



## MEETING NOTES

### Region 51 Family Council Meeting

Location: 1209 S. 4th Street, Springfield, IL 62703

Date & Time: Wednesday, February 8th, 2023 from 5:30-7:30 pm

Council Members Present: Gail Waddell, Antoinette Bidlingmaier, Megan Dennison, Mindy Parks, Megan Reynolds, Sara Trine, Jamie Aldridge  
Hybrid: Tanika Jones, Hillary Kelly, Bushra Ali, Monique Nally, Megan Loberg-Simmering, Tabitha Williams.  
Council Members Absent: Saunja Slater, and Kesha Harris.

#### **5:30 pm: Community Agreements, Future Meetings, Discussion, Introductions, and Ice breaker (*Name, Community, Ice Breaker: Coffee or Tea?*) (15 minutes)**

*Data Answer Sheet Question: Why do you think there would be long waitlists for an opening in local Child Care programs?*

- *So many different levels and expectations of staff and directors, the hoops to go through are ridiculous, and the cost of childcare is through the roof*
- *Not enough qualified teachers, we don't get paid enough, the facility has to keep up, not enough pay, high turnover.*
- *Not enough staffing so there's a waitlist, Severely underpaid and overworked.*

Notes: Amanda went over the community agreements and added one which was "safe environment, but also working towards finding solutions." Amanda went over our next council meeting and reminded everyone of online etiquette. Members went around and introduced themselves. Discussions went on about waiting lists and their answers on the data answer sheet.

Decisions made: N/A

Next Steps: N/A

#### **5:45 pm: Recap of Demographics topics, Helpful definitions for discussion, Helpful definitions of types of Early Childhood Education and Care systems (15 minutes)**

*Data Answer Sheet Question: Any questions from our last meeting on the Demographics of our Region?*

Notes: Amanda did a recap of last month's meeting and showed a more detailed map that clarifies some questions council members had last month. Amanda asked if there were any questions. A council member asked about the population from her community that was "off" last time. Ashley explained that the maps are made to protect children's race/ethnicity so the only data that shows is the area, not the specific community. Another member asked if we figured out the homeschool data.



Ashley explained that children do not need to register if homeschooled and it's not a reason to hotline to DCFS anymore. A member asked *how do we know if a child is being homeschooled versus neglected*. Ashley responded *we don't and you bring up a great point*. Amanda went over helpful definitions of poverty and Child Care Assistance Program.

Decisions made: N/A

Next Steps: N/A

**6:00 pm: What is "Slot Gap" definition, Telling about personal experiences with waitlists (30 minutes)**

*Data Answer Sheet Question: Have you personally had a child(ren) on any sort of waitlist? What was the wait for? How long was the wait? How did you get off the waitlist?*

- *At SIU we waited for 10 months to see a developmental pediatrician.*
- *We waited 1.5 years for tests and insurance won't pay until you go see all these people and get a diagnosis. Then we waited 9-12 months to get into a psychologist.*
- *People pay to hold their infant spot. There was a daycare that had no babies because parents paid for the spot because the babies weren't born yet or moms were still on maternity leave. Not everyone can afford to do that.*

Notes: Amanda defined "slot gap" and asked the data answer sheet question.

Members told their waitlist stories.

Decisions made: N/A

Next Steps: N/A

**6:30 pm: Data Map - The location of Children ages 0-6 compared to the locations of ECEC providers. Publicly Funded Programs Slot Gap and Data Map comparing the location of Publicly Funded Programs and Children Under 6 that are under 100% Federal Poverty Level (15 minutes)**

*Data Answer Sheet Question: Thoughts/Feelings/observations about the maps. Publicly funded Early Childhood Education & Care Slot Gaps and Thoughts/Feelings/observations about these two maps: Children Under 6 years old under the 100% Federal Poverty Level and Where Publicly Funded Early Childhood programs are located*

- *People drive far for child care.*
- *It seems the areas with the most children have the least amount of ECEC providers.*
- *You kind of have to have your kid close to where you work or you're driving all over the place.*



Notes: Amanda went over the Data Map of the location of children ages 0-6 and compared it to the locations of ECEC providers. Amanda asked the data answer sheet question and members shared their answers.

Decisions made: N/A

Next Steps: N/A

**6:45: Child Care Capacity Slot Gaps, Child Care Assistance Program, Providers that accept CCAP Payments. (25 minutes)**

Data Answer Sheet Questions: Thoughts/feelings/comments on ECEC Slot Gaps?

What does this data tell us about what our region might need in the future?

Notes: Amanda went over the slot gaps. Ashley explained the slot gap graph. A member asked, *do people have transportation to preschool? Like why are they not in preschool?* Ashley said the biggest thing is if they tried to enroll today, they couldn't because of capacity, and if we opened it up, would they even want the child care? Amanda explained the different types of childcare and went over the numbers in each category. A member asked, *do we have the resources for more Head Starts?* Ashley said the Early Head Start and Head Start in Sangamon county are at full capacity because they don't have enough teachers. A member asked, *what qualifies you to be a license-exempt facility?* A member answered *we have to prove that we are following DCFS protocol but we are not required to follow all DCFS rules. We cannot have a child under 3, they cannot drop in on you, we do have to follow the student-to-staff ratio, employees have to be 18 plus, and their background check clears.* Another member asked if that is the owner's choice. The answer was yes. Another question was, *how is that different from a license-exempt family child care home?* Amanda read the definition of a license-exempt family child care home. A member answered *I'm only checked on once a year because I take CCAP payments.* Amanda went over the number of Child Care centers that accept CCAP. A member shared that *licensed exempt child care facilities and homes do not get enough pay through CCAP versus a licensed facility.* Ashley explained that family/friend/neighbor care gets the same flat rate through CCAP.

Decisions made: More clarity on CCAP payments.

Next Steps: Ask the CCR&R representative on the Action Council for clarity on the co-pay for parents for license-exempt family child care home.

**7:10: Early Intervention and Individual Education Plans Graph, Video available on referrals and qualifications (10 minutes)**

Notes: Amanda went over the Early Intervention data and graph. Ashley said we will dive deeper into this data because we have people on the council that work around Early Intervention.



Decisions made: N/A

Next Steps: N/A

**7:20: Vibe Check! Data Sources Reminder, Reminder of Agenda and Foundational Trainings, Action Council Report, and How to Connect (10 minutes)**

Notes: Ashley did the Action Council report and told the council about our upcoming meetings with those in the community. Amanda reminded the members of our upcoming meetings, extra educational opportunities, and how to connect with us. Questions were asked and answered. Amanda thanked everyone for attending.

Decisions made: N/A

Next Steps: N/A