

## **Region 34 Discussion Notes Lake**

### **General Comments**

- There is a concentration of people of color in areas with higher poverty rates.
- Poverty rate is lower in the region than in the entire state.
- Lowest number of children under six are concentrated in relatively few communities.
- HUGE mismatch between capacity/slots.
- There are needs in Round Lake areas.
- Huge slot gaps between program models.
- Needs in the northwest corner of the county but few services, why?
- So few slots for almost 50,000 children!
- We clearly need more slots, but we also need more workforce and a living wage for workers.
- Getting the funding for more slots requires a lot of "hoop" jumping.
- The State is unable to serve all children.
- There are more centers in well off areas than those with more poverty.
- We also need to ensure that program offerings match what families need (including in terms of scheduling and methods).
- Making services more accessible for the entire county, e.g. the Child Care Assistance Program (CCAP) should be easier to work with for those in need.
- We need to understand the difference between families' child care needs by proximity to residence vs. proximity to employment.
- Important to know where services are delivered, vs where agencies/Community Based Organizations are located. Home Visiting offices may be geographically based in one town but serve families throughout the county. We need to know the actual gap in services by area.

- We need to find out from parents how they are satisfying child care, especially if they work non-traditional 9-5 jobs.

### **Strengths/Assets**

- Lots of diversity.
- Areas with a high concentration of poverty are surrounded by more affluent areas, which could be an asset/support.
- Many child care options.
- Quality programming throughout the region.
- Access to affordable housing.
- Access to great medical care.
- Several businesses in the area.
- There are a large number of partners who are committed to working together to address the inequities that exist in our county.
- The local Child Care Resource and Referral Agency (CCR&R) is helpful in the region.
- The community based-planning work has been valuable in beginning dialogue, sharing data, and getting partners participating and learning more.

### **Needs/Challenges**

- Lack of affordable child care.
- Lack of support for families not living in poverty.
- Reaching families that have trouble accessing communities.
- Not everyone welcomes or appreciates the diversity.
- Early care and education workforce shortage; qualified staff including shortage of teachers and teacher assistants.
- The Round Lake area is underserved in terms of high-quality early childhood education.
- Some areas are isolated, which makes resources and sharing resources difficult.

- Lack of public transportation.
- There is a need for grants to help teachers get credentials beyond Child Development Associate (CDA) credentials and Level 1 credentials.
- Large geographic area; each community needs a local approach.