



MEETING NOTES

Region 12 Action Council Meeting **Tuesday, January 17, 2023, 3:30pm-5:00pm**

Staff present: Ann Oswalt, Donna Rardin, Sophie Kershaw-Patilla

Council Members present: Jennifer Bales, Hope Dennis, Nicole Gardewine, Jamia Joyce, Beth Lindemann, Mary Roy, Tina Staley, Arianna Walker, Samantha Weidner, Liesl Wingert

Council Members absent: Courtney Hatcher, Amy Walters, Resa Shaner

3:30 Welcome, Introductions, and National Day of Racial Healing (7 minutes)

Notes: All participants were introduced by Ann as they joined the meeting. Ann took a moment to share about the National Day of Racial Healing and shared a link to the Region 12 Facebook page for more information and links (www.dayofracialhealing.org). Participants were asked to reflect on their own experiences within their communities.

Decisions made: N/A

Next Steps: N/A

3:37 Family Council Update (3 minutes)

Notes: Donna shared that a new representative from Clay County is being added to the Family Council. Representation from Jasper County is still needed, and the Interest Form will be closing at the end of January.

Decisions made: N/A

Next Steps: Donna asked for recommendations for any Family Council members from Jasper County.

3:40 Early Childhood Education and Care Landscape Continuation (60 minutes)

Notes: Ann asked Council members to expand on the previous discussion about what the Early Childhood Education and Care (ECEC) landscape currently looks like in Region 12. Council members were asked to share what they felt was needed or would be helpful to their communities.

- Ann noted each program that exists within Region 12 and provided an overview, including locations, schedules, funding, eligibility, caseloads, etc.



- A Council member mentioned that one local program elected to only offer half day due to the number of children with Individualized Education Programs (IEPs).
- Another Council member noted that family sizes are growing, so the number of children served by each service provider and their family caseload is growing exponentially.
- A discussion was held regarding family engagement.
 - In-home visits: some areas visit weekly, others every two weeks.
 - Parent coordinator position to manage outreach and activities.
 - Parent teacher conferences during school hours.
 - Family nights outside of school hours
- Ann asked for information about family child care and child care center experiences within Region 12 and shared information regarding licensed, license-exempt, and non-licensed providers.
 - Many families rely on non-licensed friend, family, and neighbor care, especially for shift work employees.
 - There are very few child care centers available, and not all families have the privilege of family and friends to help.
 - There is not equitable access to child care for all families in the Region.
- Region 12 needs more childcare. Council members were asked what they felt was needed.
 - The needs depend on the flow of society, so there needs to be more flexibility to adapt.
 - Providers cannot respond to changes in immediate or short-term family needs. Currently, wait lists are multiple months (12-15+) long for child care, and wait lists are six to eight months long for Pre-Kindergarten.
 - Birth to 3 programming is costly and has lower ratios, so it is difficult to establish or sustain.
 - Third shift care seems ideal but is often underutilized and requires different licensing qualifications.
 - There is need for more certified child care professionals. There is also need for a pathway to certification for teacher's aides and paraprofessionals.



- Ann asked about the impact of child care on business owners.
 - Council members responded that it varies depending on the type and size of business. Some small businesses rely on teenagers to fill employment spots, so child care is often not a concern.
- One concern is that much of the data regarding Early Childhood Education and Care (ECEC) includes numbers from programs that do not provide care. This skews the information and makes it difficult to provide realistic numbers for the Regional Scan.

Decisions made: N/A

Next Steps: Ann asked for Council members to continue thinking about what ECEC programs and services are needed in Region 12, so this information may be included in the Regional Scan. The Region 12 team is scheduling Focus Groups and Interviews with various community members and groups, and Council members are asked to provide any recommendations they feel would be beneficial.

Follow-up/Next Steps:

- The next meeting will be virtual on Tuesday, February 7.
- Action Council members are tasked with gathering Newsletter sign-ups from their service areas.