



## MEETING NOTES

### Region 1 Action Council Meeting

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

Date & Time: March 14, 2023 3:15pm – 4:30pm

Council Members present: Andrea Akers, Sarah Farha, Katie Janssen, Brooke Walker, Rosemary Grace, Erica Maynard, April Darringer, Shanna Edison, Julie Stratman  
Council Members Absent: Meyonna Minner, Kathy Fellhauer, Brittney Brokaw, Cassie Delaney

#### **3:19pm: Welcome & Introductions**

#### **3:20 pm: Reflective Discussion Activity**

Notes: Reflective Question: What are the inequities we see in the ECEC workforce?

- Not a lot of programs are available for those wanting to enter the field, especially non traditional learners who may need evening classes.
- Teacher shortage across all ages and content areas means that everyone is competing for limited workers entering the field
- Wage inequities for workforce as a whole
- Wage inequities among programs

#### **3:43 pm: Workforce Discussion**

Notes: The following highlights emerged from the discussion of workforce

- **Wage Inequities**
  - All positions within the field are underpaid
  - HS prefers all teachers have a BA, but there is no compensation adjustment for earning the BA
  - Center based preschools are paid less overall and many have degrees for which they are not compensated
  - Benefits (health/retirement) are major sources of inequity in the workforce

- **Career Paths**
  - Home visitors/parent educators have no clear career paths or recruitment methods/no upward mobility
  - No effort to promote EI positions at collegiate level
  - Career paths and training requirements are not the same across the ECEC landscape- HS differs from PFA differs from center based directors etc...
  - Suggestion that Home Visitor career path may start with Sociology/Psych programs as this work straddles a line between child development and social work. Child development training is provided on the job - the social work/social emotional pieces are not as readily available once hired
- **Workforce Training and Education**
  - QU is only 4 year program in region offering EC licensure on a traditional path - IC dropped their program years ago; no indication they will reinstate this program
  - Julie Auch (former QU director of EC programs) is now with NIU working to implement the ECACE program online for those who are currently working in the field of EC who want to obtain a degree/PEL. This program has a masters option, as well
  - April Darringer (council member) is working with the ECACE at the junior college level (John Wood). They are currently offering multiple credentialing programs including: AAS and Early Childhood, AA (transfer degree -articulation programs being updated with WIU and QU), as well as Gateways credentialing credits. JWCC is looking to expand credentialing options in the fall
  - Blackburn (outside Region 1, but close) is also participating in the ECACE program
  - Gateways credentials available through INCCRRA region wide
- **Workforce Needs**
  - More diversity in leadership/director roles
  - More streamlined career paths for those entering the field
  - Better compensation (wages)
  - Better compensation (benefits)
  - Better accessibility for those wanting to enter the field (programs and scholarships/funding to acquire training)

Circle Back: Governor's Commission Report on Funding will be reviewed at next meeting

**4:15pm: Upcoming Meetings** - we will continue with the workforce discussion and include a consensus building exercise for recommendations relative to ECEC programs at the next meeting (3.28). We will move to community collaborations in April (4.11). We will also be taking a hard look at scan recommendations for ECEC Programs to be sure we are capturing AC Council voice in the scan

**4:16pm: Circle Back Discussion** - Regional Scan updates: Family Council recommendations from consensus building exercise

- create a database of all birth to five services by county so that info can be given to new mothers when they have new babies. This would be inclusive of details of how to access programs and what they are.
- screenings for children 0-3 tied to funding and licensing. Screenings could be done in home based and center based care facilities - they want to see accountability and more monitoring
- expand requirements for CCAP and offset costs for parents who don't use CCAP- additionally allow lower costs for those who don't need childcare daily

**4:20pm: Announcements** - we are still forming focus groups for any stakeholders in your organizations who might be interested in participating. EI listening sessions are still taking place, as well

**4:25pm: Meeting adjourned**