

Region 49 Discussion Notes

Rock Island County

General Comments

- Rock Island County has a high rate of children living in poverty.
- We need to be more culturally and linguistically competent for Latinx children and families.
- Early Childhood leadership needs to reflect the demographics of the children.
- Families need basic survival resources - health care, etc.; early education is often low on the list for families.
- Make sure children have what they need in the classroom - have to figure out the true cost of care throughout the State.
- Large population of Thai families; centers need translation and marketing services in the language families use. Also need interpreters because not all parents read.
- Lots of different resources in the community only provide information in English.
- Transportation is an issue.
- Pay equity for staff.

Strengths/Assets

- People are ready to do the work. We are powerful together.
- We already have a strong network but need additional resources.
- Rock Island County has blended services that pull everyone together into a strong network.
- Intentional planning; we leave the competition at the door to do better for our children.
- We have Regional Office of Education (ROE) and Child Care Resource and Referral Agency (CCR&R) resources.

Needs/Challenges

- Need more multilingual people and services in centers.
- Better resources for special needs, including wrap around care.
- There is a transient community; we are losing touch with families.
- COVID is putting the community in survival mode.
- Need an Early Childhood Funding Coalition staff person.
- Need teachers who look like our children.
- Teachers need to have the ability to go back to school.
- Need family and teacher voices on coalitions and councils.
- Families are still struggling to find care. We lack available slots.