



Action Council All Member Meeting - Minutes

Action Council Members

Date: October 11, 2023

Time: 1:00 – 3:00pm

Attendees

Council members present: Molly Allen, Melissa Breeden, Ashley Dowd, Judy Englebrecht, Kadi Juris, Miranda Lin, Kathleen Lorenz, Pam Womack, Lakeesha Smith, and Erin Weise-Reichert.

Agenda

1. Introductions & Group agreements.
2. Continuous Quality Improvement (CQI).
 - a. Members shared their experience or familiarization with CQI.
 - b. CQI will be used to develop the action plan for the two recommendations selected.
3. Recommendations:
 - a. Recommendation #1: **Ensure** that salaries and benefits reflect the educational and training achievements of ECEC staff and are competitive with non-ECEC fields to attract more individuals to the ECEC field by broadening public awareness of publicly funded state and federally funded ECEC programs, services, and resources.
 - i. Members shared thoughts about if broadening public awareness of publicly funded state and federal-funded ECEC programs, services, and resources could be a “smart goal” in terms of ensuring salaries and benefits reflect the educational training achievements of ECEC staff and are competitive with non-ECC fields. Discussion of the possibility of rethinking the goal for something measurable like requesting the state and community to commit additional dollars so that salaries and benefits reflect the educational training achievements. Discussion of making a regional (for each County) wage scale to present by role (ex. an assistant teacher should make, or a lead teacher should make) and get feedback from local organizations like childcare centers.



- b. Recommendation #2: Develop a recruitment plan for child care in rural areas and address the transportation needs to and from program to program while parents are working.
 - i. Members explored developing recruitment through encouraging potential family child care in rural areas through applying for quality improvement grants to be used for home modifications or to achieve a license.

Why was Recommendation #1 made?

- Nationwide staffing shortage in the education and early intervention field.
- Educators and early intervention employees are paid at a poverty level poverty level.
- Families rely on child care to work and contribute to society.
- Need to retain qualified staff in the field.
- Improve the quality of future career pathways.
- Slot gaps in Region 17.

Data that supports:

- INCCRRA grant reporting.
- INCCRRA staff salary.
- inflation reports on the economy.
- ROE educator shortage.
- local interagency Council.
- the McLean County Health Department Community Needs Assessment.
- IECAM.

The goals:

- Increase quality and increase qualified educators.
- Retain educators, provide more career pathways, and increase pay.
- Increase access for bilingual families, and rural families.
- Increase resources for families.
- Focus on play-based learning, social, and emotional learning, trauma, and informed care.



Why was Recommendation #2 made?

- Currently there are not enough providers in rural areas.
- Address transportation as an issue for all areas that serve part-time children and children who attend 2 programs while parents work.

Data that supports:

- IECAM.
- Qualitative data from RNA

The goals:

- Send a survey to families to find out their specific transportation needs.
- Find out what parents really need vs telling them and / or assuming what they need.
- Bring together parties who can impact the lack of transportation.

4. Introduction to Workgroups

Note: Work groups will include Family and Action Council members giving input on Action Plans. Two groups will work on different schedules and work on one recommendation. Individuals may select one or both work groups to participate in.

5. Meeting Schedule and Cadence

- a. **Workgroup #1: Salaries and Public Awareness**
Meeting Schedule: Thursdays from 4:30-6:30pm on Oct 19, Nov 16, Dec 21, Jan 18
- b. **Workgroup #2: Rural Recruitment and Transportation**
Meeting Schedule: Mondays from 9:30-11:30am on Oct 23, Nov 27, Dec 18, Jan 22

Before the next meeting:

- a. Review SMART goals document and Action Plan document.
- b. Erin Reichert and Melissa Breeden will send an email to the Regional Council Manager with the summaries.
- c. Members decide which work group to attend.