



Committee: Access to High Quality Programs
Meeting Minutes
January 29, 2021 – 9:30am to 10:30am
Virtual Meeting

Attendees: Brancato, Kimberly (co-chair); Church, Rhett; Clark, Linda; Clendaniel, Cheryl (co-chair); Fisher-Klein, John (staff); Gleason, Caitlin; Herron, Kyle; Kejner, Gabriela; Kelley, Lynn; Koutsourades, Christina; Krzanowski, Kimberly; McCuen, Lillian; Merced, Tanisha; Prettyman, Andrea; Sheffler, Kristy; Sidney-Brown, Regina; Stinson, Peggy; Timm, Betty Gail; Zankowski, Linda

Welcome and Introductions – the meeting opened with a welcome and everyone was provided the opportunity to introduce themselves.

Review of Committee Purpose – the committee reviewed the DECC Strategic Plan Recommendations under its purview. Recommendations fit within three frameworks:

1. Support increased child care quality and capacity,
2. Support families in finding the right program fit, and
3. Increase financial and geographic access to quality.

Prioritize the Work – the committee agreed its first task is to gain a deeper understanding of the some of the recommendations. The committee developed the following interest list/questions:

- The committee wishes to explore the intended definition of “publicly funded.” Does this mean Early Childhood Assistance Programs specifically? Does it mean any state-funded program? Does it include federal funding such as Head Start or Child and Adult Care Food Program?
- Regarding the “single access point” for families, what are the roles of mychildde.org, 211, DTI, and others? What is the intended outcome – is this a starting point for families, or guidance throughout the process of accessing all available and appropriate supports.
- For all recommendations under the affordability subcategory of the framework to increase financial and geographic access to quality, the committee will seek clarity on what programs and services are reimbursable, at what rates, and by whom. Additionally, the committee wishes to better understand the overall funding strategy as it is, which policies are mandated by the CCDF and under which policies does the state have control or flexibility in implementation, either due to COVID-19 or typically.
- Regarding the recommendation to invest in extended-hours/flexible care, the committee wishes to examine the Office of Child Care Licensing (OCCL) regulations in this area. They will look for opportunities to remove barriers where possible, but with the health and safety of children taking priority.

- Two recommendations (increasing requirements for teaching literacy and developing/expanding pipelines to the profession) seem to fit more cleanly under the purview of the Partnerships with Professionals subcommittee. The committee chairs will discuss this with DECC leadership.
- Finally, the committee questioned the breadth of the recommendation to develop robust suspension and expulsion policy and training. The committee believes this work to be underway, but also recommends a broader view that includes the tracking of suspension and expulsion data.

Plan meeting schedule – the committee agreed to meet next on Friday, February 26, 2021.

Adjourn – the meeting adjourned at 10:25am.