



ARPA Task Force Early Childhood Learning Committee Orientation Meeting
Meeting Minutes – June 23, 2021
10:30am Virtual Zoom Webinar

Attendance:

Committee Members Present: Co-Chair, Charuni Patibanda, Co-Chair Lisa Diller, Co-Chair Ken Woods, Kirstin Olson, Madeleine Bayard, Rita Landgraf, Quinn Johnson, Heidi Beck

Committee Members Absent: Mari Viera Gunn, Pam Reuther, Aaron Bass

Others in Attendance: Aundrea Almond, NCC Chief of Staff, NCC Interns-Skylar Tucker and Kendall Tucker

Proceedings:

- Meeting called to order at approximately 10:35 a.m. by Co-Chair Patibanda
- Committee member and support staff introductions
- Meeting minutes approved (Mover Landgraf, Second Beck).
- Patibanda provided a summary of questions asked during the first meeting and followed the summary with a presentation with eligibility for projects under ARPA guidelines and the Interim Final Rules. (Presentation posted online).
- Expressly allowable projects fall under two broad categories relevant to this committee, Educational Disparities and Healthy Childhood Environments.
- Patibanda then provided a visual representation of the qualified census tracts with an overlay of licensed childcare providers in NCC.
- Patibanda also provided information regarding small business relief, and the two part test under the ARPA Interim Final Rule.
- Committee members discussed areas that the committee should drill down on in subsequent meetings:
 - Committee members are involved with what the State is doing with ARPA funds, recommendation to invite the State representatives from Department of Education Yvette Sanchez, to the committee to discuss where potential gaps may exist.
 - Where are the immediate needs? Recruitment and retention of staff, benefits and support of staff, professional development of staff.

- Should County money go directly to families in QCTs to support families. We should be focusing on families in the QCTs.
- State offered to pay for childcare for families, but children were not sent. Outreach is necessary to families to educate them on why they still need to send their children to childcare for social and educational skills.
- Route 40 corridor is a lower income area, public private e-cap program. Census tracts can be deceiving when it comes to serving all the low-income families in need.
- Childcare deserts are associated low income areas. Programs cannot make it work as a business model, so parents have to go outside the census tract to get care.
- State funds are not geographically targeted.
- There is a lack of qualified workforce and what can we do to help with training, and on the job training, etc.
- Committee defined “early childhood development” as from Birth to 5 years old.
- Committee will focus on childcare providers, in home care, home visits. See ARAP eligible slides.
- Childcare provider salaries are very low. Private care facilities are so expensive and young families are at their lowest earning potential.
- Childcare providers have to have substitute qualified teachers when a teacher takes time off.
- We have seen a huge reduction in in-home providers because of new educational credentials for childcare providers. There is a TEACH and WAGE program.
- We could work with the colleges to fast track some training programs and provide funding to teachers.
- TEACH was limited because of funding and class opportunities.
- In-home providers are faster to get up and running than childcare centers.
- Facilities grants to childcare providers are in need. The State’s past programs have not made it easy for childcare providers to apply for and receive grants.
- We could use one-time money to catalyze programs like relief squads of substitute pools to show the need for these types of programs.
- How can we capitalize on shared services? To find a way to get more support for families where traditional early childcare programs don’t have funding for. How can we leverage these funds with existing programs like Home-visiting? How could we solve for the problem that people who are unemployed cannot obtain purchase of care?
- What are the sustainability plans for funds used to catalyze programs with one-time money?
- Universal home-visiting, perhaps a pilot program targeted at QCT to test a program that we think has potential.
- Many providers do not even accept the State’s purchase of care program. This is due to the fact that the economics do not pencil out for providers who are generally all small businesses.

- Also need to have a discussion on families that don't necessarily fit the norm due to learning delays or complex physical disabilities.
- Committee discussed pros and cons of working with early learning programs in the school districts.
- Committee spoke about a speaker to discuss how to help families with children who are autistic.

Public Comment:

- Thomasina Hamilton, New Castle Council Employee, the committee should consider impacts to families who have children with autism as parents are required to report back to office jobs.
- RJ Miles—What is the wisdom around a facility that would require children to be transported to the facility rather than investing in co-location closer to the students.

Adjournment:

- Co Chair Patibanda adjourned the meeting at approximately 12:00 p.m.