



MEETING NOTES

Region 54 Action Council Meeting

Date & Time: Tuesday, March 7, 2023, 11:30 AM

Council Members present: Chris Rice, Cynthia Smith, Elizabeth Cannon, Kathy Vines, Lisa Abdelghani, Lisa Langellier, Mary Surprenant, Mia Harrier, Niah Hamilton, Odette Hyatt-Watson, and Tim Dudley

Council Members absent: Cindy Montgomery, Melissa Hollingsworth, Michael Marron, Tamara L Red, and Tamera Forthenberry

Welcome and Icebreaker (5 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.

Special Speaker: Jennifer Spinks & Amanda York are Higher Education Navigators at Child Care Resources Services CCRS (30 minutes)

Notes: Our special speakers, Jennifer Spinks and Amanda York, spoke on how their roles as Higher Education Navigators are to connect Early Childhood workers to higher education. They help walk people through the process step-by-step.

Their positions are an asset to our community because they provide multiple resources to Early Childhood workers from the beginning to the end. The higher education system can be hard to navigate.

Workforce (60 minutes)

Notes: A PowerPoint was presented to the council with the following information:

- A chart of who is included in the ECEC Workforce
 - Education Workers
 - Health and Nutrition Workers
 - Social and Child Protection Workers
- A graph with Vermilion County ECE positions as of March 2021



- Licensed Centers Positions
- Licensed Centers Directors
- Licensed Centers Teaching Staff
- Licensed Family Child Care

- ECEC Workforce Initiatives
 - Education Reimbursements
 - Scholarships
 - Educational/Monetary Incentives

- Building and Supporting a Qualified/High-Quality ECEC Workforce discussion
 - Optimizing Supply
 - Managing Quality and Retention

Next Steps: Use the information learned from the presented PowerPoint and discussion to answer the parting questions.

Parting Questions (30 minutes)

Notes: Council Members took the information reviewed today and used it to answer the parting questions.

- What are we doing to build and support our ECEC workforce?
 - Offering Scholarships/Grants/Educational & Monetary Incentives
 - People available to walk you through the process

- What challenges and problems exist, and why?
 - Existing staff is getting burnt out
 - Underpaid and overworked

 - Hard to recruit new employees
 - Low pay
 - Lots of unpaid observing hours
 - Background checks taking a long time to come back – delayed starting times for potential employees

 - Not many teachers display the variety of people in our region
 - Not many male Child Education Workers



- Not many Black Education Workers
- Teachers lacking higher education
 - Unpaid observing hours
 - Not enough time in the day for them to work, be home with their families, and go to school
 - Can't afford to quit work and go to school

Next Steps: Use the information gathered today to update our regional scan.