

Charge to the
Early Childhood Care and Education Committee
Madison Community Development Division
July 2014

In 2013, the Madison Common Council passed a resolution directing the Community Development Division to draw community institutions together to work more collaboratively to ensure children's success. As a continuation of that resolution the following charge is assigned to the Early Childhood Care and Education Committee.

Develop a system for universal quality early childhood care and child development services for Madison children 0-5 years to ensure that all children are ready for school and that all families have access to parent education, resources and support.

Research has provided copious evidence that the first three years of a child's life are critical to healthy brain development and that the social, emotional, and cognitive environments of young children have a biological impact on brain development. Years of research define best practices for early childhood care and education as well as parent education. Positive engaged parenting and early childhood learning experiences can ensure that children are kindergarten ready and position them for success throughout their education. Through various studies we now know that children who are not ready to utilize the instruction and guidance offered in kindergarten struggle with catching up with their peers.

A variety of society barriers contribute to the lack of family success in ensuring that children develop successfully. Such barriers include poverty, unemployment, lack of education, limited parenting support, education and resources, lack of accessible quality childcare, affordable housing, and mental health resources. These barriers hinder a family's ability to succeed and can lead to further trauma and stress that impede children's development. The WI Council for Children and Families points out the racial disparity that exists in Dane County between the African Americans and White residents in some of these areas

The City of Madison, Dane County, United Way, Madison Metropolitan School District, the Community Foundation and other funders in our community support many early childhood and family support programs. These include: support for new parents, home visiting, parent education, child development resources, technical assistance and funding for quality child care, emergency respite services, play and learn groups, school readiness activities, early learning initiative zones and basic needs support. The University of Wisconsin, Madison College, area hospitals and physicians, non-profit agencies and other institutions also play an important role in supporting families and children in our community. And although efforts have been successful with part of Madison's population, these initiatives have not been successful in supporting development of all children in our community. Many families struggle to provide for their children. And children continue to enter school without the tools that they need to learn.

The charge given to the Early Care and Education Committee is to create a plan which ensures affordable quality child care to all families who want and need this care and provides support to families from pregnancy and birth through their child's entrance into school. The plan will address the needs of all children and families in Madison and will provide a spring board for generating interest and commitment from our community, our political leaders and potential funders.

The ECCEC starts with a variety of assets. There is information from various sources about municipal demographics and geography (e.g. City, County, census data, United Way, MMSD). Information regarding systems that have been developed in other U.S cities is available. The Born Learning Mobilization Plan may provide guiding information. There may be additional data from MMSD regarding 3rd grade reading scores or PALS (Phonological Awareness Literacy Scores) to help identify the highest gaps in our city. City staff will be available to assist the committee in its work.

Steps toward the development of system design may include:

- * A review of the current municipal efforts throughout the country that have been successful in providing these universal services to parents and children. Consideration should be given to the efforts in cities such as Providence, Rhode island, Seattle Washington, San Antonio, Texas, Denver, Colorado and Chicago, Illinois.
- * Identification of best practices of services that support children's success in early childhood care and education and parenting supports.
- * Identification of current programs and initiatives to determine what programming already exists.
- * Identification of needs of specific populations and/or geographic areas of the city.
- * Involvement of community partners and stakeholders, i.e. parents, child care providers, community and neighborhood centers, non-profit agencies, schools, churches, funders (City of Madison, Dane County, the State of Wisconsin, United Way, MMSD, Community Foundation, Public Health, Head Start) as well as private investors.
- * Funding methods that could be explored.

These efforts should lead to recommendations from the ECCEC of initial steps (i.e. pilot) to be taken by the City of Madison toward system implementation.

Next Steps?????

- Mayor calls meeting to review, revise charge by Aug 1?.
- Charge is delivered to the ECCEC at its August 6, 2014 meeting.
- Committee formally accepts charge.
- ECCEC develops a framework for the plan (division of work, appointment of sub-committee, roles of individual members, assignments to City staff and a timeline for the plan.
- System Plan outline by ??????
- System description to Mayor /Council by ??????
- Plan for rollout to community partners, community developed.

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