



## Meeting Notes

### Region 51 Action Council Meeting

**Location: Birth to Five Illinois: Virtual Teams Meeting**

**Date & Time: Thursday, April 27, 2023, from 6:00-8:00 pm**

Council Members Present: LeAnn Bell, Apryl Edwards, Kayla Miller, Laura Pickrell, Laurie Rhodes, Tracie Sampson, Wendy Williams, Jamar Scott, Connie Shugart, Mitch Baker, Lori Harrison, Lajewell White, Jill Larson, and Tiffani Saunders

Council Members Absent: Christine Craddock, Lindsay Sleade, Kevi Jackson, Ya'Shika Reed, Doris Turner, Debbie Tiskos, Violet Wiker, Kendra Day, and Savannah Wilken

6:00pm: Community Agreements, Ice Breaker, Reviewing of the Local & State Recommendations and Dived Deeper into the Local Recommendations (20 mins)

Question: How can we increase capacity in ECEC programs caring for children from birth to five? Council picked:

- *Increase staff by using workforce mentors/recruiters in the High Schools and keep the staff in the ECEC programs connected to scholarships and grant programs.*

Question: How can we invest more in Home Visiting Programs to help aid pregnant persons during and after pregnancy? Council picked:

- *Develop a Home Visiting Brochure to pass out to Hospitals, Dr offices & ECEC programs in order to recruit more physicians and community leaders to promote Home Visiting and make referrals through Sangamon Heart while in conjunction with a community campaign on the importance of Home Visiting.*

Question: How can we do a 211 Campaign and ECEC Family Resources Campaign? Council picked:

- *211 Campaign for Region 51 through United Way with a Social Media Campaign, spread of 211 business cards to schools, nonprofits, and Dr offices, and enrolling all nonprofits in the 211 database.*



Question: How can we implement Community Navigators?

Council picked:

- *Implement Community Navigators in Region 51 by first discussing with the healthcare sectors on how they implemented their navigators.*

Notes: Ashley asked the Action Council Members to revisit the first two Local Recommendations and then dive deeper into the last two recommendations. She stated that the Local Recommendations were too broad and in order to take action locally the Council would have to ask the question How?-To see How as a community they could take Action. The Council had a group discussion around the recommendations and chose which solution they wanted to pursue as a council. Decisions Made: The Council Members finalized their Local Recommendations. Next Steps: The Action Council will now develop a plan of action on which Local Recommendations to focus their attention on first to allow them to begin to take action.

6:45 pm: Discussed the Data Answer Sheet Questions one by one in a group setting with the Council Members who were present. Some provided their feedback verbally while others put their comments in the chat. (30 mins)

Asked: What are parents experiences with accessing Early Childhood Education and Care Programs in the Region?

- *A lot of parents are discouraged but have no clue about the Illinois Cares for Kids website. There are no openings for care, families need help, and families are overwhelmed/frustrated. Families do not know where to turn to for answers when trying to find care or services. We need to make families feel supported, instead of adding more frustrations to their plates.*
- *Same conversations at my program. I worked with a parent who just found employment, but can't find child care. The parent was in tears. Children are on every single waiting list they can find in hopes they can find something quickly even if it means it is not quality care. Just for families to find care in Menard County is very frustrating.*

Asked: Do we know how many children are reaching out on behalf of their parents due to language barriers, translating for their parents to deliver or receive a message?

- *No responses given*



Asked: How long does it take to have a message delivered or a call returned?

- *I call people on my wait lists and leave messages to tell them that children are brought in on a “first come first serve” basis because I cannot wait for a parent to call back three days later. I also find that families’ phone numbers change constantly, so the number given when put on the list will no longer be in service when I go to call. Therefore, there is a challenge in reaching out to those on the waitlist or even parents that are enrolled in her center.*
- *I send a mass email update each quarter to each classroom’s waiting list to see if people still need care. This seems to get a great response. This allows us to reach out to everyone involved (parents & administrators) letting them know the date and time of the opening. Individuals also reach out via Facebook asking about openings so we then send these messages to our emails to remind ourselves to follow up with these families.*

Asked: Can anyone answer this on behalf of those who are not native English speaking?

- *No responses given*

Asked: Do our current services and supports seem sufficient for how the community is growing and changing? and Is it going to meet the need?

- *According to our slot gap data, No!*
- *Agree 100%. This will not meet our needs for the future.*

Notes: Everyone either put all their answers on the Data Answer Sheet provided to them or gave their answers verbally or in the chat.

Decisions Made: N/A

Next Steps: N/A

**7:15 pm:** The Council Members went over the Draft of the Regional Needs Assessment in the Google Drive providing their input and edits. (35 mins)

Decisions Made: The Council Members finalized their edits with the Birth to Five Illinois: Region 51 Staff.

Next Steps: The Birth to Five Illinois: Region 51 staff will send the next section of the Needs Assessment via email for them to review and edit.



7:50 pm: Data Sources Reminder, Foundational Trainings Reminder, Family Council Report, and How to Connect.

Notes: Ashley briefly reviewed the data sources, agenda for future council meetings, and how to connect.

Decisions made: N/A

Next Steps: Send a reminder email for the next meeting on June 8th, 2023