



City of Madison

City of Madison
Madison, WI 53703
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Meeting Minutes - Approved EARLY CHILDHOOD CARE AND EDUCATION COMMITTEE

Wednesday, December 10, 2008

8:00 AM

215 Martin Luther King, Jr. Blvd.
Room 260 (Madison Municipal Building)

CALL TO ORDER / ROLL CALL

Present: 7 -

Lynn E. Edlefsen; Joanna R. Parker; Diane B. Adams; Kathleen B. Raschke; Patricia A. Lasky; Richard C. Schultz and Joanne E. Brown

Absent: 4 -

Bev A. Willer; Brenda K. Konkel; Michael B. Jacob and Tracy K. Kuczenski

Staff Present: Monica Host, Terri Strong, Connie Williams, Linda Eisele, Lois Evenson, Enis Ragland, Bill Clingan, Becky Schesny

Brown called the meeting to order at 8:13 am.

CHILD CARE FORUM

[12972](#)

Child Care Forum

Topics for Discussion:

- The impact of the economy on early childhood care and education in the City of Madison.
- Supporting the social-emotional development of children with diagnosed or undiagnosed needs in ECE programs

Forum Speakers:

Peggy Haack, Wisconsin Early Childhood Association

Current state of economy's effect on early care and education. In 2000, the state allocated \$38 million to children's education compared to only \$10 million today.

Expulsion rate in preK programs is three times higher in pre-kindergarten due to undiagnosed learning disabilities or other conditions.

Christie Howell-Yrios, Animal Crackers

69% of center's enrollment is low-income families with 8 out of the 56 families enrolled being two-parent families. Part-time enrollment has increased due to economy and nature of employment and work schedules.

Summer school age program and staff witnessed children with extensive needs and \$900 in damages to a classroom. City OCS staff support is

important to the high quality care they provide

Need to engage workforce, who employ single parents with inconsistent, unreliable work schedules.

Becky Van Houten, Preschool of the Arts

The economy and enrollment has changed drastically. Parents are reducing their day care costs by keeping kids home or making other arrangements. The center has had to decrease budget for building repairs and improvements.

Increase in number of children with emotional issues. In the 1990s 2-3 children with emotional issues requiring additional support were enrolled, compared to 14 now.

Continuing education for teachers is important. Additional teachers and support staff are needed in the classrooms.

George Hagenauer, Community Coordinated Child Care, Inc.

Although Wisconsin Share has an increased reimbursement rate for those with special needs, the additional funding is underutilized. Sleep apnea study demonstrated improved performance and behavior in students when given treatment for the condition.

12 child care programs/centers closed in 2007. Data shows that child care programs with few Wisconsin shares children did not close while programs with 50% or more of Wisconsin Shares kids were more likely to close.

While the government is bailing out banks and auto companies but not child care or welfare programs. Federal government has provided no COLA for these programs and there have been no increases in funding rates while the cost of care continues to rise.

Wendy Rakower & Lisa Melkert, Red Caboose Day Care Center

Health insurance costs are up \$50,000 this year for an overall total of \$200,000. The \$46,000 in uncollected parent co-pays will partially be covered, \$23,000 by fundraising.

Special needs children require a lot of one on one time and even the most skilled teacher can have difficulty in successfully assisting/supporting that that child in a classroom/center setting. In the school-age program approx 20 of 130 children receive special services/support during the school day but not in after school programs.

Red Caboose school-age program enrollment of older children has declined as parents can no longer afford co-pays, resulting in children home alone unsupervised.

Oma Vic McMurray, Child Care Providers Together (CCPT) – AFSCME

McMurray has been a family child care provider for 30 years and accredited with the City for 23 years. Every hour of program operation requires 3 hours of prep/administrative time.

Previously she reserved 25% of enrollment/slots for low-income families. The last decrease in WI Shares reimbursement rates forced her to change this policy and she no longer holds 25% of her enrollment for low-income families.

She currently has no Wisconsin Shares children enrolled in her program.

Children with special needs require more support/people, without it there is a strain on staff and children. Do our practices reflect what is best for children rather than based on economics?

OPEN FORUM DISCUSSION –

What role can the City Play in Supporting These Issues:

Christie Howell-Yrios from Animal Crackers Inc.

