



## MEETING NOTES

### Region 30 Action Council Virtual Meeting

**Date & Time: Thursday, March 2, 2023, 5:30p–7:30p**

**Council Members present** : Tangela Oliver, Tracie Griffith, M Stalls, Denise Henry, Dona Middleton, Sheridan Johnson, Kathy Swafford, Lindsay Baskin, Patty Davis, Keeshia Carr, Lashauna Cornelius, and Van Ikner.

**Council Members absent** : Sheryl Houston, Debbie Bruns, Sandy Snowden, Lindsey Baskin, Cindy Rice, Brittany Matthews, Cheryl Graff, NaTasha Hubbard, and Colleen McLaughlin

#### **5:30pm Welcome, Introductions, and review of Community Agreements (10 minutes)**

**Notes:** Zena welcomed everyone to the meeting and provided updates. Region 30 has been having good conversations in Focus Groups and with our Family Council. The deadline for the Scan is the end of May. The workforce is an interesting workspace. We'd like statements to include in the Scan. We've talked about data and it's been mentioned that some data is not correct. However, the data that we have shared has been gathered from people who completed the 2020 census and is accurate for those people who participated in the mentioned census. Also, we may have a State Team Member join the meeting to briefly observe the meeting.

#### **5:40pm Team Building (20 minutes)**

**Presenter:** Akemi Walker

**Notes:** Akemi asked Council Members: "If you had to pick one food item to eat, what would it be? Also, share your favorite restaurant. Everyone shared their answers and we got to interact with one another.

#### **6:00pm Consensus Statements-Early Childhood Workforce (60 mins)**

**Presenter:** Zena Madison

**Notes:** Zena shared her screen to present a PowerPoint presentation. We started the discussion by sharing the information received from Lindsey regarding the Preventive Initiative Program.



Local Early Childhood or Education Collaboration Member mentioned:

- Shortage of providers
- Limited access
- There were no referrals for a while because of families not going to appointments after COVID but now referrals have increased.
- Anyone is able to make a referral but referrals mainly being done by a doctor or family.

Zena proceeded to show the Early Intervention & Special Education Data and asked what statement would make sense according to the data to make for our Region regarding its quality and stability.

Local Early Childhood or Education Collaboration Member mentioned:

- Her institution reaches all areas but getting actual services to the parents/caregivers is the challenge because providers won't go to all areas, especially Alexander Pulaski counties which have very limited services.
- At times, referrals are received and the family is interested in getting providers to go to their homes but providers can refuse to go. Providers set their own schedule, they can pick/choose, most only work part-time on the weekends, and some provide evaluation only but don't provide services.
- Have even fewer providers available for hearing (only 2) and vision (only 1) screenings.
- There is the option for providers to provide services via live video to have parents work with their children but parents prefer hands-on treatment. A lot of families in our Region don't want to do the live video option.

Zena asked Members to rate the Early Intervention/Special Education services in our Region on a scale of 0 to 5:

- 0
- 1: 3 votes
- 2: 9 votes
- 3
- 4
- 5



Zena started a PowerPoint presentation regarding the workforce. Started with the landscape and asked Council Members to keep in mind and note what stands out to them in order to share for the Scan. Data is from the Gateway Registry. Data for all licensed center positions, licensed center directors, licensed teaching staff, all licensed Family Child Care positions and providers, and licensed center teaching staff including their highest level of education.

Zena shared a video regarding the impact and value of teachers.

- Director of Southern Seven Head Start pointed out that “teachers are undervalued”

Overall assessment of the workforce in our Region:

- Shortage

Initiatives in our Region to recruit providers:

- “Grow your Own” program through Southern Illinois University (SIU)
- Southern Illinois Future Teacher Coalition
- At SIU if enrolled in Special Education, the program pays for all books, mileage, etc.
- Early Childhood Access Consortium for Equity (ECACE) Scholarship through John A. Logan College which offers free tuition costs if enrolled in Early Childhood Education
- Schools have future teachers clubs that more information could be promoted to High Schoolers

Zena asked the Council Members what are statements that can be made about workforce in our Region:

- Jackson County Business Owner stated that the workforce needs to be more diverse
- Jackson County Community Member stated that also agrees with more diversity including gender and ethnicity—“it’s a big issue.” Also mentioned that there are no campaigns about different ethnic groups involved in education.



Zena mentioned that all names will be included in the scan and we want it to truly reflect our Region. We get to make the recommendations needed for Region 30.

- Jackson County teacher mentioned that more diverse recruitment is needed in child care centers.
- Jackson County Business Owner mentioned that her sorority has been looking for a theme for outreach and she'd propose the shortage in education as a means to promote this field of study.
- Jackson County teacher mentioned that Southern Region has had many job openings for years now and positions cannot be filled.
- Director of Southern Seven Head Start stated that they have problems hiring enough staff and have had to close classrooms and it's really a struggle.

**7:00pm Next Meeting Agenda Needs, Strengths, and Recommendations (5 mins)**

Notes: Zena mentioned the next meeting agenda which will be Needs, Strengths, and Recommendations for Region 30. Mentioned that we will conduct three Focus Groups in the near future in Perry, Jackson, and Union Counties to be sure to help us spread the word with family members/caretakers.

**7:05pm Training Available to Council Members, Questions, Comments (10 mins)**

Notes: Zena mentioned different online trainings available that are great resources all listed in our Region 30 Google Drive.

**7:15pm Meeting Adjourned**

Next Meeting

Date: April 6, 2023

Time: 5:30pm—7:30pm

Location: Virtual