



## Panel Discussion

**Dec. 11, 2023**

### Notes

Present: Marc Baxter, Tori Buckert, Anderea Garnett, Micah Garnett, Amy Gee, Diann Sugden, Angela Vera, Sharon Warning, Robert Kensinger, Paul Larson, and Shannon McKee

Panelists were introduced along with a brief overview of their work.

1. What barriers to service/care have you observed families facing?
  - a. Not knowing when children have delays or need extra help.
  - b. Not being able to find a child care spot or afford it if they do.
2. What is one thing that has been done to combat those obstacles?
  - a. An overview was given of the State of IL's efforts to retain work force, keep centers open, attract new providers, and make child care more affordable for families
  - b. These include employee retention grants and grants employees to increase their knowledge. Scholarships for people wanting to pursue a degree
  - c. Spoon River College is now accredited for early child hood education classes
  - d. Foundation grants have been awarded to CCRR for resources
  - e. Enrollment based CCAP reimbursement rather than attendance based
  - f. WCCCC has mentorship program, takes resources to home providers monthly
  - g. Robert's center offered bonus's for people who don't call in
3. How do we bridge the gaps that are preventing collaboration between services?
  - a. Employers need to be part of the collaboration
  - b. Time is a barrier for many in child care
4. What are the easiest or most actionable thing that could be done?

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- a. The easiest things right now are the small foundation grants and focusing on high schools to offer dual credit
- b. More centers could be opened but there is a lack of staff
5. What can be done locally to improve the workforce pathway?
  - a. Pilot apprenticeship program is in place several other counties in IL
  - b. Working in child care can get free child care if they qualify
  - c. Offering orientation for center employees to help with the onboarding is helpful

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