The City stabilization funds are a lifeline. The funds have helped maintain consistent stable child care for 6 children from 4 families at Animal Crackers. She uses these funds to leverage additional fundraising efforts. The funds also helped support the center's effort to wipe out every families' debt to the center. She's helping families financially plan for 2010.

Teaching staff also have needs that have been met by City staff. The OCS Child Care Specialists help to support staff through difficult challenges and help to prevent burnout and turnover. There needs to be more resources, funding and staffing to do the City's work.

The City has always remained committed to helping child care centers. The entire state needs a program of this nature. 2010 will be very hard for centers and their budgets.

Oma Vic McMurray, Child Care Providers Together

She has two suggestions for the City. 1. Create a loan program for those waiting to receive payment from the state as it can take months to get reimbursed. 2. Provide funding for family child for purchase of safety equipment.

George Hagenauer, Community Coordinated Child Care (4-C)

Cost to Federal Government/subsidized care for children in City accredited care is about three quarter of a million dollars a year. There is a ten to fifteen percent gap between the reimbursement rate and what providers are being paid. Banks (5-6) in the City are applying for federal money.

With the new president starting in January and the current online structures requesting information/feedback, there needs to be a flood of child care issues being sent through these channels. Child care structures are and will be needed to fuel the recovery of the economy. We can't recreate a dozen child care centers as employment increases/stabilizes.

Please contact local reps in Congress and Senate as well as on a federal level. Chicago advocacy groups have linkages to Obama and should be utilized to convey issues raised. State is running massive deficit and federal budget needs to help pick up slack. Advocacy needs to be done in next 30 days.

Pam Bennett, Meriter Children's Center

Families and teachers are struggling like no time before. The City's child care program is a phenomenal. We are a web of programs and it's the City of Madison child care program that holds the web together.

Strengthen funding/access for families to quality care, especially those not eligible for county assistance, but are on the waiting list for the City funds.

Strengthen the support system that meets the social/emotional needs of children. Children struggle to survive with social and emotional issues and city accredited specialists have helped tremendously. City child care specialists are the lifeline to teachers and programs and the families they serve. More accredited specialists are needed to strengthen ability to be there for programs.

Like families, teachers have stress/fear/anxiety and are struggling financially, even at a center with higher salaries and benefits. Families are cutting back in child care because they can't afford cost. All of this fear/anxiety among parents manifests in behaviors of children.

Oma Vic McMurray, Child Care Providers Together
Doyle is attempting to tap into federal bailout money for UW buildings and job creation. Funding for child care would be a better investment.

Peggy Haack, WECA

The City should be incredibly proud of the Accredited programs. From a state perspective, it is concerning what is happening elsewhere – where there is not a level of support similar to this. To the extent that this group and the City is able to do so, replicating the work, the program, and influencing state and federal policy is critical.

Board Comments/Discussion

The forum was recorded and a copy of it could be shared with Doyle's office or Obama's transition team. Urge policy that replicates program across country.

There is frustration with manner in which the state/county funding administers the program. Are municipalities working together to put pressure on state to make needed changes? Dan Harris and Reggie Bicha need to be aware of these issues. Invite them to an ECCEB meeting. Provide them with copy of Forum before a meeting.

The ECE community, from the state and federal perspective is only Head Start and state funded programs. There is a system of ECE providers getting federal support but its not impacting where the greatest need is.

Should the child care unions could be a voice for the state in regards to these issues and provide organization strength and social capital to make message hear by the right people at the right time.

The effect of the economy on the early child care and education professionals and their needs should be discussed and not taken for granted. ECE is an economic development and public safety issue.

APPROVAL OF MINUTES

MOTION by Raschke, seconded by Lasky to approve the minutes from November 19. Motion passed by voice vote.

DISCUSSION ITEMS

1. [12973](#) Budget Update

Bill Clingan updated Board on City budget.

2. [12974](#) 2009 Meeting Schedule

The 2009 schedule is available and the meetings will be at 8 am.

3. [12054](#) ECCEC Subcommittee

The Subcommittee will consist of Parker, Schultz and Edlefson.

Announcement: Board acknowledged work of specialists as was recognized during the Forum and will advocate for expanding the program.

ADJOURNMENT

MOTION by Edlefson, seconded by Adams to adjourn the meeting. Motion passed by voice vote. Meeting adjourned at 10:20 am.