



Action Council Meeting

Date & Time: November 1, 2023, 2:00 to 4:00 pm.

Notes

2:00pm: Welcome and Updates (10 minutes).

Notes:

- Council members were asked to start preparing for our discussions surrounding the mental and behavioral landscape in Region 19. In preparation, we will start to compile a list of services and public reports.
- The first round of Early Childhood Regional Needs Assessment Addendums are now available on the Birth to Five Illinois website.
 - Region 19's Addendum includes additional input regarding transportation and healthcare access.
- Valerie Varju, Region Council Manager shared highlights from her recent trip to Springfield, visiting with several local elected officials during the fall veto session.

2:10pm: Workgroup Overviews and Updates (20 minutes).

Notes:

- A brief overview was provided detailing how the recommendations and subsequent workgroups were determined.
- Valerie Varju, Region Council Manager presented the target problem assigned to each workgroup and the recommendations considered during each workgroup's first meeting.
- Based on the discussions within the separate workgroups, four patterns and common themes emerged.
 - A need for public awareness and family/caregiver education.
 - A need for comprehensive professional development for both the Early Childhood Education and Care (ECEC) workforce, but also various community members that work with families.
 - A need for mental health supports for everyone, including but not limited to young children, their families, and the ECEC workforce.
 - In order to achieve long-term, sustainable change there needs to be advocacy efforts aimed at the state level.

2:30pm: Workgroup Discussion (70 minutes).

Notes:

- A question was posed regarding how equity and cultural competency was being considered in each of these themes and the overall work of the workgroups.



- Birth to Five Illinois was created on the basis of addressing the racial inequalities across the state of Illinois. Equity is embedded within our mission, vision, and goals.
- When considering the different patterns and themes, equality and cultural competency are embedded within each and hold a critical role in laying the foundation of change in Region 19.
- It is important to acknowledge the disparities and discrimination within Region 19 that disproportionately affects our Black and Brown children. However, it is often overlooked or “swept under the rug”.
- We acknowledged that although Birth to Five Illinois has an understanding that the work cannot move forward without considering equity and cultural competencies, not everyone has the same understanding. As part of our Action Planning process, Birth to Five Illinois is committed to ensuring these disparities are identified and acknowledged by clearly labeling the needs within the written action plan document.
- As workgroups consider action steps, participants will be asked to consider “what am I doing to mitigate harm?”.
- The Regional Office of Education (ROE) provides implicit bias training for teachers within the local school districts and is willing to partner with Action Council members to discuss how we can leverage their expertise.
- Council members also discussed the ability of our Region to assess outcomes for our young children and explored the possibility of looking at KIDS data to gain a better understanding of location and racial disparities.

3:40pm: Next Steps (5 minutes).

Notes:

- Action Council members were asked to assist the workgroups with the planning process by adding their input on the Jamboard, including identifying the following for each:
 - Action steps/solutions.
 - Risks, challenges, and barriers.
 - Potential Partners.
- If Action Council members have not signed up to participate in one of the three workgroups and are interested, they can contact Valerie directly.
- Emails will be sent by the end of the week to schedule the November, December, and January workgroup meetings. The input from the full Action Council will be shared with each workgroup for consideration during their next meeting.

Next meeting: Full Action Council Meeting: Wednesday, January 24, 2:00 to 4:00 pm.