

**Early Learning Legislative Advisory Committee**

November 10, 2022

4 – 6:00 pm

**AGENDA**

1. Greeting & Housekeeping (5 min)
2. Exit Ticket Reflection and Themes (5 min)
3. History of the Work to Date & Background on Current Proposals (45 mins)  

Community Panel & Discussion
4. How We Do the Work and Norm Setting (20 mins)
5. Draft Work Plan Review (10 min)
6. Work Plan Reflection, Markup, & Closing (5 min)

**Early Learning Legislative Advisory Committee:  
Meeting Notes  
4-6 pm**

November 10, 2022

**Attendees:** Lynne Bolton, Eric Haugee, Halla Henderson, Mitra Jalali, Megan Jekot, Hwa Jeong Kim, LaVon Lee, Nicolee Mensing, Kristenza Nelson, Rebecca Noecker, Khalid Omar, Kera Peterson, Tracy Roscoe, Clare Sanford, Sai Thao, Brianna Trinidad Sprung, Quentin Wathum-Ocama, Nelsie Yang, Barb Yates

**Absent:** Camila Mercado Michelli, Maria Scot, Stephanie Thomas, Leah Van Dassar, Zang Vang-Lee

1. Greeting and Housekeeping

2. Exit Ticket Reflection and Themes

The group took a few minutes to each read silently the results of last meeting's reflections.

3. History of the work to date and background on the current proposals

The Committee heard from a panel of speakers.

Laurie Davis of the Saint Paul Children's Collaborative (SPCC) outlined the history of the Saint Paul 3K initiative, which began in 2017. Between April and October, the SPCC convened an advisory and a workgroup that produced a Blueprint which was released in October. The SPCC Board endorsed it and recommended that their partners (the city, county, school district and community) should implement it. Recommendations in the Blueprint included:

- creating a one-stop shop for finding a provider and applying for funding;
- beginning with 3- & 4-year-olds and expanding downtown as funds become available;
- use a targeted universalist approach, beginning with children with the highest need first;
- funding should follow the child;
- the new public funding source should be "last dollar in" after using other public funding sources;
- should be run by a new nonprofit, not the city or school district.

Debra Messenger, operator of a childcare center of 90 kids, is concerned that a PreK program will take dollars out of the pockets of providers. She discussed the worker shortage and the challenge in retaining teachers. She encouraged the group to consider the whole children system as they are making decisions, not just PreK.

Lydia Boerboom, of ISIAH/ Kids Count on Us said they started organizing community based childcare center in 2016-2017. Their vision is full funding at the state level for all families, not just for the lowest income children, and a career and wage ladder on par with K-12. She said that there aren't enough teachers, workforce and accessibility must go hand in hand. Kids Count on Us is

advocating for a state level Department of Early Care and Education. There is also Great Start Task Force meeting to create a solution for what a fully funded ECE could look like.

Maria Snider, of Rainbow Child Development Center, said previous work on a program held a strong commitment to a mixed delivery system, to include schools, Head Start, childcare centers, and family childcare. Parent choice was a key value.

Ginny DeLuca, ISAIAH, leader within Faith in Minnesota shared that it was critical to address workforce and wages.

Discussion:

- Concern about public dollars going to a nonprofit organization.
- Ramsey County contracts with Think Small to administer childcare assistance.
- People who are doing the work should be at the center of the decision-making.
- Mixed delivery is critical; without it, no way to scale up to serve all Saint Paul kids.
- Need to consider infants and toddlers; no profit in caring for infants and toddlers. Providers make more money in preschool age children because the ratios are bigger.
- Concern about unintended consequences on people's livelihoods.
- Consideration of funding programs versus funding following the child; this is like Pathway II early learning scholarships.
- Competitive wages would be on par with K-12 teachers, with access to benefits.
- Suggestions that the committee have a basis discussion about public funding, as well as how a childcare program runs.
- There is a tension between wanting to be visionary, but also be pragmatic from a fiscal standpoint. St. Paul voters wouldn't allow it.
- Struggles on the ground in finding teachers and being able to pay them enough. Classrooms are being closed.

#### 4. How we do the work and norm setting

Discussion:

- The model of the Community First Public Safety committee was shared. Facilitators work with the group over many meetings and at the end, committee members completed a survey of questions that were discussed to date. Facilitators would aggregate the data and anything with 80-90% agreement would be a strong recommendation.
- For the rent stabilization work group, the threshold for a strong recommendation was 60-70%. Want recommendations in a set of areas:
- Council received the recommendations, as well as the percentage of agreement.
- A committee member liked holding agreement to a high threshold.
- It was suggested this is a good way to show differing perspectives.
- A committee member recommended being thoughtful about the people doing the work. When we say making children the center, we're not looking at the people doing the work.

- A committee member suggested --does this policy benefit children? Does it benefit providers? Looking at decisions based on these questions.
- The co-chair recommended the use of a “parking lot” for issues that arise that are adjacent to those being discussed. The lists will be preserved and can be reviewed later.

The following norms were brainstormed:

- Step up and step back
- Be mindful that we’re all colleagues and okay to respectfully disagree
- Have the conversation here – do the work here, not come back to the next meeting with new whole ideas.
- Start on time
- Ask questions – there are no dumb questions
- Avoid education-speak and acronyms.
- End right on time
- Review the norms at the start of each meeting.

#### 5. Draft Work Plan Review

A draft workplan for the committee was shared. Committee members were encouraged to mark up the document either at the end of the meeting or by email later, suggesting changes or speakers. Committee staff will send a follow-up reminder.

The meeting was adjourned.