



**Great Start for All Minnesota Children Task Force  
Workforce Compensation and Supports Working Group Meeting**

Wednesday, October 19, 2022

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

Virtual Meeting: WebEx

**Working Group Members Present:** Lydia Boerboom, Oriane Casale, Cyndi Cunningham, Siv Dobrovolny, Nancy Hafner, Debbie Hewitt, Ann McCully, Jenny Moses, Krystal Shatek, Michelle Trelsted, Senator Melissa Wiklund

**Working Group Members Absent:** Meghan Caine, Pat Ives

**Task Force Consultants Present:** Ellen Johnson, Afton Partners; Gerald Liu, Afton Partners

**Children’s Cabinet Staff Present:** Hannah Quinn

**Welcome and Agenda**

Working Group members reviewed virtual meeting protocols, Task Force Guiding Principles, and went over the agenda for the meeting. The agenda included finalizing supported workforce recommendations, and a follow-up discussion of compensation framework and the Power to the Profession Unifying Framework following feedback from the full Task Force. As this was the final scheduled Working Group meeting, the agenda also included time to reflect on and celebrate the work of the group.

**Review**

Members reviewed the Working Group Charge:

Define what a “qualified, diverse, supported, and equitably compensated” ECE workforce in Minnesota looks like and how it can be achieved.

Legislation determines that the Task Force must consider the following factors under the areas of the charge:

**Qualified**

- Develop affordable, accessible, and aligned pathways to support early childhood educators' career and educational advancement.

**Diverse**

- Increase racial and ethnic equity and diversity in the early care and education workforce and recognize the value of cultural competency and multilingualism.

**Supported**

- Consider the need for and development of a mechanism that ties childcare reimbursement rates to employee compensation.

**Equitably Compensated**

- Include a compensation framework that supports recruitment and retention of a qualified workforce in every early care and education setting.

- Set compensation for early childhood educators by reference to compensation for elementary school teachers.

The group must also:

- Consider the recommendations from previous work including the Transforming Minnesota's Early Childhood Workforce project and other statewide reports on systemic issues in early care and education.

### **Supported Workforce**

Working Group members reviewed slides 11 and 12, which include a summary of feedback from the full Task Force regarding the draft supported workforce recommendations, and a revised version of the draft recommendations. There were no suggested changes, and the Working Group is comfortable with these recommendations being brought for a vote at the October 25 Task Force meeting.

### **Compensation Framework**

Working Group members reviewed slides 14 and 15, which include a summary of Task Force feedback on the compensation framework proposal. Slides 16-20 contain an updated draft compensation framework based on feedback and an example of regional variation. Slide 21 has discussion questions for consideration.

Discussion themes included:

- Working Group members proposed that the comparable competencies and experience guidelines be set by a group of experts, including state agency representatives, providers of all types, and other stakeholders and end-users, based on prioritizing key components of the knowledge and competencies frameworks.
- Members also asked that language around re-evaluating the competencies and guidelines be open-ended to encompass different outcomes.
- Legislation directs the Task Force to *"consider the need for and development of a mechanism that ties child care reimbursement rates to employee compensation"* and *"set compensation for early childhood educators by reference to compensation for elementary school teachers"*. Members discussed these requirements and how the proposed framework accomplishes those goals.
  - Regarding reference to elementary school teachers, a question was raised about if that could be set in alignment with local district contracts. After considering potential issues with how school salaries are set and implementation concerns of that potential structure, that idea was not advanced.
  - Further language clarification is needed in the draft proposal to show the connection to the proposed family benefits program and the mechanism that ties the per-child rates to the proposed incentivized wage scale.
- Working Group members discussed regional differences in cost of living and how that relates to the proposal, which includes regional variation. After discussing the methods of how the cost of living is calculated regionally, as well as discussing variation in costs across the state, most working group members affirmed the direction to include variation. One member expressed support for proposing one statewide scale.

The Working Group will bring an edited draft proposal, based on this discussion, to the full Task Force for consideration.

### **Revisiting the Power to the Profession Unifying Framework**

This Working Group had previously considered a potential endorsement of the Unifying Framework as a recommendation. That draft was presented to the full Task Force as an option and feedback was solicited. Out of 22 survey respondents, 11 members thought the draft recommendation should be brought for a vote, 9 members thought it should not be brought for a vote, and 2 members wrote in commentary that they were not decided. Working Group members reviewed slides 23-25, which include feedback in favor of the recommendation, against the recommendation, and suggested alternative approaches from survey commentary. Slides 26 and 27 include a draft alternative approach and potential language for use in the narrative portion of the Task Force plan.

Discussion themes included:

- Current workforce shortages are making it difficult for employers to hire a qualified workforce. Other recommendations from the Task Force, in the areas of workforce qualifications and compensation, will try to address that issue.
- Some additional language tweaks may be needed in the draft language to provide further clarity.
- Some Task Force members remain opposed to the Unifying Framework, and do not want this alternative approach to be considered.
- Most working group members are comfortable with the draft alternative approach and compromise.

Members will present the draft alternative approach to the full Task Force for consideration and discussion.

### **Next Steps and Close Out**

Working Group members celebrated their progress and work together. Someone from the Working Group will report out at the October 25 Task Force meeting. There are no remaining scheduled Working Group meetings.