

## Early Childhood Task Force

### Meeting minutes

Keokuk 9/25/19

This meeting of the ECTF was held at Dr Getwell's in Keokuk at 9:30 am with the following present:

Ginger Knisley – Children First, Missy Park – LCHD HOPES, Carolyn Baker – community member, Jamie Beskow – LCHD 1<sup>st</sup> Five, Cyndi Mason – retired CCNC, Kathy Osipowicz – CPS technician, Morgan Small – Sieda VB Head Start, Sarah Tweedy – Raisin Em Up, Deb Bergquist – Jail Diversion, Heather Harder – Ft Madison Schools TAPS program

Introduction took place around the table. Missy provided a brief explanation of what the ECTF is.

There was a **motion** by Jamie and a second from Missy to approve the **agenda** for today's meeting as written. All voted aye.

There was a **motion** by Missy and a second by Carolyn to accept the **minutes** from the previous meetings on 6/26/19 and 8/8/19 as written. All voted aye.

Ginger provided a written **administrative update** including updates on funding, parent council efforts, and board membership vacancies. Kathy recommended Rebecca Rump recently retired from SCC for a possible board member under Lee County Education. Cyndi asked if she would qualify under education but she is not yet sure how much she wants to commit to since she just recently retired. Ginger shared she would be gone for the October meeting day and asked for volunteers to run the meeting. Missy agreed to Chair the meeting and Jamie agreed to take the minutes for the meeting.

**Oral Health** – Morgan questioned if the Silver Diamine study was going to be taking place as she has heard nothing about recruiting families for it this school year. Ginger said she would look into it.

**Mental Health** – Jamie gave an update on Children's Mental Health efforts. Jamie also shared about events she has upcoming with medical providers that should increase their buy-in with early screenings. She also shared that FtM peds is doing maternal depression screenings. She is hopeful that more focus will be put on prevention and early intervention with the proposed revisions to the Children's Mental Health bill.

**Family Support** – Missy is still getting new families for Family Connections and is working on stabilizing the Keokuk group due to issues with babysitting older siblings. She reports more and more families are working. Crime and domestic violence appear to be prevalent issues in our communities. HOPES families report a high rate of suicide or suicide ideation among TLC employees which is disturbing due to the high number of young families working there. It is also noted that TLC does not have family friendly work policies. \*\*\*We need to address this as a community and see if we can affect some change.

**Preschool/Child Care** – Ginger shared that Susie Rettig has still not received her registration and now has to go through the background checks again since it has been in process for more than 90 days.

\*\*This too is a system issue we need to find a way to address. Morgan reports huge turnout for registration in Van Buren County with both sites having a waiting list. She also reports it is difficult to get parents, especially over income parents, to participate in parent meetings and other activities – perhaps because they may not need as many services or resources.

There was a lengthy discussion around the issues happening in Donnellson at Raisin Em Up and the implications for our entire EC system. Sarah reports the DHS visits have been weekly for several months and last week was four hours long in duration. Jill stated to her she would find something wrong every week so she didn't lose the revocation hearing. Heidi Brown, a DHS regulatory person from another area, came with Jill last week. Sarah reports she is very picky but very helpful in finding ways to fix things. The struggle to find and keep EC employees is very concerning as they cannot be paid a very good wage and are exposed to personal liability not seen in many other jobs. There appears to be a lot of room for interpretation of the rules and regulations around child care licensing. \*\*\*There are many issues with the system in wanting quality but making things so strictly regulated that providers cannot realistically make it work. What is realistic? What can we do to assist in both directions? What can be done to offer some protection for EC workers?

#### **Other business –**

Ginger reported the Keokuk Schools are asking for a list of resources to aide them in assisting families in a variety of forms of crisis. Missy suggested perhaps CAPC/PPC could pay to print the community action resource directories. Ginger agreed this was one option but wants to look into creating a simplified, perhaps one page, guide for them to access assistance in an efficient way. Ft Madison school would also be interested in such a resource.

This meeting was adjourned at 11:00 am.

The next meeting of the ECTF will be Thursday, October 23<sup>rd</sup> at 9:30 am in Ft Madison at the Palms.

gk