

## **Region 56 Discussion Notes**

### **Will County**

#### **General Comments**

- Kids in poverty in Joliet is not surprising; there are quite a few daycares of low quality there.
- I'm surprised by Bolingbrook's poverty level because many consider this area to be high income.
- Lot of home providers are not giving foundational care; they are just babysitting.
- Are we making Kindergarten ready for kids or are we making kids ready for Kindergarten?
- Kids growing up in a pandemic have different challenges, and we need to be adapting to children.
- Will County All Our Kids (AOK) network has great programs and collaborations.
- Strong interconnectedness.
- This is a difficult time for a new initiative to be successful due to the uncertainty of the pandemic.
- Data is incorrect, there are Illinois Department of Human Services (IDHS) programs through Catholic Charities.
- It would be great to have a network and funding resources for professional development for staff.

#### **Strengths/Assets**

- Teachers are adjusting, becoming more play based.
- The Child Care Assistance Program (CCAP) office has been a great resource.

#### **Needs/Challenges**

- More support for children who struggle in large group settings.

- Need to spearhead and set the educational foundation for a child way before kindergarten.
- I would like to see more support for children who struggle in large group care, especially in child care settings. Yes, there is help in pre/pre-k programs in the public school but then they go to child care settings after they attend these programs during the day and many struggle because the ratios are higher.
- Many centers no longer exist.
- Centers open and close due to COVID. There is no consistency. Families need to adapt and cannot.
- Kids struggle to transition between environments. There is no cohesive system.
- There is room for more collaboration with Catholic Charities.
- Some parents can't afford programs.
- Even with a subsidy, many families won't qualify for services.