



MEETING NOTES

Region 49 Action Council Meeting

Date & Time: 10/19/2022 – 1:30-3:00pm

Council Members present: April Berthiaume, Danen Busch, Beverly Clark, Melissa Gravert, Janet Hill, Tess Hurt, Kate Jennings, Julie Larson, Cindy Mahr, Lindsay Meeker, Marcy Mendenhall, James Richardson Jr., Tiera Teague, Michael Terry
Council Members absent: Tammy Muerhoff, Marcia Seabolt

What has drawn each Action Council member to the Birth to Five Illinois work in Rock Island County?

Notes: Action Council members shared their devotion and passions related to ECEC services in Rock Island County.

- Life is dedicated to the betterment of children and families in our community.
- The work of Birth to Five Illinois aligns with professional work.
- Raising safe and healthy children from the start.
- Services are often hard to locate – systemic change is needed.
- Passionate about community growth and regional collaboration.
- Servant to families and community.
- Broadening understanding of services and representing underserved populations.
- Learning and serving – new to early childhood advocacy.
- Passionate about family access – history of working within collaboratives.
- Parent and educator representing families.
- Passionate about meeting the needs of child care centers, homes, families, and children.
- Belief that there should be a great opportunity for all children to access high-quality services.
- Parent and child care center director driven to lift the workforce and contribute new and fresh ideas to the work.

Welcoming new Action Council member, Melissa Gravert.

Notes: Melissa Gravert has a robust history of working with young children, specifically those from bilingual and multilingual homes. Melissa is eager to learn and advocate for children, families, and providers in Rock Island County.



Systems Building

Notes: Regional Council Manager presented Systems Building video and the importance of functional community systems.

Decisions made: All Action Council members agreed that there should be “no wrong door” -

Next Steps:

Perspectives of Rock Island County ECEC services: Quality & Collaboration

Notes: Action Council members were asked to anonymously share their perspective of the quality and collaborative or siloed nature of the ECEC services within Rock Island County.



Decisions made:

- There is no belief that Rock Island County possesses low quality ECEC services.
- There are no extreme perspectives; collective median perspective.
- There is an urgency in moving away from siloed work.

Illinois ECEC Collaborations & Roles of ECEC Collaborations

Notes: Regional Council Manager reviewed many collaborations recognized by Illinois Action for Children’s Partner-Plan-Act as well as the role(s) that a collaboration plays within their community.

- Continuous Improvement
- Improved System Functioning
- Diverse Stakeholder Engagement

Presentation by Cindy Mahr, President of Early Childhood Coalition (ECC) of the Illinois Quad Cities



Small Group Discussion

Notes: Action Council members were asked to join small groups to discuss the community groups and collaborations they are involved with, the work that is currently being done within those groups, and how that work can connect with community systems work.



Decisions made: There is a wealth of involvement within the members of the Action Council. There are many opportunities to bring systems together for collective impact within Rock Island County.

Questions that Remain Unasked/Unanswered

Notes: Action Council members raised questions that are tabled for future discussion and research.

- How can there be assurance that all programs will be supported and funded adequately? Do expectations match the supports needed to implement services? (Bilingual/Multilingual, English Language Learners, Special Education, children with differing abilities)
- Are refugee and immigrant populations being served in a just manner?
- How is the workforce gap addressed, specifically regarding pay equity?
- ECEC funding to match K-12 funding?
- ISBE & IDHS working together to create seamlessness between programs?
- Is there a possibility of Universal Preschool?



Learning Through Growth

Notes: Action Council members shared what they may be learning that is new or especially interesting to them.

- Learning about a wealth of resources within Rock Island County.
- Collaboration is imperative as the Action Council possesses varied expertise.
- Success of local 501(c)(3) collaborations.
- Hopeful of the promise of Birth to Five Illinois within the community.
- As a group, we are recognizing problems and working toward proposed solutions.
- Variety of organizations with individual assets and deficits.

Note: Kate Jennings of Q2030 shared a child care provider forum event being hosted on November 2, 2022. Information including location and time will be shared with the Birth to Five Illinois: Region 49 newsletter recipients and shared within the Birth to Five Illinois: Region 49 Facebook group.