

Great Start for All Minnesota Children Task Force

Tuesday November 30, 2021

6:00 p.m. to 8:00 p.m.

Virtual Meeting: WebEx

Also available by livestream to the public.

Task Force Members Present: Patricia Ives, Krystal Shatek, Kathleen Church, Luciana Carballo, Jayne Whiteford, Shakira Bradshaw, Sandy Simar, Adriana Lopez, Meghan Caine, Brook LaFloe, Jennifer Moses, Representative Liz Boldon, Nancy Hafner, Deb Fitzpatrick, Suzanne Pearl, Lydia Boerboom, Barb Fabre, Missy Okeson, Summer Bursch, Cyndi Cunningham, Michelle Trelsted, Ann McCully, Clare Sanford, Tonia Villegas, Debbie Hewitt, Oriane Casale, Karen Fogg, Cindi Yang, Nicole Blissenbach, Laurena Schlottach-Ratcliff, Janell Bentz, Kraig Gratke

Task Force Members Absent: Senator Karin Housley, Senator Melissa Wiklund, Lauren Schothort, Amy Walstien, State Representative from Minority Party

Task Force Consultants Present: Katie Reed, Afton Partners; Carrie Stewart, Afton Partners; Ellen Johnson, Afton Partners; Gerald Liu, Afton Partners; Kate Ritter, Children's Funding Project

Children's Cabinet Staff Present: Erin Bailey, Angela Butel

Guests Present: Lt. Governor Peggy Flanagan

Introductions: The facilitation team, Children's Cabinet staff and co-chairs were introduced.

Agenda: The meeting agenda included context for the work at hand, Task Force charge and goals, and approach to the work, including focus on equity.

Charge: Develop a plan and implementation timeline that ensures all families have access to affordable, high-quality ECE that enriches, nurtures, and supports children and their families.

How did we get here:

The Great Start for All Minnesota Children Task Force was proposed by early care and education advocates, legislators, and the Walz-Flanagan Administration for the purposes of developing a state plan to accomplish the goal that "all families to have access to affordable, high-quality early care and education that enriches, nurtures, and supports children and their families" (Minnesota 2021 Session Law, First Special Session, Chapter 7, Article 14, Section 18, Subd. 2).

The global pandemic and changes in the federal landscape continue to impact the early care and education industry as well as our work together.

State Representative Liz Boldon also provided remarks reiterating the impacts of the pandemic. She shared that the system is in crisis, investment in the early years is important, and that there are solutions.

Task Force members also shared their reflections on the charge. Common themes included:

- The need for a system that is equitable
- A system that respects and includes a variety of provider types
- Increased family access
- Support and compensation for a workforce including higher education opportunities
- Focus on equity in all goals of the task force

Lt. Governor Peggy Flanagan joined to provide brief comments sharing her gratitude for the commitment of the task force members and importance of the work.

Review of pre-reading materials:

[Great Start for All Minnesota Children Task Force Language \(ecworkforcemn.org\)](https://ecworkforcemn.org)

[Early Childhood Systems Reform \(mn.gov\)](https://mn.gov)

[EARLY CHILDHOOD systems reform: AMERICAN INDIAN REPORT \(state.mn.us\)](https://state.mn.us)

[Why do parents pay so much for child care when early educators earn so little? - Center for the Study of Child Care Employment \(berkeley.edu\)](https://berkeley.edu)

[Child_Care_PP_final.pdf \(hamiltonproject.org\)](https://hamiltonproject.org)

Members were invited to share their reflections on the readings.

Breaking down the charge: The Task Force will be developing an implementation plan which will start July 2025 and finish no later than July 2031. Plan must address:

- Affordability - create system in which family costs are affordable
- Equity and accessibility
- Workforce compensation

Breakout Groups: Members met in small groups to share their hopes for the Task Force and identify questions they have about the Task Force, charge and work ahead. The groups shared out when the Task Force reconvened.

Hopes:

- Build on work that has already happened
- Address workforce concerns
- Dream big
- Funding streams that work for all providers; equity in pay
- Having real change
- Equitable access and affordability
- Long-term solutions, no more band-aids
- Having a continued equity lens throughout
- Consideration for high-quality trauma-informed care
- No family that will pay more than 7% of income for child care
- Mixed delivery implemented with flexibility for local needs

Questions:

- How will we have resources to implement the plan?
- What authority does the Task Force hold?
- How will Build Back Better legislation, should it pass, affect our recommendations?
- What format will the outcomes of this task force take? What format do they need to be in to be actionable?
- How do we have agency doors more open to a variety of providers?
- How do we close some of the divides that have been created across the state?
- How do we create more coherence in how families access the system?
- How do we continue the momentum that got us here and capitalize on it to create some actionable items?
- Is there a way that child care and licensing within county systems could be designated as a community services department?
- What other ways can we make sure kids are ready for school?
- How do we prioritize which things to focus on?
- How do we equalize voices among members of the task force?

Approach to our work:

- Need thorough planning to set ourselves up for success (and also to remain flexible)
- Meeting roles
 - Co-chairs
 - Lead Task Force meetings
 - Keep equity centered
 - Prioritize issues for discussion
 - Build consensus among membership
 - Formally accept recommendations and deliver report
 - Engage public and media
 - Task Force members
 - Offer diverse expertise and perspectives
 - Be informed by research, analytics, stakeholder input
 - Participate in working groups
 - Voting members will vote on key process steps and recommendations
 - Facilitators
 - Provide project management and facilitation
 - Develop meeting agendas and materials in partnership with co-chairs
 - Conduct research and data analytics where necessary
 - Children's Cabinet
 - Collaborate with state agency leadership
 - Coordinate and schedule meetings
 - Partner with facilitation team in development of agendas and materials
 - Ensure compliance with all applicable laws and rules

- Framing the Work
 - Context
 - Charge
 - Norms & Expectations
 - Attend meetings prepared
 - Engage in respectful dialogue
 - Be actively engaged
 - *Co-chairs will add to this list before next meeting*
 - Procedures
 - Public meeting law requires public bodies to record and maintain votes (by roll call in virtual meetings)
 - Formal votes will only include voting members and will be held regarding anything that would be included in the report
 - Informal voting can be used to engage all Task Force members on informal items like whether an issue needs more discussion
 - Quorum is defined as a majority of voting members
 - Information about reimbursement is forthcoming
 - Guiding principles
 - *Co-chairs will propose guiding principles at next meeting*
- Approach to the work
 - Task Force
 - Working Groups
 - Stakeholder Engagement
 - Equity Framework
 - Key Analyses
- Sharing the work
 - Internal and External Communications
- Process for deliverable development
 - Develop a shared understanding of the current ECE system and context
 - Identify goals for the future ECE system
 - Identify root causes of inadequacies, inequities, and other challenges
 - Ideate pathways and solutions to improve or redesign the system
 - Determine appropriate timelines and implementation to move forward
 - All moving us forward, building on work that has already happened

Next meeting: Tuesday December 21, 2021, 6:00-8:00 p.m.