



## February 2023 Council Meeting

**Date/Time:** February 15, 2023 1:00-3:00pm

**Location:** NH Employment Security, 45 South Fruit Street, Concord

### Council Members in Attendance:

- Christine Brennan
- Tricia Tilley
- Christina Lachance
- Kate Baker Demers
- Kate McCaffrey
- Athena Cote
- Rebecca Woitkowski
- Kimberly Nesbitt
- Debra Nelson
- Laurie Foster
- Michelle Lewis
- Richard Lavers
- Rep. Deb DiSimone
- Christina D'Allesandro
- Karen Hebert
- Rebecca Fredette

**Guests:** Krisha Dubreuil, Kate McCaffery, Kiley Bednar

### Members of the Public:

- Sarah Fox, State Early Learning Alliance of Early Childhood Coalitions
- Liz Scruton, Family Support New Hampshire/NH Children's Trust
- Katie Brissette, Early Learning NH

### Council Business (Christina Lachance)

- There are open positions on the Council
- Sen. Whitley and Rep. DeSimone will be on the Council again this year
- Past meeting minutes will be sent out to the Council soon for approval
- We are conducting a trial run on recording meetings in order to reach more community members
- Federal funding increases (at the national level) at the end of 2022
  - CCDBG increase of \$1.8 billion – second largest increase in the history of the program, \$3.7M annually for NH
  - Head Start/Early Head Start increase of \$960 million
  - PDG increase of \$25 million, one time \$3.8M for NH in 2023
  - IDEA Part B increase of \$10.4 million
  - IDEA Part C increase of \$43.7 million
- NH 2023 Preschool Development Grant
  - Awarded a planning grant of \$3.8 million
  - Intended uses:
    - Support NH Strategic Plan workplan development phase

- Planning for Office of Early Childhood
  - Grants to support planning for Community Schools (RFP open now through UNH)
    - \$850,000 distributed among 4 projects
    - Volunteers needed to review applications
      - Application due March 15, less than 20 pages per application
  - Development of a Family Child Care Network
  - Continued coaching to support EC workforce
  - Supporting data driven decision making at DHHS
  - Supporting family and community voice
- One page graphic showing the Council structure was updated
  - This, and all materials, is intended to be passed to the future Office of Early Childhood.
  - This will be shared with Council members and posted to the website.
- Strategic Plan Framework one-pager has been shared with Governor Sununu
- Updated Strategic Plan was recently finished by Greenway Strategy Group, and it will be distributed to Council members soon.
- Workplans for New Hampshire Strategic Plan for Early Childhood Framework
  - For each initiative in the Strategic Plan, we'll inventory existing workplans for alignment (requests have been made to NHED and DHHS ECITs) and then create workplans where they don't exist.
  - Establishing measurable goals will be essential for tracking and communicating progress.
  - Metrics should have a clear "so what?" behind them.
- DHHS Lead Testing Rates announcement
  - [Press Release](#)
  - [Data Brief](#)
  - Lead testing for young children is at its lowest rate since 2017. COVID caused testing rates to decline. Campaign to spread the word throughout our networks to increase testing for one- and two-year-olds.
  - Funding is available for home remediation if children have high lead levels – for both renters and homeowners
  - New board book, "Lead Free Me" is being distributed throughout the state

## Legislative Updates

- Rep. DeSimone sits on a bipartisan special committee for child care. