

Vital Communities ECE Initiative

Workforce and Program Models Workgroup

Monday, June 5, 2023

12:30-2:00 pm

Here are the minutes from the last meeting.

Join Zoom Meeting

https://us02web.zoom.us/j/88144914668?pwd=VkJXWjQ3bVhhVUZLeFB2N2Z0YzRyUT09

Meeting ID: 881 4491 4668

Passcode: 383671

Vital Communities Early Childhood Initiative

North Star: The goal of the Early Childhood Education Initiative is to facilitate an increase in high-quality, accessible, and affordable early childhood education in the bi-state Upper Valley area.

Agenda

- Introductions and Icebreaker
- Bringing It Home Project (Alexa Plewa,Executive Director,Cheshire Children's Museum)
- Information from Sharron Harrington- Compensation and Scales

  My suggestion is to be sure workgroup members have reviewed the resources on our website: Advancing as a Profession and subscribe to the VTAEYC eNews to receive updates.

  Also, there is a recording that describes the process of developing the minimum compensation scales - please keep in mind this is still in process.

  Minimum Compensation proposal as of fall 2022:
  https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=8IBJF8dIOxg&list=PLJJUkiA2cZw_AEQTaZkLf7IfyhBJZvWXA&index=13

  Lastly, NAEYC and VTAEYC provided testimony on wages during the legislative session on ECE compensation.

  NAEYC
  https://legislature.vermont.gov/Documents/2024/WorkGroups/House%20Human%20Services/Early%20Childhood%20Education%20and%20Pre-Kindergarten/W~Lauren%20Hogan~Early%20Childhood%20Educator%20Compensation%20Presentation~4-5-2023.pdf

  VTAEYC
  https://legislature.vermont.gov/committee/document/2024/16/Date/4-6-2023#documents-section

- Update from Amy Brooks- Progress on the workforce pipeline; status of the modular in Lebanon; update on RFP; summer plans; ECEA UV Retreat
- Update from Shaun Mulholland
  Progress with ECE facility

SB 221– Advocacy is needed!
VT Child Care legislation

- Goals for June 2023-August 2023 (See Below)
- Meeting with Joanne C., Sara K. and Joanne R. -Document being prepared for Sian
- Other Business

Next meeting: Monday, June 19, 2023, 12:30 pm

North Star (Draft)

Workforce and Program Models North Star:

- Identify, develop, and evaluate strategies that promote bi-state sustainability supporting the retention and recruitment of early childhood educators.

Action Steps and Metrics:

1. Build public awareness of ECE as a profession
    - 1) What did we do and how much of it did we do? (numbers)
        - Working with Advocacy to attend/participate in a meaningful way with legislation
        - Fall and spring events (WOYC)
        - Podcasts -Advocacy -formal messaging campaign “The bedrock of the granite state”
        - ECE-shared services and programs ELNH come to a WF meeting; including food discounts; grant funding; ‘acquire for hire’; telehealth; plan for the fall
    - 2) How well did we do it? (usually in percentages) and
    - 3) Is anybody better off because of it? (who?)

2. Connect early childhood educators to networks providing business-related technical assistance and capital access to optimize their business operations, lower operation costs, and increase their capacity
    - 1) What did we do and how much of it did we do? (numbers)
        - RFP DHHS- Childcare business improvement
        - NHLI
        - NH Community Loan Fund- ECE program
        - VT Community Loan Fund
        - USDA low interest loans– put together a comprehensive list
        - Building Bright Funds hubs (Courtney Hillhouse could update)
    - 2) How well did we do it? (usually in percentages) and
    - 3) Is anybody better off because of it? (who?)
3. Identify and support opportunities for cooperative procurement of services
    - 1) What did we do and how much of it did we do? (numbers)
        - Food support-creative ideas and solutions
        - Electricity, insurance, supplies, shared HR, IT (CCA Global), administrative supports–National work Opportunities Exchange; NHLI; Louise Stoney-ECE shared services platform– Providers might not be ready for this yet. Shared education and knowledge for a potential future conversation. Proactive. More accessible for new centers
    - 2) How well did we do it? (usually in percentages) and

- 3) Is anybody better off because of it? (who?)

