



MEETING NOTES

Region 1 Action Council Meeting

Location: 608 E. State St., Jacksonville, IL 62650

Date & Time: Feb 14, 2023 3:00pm – 4:30pm

Council Members present: Andrea Akers, Sarah Farha, Katie Janssen, Brooke Walker, Rosemary Grace, Erica Maynard, Shanna Eddinger

Council Members Absent: Meyonna MInner, Vianey Torres, Kathy Fellhauer, April Darringer, Brittney Brokaw, Julie Stratman, Cassie Delaney

3:00pm: Welcome & Introductions

3:02pm: Reflective Discussion Activity

Notes: Icebreaker question: Topic is funding for public education programs for children 0-5. What is your funding capacity relative to need. Focus on the next meeting will be CCAP, and child care centers/home based providers. However, for today, we are going to stay educational settings in this meeting before moving on :

- Inability to fill slots due to lack of teachers, not lack of demand.
- Not enough funded slots to meet demand in fully staffed 3-5 centers in urban hubs- both have wait lists. One cannot expand in current facility and also faces transportation barriers for family/child access
- Home visiting services often have wait lists when there are workforce vacancies, but then quickly pivot to recruiting once hires are in place
- Some rural programs have slots to fill but face working parents who are taking their children to outside districts for childcare; others are full or near to full
- Rural programs lacking 0-3 services -this depresses overall enrollment in publicly funded programs
- Cass County HS and EHS are full
- Camp Point (**Adams County**) - needs a teacher to come up to full capacity

3:36pm: Slot Gap Discussion

Notes: The following highlights emerged from the discussion of slot gap as it pertains to publicly funded education programs

- **Eligibility**
 - Eligibility is severely restricted in HS/EHS programs by income requirements (100% of FPL), with only 10% being reserved for over income each year, and these over income spots prioritized for children with identified delays/IEPS. Over income percentage is shared by entire service area, not on a per site basis
 - PFA's are not as strict, and look at a variety of factors, but income is one of the considerations on the points rating system used by the PFA's. This allows them to serve more upper income families
 - Eligibility by income seems to be a reductive factor in meeting universal need and many council members question whether the eligibility requirements need to be revisited
 - HS suggests that PFA's refer poorest students to them first which could potentially open up more slots in the PFA/PI programs for middle class families
- **Management of existing slots**
 - HS is allowed to hold out 3% of total slots but haven't ever used the full 3%. The idea is that these spots are there for DCFS and McKinney Vento candidates, but have always been able to get them in. Any waitlist is ranked by needs
 - PFA's reporting that they hold out 2-4 slots until mid-October, but then fill. Wait list is based on need
 - 0-3 programs do not hold out slots - they fill them ASAP
 - Most children who turn 3 after October do not get a spot until the following school year once a program is full.
- **Current capacity:** capacity in 3-5 isn't perfect but is far greater than capacity in 0-3. Region wide, there are 21 centers dedicated to 3-5, with only 13 publicly funded 0-3 programs - only 3 of which are center based
- **Prioritization of need:** general group agreement that given the disproportionately low capacity in 0-3, this is where the greatest need lies and within this group, early identification of delays/referral and related services top the list of concerns
- **Barriers to greatest need (increased reach in the 0-3 sector):**
 - Working families cannot participate with home visitors who are also working a regular work day
 - some creativity in meeting parents on lunch breaks, in parks, libraries etc..
 - Perhaps home visiting schedules could be more accommodating by offering evening visits
 - this is currently hamstrung by the disqualification of virtual visits from counting toward participation rates in publicly funded PI
 - There could be safety concerns if home visitors do not have open offices to track their movements
 - Funding/grant cycle - even programs that are ready to stand up a 0-3 program have to wait for the new grant cycle to write for more funds
 - Some programs that want to expand need increased administrative support to offload current coordination/marketing/outreach from home visitors' schedules to allow for more time in the field

Decisions made: N/A

Next Steps: N/A

Circle Back: What MIECHV program is operating in our region? It's serving 32 kids?

4:15pm: Upcoming Meetings - we will continue with slot gap and then move to workforce in the next two meetings (2.28 and 3.14)

4:16pm: Circle Back Discussion

- We have an upcoming visit with Transitions. Still working on a meeting with Cornerstone.
- Chaddock- we have found there isn't a significant 0-5 age range they are serving
- Funding in Mendon Unity- Mendon is self funded through the school district. This is one of two self funded programs we have found in the region. The second is Meredosia/Chambersburg. Their principal says they are ready to create a self-funded 0-3 program using district funds - there is an appetite for this 0-3 infrastructure.

This discussion also included update of Birth to Five Illinois activities in Region 1 to date:

- The Family Council has had 3 meetings and are giving us good stories about how they are experiencing things in the field.
- We are working alongside the Tracy Family Foundation to explore early childhood collaborations in Brown and Cass Counties
- PFA Listening Tour
- 4 out of 5 HS Programs
- Jacksonville Morgan County IRIS group
- Center Based and Home based child care focus groups

This discussion also included a Jamboard Activity to allow council members to reflect:

- council members participated in an activity by which they ranked areas of highest need in our region and gave reasons why they ranked them as they did
- Top three emergent needs:
 - Services for 0-3
 - Marketing/Outreach/Relationship building
 - Workforce expansion/improvements

4:25pm: Announcements

- We are willing to come to events that we could come and hang out and get families to sign up for focus groups. We wouldn't do the FG at your event, just recruit families.
- Conscious Discipline shared (Brooke shares that she will be in attendance)
- EI Town Halls for Families
- Raising Illinois - E Postcard Campaign
- Meeting Links shared with group from PP - Flyer for the Get Involved Focus Groups

4:30pm: Meeting adjourned