



MEETING NOTES

Region 51 Family Council Meeting

Location: Birth to Five Illinois Building

Date & Time: Wednesday January 18th, 2023, from 5:30-7:30pm

Council Members present: Hillary Kelly, Tanika Jones, Gail Waddell, Megan Dennison, Monique Nally, Sara Trine, Mindy Parks, Tabitha Williams, Kesha Harris, Megan Reynolds. Hybrid: Bushra Ali

Council Members absent: Jamie Aldridge, Antoinette Bidlingmaier.

5:30-5:45pm: Community Agreements, Future Meetings Discussion, Introductions & Ice Breaker (*Name, Community, Ice breaker: As a child, what did you want to be when you grew up?*) (15 minutes)

- Data Answer Sheet Question 1: How would you describe your community to someone who has never visited?
 - *“Small, friendly, & welcoming. Beautiful, but could be more family friendly.”*
 - *“Small farming community, diverse working trades, middle class/poverty, rural/travel for work, lack of diversity.”*
 - *“Small town feel, homey, caring community, friendly, safe.”*
 - *“It’s a quiet family friendly town. I love my area because there are a bunch of children around and feels very family oriented.”*
 - *“rural, farming community”*
 - *“Small town, everyone knows each other”*
 - *“Rural farm community, family oriented, small town”*
 - *“Small and close knit which can be supportive, but can also lead to judgment.”*

Notes: Amanda welcomed everyone and went through the community agreements. There was none to be added. Amanda went over the future meetings with the members. The members went around and introduced themselves and answered the ice breaker.

Decisions made: n/a

Next Steps: n/a



5:45-6:00pm: Family Council Demographics Questions for the Regional Scan, Map of Region 51, Stereotypes (examples given) (15 minutes)

- Data Answer Sheet Question 2: Are there any stereotypes that you are aware of in your community?

Notes: Amanda did an overview of the questions for the Regional Scan regarding demographics in their communities. She gave examples of the different types of stereotypes that can be identified within communities for the members to better understand.

- *“Very small town, lack of diversity, little job opportunity in immediate area (have to drive), more poor community, safe, older generation, less educational opportunity.”*
- *“People from the outside see a wealthier community with little diversity. From this perspective, people think we may not have insight into issues and problems people may have.”*
- *“Not poverty, but not a lot of wealth, definite lack of diversity-mostly white. churches more than bars, quieter/safer, smaller school district, some jobs available at local businesses, but no large business-mostly travel to Springfield.”*
- *“It is known to be an expensive place to live.”*
- *“Farmers, lower income in city, lack diversity, travel for work (not many jobs).”*
- *“I have heard it is a racist community, which does not reflect what I see.”*

Decisions made: n/a

Next Steps: n/a

6:15-6:45pm: Demographics: Population, Location, Race/Ethnicity (30 minutes)

- Data Answer Sheet Questions 3: What does this tell us about our region as a whole?

Notes: Amanda went over the data charts and graphs for population, location and race/ethnicity for children ages 0-5. Questions were asked and answered. Members made remarks at the data graph on race/ethnicity that it's "awful, horrible." We went deeper into the data in Athens and Ashley explained and reported out the findings of that town. Ashley asked if the council had an idea where the Hispanic population is located in their communities. Specifically to advocate for their needs like translators. Council members suggested looking in Springfield. The council asked to look deeper into their communities. Amanda discovered that the website would not pinpoint one city but only the county. A member asked if there were any home



schooled parents on the council, Ashley said we were looking to interview and have a focus group.

- *"Our children are mostly white."*
- *"There seems to be a lot of data missing and lack of solutions to accurately count children."*
- *"It seems to be going down as far as numbers of children. Why?"*
- *"The data seems off by the population count but ratio of race/ethnicity seems correct."*
- *"There's not accurate information for our communities."*
- *"Communities not diverse."*

Decisions made: n/a

Next Steps: Connect with homeschooled moms/dads and report back from Action Council to see if the piece of data spoke the truth to them.

6:45-7:10pm: Demographics: Poverty Levels (25 minutes)

- Data Answer Sheet Question: *What does this tell us about our region as a whole?*

Notes: Amanda explained the different federal poverty levels. A member asked what's the difference between 100%-200%. There was a discussion about tax brackets, household incomes and government assistance.

- *"Raised questions about how to serve underserved people in our area" and "That all of our rural areas are in need of additional services."*
- *"Better work environments and trainings are needed."*
- *"How is this figured, what does it mean?"*
- *"I think there are more children ages 3-5 years old are showing up at 200% Federal Poverty Level than ages 0-2."*

Decisions made: n/a

Next Steps: n/a

7:10-7:20pm: Locations of Early Childhood Education and Care Providers (10 minutes)

- Data Answer Sheet Questions: *What do you notice about the locations of the Early Childhood Education and Care Providers?*

Notes: Amanda explained the location of the Early Childhood Education and Care providers graph in region 51. Also added that we will have a future meeting focused solely on this topic.

- *"Springfield has many options and smaller towns have fewer."*
- *"In places where more jobs are available."*



- *“Most childcare centers are centrally located; there are not very many state funded options in rural areas.”*
- *“Preschool for All is pretty available in most towns. In Chatham, there is only one public preschool. All of the preschool kids get sent to Ball Elementary even if that’s not your community school. There are not much Headstarts in Springfield.”*
- *“Far too sparse.”*

Decisions made: n/a

Next Steps: n/a

7:20-7:30pm: Data Sources Reminder, Reminder of Agenda for Council Meetings, Foundational Trainings Reminder, and How to Connect

Notes: Amanda reminded the members of where the data sources are located and she went over the future meeting dates. She presented the Foundational Trainings and encouraged the members to watch the educational videos provided.

Decisions made: n/a

Next Steps: Send reminder emails.