

Child Care Advisory Council Meeting

1/23/2018

**Call to Order.....Commissioner Adria Johnson**

The meeting of the Child Care Advisory Council duly called by Commissioner Adria Johnson and held on January 23, 2018 at Bluegrass Community Action Agency, 111 Professional Court Frankfort, KY 40601 commencing at 1:06PM.

**In Attendance**

Christa Bell, Bill Buchanan sitting for Stephen Pruitt, Elizabeth Caywood, Twylynn Edwards, Linda Hampton, Dr. Amy Hood, Adria Johnson, Erica Tipton, Patricia Porter, Com. Names?\*

**Absent**

Linda Avery, Adrienne Bush, April Glover, Randi Jansen, Carol Moore, Erica Vaught, Mike Haney

**Review of minutes.....Commissioner Adria Johnson**

Upon arrival, committee members were presented with the agenda, and a copy of last meetings minutes.

**Update on appointments.....Christa Bell**

Christa Bell began by stating there is currently an opening for a co-chair member. She opened the meeting for nominations. No nominations were received, and Christa Bell acknowledged that there were not enough members present to vote. An email will be sent out to the 13 voting members for nominations. Christa Bell stated there are currently two member vacancies; one for a member representing child-care providers, and the other for a member from the private sector who is knowledgeable about education, health, and development of children. The governor's office is currently reviewing the applications for the vacancies.

Christa Bell then stated the governor's office would not make changes to the current members of the council. However, if a member misses three meetings in a row, or does not make any outreach known, then their membership will not continue. In June 2018, all appointed council memberships will expire. The link to reapply/apply for membership is listed in the last meeting minutes, and Christa Bell encouraged all current members to reapply.

**Division of Child Care Updates.....Christa Bell**

Christa Bell began the DCC updates by reminding the council during the last meeting she talked about all the sections and what each section does within the Division. DCC is split into three sections: CCAP (childcare assistance program), Quality Initiative Section, and CORE.

## **ALL STARS**

Christa Bell began by discussing the updates within the Quality Initiatives section, (PowerPoint presentation was followed.) In January 2017, there were only 6.79% of childcare programs verified at a high-quality rating within Kentucky All STARS, and as of January 2018 there are 41.7% verified at a high quality rating. She stated each month, there is a goal of a certain percentage, and as of right now the project is exceeding March projections. She also noted the 6.79% were mostly consisting of Head Start programs that came into the program already a level 3. Next, a map of each region and their percentage of high quality programs was displayed. The Jefferson, Southern Bluegrass, and Salt River Trail regions have yet to reach the goal of 45% of programs at high quality, however, the project is confident that those regions will reach the goal, and Christa Bell noted those regions have come a long way in progressing.

Next, Christa Bell continued with the Kentucky All STARS updates. The project applied for a no cost extension, and was granted the extension until the end of the year. As part of the projects next steps, the curriculum, assessment and screening tools are still being sent to providers who ordered them. The project noticed the need for curriculum, screening and assessment tools through the audits completed for programs. In addition, training for levels 1 and 2 are being offered for free across the state. Lastly, the project is working on getting Kentucky All STARS within the KICCS system, and the ALL STARS team has been working with the programmers in getting everything planned. Along with the programming changes, raters will soon use the ECERS-3 environmental rating scale, and will soon have electronic tablets rather than a paper process when conducting rating visits. Overall, the electronic version will generate more information that will be helpful for providers.

### **Background check requirements**

Christa Bell then began giving the updates on the CORE section. On the PowerPoint presentation, she provided the link for the new regulations in regards to the new background checks. She stated every state applied for an extension in getting the new requirements in place, and mentioned many states are struggling in placing all the federal mandates. Kentucky was granted the one-year extension, and Christa Bell provided the breakdown of the number of childcare employees each month that would get their fingerprints ran. She did note that the chart will need to be updated, due to the pilot was supposed to already start, but KSP has programming issues that will need to be resolved. Linda Hampton then asked what counties have fingerprint stations. Christa Bell stated she can share the map, and 80 counties currently have stations. Dr. Amy Hood then asked about the cost of the new background checks. Christa Bell stated with RTT (Race to the Top) funds, the Division would absorb the costs until Sept 2018.

Next, Christa Bell stated the chart was created in order to have even distribution of childcare employees getting their fingerprints versus over 21,000 people all going at the same time to have them ran. She also explained that the Division tried to have the new checks completed for

each center before their licensure expiration month, so their survey visit would come after all new background checks were completed and all results received. Linda Hampton then asked how long it takes to get the results of the check. Christa Bell stated currently, the regulations state they must be received within 45 days; however, typically the turnaround rate is two weeks.

Christa Bell then shared as of right now, as part of the federal mandate, childcare providers will have to wait until they receive the results before officially hiring new staff. Christa Bell stated she is advocating that staff can still be hired, but until results are received, they are supervised, (currently the way the system is in place right now.) She stated she is concerned about the workforce if Kentucky has to follow this rule, and currently the regulations state childcare employees can be employed until the results are received.