4. Identify means to decrease start up costs for new ECE professionals (home-based and centers)
    - 1) What did we do and how much of it did we do? (numbers)
        - Business incubator- resources and information; funding resources, capital
        - Guide for new startups for new centers-manual for VT and NH
        - Bringing It Home Project- collaborate to accelerate the pace for our regions; share models
        - (Let's Grow Kids: ECEA UV Home-Grown Effort- match funding for home-based VT and NH); Centers; VT Business Hub; NH regional)
            - Licensing
            - Funding is a barrier
            - Director role is lacking
            - 85% capacity to be profitable
            - NH Loan Fund-model CDFI Community Development Financial Institutions-mission based lenders focus on ECE; National network of these organizations-Draw on this expertise
            - Community Loan Fund- VT and NH resources
            - Wonderschool- VT/NH-licensing, policies, tuition cost, business model, collections, HR/family boundaries
            - Access to mini grants for start-up costs
    - 2) How well did we do it? (usually in percentages) and

        - 3) Is anybody better off because of it? (who?)

5. ECEA information for VT and NH ECE professionals shared with VC website

    - 1) What did we do and how much of it did we do? (numbers)
    - 2) How well did we do it? (usually in percentages) and
    - 3) Is anybody better off because of it? (who?)

6. Inform the Advocacy Committee of opportunities to support ECE efforts particularly in regard to VT Child Care and NH bills including SB 221. Connect with Senator Prentiss and other influencers.

    - 1) What did we do and how much of it did we do? (numbers)
    - 2) How well did we do it? (usually in percentages) and
    - 3) Is anybody better off because of it? (who?)

- Cindy Warmington, Executive Counselor Democratic Candidate (August)
- Understand our concerns

Meeting Notes

In Attendance
Joanne Roberts
Alexa Plewa
Amy Brooks
Jessie Ratey
Damian DiNicola

Bringing It Home Project (Alexa Plewa, Executive Director, Cheshire Children's Museum)

alexaplewa@outlook.com

Working with KSC, Monadnock UW Hannah GRimes, NH charitable, and monadnock economic corporation

CDFA tax credit program: open or grow 10 family based child care providers and entrepreneurAL TRAINING through HG, educational training through KSC, and sustained funding through the United way
Collab cohort of 6 women - met 4 times
Changing the perception of family based care to a professional, credentialed field that people are going into
Find out on june 15th if we've been awarded to launch it - beginning the beginning of december to start renovating homes
Amy is connected with this group already

- they are supporting Vermonters
    - Each of these providers can rec up to 30,000 to renovate their homes
    - Looking for connections outside of the Monadnock region
    - Trying to crate and grow sustainable programs
    - There are no other programs that are tailored to family based programs
    - We will share this framework around the state if it is successful
    - KSC has a 3 year accelerated ECE degree. Start in september in the hG business lab and then can go on to take courses from the KSC degree program

  Q: What is the museum's role in this?
    - Using it as facility to host the cohort for trainings
    - when we meet, we provide staff to cover childcare for the participants

Information from Sharron Harrington- Compensation and Scales

Update from Amy Brooks - Progress on the workforce pipeline; status of the modular in Lebanon; update on RFP; summer plans; ECEA UV Retreat

- Cohorts were released from the program last week. Waiting to see what the status of their employment is
- Modular is being delivered on Thursday
- Hoping for at least 10 people in each cohort
- Board approved hiring workforce trainers, so interviews for that will start this week
- Working on an MOU to put the cohorts on a college track
- Two summer cohorts, one for 16-HS grad and one for HS grad and up.
- Retreat: gave them more networking time and they were surprised at the number of resources out there

Update from Shaun Mulholland

- Energy and sustainability components and geotechnical engineering firm contracts so they can start their work
- We are on schedule! No dates for the additional community conversations, but we are on track to have them and will have something to show. This is where the fundraising phase begins.
- SB 221 has been retained by the special committee

Meeting with Joanne C., Sara K. and Joanne R.

- Vital Communities' work is done with the document to go to Sian. A lot of it related to what came out of the ECEA retreat.

Finalize Workforce & Program Models Summer 2023 Goals

The goals listed above have been finalized by the Workforce and Program Models Workgroup. These goals will lead us from June to early September. We will then build from September to December.

- We will keep the meeting schedule the same.

Two meetings ago:

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Former Strategic Goals (Blue text is progress to date as discussed in the last meeting)

Staff Retention and Recruitment Strategic Goals

1) **Developing the Early Education Workforce**
    a) Identify and support organizations and funding sources to develop a robust pipeline of new early childhood educators i.e., ECEA, Tech Centers, colleges, and middle/high schools. (Apprenticeships, mentorships, etc.)

    We have made great strides in this area
    -ECEA training program in Lebanon; expansion to Claremont and Henniker in Winter 2023
    -HACTC conversation with ECEA and Lebanon High School (Potential opportunity down the line for HACTC to offer a program/collaboration with Lebanon ECE where students earn credits/credentials during the day and HACTC Adult program in the evening.
    -ECEA submitted RFP
    -Conversation with Dartmouth College and Dartmouth-Health

    b) Update and maintain a bi-state inventory documenting innovative strategies and funding promoting early education workforce retention and recruitment.

