



MEETING NOTES

Region 35 Family Council Meeting

Location: Ottawa, IL

Date & Time: 2/07/23, 5:09pm-7:00pm

Council Members present: Elissa Barker, Kelsie Hardy, Steffanie Maxwell, David Trenor, Melissa Terry

Council Members absent: Sean Dergance, Chris Bickel, Molly Wiley, Randi Paquette

5:09pm Welcome & Introduction of Members-Consent to Record (3min)

Notes: All approved

5:12pm Ice Breaker – If you were on a deserted island... (11min)

Notes:

Name one person, one thing, and one endless food supply you would take with you. All parties participated, building on our rapport within the Family Council.

5:23pm Introduction to PowerPoint – Early Childhood Education Care (ECEC) Workforce Data within region 35 (7min)

Notes:

- Marshall and Putnam counties lack options for ECEC and meet the 100-200% federal poverty level (FPL). The result is disadvantaged conditions for accessing resources families need.

5:30pm Discussion Median Yearly Wages/2020 (24min)

Notes:

A point of view covering problems within both child center and public-school teachers.

- The median wages are too low, resulting in a lack of interest in working in the ECEC field. There are less qualified staff for our children and qualified staff does not mean permanent staff. Another focal point is a child care worker caters more so to parent expectations, working throughout the summer, while a public school teacher is going to possibly work a later evening but no summers unless by choice.



5:54pm Discussion Special Education Endorsements-Degrees held by staff (19min)

Notes:

- According to previous data, we see that the need for Special Education is on the rise, yet here we see the education level of our staff in ECEC is not qualified to aid in teaching this population. Whether it is the refusal to accommodate for every child to equitably participate or the environment, the narrative is we are not seeing the labor market willfully moving to Special Education degrees. There needs to be a rethinking process and diversity brought back into the educational system.

6:13pm Discussion Child care staff receiving benefits (47min)

Notes:

Are these percentages we are viewing a problem? From your perspective, why is it difficult to keep staff in ECEC? In your opinion, what is causing ECEC staff to leave/stay and what is quality care? How diverse is the ECEC workforce and is the workforce representative of the communities we serve?

- Knowledge and awareness to provide tools and resources to teaching staff about benefits are lacking. There is no financial motivation to teach in a preschool system. The perspective of how important the staff is does not show in wages. The cost-of-living expectations are too high in comparison to child care staff benefits. When there is a raise provided, there is also an increase in employee contributions to benefits and they end up making less.
- The data depicts wages versus hours as a driving factor of unfortunate turnover. The hours are long, and, in many situations, it is not feasible for a family to have both adults working. The cost of child care is not demographically correct considering limited employment and transportation options. This leads to a high turnover rate for temporary employees or staff who are being moved into classroom teaching positions they are not qualified for. The quality of care depends primarily on what the family considers to be "quality".
- It is noted the data depicts an accurate view of the workforce in our region, possibly only leaving out the matter of religious-based centers.

Follow up:

Charlotte is going to reevaluate our scan soon to see if there is anything we are missing.