Christa Bell stated there are five checks that encompass the new fingerprint background checks: (will need this ... ) However, if an employee has lived out of state/states for less than five years, on top of the five checks, three additional checks must be requested from the potential childcare employees past states. The Division of childcare will keep a list of all other states contact information. It was noted that volunteers are not subject to the new fingerprint checks. Lastly, Patricia Porter asked if her husband will have to get his fingerprints ran, and Christa Bell stated he will and anyone in a Family Child Care Center over the age of 18. She also asked if she and her husband would have to get their fingerprints ran when going through the adoptive/foster care process. Christa Bell stated she and her husband would have to have their fingerprints ran again due to they are separate programs and have different standards and criteria.

### **CCAP and Benefind**

Christa Bell began giving the updates on the CCAP section. As of October 2017 as part of a federal mandate all eligibility/enrollment moved into the single program system Benefind. This has allowed the Division to have better access to data. \* need PowerPoint for #'s\*

Next, Christa Bell stated the transition has been a work in progress. As far as eligibility is concerned, all operations have ran smoothly. However, the Division is aware there have been issues with enrollments. The Division is working on solutions, and sometime in the next couple of months \* all contracts will be sent to the provider versus sent to the client for signatures. Providers gave feedback that they were better equipped to keep track of contracts, and getting the signed copies back into local offices. The Division also acknowledged they are aware of the long wait times for clients who call into the DCBS call center, and are working on solutions. In addition, the known issue with the mailroom has been resolved, and the known issue with the fax number being busy has also been resolved, and another fax line has been established.

Linda Hampton then asked if there was a script her office could have for when clients call into her office. Christa Bell stated to be sure to give them all the options for applying/ making changes to their case; calling the DCBS #, 1-855-306-8959, visiting their local office, or going online at [www.benefind.ky.gov](http://www.benefind.ky.gov). For childcare provider, they can call the Division of Childcare's call center at 1-844-209-2657.

## **Funding**

Next, Christa Bell provided a breakdown of all the funding streams within the Division of Child Care. She stated the TOBACCO funds are mostly set aside to sustain the KY ALL STARS program. Erica Tipton asked about how the cuts proposed will affect the scholarship programs. Christa Bell stated the Division is looking into this further, and could possibly look into other funds to support the program.

Lastly, Christa Bell asked if anyone had any other questions surrounding funding or questions around the Division updates.

Christa Bell then shared the Division has had two supervisors accept other positions: Heather Richardson (CCAP) supervisor, and Brittany Barber (Quality Initiative Section) supervisor, the Division does look to soon fill those positions. She also shared the Division has worked through the red tape reductions comments, and as long as they did not affect the health and safety of children in care, a lot of Family Child Care regulations have been changed or removed from regulations. Lastly, Christa Bell stated the Division is working on the state plan.

Bill Buchanan asked if the council could assist in sharing feedback concerning the state plan. Christa Bell stated she was on the same page, but was not sure the timeframe allowed for it this time around. Christa Bell did state at the next meeting she could share what has been drafted. Elizabeth Caywood did state the plan would be available online for public comment. Bill then suggested working groups that could provide feedback, and Christa Bell reiterated that she was on the same page, and would like to see subgroups working on initiatives such as feedback on the state plan.

Next, Dr. Amy Hood asked if a list of all centers ratings in Kentucky ALL STARS was available. Christa Bell stated since the regulations are not in place, those will not be shared yet. Dr. Hood also asked if a local press release could be sent out when a center reached a high quality rating. Christa Bell stated she liked the idea and would work on making it possible.

## **Advisory Council Updates.....Open Discussion**

Adria Johnson then opened the discussion for Advisory Council Updates. Christa Bell started the discussion by stating she hoped the council could have sub-committees, but could not get that started until the Council had a full number of members. Christa Bell then openly asked what does the Council want to accomplish.

Bill Buchanan started the conversation by stating the importance of quality, and suggesting the Council be a platform on ways to discuss improving quality in childcare centers. He also mentioned providing feedback on priorities in funding. Christa Bell stated the Division is limited on what we can use funds for, but hopefully this year the Division can look into more of initiatives the Division wants to accomplish. Christa Bell also stated at the next meeting she could discuss what the Division's requirements are to receive federal funding.

Dr. Amy Hood then suggested the Council could also discuss regulations that childcare providers feel are outdated or need updating. Christa Bell stated this is absolutely the platform to discuss this, and she hoped the Council could look into ways to recruit FCC (Family Child Care) home providers, due to this is one of the Division's goals.

**Member issues/updates.....Open Discussion**

Next, Christa Bell opened the discussion to any member issues/updates.

Patricia Porter started by stating her and some providers feel isolated. She suggested if there were ways or initiatives that they Council and Division could support to help childcare providers feel more appreciated. Christa Bell stated she appreciated her comment and suggestions, and that she could look more into ways to provide that support.

Next, Bill Buchanan provided updates on the preschool partnership grants, and all the accomplishments that have resolved from those funds. He also shared other updates that can be found by going to 'Open House,' 'Department of Education,' 'supplemental data,' 'kindergarten readiness.'

Lastly, Christa Bell noted the next meeting dates/times are listed on the bottom of the agenda, and the location of all the meetings will be at the same location; Bluegrass Community Action Agency.

**Adjourn**

Commissioner Adria Jonson made a call to adjourn the Child Care Advisory Council meeting, and Dr. Amy Hood made the motion.