



Department of Housing & Human Services

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Family Resource Network Regional Council Meeting Minutes

Thursday, March 10, 2022

3:00-4:30pm, MS Teams

Present: Robin Bohannan, Danielle Butler, Susan Caskey, Suzanne Crawford, Elizabeth Crowe, Betsey Martens, Karin Stayton, Johnny Terrell, Julie Van Domelen, and Dennis Whalen

Absent: Marc Cowell, Dr. Perla Delgado, Sam Messier, Christina Pacheco, Camille Rodriguez, and Simon Smith

Guests Present: Olga Bermudez, Nicole Cavalino, Daphne McCabe, Susan Grutzmacher, Jodi Sherman, Wanda Pelegrina, and Jane Wilkinson

Staff Present: Joni Lynch, Lane Volpe, and Whitney Wilcox

Welcome and Introductions

The regular meeting of the FRN Regional Council was called to order by Julie Van Domelen, who chaired the meeting on behalf of Christina Pacheco.

Approval of November 2021 FRN Regional Council meeting minutes

Julie called for approval of the November 2021 FRN Regional Council meeting minutes. Motion for approval and seconded, minutes were approved unanimously.

Whitney shared a few membership updates: City of Louisville representative Rebecca Alderfer's term ended in December and City of Louisville is working to fill the vacated seat, and the City of Boulder's representative Kristin Hyser has transitioned to a new role with Broomfield County Housing Authority and Elizabeth Crowe will fill her vacated seat.

Discussion, Nominations, and Elections for Chair and Vice

Kristin Hyser was going to transition from Vice Chair to Chair. With her departure from the Regional Council, both the Chair and Vice Chair positions are open. Christina has agreed to continue as Chair to maintain continuity and Julie expressed interest in serving in the Vice Chair role. Suzanne moved and Danielle seconded that Christina serve an additional year as Chair and Julie serves as the Vice Chair. The motion was approved.

Julie asked members interested in serving in a leadership role in the future to connect with Whitney.

Early Care and Education Updates and Discussion

Danielle provided an overview of early care and learning to ground the group in the early childhood system:

- Early Childhood is technically defined as birth-eight years old and includes eight subgroups. Early childhood is also talked about as below school-age (0-3) and school-age (3-8).
- The early childhood workforce includes class room teachers, family child care home providers, cooks, bus drivers, child health nurse consultants, and Friend, Family, Neighbors (FFN) care.
- Early childhood professionals study eight areas including child development, nutrition and safety, family relationships, and diversity.
- The early childhood system includes four domains: early learning, family engagement and support, health, and mental health and socio-emotional development. The local child care system is built on the availability, accessibility, affordability, and quality of child care.
- Types of care include parental care, formal child care (state licensed and includes child care centers and preschools), and informal child care (unlicensed and includes FFN).
- There are several different types of early learning programs that might be in a licensed center or home, including Head Start, Colorado Preschool Program, and Montessori.
- There are also a number of health, mental health, and family support programs, including programs like Parents as Teachers, Nurse Family Partnership, Kids Connects, and Head Start.
- Child care data is lacking. There are individual reports created including Status of Children in Boulder County, Indicators reports, child care cost surveys, and Head Start needs assessments.
- As of January 2022, there were a total of 306 licensed programs in Boulder County, including the licensed sites in BVSD and SVVSD. ECCBC has purchased a national database system and are collecting child care supply data moving forward.
- Betsey asked if Danielle would describe the early childhood system as fragmented or coordinated. Danielle said the system is fragmented. She said the k-12 public school system is coordinated: it has a public funding system and looks similar across the U.S. The early childhood system in contrast is fragmented: it is based mostly on parent fees, local community supports, local operators, local Head Start programs, and local investments.

Boulder County Public Health (BCPH) FFN pilot with Colorado Statewide Parent Coalition (Jane Wilkinson, Child Health Promotion Coordinator with BCPH)

- The BCPH Child Health Promotion Program provides inspections of licensed child care centers and programs, performs child health outreach that includes safety and nutrition, and works closely with child care nurse consultants. They are uniquely funded and situated to partner with child care organizations.
- Not everyone in our community is able to access licensed and regulated providers, but it's unclear how many families are utilizing FFN (unlicensed) care. To identify and support FFN providers, BCPH is using ARPA funding to engage community partners in reaching and supporting FFN providers. Partners include ECCBC, Colorado Statewide Parent Coalition, and Kid Connects.
- They are working to connect Boulder County unlicensed providers to BCPH resources, including bilingual breastfeeding consultants and bilingual Child Health Promotion Outreach specialists.
- They also have funding to support PASO and a conference in May designed to support self-care.

