



MEETING NOTES

Region 1-B-C Action Council Meeting

Date & Time: March 9, 2023, 4:30pm-6:30pm Zoom Meeting

Council Members Present: Leatha Asbury, Gretchen Bailey, Adelia Brienzo, Rochelle Golliday, Janice Jones, Michelle Zurita-Sharpe

Council Members Absent: Kelly Burke, Sharhianna Fulce, Billy Hubbert, Janice Martin, Felicia McBride, Daniela Rivera, Joyce Scott

4:30 PM: Welcome/Icebreaker (10 mins)

- If you were stranded on a deserted island, what are two things you want to have with you?

Notes:

- Action Council Members responded to the icebreaker and shared their wish list with the group.

Decisions Made: N/A

Next Steps: N/A

4:40 PM: Review of Community Agreements & Best Practices (5 mins)

Notes:

- Action Council Members reviewed Community Agreements and decided to make no changes at this time.

Decisions Made: N/A

Next Steps: N/A

4:45 PM: Updates (30 mins)

- Regional Scan/ Needs Assessment- Timeline and Where we are now.
- Focus Groups/ Interviews
- Action Council Recommendations
- Family Council Update

Notes:

- Ashonti-RCM went over the information from the previous meeting and shared information and updated the council about the Regional Scan.



- Ashonti-RCM shared the sections that must be finalized by March 10 and the timeline for other items due at the end of March and April to have a finalized Regional Scan ready to print by the end of June.
- Action Council members will receive a list of questions for the recommendations section of the Regional Scan.
- An Action Council member asked about how Region 1-B-C represents the communities when each one of them is very different.
- It was shared as an example of how Region 1-B-C will accurately share the needs of families to the west of Cicero and to the east.
- Ashonti went on to explain that the regional scan will highlight those diverse communities and also shared the experience we had with the Arabic families in Palos Hills, an affluent community.
- These families shared their struggles that we wouldn't expect in that area.
- The same member recommended having the same conversation with families in Harvey's school district.
- Ashonti explained that even though there are communities that do not seem to need services, each community has pockets of families in high need.
- When meeting with families from different geographical regions, we were recommended to include families from different racial groups.
- Ashonti also shared the information we collected from the last Focus Group with the providers and CFC #12.
- Another Action Council Member asked about the next steps after the Regional Scan. Ashonti explained that we would take the Regional Scan to the community and Elected Officials.
- Jaime (FACE Specialist) shared that the Family Council will also be part of the dissemination of the Regional Scan in the community through advocacy and parent cafes.

Decisions Made: Action Council Members will review the first part of the Regional Scan and will provide feedback.

Next Steps: Try to have a focus group with families from Harvey. Also, connecting with a community program in Riverdale to meet with parent leaders to support the dissemination of the Regional Scan.

5:15 PM: Review of Priority Populations (25 mins)

- Children of teen parents
- Children experiencing homelessness.
- Children in poverty or deep poverty



- Children/Families with Department of Children and Family Services involvement
- Children with disabilities
- Children of migrant or seasonal workers
- Children in families with low caregiver education attainment
- Children in families that face barriers based on culture, language, and religion.
- Children of a parent or legal guardian with a disability
- Children in families who face barriers due to immigration status.

Notes:

- Ashonti went to recap what we covered last time and review all the priority populations. Members were asked if anything else needed to be added.
- A concern was raised about parents with disabilities.
- An issue the communities need support with.
- Also, kinship care is a priority population not listed or addressed.
- A member asked how LGBTQ+ families are a priority population.
- Two members supported in elaborating how these families could be marginalized, discriminated against, and victims of microaggressions.
- As simple as program applications not being inclusive and asking for information from Mom and Dad without realizing some households will have two moms or two dads.
- On the other hand, some children are being segregated in special needs classrooms for being different.

