

Child Care Advisory Council Meeting

July 24, 2018

Call to Order.....Commissioner Eric Clark

The meeting of the Child Care Advisory Council duly called by Executive Advisor, Christa Bell and held on July 24, 2018 at Bluegrass Community Action Agency, 111 Professional Court Frankfort, KY 40601 commencing at 1:04PM.

In Attendance

Melissa Banks, Christa Bell, Brenda Brunner, Bill Buchanan, Elizabeth Caywood, Eric Clark, Tal Curry, Twylynn Edwards, Laura Glover, Danielle Jones, Sandra Woodall

Welcome and Introductions/Older Business.....Christa Bell

Upon arrival, committee members were presented with an agenda and a draft of the minutes from the last meeting. Christa Bell announced there had been changes in memberships and asked all members to introduce themselves. Christa Bell noted there were only 5 voting members present and advised because there was not a quorum, the previous meeting's minutes could not be approved nor could any votes be taken on any agenda items. Christa Bell advised any business requiring a vote would need to be held at the next meeting, which is on October 23, 2018.

Division of Child Care Updates.....Christa Bell/Melissa Banks

Christa Bell announced the change in leadership, including her transition to an Executive Advisor in the Department for Community Based Services, Commissioner's office. DCC Assistant Director, Darlene Hoover, is serving as interim Director, until the position is filled. In addition, as of July 1, Melissa Banks is serving as an interim assistant director within DCC to provide project coordination and implement new initiatives.

Christa Bell advised the deadline for the Child Care and Development Fund State Plan had been extended to August 31, 2018. Christa Bell advised the public comment period had ended. Christa Bell advised a large stakeholder meeting had been held and lots of feedback was received. Christa Bell advised DCC will continue to engage stakeholders by holding bi-annual meetings to solicit feedback even during non-state plan approval years. She stated there are four priorities the Division of Child Care and stakeholders would like to implement.

The first priority is increasing the provider rate to the 50th percentile for infants and toddlers. On a federal level, the suggested percentile is 75. However, only two states meet this suggestion, and in doing so, have created a wait list and Kentucky does not want to impose a waitlist on clients. A financial analysis is being completed to determine the impact of this proposed change.

This rate increase would greatly support providers in creating high quality childcare environments. Kentucky currently is paying the 50th percentile for school-age children.

The second priority is removing the work requirement for Child Care Assistance Program (CCAP) receipts who are pursuing higher education. A fiscal impact analysis is currently being completed. Once the analysis is received, a decision memo will be drafted.

The third priority is increasing the Federal Poverty Level (FPL) at redetermination from 165% to 200%. This would give child care assistance recipients a chance to adjust economically, and create stability for children in care. Currently, this initiative is under review for fiscal impact. Christa Bell also noted the fiscal impact of increasing FPL to 180% is being determined.

The fourth priority is raising the FPL to 200% for initial applicants for the Child Care Assistance Program. However, this is currently not under fiscal analysis because all funds will likely be allocated to the first three priorities discussed.

Christa Bell stated the Division of Child Care has reviewed the fiscal impact of continuing to pay for the new national background checks. She also stated DCC will continue to cover those costs until the next fiscal year. She also stated DCC plans to pay for children in foster care under the Child Care Assistance Program. CCAP is currently not accepted alongside foster care payments.

Mel Banks provided the remaining DCC updates, beginning with announcing the Division of Child Care received the W.K Kellogg Foundation grant from The Prichard committee. The first meeting with advisors is scheduled for August 31, 2018. The objectives of this grant are to support and increase the number of family home care providers, and to increase the number of quality care options for infants and toddlers.

Mel Banks then provided an update on the National Background Check Program (NBCP). Currently, there are 1,088 users active in the KARES system. Over 21,000 fingerprint-based checks have been submitted. The Division originally estimated 25,000+ people would submit to the new background checks. Christa Bell noted she is confident that number will increase. Overall, the Division has received positive feedback on the process.

