



MEETING NOTES

Region 41 Action Council Meeting

Date & Time: 02/21/2023, 12:30pm-2:30pm

Action Council Members present: Barbara Corby, Amy Knackstedt, Aimee Villet, Veneta Wadlow, Christine Coleman, Sister M. Kateri, Lauren Jacobs, Michelle Wright, Kristy Smiley, Timothy Rhymer

Action Council absent: Wendy Phillips, Terri Mussatto, Donna Dixon, Amber Mezo, Heidi Elliott, Kyra Lakin, Esther Beard

12:30pm Welcome & Activity (5min)

Notes:

- Council members welcomed. Member shared information about the Sequoia Redwoods with team comparing that to the work that we are doing. Members shared thoughts.

Decisions Made: N/A

Next Steps: N/A

12:35pm Community Agreements, Meeting Roles (5min)

Notes:

- Community Agreements overview.
- Meeting Roles established.

Decisions Made: N/A

Next Steps: N/A

12:40pm Small Group Work (Recommendations) (30min)

Notes:

- Discussion around Quality, Access, and Equity in Early Childhood Care.
 - Members worked in small groups to make recommendations to improve quality, access, and equity in Madison County regarding early care and education.

Decisions Made: N/A

Next Steps: N/A



1:10pm Share Out(20min)

Notes:

- Recommendations include the following:
 - Mentorship
 - universal steps to achieve quality
 - Staff support
 - Community collaboration
 - Collaboration for all community-based early childhood groups
 - Increase funding for equipment upgrades, salary, etc.
 - Equitable pay

Decisions Made: N/A

Next Steps: N/A

1:30pm Break (5min)

1:35pm Small Group Work (Recommendations) (35min)

- Notes: Discussion around Quality, Access, and Equity in Early Childhood Care.
 - Members worked in small groups to make recommendations to improve quality, access, and equity in Madison County regarding early care and education.

Decisions Made: N/A

Next Steps: N/A

2:10pm Share Out(15min)

Notes:

- Increase care for before and after care
- A centralized agency to provide support for families so they can access equitable early childhood education and care
- Reliable and free transportation
- Shared data among all early childhood education and care agencies (current enrollment, available seats)
- Funding to increase staffing
- Offer agency incentives to hire parents
- More direct practice for early childhood providers
- Mentoring for new educators including reflection during the first year of practice
- Easier Certification easier.
- Shared data



- Increase funding to serve children with disabilities
- Special education supports in each classroom
- Fund inclusion initiatives for children with disabilities
- More secure and sustainable funding with new initiatives for families and staff
- Rolling scale for early care and education out of pocket expenses OR free child care for all
- Employers provide early care and education
- Parent-to-parent support
- Additional Navigators to support staff with scholarship applications

Decisions Made: N/A

Next Steps: N/A

2:25pm Recent and Upcoming Happenings

Notes:

- Region 41 is preparing surveys that can be distributed to targeted audiences and would like the Council to help with distributing.
- Teacher and Support Staff Virtual Focus Group was held on February 8, 2023, with six participants.
- Draft Regional Scan will be reviewed with Council in May. The summer of 2023 will be spent disseminating the information from the scan with local stakeholders. Council members asked to help with sharing that information.

Decisions Made: N/A

Next Steps: N/A

2:30pm Final Thoughts (5min)

Notes:

Comments were shared regarding the proposed budget with some concerns about block grant funding exceptions.

[Gov. Pritzker Introduces Smart Start Illinois | IECAM](#)

- Members were thanked for their hard work and dedication. We are like the Sequoia Redwoods in that we could not do this work alone. New connections, collaborations, and a greater understanding have been had by all.

Decisions Made: N/A

Next Steps: N/A

2:35pm Adjourn

Next Meeting

Thursday, March 9, 2023, from 12:30pm to 2:30pm