



MEETING NOTES

Region 39 Action Council Meeting

Date & Time: 10:00am – 12:00pm. Thursday, March 16, 2023

Location: Zoom meeting- online

Council Members Present: Megan Meyrick, Karen House, Jeffrey Dase, Brian Rhodes, Michelle Witherspoon, Megan Meyrick, Kristine Hansen, Amy Steck

10:00am- 10:10am Introductions

Decisions Made: N/A

Next Steps: N/A

10:10am-12:00pm Large Group Discussion on Early Childhood Education & Care (ECEC) Workforce using the Workforce Continuum Diagram

Notes:

- **Recruitment:** ECEC Staff share highlights with students about teaching, unfortunately many staff talk against teaching; recruit outside the area for more diversity - go to where diverse candidates are; state subsidized insurance for ECEC staff; ECEC work programs through high school; teacher exploratory classes/ clubs at high schools; share volunteer info with guidance counselors to gain interest in ECEC.
- **Preparation:** Talk with Richland Community College to expand their course offerings to provide ECE degree; State has NAVIGATOR scholarship for all free ECE classes up to a bachelor's degree; more classroom management & how to work with children with trauma taught at college level courses; state reimbursement of teaching degreed teachers.
- **Hiring & Onboarding:** new hires - observation & reflection pieces before going into classroom; Need DCFS to require in first two years specific trainings for new staff: social emotional, trauma-informed & hands on techniques; need the state to lower lead teacher age to 18yrs old.
- **Mentoring:** need Coaches & Mentors state-subsidized for private programs.



- **Ongoing Professional Development:** need 1 coordinated state-funded hub that collects & distributes Professional Development & Community Resource information; ECE trainings on evenings & weekends; state reimbursement for staff to attend trainings.
- **Working Conditions:** State supplement for building a new center or making improvements in older centers; supports for families that use private care (family educators trained on community resources).
- **Compensation & Benefits:** \$500 sign on bonus from CCRS available, but staff are not staying long enough to be eligible; increase the Great Start Wage Supplement funds.
- **Retention:** need retention bonuses for long term staff- subsidized by the state.
- **Local Recommendation** to establish a birth to five summits for family engagement workers that will coincide with the release of the Yellow Pages Resource Guide Update.

Decisions Made: N/A

Next Steps:

Birth to Five Illinois will contact local community & school programs with home visitors, parent educators, or family engagement workers to collaborate on a Family Resource Summit.

Birth to Five Illinois to reach out to area schools having Kindergarten screenings to leave Focus Group flyers for families.

Next Meeting:

- Thursday, April 6, 2023, 10:00am-12:00pm
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