Mel Banks then provided an update on Kentucky ALL STARS. The Division was granted a no-cost extension, through December 31, 2018, but as of June 30, 2018, the Division of Child Care has concluded their business for the project. Kentucky ALL STARS is now the quality improvement and rating system for Kentucky per 922 KAR 2:270. All processes have moved to the KICCS portal and coaches have received training to implement these new electronic-processes. Currently, 47.4% of the state's child care providers are operating at high quality (levels 3, 4, 5.) The goal for this project was for 45% of providers to reach high quality, the program exceeded the goal; and the numbers are still growing.

Gail Edwards then requested an update on Early Childhood Environment Rating Scale (ECERS-3). Mel Banks stated the state would be using ECERS-3 beginning August 1, 2018. Mel Banks stated if childcare providers need training or assistance the provider should reach out to their quality

coach, who can provide technical assistance. A listserv message regarding ECERS-3 was sent to providers. Providers can send a request to DCCListServ@ky.gov to be added to the listserv directory. Mel Banks advised if providers are experiencing issues in contacting any of their coaches, to please direct them to The Division of Child Care, Quality Initiatives Section.

Sandra Woodall inquired if providers would be confused by the Division of Child Care using the Infant/Toddler Environment Rating Scale (ITERS-R), and ECERS-3. Christa Bell explained the Division of Child Care does plan to utilize ITERS-3, once the authors reach a consensus about a few content details.

Christa Bell briefly discussed the purchase of Branaugh software and tablets, which will provide an avenue for providers to receive constructive feedback and helpful reports in a more efficient manner.

Christa Bell stated the Director of the Division of Child Care position is posted on the non-merit state website.

Kentucky Administrative Regulations & Kentucky Revised Statutes.....Christa Bell

Christa Bell acknowledged this was a requested standing agenda item. Currently, the Division of Child Care will not open the regulations until final decisions are made concerning the stakeholder priorities.

Council Vision and Mission Statement.....Christa Bell

Dr. Amy Hood was appointed lead to draft a vision and mission statement for the council. Dr. Amy Hood was not present; this will be on the next meeting's agenda.

New Business and Next Steps.....Open Discussion

Christa Bell stated in order for the council to fully move forward, three parents and/or guardians who are receiving services from a licensed or certified home need to be appointed. She stated no applications have been considered for these appointments. Christa Bell urged the council, to encourage any interested parent/guardian meeting the criteria to apply. Brenda Brunner asked what qualifications the council is seeking in a parent member. Christa Bell advised KRS 199.8983 states they have to be receiving services in a licensed child-care center or family child-care home. Christa Bell expressed her desire to have a parent member who also receives CCAP. Laura Glover asked if there was a way to flag those applications. Christa Bell requested an email be sent to Darlene Hoover or Mel Banks after a parent/guardian applies.

Christa Bell reminded the members of the council it is statutory required to submit recommendations annually. Christa Bell encouraged all members to have recommendations to discuss at the next meeting.

Bill Buchanan suggested the council request early childhood experts to present during council meetings. Christa Bell encouraged the members to email any suggestions for speakers to her and Darlene Hoover.

Christa Bell then opened the floor for discussion. A member of the audience asked Bill Buchanan to provide an update for Kentucky Department of Education. Bill Buchanan gave a brief update on the Preschool Partnership Grant and how programs utilized the awarded funds. Mr. Buchanan stated Northern Kentucky University was identified as the independent evaluator of the grant. He reported in Tier 1, collaboration and kindergarten readiness increased. In Tier 2, an increase in enrollment and more children being served was reported. Mr. Buchanan stated more than 400 high quality centers and 19,000 staff participated.

Two members of the audience had a comment concerning the three empty parent appointments. There was a concern about parents being able to take leave from work, and to be reimbursed for their time and travel. Christa Bell stated the state cannot reimburse for time, but can reimburse for travel.

Commissioner Eric Clark stated the Cabinet plans to move, and move quickly, on the stakeholder priorities. He stated he is sensitive to human services and the people who are being served. The Division of Child Care director's position will be filled as expediently as possible. Commissioner Clark also stated Kentucky's Red Tape Reduction initiative is still an ongoing process. He encouraged all council members to make any suggestions or comments they may have.

Adjourn

Christa Bell advised council members to come prepared to discuss formal recommendations, and a vision and mission statement. Next meeting is scheduled for October 23, 2018. Christa Bell adjourned the Child Care Advisory Council meeting at 2:15PM.