    Document prepared by Alison Chisolm

    c) Bring these concepts to the Advocacy Committee

    We are doing this.

2) **Promoting Fair Compensation and Benefits**

a) Consult with subject matter experts. Share accurate data and identify gaps focused on fair and equitable early childhood educator compensation and benefits and the inequity of marginalized populations in the Upper Valley.

Great strides in this area:

-ECEA and Kim Votta have done research in this area
-Couch Foundation and UNH
-LGK Rand report
-Impact of new centers on staffing levels
-Wages subcommittee of the Advisory Childcare Council Legislative Council
-Council for Thriving Children Strategic Plan 2023–2025
Untapped workforce people not in the college pipeline
Categorical eligibility
- #1 barrier is access and cost of ECE for their own children

VT Early Child Care Education Legislation

S.56 2 An act relating to child care and early childhood education (Passed March 2023)

S.56 would increase access to quality child care services throughout Vermont, provide financial stability to child care programs, support and stabilize Vermont's child care workforce, address the workforce needs of Vermont employers. It would also create a Prekindergarten Education Study Committee to provide policy recommendations for how to improve and expand accessible, affordable and high-quality prekindergarten education.

NH

SB 466 (Passed June 2022)

This bill directs the department of health and human services, in consultation with the child care advisory council, to submit a plan to the governor, the speaker of the house, the senate president, and the governor's office for economic relief and recovery relative to fostering sustainable childcare opportunities within the state.

The Child Care for New Hampshire Working Families Act SB 237 (Pending Motion)

This bill modifies the child care scholarship program, establishes a child care workforce program and a regional fingerprinting support program, and makes appropriations for these programs, and for child caregiver supports, early childhood mental health support, and for early childhood education scholarships.

b) Develop an inventory of Upper Valley compensation and benefits in other business sectors with similar or less pre-employment requirements.

VTAEYC have been working on what a wage scale/career ladder might look like compared to other fields- Reach out to Sharon Harrington to join one of our meetings to make sure we are all on the same page with this topic; Emilie T. would know where to find data.

Joanne emailed Sharron H.

c) Identify strategies to retain qualified educators

- Part of the ECEA training program
- NH 221- Senator Prentiss–August/September come to a meeting; testify at legislative meetings
- Involve Advocacy committee members

d) Bring these concepts to the Advocacy Committee
We've been bringing these concepts to the Advocacy Workgroup.

Facilities and Program Models Strategic Goals

- Facilitate the development of an integrated network of business support organizations that can provide the necessary business-related technical assistance to existing providers to support early childhood educators to increase capacity, maximize revenue, and capture operating efficiencies.

- Joanne attended UVBA meeting and talked about the dire need for ECE
- Assistance with grant writing-proposal to assist Directors
- ECEA training program
- GOFFER-$3M not sure where it is going
- Early Learning NH can provide support through the DHHS RFP if they get that funding; coordinate and align with the work of ECEA
- Dartmouth College & Dartmouth Health ECE proposed projects (Six Areas)
    - 1. Workforce
    - 2. Leadership Training
    - 3. Expand/renovate current center-based facilities
    - 4. Enable smaller center-based and home-based programs to thrive
    - 5. State Advocacy

- Develop a list of Vermont and NH grants and/or low-cost loans available for facility improvements and expansions. Add to the Vital Communities ECE Initiative website, ECEA, and other websites so the information is readily available.

ECEA has this information. Do not know if there is a shared link with VC.

- It would be great to have one person who can be the ‘go-to contact’; walk them through what they want, potential resources, what you can spend it on regarding facilities
- For many centers, their books might not be in order as well as they would like them to be
    - We had a person from Mascoma Bank attend the earlier sessions who said they would be willing to assist with that. We could loop them back in.
- Include NH and VT Community Loan funds have targeted capacity to do ECE lending with greater flexibility than banks

- The document the ECEA ended up with is program support so that would have to be a separate document

- Locate a contractor who can provide estimates for facility improvements to use as a resource.

  We did look into this, but people were not ready to have site visits
    - On hold.

- Develop a rubric to score applications for the City of Lebanon ECE concept

  Complete

- Bring these concepts to the Advocacy Committee

  Complete

In Attendance
Anna Hubbard
Lori Brown
Amy Brooks
Shaun Mulholland
Julie McConnell
Faye Grearson
Jessie Ratey
Joanne Roberts
Katie Jenks
Sunnie McPhetres
Damian DiNicola