City of Longmont FFN pilot (Olga Bermudez, Counselor with City of Longmont Children, Youth, and Families)

- Longmont City Council approved \$210k to support early childhood education, including award to PASO. PASO is a leadership program for Latinx families. The award supports leadership

development for 20 families and raises importance of early childhood education and provides concrete tools parents can use at home to promote early childhood education. Parents will complete 13 sessions. Upon completion, parents will recruit additional parents from community to share what they've learned.

- City of Longmont also provided PPE to Longmont FFN providers and funding to Front Range College to support scholarships for students wanting to pursue early childhood education. Student enrollment has been lower than projected, hope to see increased enrollment in the Spring.

EFAA's Zero-Five Thrive program (Julie Van Domelen)

- EFAA had planned to launch program prior to COVID, but coming out of COVID see program as even more relevant: Housing and child care costs have increased since the pandemic and women's ability to move into the workforce is challenged because of child care costs. This pilot program will help mitigate effects of poverty over the long term through a combination of economic support (will expand financial support from rent, utilities, and medical to include child care and investments in children's education) and additional child development services.
- Will experiment with cash transfers and direct payments to families, as well as direct financial assistance. They're looking at blended approach to meet the needs of households.
- They are currently hiring Child, Youth, and Family Program Manager and other key staff, planning to launch program in Fall 2022. Estimate that they will serve 150 households at a cost of \$600k per year. Will layer on top of existing programs like Keep Families Housed and refer to existing programs and services.

ECCBC and FRC Planning Grant (Danielle Butler)

- ECCBC, Sister Carmen, EFAA, and OUR Center, Boulder County Housing Human Services, BCPH, BVSD, and SVVSD received mini-grant to test two new tools launched by the Office of Early Childhood, including *Collaboration Guide: Family Resource Centers and Early Childhood Councils* and *A Local Early Childhood Systems Toolkit* to help structure local conversations. The organizations will contract with Morgan Jankey to support the work, which will begin in April.

Child Care Assistance Program (Susan Grutzmacher, Division Director with Boulder County Housing and Human Services)

- CCAP serves children 0-12. It supports children at early ages by providing access to high quality child care and supports families working and/or attending school. It is not an entitlement program. Current budget is about \$6.3 million. Typically spend about \$10 million, pull from multiple revenue sources to fill funding gap.
- Currently serving about 1,024 children, state allocation would probably support about 500 children. No families have been turned away because of a lack of funding.
- CCAP team working hard to get people approved and on the program. Team is working to simplify process and contact and connect with families to support application process.
- Eliminated parent fees and requested double payments for providers impacted by the Marshall Fire.
- Market rate study, which dictates provider rates across the state, will be released in the next couple of months. Rates typically change in September.

City of Boulder's Child Care Subsidy program (Wanda Pelegrina, Family Services Manager with City of Boulder Housing and Human Services)

- Child Care subsidy program mirrors CCAP, goes up to 375% FPL and serves families of lower middle-income that are ineligible to receive CCAP. No citizenship requirement but do have to live within the City of Boulder limits.
- Currently 12-15 providers receive these subsidies and have slots for families, including some BVSD, YMCA, and licensed-child care provider sites. Providers do have to be licensed to be eligible to participate in program, but City may explore expanding to include FFN providers in the future.
- Budget is about \$2,000. Half of budget is from community child tax credit donations.

Large Group Q&A:

- Elizabeth asked about current child care needs. Danielle said impact of the pandemic on providers has been significant and have seen significant turnover and some providers have closed. Danielle said provider needs include workforce, general operating support, and support with more flexible requirements and lower grant administrative burdens. She added that parents with young children need more options.
- Elizabeth also asked about current data sources ECCBC has to understand the supply and demand for child care. Danielle said there needs more investment in data collection and coordination. With private and board donations, ECCBC has bought a data system and working to build data up and maintain the data, create a local parent referral system, and train community partners to use data system.
- Jane added opportunity to support CCAP in a new and different way and making it more accessible.
- Danielle shared that universal preschool will impact the system locally and need to have conversations about the legislation and what it will look locally.
- Danielle gave kudos to Susan Grutzmacher and the CCAP team for their work in the community over the years.
- Daphne said that Family Connects will assess child care needs with new moms and there will be opportunity to promote child care programs.

The meeting was adjourned.