

**Great Start for All Minnesota Children Task Force
Family and Provider Affordability Working Group Meeting**

Tuesday, February 15, 2022

1:00 p.m. to 2:00 p.m.

Virtual Meeting: Microsoft Teams

Working Group Members Present: Representative Liz Boldon, Shakira Bradshaw, Kathleen Church, Jayne Whiteford, Janell Bentz, Summer Bursch, Missy Okeson, Clare Sanford, Tonia Villegas, Cindi Yang

Working Group Members Absent: Brook LaFloe, Deb Fitzpatrick

Task Force Consultants Present: Katie Reed, Afton Partners; Gerald Liu, Afton Partners; Brytain Tate, Afton Partners; Kate Ritter, Children’s Funding Project, Ashley Brooks, Children’s Funding Project

Children’s Cabinet Staff Present: Hannah Quinn

Welcome and Agenda

Due to technology issues, the working group meeting started twenty minutes late, at 1:20pm. Working Group members reviewed virtual meeting protocols, Task Force Guiding Principles, and went over the agenda for the meeting. The agenda included introductions, a review of Working Group charge, process, and sequence, and a group brainstorming activity.

Introductions

Members gave introductions by sharing their name, role, and organization, along with an explanation of where they sit in the Early Care and Education (ECE) system. They also gave a brief explanation of why they were interested in being a part of this working group.

Name	Position
Cindi Yang	Department of Human Services
Clare Sanford	Minnesota Child Care Association
Deb Fitzpatrick	Statewide Advocacy Organization
Janell Bentz	Department of Revenue
Jayne Whiteford	Parent Children Under 5 - Greater MN
Liz Boldon	Representative, MN House
Missy Okeson	Minnesota Initiative Foundations (MIFs)
Shakira Bradshaw	Parent Children Under 5 - Metro
Summer Bursch	Minnesota Association of Child Care Professionals (MACCP)
Tonia Villegas	Minnesota Association of County Social Services Administrators
Kath Church	Family Child Care Program License Holder - Greater MN
Brook LaFloe	Tribal Representative with Expertise in Early Care and Education

Working Group Charge

The charge of the working group is to define what an affordable ECE system that *works for families* and that *providers want to be part of* looks like in Minnesota and how it can be achieved.

Legislation determines that the Task Force must consider:

- The maximum percentage of income that families must pay for ECE

- The process through which families will access financial assistance for ECE (infrastructure, benefit mechanisms, and financing mechanisms)
- How provider payment rates for childcare will be determined and updated
- How to streamline funding and reduce complexity in plan administration
- Roles in administering the plan (including state agencies, local agencies, and community-based organizations)
- How to maintain and encourage the further development of Minnesota's mixed-delivery system in the plan

Questions the working group will explore include:

Family Contributions

- What are today's family co-pay policies for child care financial assistance, and how is it working for families?
- What alternative co-pay policies might we consider and why? What would potential changes mean for affordable access and equity for families within the system?
- What financial impact would a change in family co-pay rates have?

Family Benefit Mechanisms

- How should families access financial assistance in the future system (what are the "benefit mechanisms")?
- How can we ensure family choice of care setting is maintained and further supported?
- How can we make the system more transparent and accessible to families?

Provider Funding

- What changes are needed in provider pay to have a stable, sustainable system for providers of all types?
- How should provider funding be determined and updated?
- How can we ensure provider pay is equitable across the mixed delivery system?

Administration

- How should the system of provider pay and family benefits be administered to best meet our goals?
- What roles might exist for state agencies, local agencies, community-based organizations, and other entities in the future plan?
- What infrastructure needs exist to set this future system up for success?

Equity Commitments

In all conversations, the working group will strive to:

- Center children and families
- Pay particular focus to the needs and priorities of historically disenfranchised children and families and their communities
- Specifically contemplate how our decisions may benefit or harm historically disenfranchised children and families and their communities
- Seek the expertise and input from stakeholders already doing the work in historically disenfranchised communities
- Where possible, consider data that provides insight into the relative impact on historically disenfranchised children and families and their communities

Brainstorming Activity

The working group participated in a brainstorming activity to share what comes to mind as members think about what they like, wish, and wonder about family benefits and provider funding.

Next Steps and Close Out

Future meetings will occur on the second Thursday of each month (listed below), from 12pm-2pm.

- Thursday, March 10
- Thursday, April 14
- Thursday, May 12
- Thursday, June 9
- Thursday, July 14
- Thursday, August 11
- Thursday, September 8
- *October TBD*

Next Working Group Meeting: March 10, 2022, 12:00 p.m. – 2:00 p.m.

