



MEETING NOTES

Region 51 Family Council Meeting

Location: Birth to Five Illinois Building

Date & Time: Wednesday, March 8th, 2023 from 5:30 to 7:30 pm.

Council Members present: Megan Dennison, Kesha Harris, Hillary Kelly, Sara Trine, Mindy Parks, Jamie Aldridge, Saunja Slater, Gail Waddell

Council Members absent: Megan Loberg-Simmering, Bushra Ali, Megan Reynolds, Hybrid: Tanika Jones, Antoinette Bidlingmaier, Monique Nally, Tabitha Williams.

5:30 pm: Community Agreements, Hybrid/Online Etiquette, Ice breaker, Future Meetings agenda, Smart Start Statement, Previous data Q&A (15 minutes)

Ice Breaker Question: What is your greatest accomplishment as a parent?

- *My child is not gibberishing, he's speaking now. He's doing wonderful and that's my greatest accomplishment because I had to be his advocate and I stepped up to the plate during that period of time.*
- *Having all the laundry caught up with 5 kids and a grandbaby!*
- *My daughter asked me to be a mediator with one of her friends she was having problems with and I was so proud that she asked me to do this because this is something I've been teaching her and even my students. The fact that she knew to do that really made me proud as a parent.*

Notes: Amanda went over the community agreements and hybrid/online etiquette. She introduced the icebreaker question and the council members went around and answered. Amanda then told the council members about our next few meetings, including our ribbon cutting on March 16th, and our Meet & Greet on March 22nd, 2023. Amanda introduced Smart Start and explained how it goes hand in hand with the work that Birth to Five Illinois is doing. Amanda presented previous data points and definitions as an overview.

Decisions made: n/a

Next Steps: n/a

5:45: Early Childhood Collaborations, Overview of Sangamon Heart/IRIS and Continuum of Learning. (30 minutes)

Notes: A video was played about early childhood collaborations that explained what an early childhood collaboration is. Amanda introduced Illinois' Action for Children's Collaboration Directory which the council has access to view. Ashley told the council about Sangamon Heart/IRIS which is a community collaboration in Sangamon



county. She explained their goal, which is for IRIS to enroll all of the agencies in our collaborative to finally have a common place where clients can not only be referred for a needed service but have follow through to ensure that services are received.

Main service is for Home Visiting.

- *How can we get the word out?*
- *Is it more that you need nurses to know about it and push it forward? Or is it parents that need to know about it? Like 211?*

Ashley explained that it would be more for non-profits to know about IRIS so they can collaborate. Council members then thought of

- *Catholic Charities would be a good one*
- *Are any Medicaid health insurance providers going to be involved in some way?*
- *Can we do a training video for all daycare teachers on different resources such as this?*
- *We have to do our continuing education all the time like shaken baby syndrome, why can't this be one of those 1-2 hour classes just to refresh everybody all the time? I really think that would be beneficial.*
- *I think the School District should be on there because the Family and Community Engagement Liaisons do a lot with the younger children as well.*

Ashley had a council member write on a post-it board the local needs. Ashley then introduced and did a brief overview of the Continuum of Learning. This project focuses on education across the lifespan, from cradle to career. Unfortunately, due to covid, this project is currently inactive.

Data Answer Sheet Question: Are there areas of the region where there are no community collaborations?

- *Menard County. We could benefit from anything!*

Decisions made: n/a

Next Steps: n/a

6:15 pm: Priority Populations; Focus Groups: Immigrant/Refugee, Homeless (30 minutes)

Notes: Amanda guided the council to their folders for a handout with the definitions of priority populations and did an overview of them. She also explained the McKinney-Vento Services. A child who lacks fixed, regular and adequate nighttime address is eligible for these services. Amanda presented ISBE's Kindergarten data for homeless, IEP, and LEP per county. Ashley went over the information we've gathered from focus groups. She went over the meeting with Western Dreamers which is our welcoming center. She shared that their biggest barrier is languages; for example People from Guatemala speak 25 different dialects. Ashley then shared the information from The Hispanic Women of Springfield and the different services they



provide. Lastly, she went over the information we gathered from Early Head Start. They are seeing lots of families experiencing homelessness/unhoused.

Data Answer Sheet Question: Are there programs in place to support migrant, immigrant, refugee families?

- *The Salvation Army*
- *Lawrence Education Center*
- *Springfield Urban League*

Decisions made: n/a

Next Steps: n/a

6:45: Needs and Recommendations, Action Council Report (30 minutes)

Notes: Amanda went over the local and state needs and the local and state recommendations. Amanda then invited them to think of groups or individuals that would be great for a focus group. A council member asked about a home-schooling contact and said they were interested in partnering with Birth to Five. Ashley reported on the last Action Council meeting and shared their recommendations.

Decisions made: n/a

Next Steps: Reach out to homeschool contact.

7:15: Vibe Check! Thoughts, Questions, Concerns. (15 minutes)

Notes: Amanda went over how to connect and the next steps. Then thanked everyone for coming!

Decisions made: n/a

Next Steps: n/a

Follow-up/Next Steps: Send a reminder for the next meeting, Wednesday, April 12th, 2023