoria Foundation a private philanthropy organization seeded money to create an ECEC network years ago.
 - +Paid for by revenue from a Casino
 - +Decatur/Springfield and others were Pilot Programs
 - +Studying these modes may offer solutions
 - +Council member is seeking more information.

4) What do your findings regarding the placement of early childhood education and care sites, along the slot gap, contribute to the conversation about early childhood workforce?

- *More funding is needed in ALL areas of ECEC.
- *The biggest slot gap and need in our region is Infant care.

5) How diverse is the ECEC workforce and is the workforce representative of the communities they serve?

- *The ROE is using time and treasure to improve diversification in the workforce.
 - Congolese Immigrant population is an example of initiatives in the area of diversification.
 - +Obstacles from the State agencies surrounding translation of paperwork, training, and credentialing.
- *IECAM and IDHS data is based on self-reporting and is inaccurate.

6) What would a truly representative ECEC workforce look like for your Region?

- *The workforce would reflect the demographics of the Region.
- *Homogeneous communities may benefit from a diverse workforce.
- *An improved transportation system could assist interaction between urban and rural areas.
- *The solution must include financial viability.
 - cost increases play a roll
 - ECEC is historically a workforce made of women and historically women are underpaid.
 - +Societally, a shift is required to include more value placed on the importance of ECEC.



*Supporting Stories:

- In Bangladesh- if children live to 5 years old- they will be successful
- If children do not receive love, education, and health care- they will be unsuccessful.
- In past generations, nuclear families had 1 bread winner with 2 parents.
- Now, there are more double income homes, there are more divided families.

*Education is broken when it comes to marginalized communities.

- The importance of education is not taught in all homes.
- There is no trust for educational systems in all homes.
- Societal problems are very large and are materializing in ECEC.
- Trust of established institutions is very low in many families.

Decisions made: N/A

Next Steps:

10:30am: Next Steps (15 minutes)

Notes:

- Future Meetings will be:
 - *1st Tuesday of the Month @ 12:15pm – ONLINE
 - Invitation from Rhonda Hillyer
 - *3rd Thursday of the Month @ 4:15pm – Hybrid
 - Monmouth ROE 105 North E St. Monmouth IL 61462
 - Invitation from Roy Van Meter

10:40am: Meeting Adjourned