



MEETING NOTES

Region 30 Virtual Family Council Meeting

Date & Time: 2/7/2023, 6:00pm–7:30pm

Family Council Members present: Veronika Parrone, Kimberly Myers, Denasha Oliver, Nicki Rathert, Amanda Hester, Victoria Taylor, and Sonya Clark

Family Council Members absent: Micole Larry, Breanna Kobus, Breanna Puckett-Woods, Keosha Woods, Amanda Sullivan, Alessandra Nicholson, Lyndsey McCann, and Shauna McGuire

6:00pm Welcome & Group Warmup Activity (20mins)

- Happy Birthday January and February Family Council Members! (Happy Birthday song)
- Group warm-up activity—What cartoon character would you be and how does that cartoon character inspire you?

Notes: Linda introduced that moving forward members of the Family Council would be recognized on their birthday with a birthday song—another way to show Family Council Region 30 appreciation. One parent was recognized this month and commented “this is so much fun.” Linda asked the group during the group warmup, what was their favorite cartoon character and how that character inspired them? Several members chose superheroes or characters that inspired them.

6:20pm Family Council Round Table Discussion (60mins)

- Group discussion question—The ECEC workforce
 1. How does the Early Childhood Education and Care workforce look like in your community? Rural or city?
 2. Why is it so important to include Parent/Family engagement information in the scan?

Presenter: Linda Poindexter

Notes:

ECEC Workforce

Jackson County-Teacher shortage in Jackson Co., waiting list is well over 100 people, the wait is months and months.

Union County-Centers have closed in Union Co., I've worked in some child care facilities, younger people without a degree and no background are working in these spaces.

Jackson County-Newer, more eager teachers that do not have the skill set, and parents who are unsure of the quality. Some places have experienced, more seasoned staff that are on their way out.

Union Co.-Home program Head Start-difficulties with facilities (water leak), teachers not getting the support they need/hands tied by regulations. "Our education system needs to evolve".

Jackson Co.-Carbondale had better options than Murphysboro. Great staff, but support staff is missing, they move people around a lot. My daughter said, "A teacher yelled at me and I don't remember their name". Staff is hard to keep, they offer babysitters, though.

Quality Care - Yes-3 No-0 (poll) Do you feel like the programs provided quality care?

The social-emotional curriculum is good, but nutrition needs improvement—Jackson County

Southern Region SIU is ½ day program, difficult to transport my child, but we dealt with it for 2 years because of the quality of care they provided—Jackson County
Strengths: communication, family activities, positive attitude/outlook, enjoyed what they were doing, current on best practices in early childhood.

Workforce-Why are teachers leaving?

Low pay, underappreciated, too much paperwork, no breaks, no lunch, eating lunch with students, many teachers feel guilty because of shortages.

Why is it important to include this information in the scan?

- To hear firsthand from parents
- If you rely too much on statistics, you don't get the full picture but the qualitative input shows what's really going on
- So leaders will know what families go through and can come up with suggestions on how to change things
- Not every area is the same, so what is needed in each place is different
- Allows the opportunity of the story and experiences to be heard, a mom that lacks child care and transportation, what is actually being lived from day to day
- Offers different perspectives, we don't see things the same way, human level to create empathy, I'm not just a number, I'm real (what I'm going through)
- Work evenings, I've sacrificed working days, (Dad works days, Mom works evenings) I couldn't find child care, and my child has a disability
- I have to skip social events, taking time off work to get other task done (going to the bank)
- I babysit for my niece- she doesn't qualify for CCR&R because she's a nurse, but can't afford child care
- List of qualified child care providers/network

Parent Stories

- Parents are the experts in what their children need
- Everybody has a different story

What do you want lawmakers to know?

- Serious lack of options
- We are working hard to barely pay for child care that's not that great
- Identify the problem-single parents need more help
- Lack of communication
- Quality care depends on the value of those in charge, they need better pay, more funding to provide for longevity

Ideal Child Care Center

- High-quality, you don't have to worry about nutrition, staff is happy to see your child
- Implement meaningful activities

- Support
- Emotional intelligence

7:20pm Break (10mins)

Notes: Linda asked Members if there were any questions, concerns, or comments

7:30pm Closing—(15mins)

Closing—final thoughts/questions/comments on tonight's discussion and short video:

Notes: Linda presented a short video on child care workers and the issues that have been raised about how child care workforce are dealing with long hours, few to know duty-free breaks, and low wages. Some members shared their own experiences working in the child care field and validating the low pay wages and non-existent duty free breaks.

7:45pm Meeting adjourned

Next Meeting: Tuesday, March 7, 2023