



MEETING NOTES

Region 13 Action Council Meeting

Date & Time: March 30, 2023, 12:30pm-2:30pm

Council Members present: Kara Booze, Tranae Brockhouse, Jennifer Clark, Emma Conway, Crystal Donoho, Shirley Gordon, Ashley Griffin, Mary Hart, Jessica Palazzolo, Jill Wardlow

Council Members absent: Makayla Hargrave, April Higgins, Christy Jean, Maria Koehler, Deborah Lewis, BreeAnna Pelczynski

12:30 Welcome, Introductions, Ice Breaker & Community Agreements (11 mins)

Notes:

- Birth to Five Staff: Heather Pruettt – Regional Council Manager, Brittany Lemons – Family & Community Engagement Specialist, Jessica Chin – Administrative Support
- Members: Kara Boozer – Youth development educator at the University of Illinois Extension, Tranae Brockhouse – Director of Project Child and Child Care Resource and Referral Office at Rend Lake College, Jennifer Clark – Owner of Clark Academy School, Emma Conway – PreK Teacher at Germantown Elementary, Crystal Donoho – Director of Children’s Learning Center at Kaskaskia College, Shirley Gordon – Elect Lady at Southtown Apostolic Church, Ashley Griffin – Director of Ivy League Day School, Mary Hart – Parent/Family Member, Jessica Palazzolo – Manager at Lincoln Prairie Behavioral Health Center, Jill Wardlow – Program Director for the Regional Office of Education Preschool for All
- Members introduced themselves and talked about their favorite vacation.
- Community Agreements for an effective meeting space were reviewed.

12:41 Family Council Updates (3 mins)

Notes:

- Brittany reviewed updates from the Family Council.
- Brittany also shared Region 13’s participation in The Week of the Young Child and Facebook Live Story Time.

Decisions made:

- If the Action Council would like to nominate someone to read at one of Region 13's Facebook Live Story Times, please contact Brittany Lemons.

12:44 Regional Scan Review, ECEC Programs (Child Care) and Workforce (8 mins)

Notes:

- Heather shared what was captured from our Early Childhood Education and Care Programs and Workforce discussion.

Decisions made:

- The Action Council agreed with the concerns and needs that were captured during the last meeting.

Next Steps:

- Email Heather if any additional information should be added to the Regional Scan.

12:52 Parents, Caregivers, and Families – Data Presentation, Discussion (32 mins)

Notes:

- Heather shared and reviewed the case study that was sent to the members before the meeting.
 - The mom is a pregnant single mother of four that has just moved to Nashville, Illinois. She has three children currently that have special needs. Find support for this mother and her family.
- Shared the Family Council's findings from the same case study.
- "I worked 10-hour shifts which many of the Mount Vernon community do. It is difficult because you call during your break but then you have to call back or they will have to call you back. It is really frustrating to be in that situation. She already feels defeated, which will play a big role in her mental health. That is a big issue a lot of parents are feeling in the area."
- "It is such a pendulum. If one thing does not work out or falls out of place it impacts everything else. If your child care falls through you can't go to work or you can't get off work to take your kids to speech therapy. It must be difficult to be a caregiver. There are so many battles you have to overcome."

Decisions Made:

- Members shared where this mother should start her search:
 - BCMW
 - Project Child
 - School District
 - Regional Office of Education #13
 - McKinney Vento
 - Insurance Agency

- Sleep in Heavenly Peace
 - Housing Authority
- Families in our region struggle to find resources, especially caregivers like the parent in the case study.
- Difficulties parents, caregivers, and families have accessing programs and care:
 - Working caregivers can't find the time due to the hours of operation of the programs.
 - Having to call multiple different agencies.
 - There is no resource directory to help guide caregivers.
- Clinton and Washington Counties do not have as many resources for parents, caregivers, and families.
- The most difficult services to access:
 - Speech Therapy
 - Early Intervention
 - Child Care
- Having one central place for resources would make it earlier for parents, caregivers, and families to access programs and services.

1:24 Parents, Caregivers, and Families – A Walk in Their Shoes – Case Study (33 mins)

Notes:

- Presented stories and quotes that have been captured during Council meetings, Focus Groups, and Interviews.

Decisions Made:

- It would be beneficial to educate pediatricians and caregivers on Birth to Three screenings and developmental milestones.
- Transportation and quality child care seem to be a common thread in the conversations we have had with the community.
- The Council would like to get data on how big the need is for odd-hour care.
- Struggles programs are having with offering odd-hour care:
 - Caregivers are not accessing odd-hour care when it is available.
 - Transportation
 - First and Second shifts overlap which affects the ratio and slots.
 - Lost Money
 - Staffing
 - Benefit loss for staff

1:57 Meeting 9 Preview, Review Training Opportunities, Closing Comments (11 mins)

Notes:

- The next Action Council meetings will include Regional Strengths and Needs.

- Heather gave a snapshot of what will happen after the Regional Scan has been completed.
- On-demand foundational trainings were shared.
- Shared when Region 13 will be hosting Town Halls and the registration links.

Decisions Made:

- If the Action Council wants a certain topic discussed during the Town Halls please contact Heather before April 4th.

Next Steps:

- Our next meeting will be April 20th at 12:30pm.

Follow-Up/Next Steps:

- Email Heather if any additional information should be added to the Regional Scan.
- Our next meeting will be April 20th at 12:30pm.