



**Committee: Partnership with Professionals**  
**Meeting Minutes**  
**February 18, 2021 - 4:00pm to 5:00pm**  
**Virtual Meeting**

**Members Present:** Rena Hallam (co-chair); Lucinda Ross (co-chair); Deidra McNatt (staff); Julie Beebe; Kim Krzanowski; Lillian McCuen; Heidi Beck; Carmen Gallagher; Cathy Lopez-Cooling; Linda Zankowsky; Caitlin Gleason; Julie Johnson; Elizabeth Ritchie; Michele Brobyn; Rhetta Church; Leah Leader

Welcome and Introductions - Co-Chair Rena Hallam called the meeting to order at 4:02 pm, welcomed everyone, and provided an opportunity for everyone to introduce themselves.

Review of the DECC Strategic Plan Recommendations Matrix - The three areas of the plan that the Partnership with Professional committee has been tasked with reviewing are:

1. Support and develop early childhood as a profession;
2. Increase compensation and building a system of support; and
3. Achieve culturally and linguistically responsive, inclusive practices.

Discussion - The committee discussed that the DECC Strategic Plan Recommendations Matrix has a lot of complexity and highlighted the value of having a diverse group of participants from different backgrounds, with different lenses, who can support making some progress on these issues. The matrix shared included information based on a preliminary list of groups we think are already working on each task. Caitlin Gleason share that in February 2019, the ideas listed in the DECC Strategic Plan Recommendations Matrix were brainstormed through the Preschool Development Grant Birth through Five (PDG B-5) needs assessment and strategic plan process. The following acronyms are listed in the matrix presented:

1. IHEs: Institutes of Higher Education;
2. DOE: Delaware Department of Education;
3. ECS: Early Childhood Support;
4. CIPD: Curriculum and Instruction Professional Development team;
5. OEL: Office of Early Learning; and
6. DIEEC: Delaware Institute for Excellence in Early Childhood

Questions and Input - The committee developed the following questions and comments for further discussion:

1. Are there any obstacles to overcome before the committee can recommend a specific strategy for any of the tasks listed?
2. Can any of the tasks be organized or categorized as bullet points or sub tasks of another larger task? The example of including trauma informed training under the category of learning opportunities was provided.
3. What tasks should be prioritized?
4. What professional development content is covered in the different training programs: CDA, associate's degree, bachelor's degree, and the high school career pathways (traditional and vocational)? The committee would like to invite someone who can talk about the different high schools career pathways.

5. How can the credits earned in these programs be stacked to allow people to move through the continuum a little bit faster? The committee would like to look at the career lattice and discuss how the current system can be revised in way that is achievable and gives people credit for what they have already earned.
  - Comment: Early childhood professional may face challenges in increasing their qualifications because they are not able to move past the basic college math and English requirements, which leaves a gap in the workforce. Elizabeth Ritchie shared that there is some work going on at Del-Tech called “Achieving the Dream,” and some actions are beginning to be implemented regarding credits for prior learning.
6. Conversations regarding increasing qualification requirements need to be tied to increased compensation. The committee would like to look at how other states, including PA, DC, WA, and LA, have implemented higher qualifications linked increased compensation and propose this topic be explored by the full committee. Looking at the PA career lattice was also suggested.
7. The committee expressed interest learning more about the findings of a professional development committee that met several years ago. Kimberly Kraznowski shared that the committee had explored a variety of topics and made recommendations around qualifications, which she can share with the committee chairs.
8. The committee also expressed interest in looking at the workforce study completed by University of Delaware to learn more about the number of people in the workforce. Catlin Gleason could possibly do a mini-presentation. Caitlin shared the following links in the chat:
  - PDG needs assessment with workforce stats:  
[https://education.delaware.gov/wp-content/uploads/2019/12/oel\\_PDG\\_consolidated\\_needs\\_assessment.pdf](https://education.delaware.gov/wp-content/uploads/2019/12/oel_PDG_consolidated_needs_assessment.pdf)
  - Workforce study that Tibor Toth did in 2012:  
[https://www.doe.k12.de.us/cms/lib09/DE01922744/Centricity/Domain/146/admin\\_teacher2012-5.pdf](https://www.doe.k12.de.us/cms/lib09/DE01922744/Centricity/Domain/146/admin_teacher2012-5.pdf)
  - Workforce study that Tibor Toth did in 2016:  
<https://www.doe.k12.de.us/cms/lib/DE01922744/Centricity/Domain/432/Workforce%20Survey%20adminteacher2016-7.pdf>
  - Early Childhood Workforce Index, the update for 2020 will be available in the spring:  
<https://cscce.berkeley.edu/wp-content/uploads/2018/06/2018-Index-Delaware.pdf>

Immediate Supports - The committee began to brainstorm ideas for immediate supports for the provider community given the pandemic and current state of affairs. What specific ideas or recommendations would this group would like to make to strengthen the current early childhood workforce? What innovative strategies or ideas do we have? Possible strategies identified were:

- Loan forgiveness for college graduates who join the early childhood field for a set amount of time.
- Developing tool-kits for de-escalation and for trauma informed practices to help the early childhood workforce cope with their own trauma and Adverse Childhood Experiences (ACE’s).

Next Steps: Following the meeting, a copy of the matrix will be sent out. Committee members were asked to:

1. Add any additional information or comments about groups that might be working on the listed task;
2. List any obstacles that might need to be addressed prior to making recommendations about a task;
3. Provide information about prior work product that could provide background information; and
4. Contribute other ideas for immediate supports for the provider community.

This information should be return to the committee chairs prior to the March meeting.

The committee discussed adding additional members from family child care, early intervention 619, high school career pathway programs, and higher education.

The chairs will go to the council and ask about sponsoring some type of state panel to look at qualifications and compensation.

Announcements: Kimberly Krznowski shared that the DOE Joint Finance Committee (JFC) hearing took place this week and included conversations regrading early childhood funding and pre-k quality. The DHSS JFC hearings, which include Purchase of Care (POC) and conversations regarding subsidy rates, will take place next week. The exact date can be found on the state website.

A Doodle Poll will be sent to all committee members to assist in scheduling the next meeting date and time.

The meeting adjourned at 4:59 pm.