

Early Childhood Education Task Force Quarterly Report
September 19, 2022

Presented by Assemblymember Chelsea Tremblay

Members:

Chelsea Tremblay, Assembly, Chair, Jeff Meucci, Assembly, Kallie Caples, Heather Conn, Jessica Doril, Rachel Etcher, Hannah Flor, Denise Gubernick, Katie Holmlund, Sharlay Mamoe, Stephanie Payne, Becky Turland, Glo Wollen, Chad Wright

Invited Guests and Expert Questions: Liz Cabrera, Barb Marifern

Timeline of Meetings

Access/Brainstorming (AB)

Meeting June 30 (Glo, Denise, Rachel, Steve)

Introductions, key theme of the meeting was the barriers involved in getting engaged in childcare either as volunteer or professional. (Timeline on background checks thanks to fingerprinting.) Talked about past programs, including past Boys and Girls club.

Meeting July 28 (Rachel, Becky, Denise, Stephanie, Steve)

Discussed the Rally program in Juneau (childcare affiliated with school system in summer.) More conversation on history of Boys and Girls club, questions on funding, community support, etc. Identified building access and overall space as a major roadblock, particularly for infant care based on regulations involved. (Other issue for infants is the cost of maintaining higher staff-kiddo ratio)

Meeting Sept 13 (Steve, Stephanie, Glo, Rachel, Sharlay)

Reviewed a report from a committee member who had a conversation with an individual representing the Boys and Girls Club of Alaska. Community needs to provide space and pay utilities, but the club pays for training and salary of staff to support the program. Discussed details, brainstormed possibilities for locations, will keep researching.

Staff and Administrative Support (SAS)

Meeting June 30 (Kallie, Jessica, Sharlay, Rachel)

Introductions, touching base on what kind of common issues the different facilities share. Touched on the Early Childhood Incentive Program proposed by the Petersburg Community Foundation's report, inspired by the Juneau HEARTS program. Collectively agreed that it was a start towards supporting community's ECE professionals.

Policy and Details (PD)

Meeting July 1 (Katie, Hannah, Steve, Jeff, Chad)

Introductions, setting goals for this group. Basically to chase down details for the conversations the other groups start. (Identifying specific regulations, researching proposed legislation, etc.) One group identified House Bill 149 introduced in the 2021 legislature, which would have allowed childcare entities to negotiate for funding with the state, as an area of further research.

Meeting July 14 (Hannah, Katie, Steve, Jeff, Becky, Sharlay)

Reviewed House Bill 149, the large amount of money now in the state's childcare provider fund to be dispersed through Thread. Decided to ask RayMatiashowski, the Borough lobbyist in Juneau, to research to see what else he might be able to find out about the bill and its chances in next session.

Meeting September 15 (Becky, Katie, Barb, Steve, Hannah)

Bryan Holst from Juneau Economic Development Council, who has an hour-long presentation on the Juneau HEARTS program. HB 149 is in limbo until the next session, group decided to hold off on this item until the legislature reconvenes in winter. Will work on a report to help facilitate possible future buildings (public or private) that could meet regulations for childcare needs.

"Family Meeting" August 3 (Hannah, Katie, Denise, Jeff, Sharlay, Rachel, Becky)

Majority met to establish how we would vote on making decisions on allocating funds that the Assembly designated to the Task Force. We decided that it would take a majority vote of the group as a whole to make a spending decision, rather than subcommittees making decisions themselves. (Note, spending decisions will still be reviewed by the Assembly.)

Next Steps

October 10, AB, time TBD. meeting with Petersburg School District guests Cyndy Fry and Barb Marifern to clarify gaps that the school has identified, talk about working together on use of building space and other areas of collaboration.

October 19, PD, time TBD. will meet to review potential future space.

In progress: Joint Task force and Assembly meeting for presentation from Juneau Borough.