Decisions Made: N/A

Next Steps: N/A

5:40 PM: Priority Population Questions (30 mins)

1. Are there programs in place to support migrant, immigrant, and refugee families? If so, what are those? Are they located in an area that can easily reach these families/communities?
2. COVID contributed to higher unemployment rates and increased the number of people experiencing homelessness. What impact did it have on families in our Region? What services/supports were implemented to help those impacted? Have those services/supports remained in place?

Notes:



1. Are there programs in place to support migrant, immigrant, and refugee families? If so, what are those? Are they located in an area that can easily reach these families/communities?
 - Harvey has a location to serve migrant families.
 - Why Harvey? An at-risk neighborhood with high crime rates.
 - Other affluent and more educated communities will not allow this type of service to come to their community.
 - The community needs the additional funding it brings, which is why they housed it there.
 - Arab-American Family Services in Worth, IL, is one of the few agencies supporting the Arab American population.
 - There are no other agencies within the community.
 - Families must travel to downtown Chicago or the north side of Chicago to receive some of these services.
 - An example was shared, a family member needed support to file for citizenship, and there were no free or low-cost agencies to support in the southern communities.
 - She had to travel to support her family member in filling out the application.
 - COVID contributed to higher unemployment rates and increased the number of people experiencing homelessness.
2. What impact did it have on families in our Region? What services/supports were implemented to help those impacted? Have those services/supports remained in place?
 - Some services have been extended because the community is asking for them.
 - Some others are needed, such as mental health support.
 - That's why they are being extended.
 - Some families are not looking for jobs.
 - Families do not want to lose other services if their income increases.
 - Illinois Action for Children is in the community as well.
 - The school districts have parent liaisons and family education coordinators.
 - Some communities are prepared for these families because they historically have been immigrant communities.
 - Blue Island was an immigrant community for Hispanics, and now they are seeing immigrants from other countries, such as Ukraine.



- They are not prepared for them.
- Some services are unavailable to families due to language barriers, lack of proper identification documents, and lack of health insurance.
- In addition to racism.
- COVID has changed how community organizations and school districts work. Some families lack proper internet access or proper devices.
- Many of the services now require individuals to fill out online forms and applications.
- IFSP/IEP meetings are being held virtually.
- We are starting to see the effects of COVID on children.
- They are not socioemotionally prepared to interact with others.
- Families have family members immunocompromised, adding a layer of difficulty to go out to receive services or having someone come to their home and provide the services.
- Services were not equally distributed to the community.
- Sanctuary cities not being able to provide stimulus support to undocumented families.
- More people from marginalized communities were exposed to COVID (living with extended family/mixed housing, frontline workers (restaurants, etc.), etc.
- Children were also affected by the disruption of services.
- Higher rates of domestic violence and child abuse.
- Exposure to trauma and mental health.

Decisions Made: N/A

Next Steps: N/A

6:10 PM: ECEC Programs (15 mins)

- Child Care Centers (centers, homes, private preschools, etc.)
- Early Head Start/Head Start
- Early Intervention
- Home Visiting
- Preschool for All/Prevention Initiative
- Child Care Assistance Program (CCAP)
- MIECHV

Notes:

- ECEC funding sources were discussed.



- The topic of conversation was reporting.
- Some programs have the same program type administered by two different entities.
- Reporting and applications have to go through different processes.
- If it is confusing for the providers, it definitely is confusing for the families.
- The solution is a one-stop shop for families.
- “I know one of the recommendations from the commission was to centralize these funding streams to one agency, but from what I understand, it is controversial on how to do that. Like if a new agency should be created or not. Does anyone know where that conversation stands?”
- It is difficult to find a neutral partner to support all the FCCH, CBOs, and school districts to fill their slots.

Decisions Made: N/A

Next Steps: We will continue the conversation about ECEC in the next meeting.

Follow-up/Next Steps:

- Address Parking Lot Questions:

<https://www.partnerplanact.org/rcs1/foundational-trainings616>

Next Meeting

March 23, 2023, 4:30-6:30 PM - Hybrid (ECEC Programs)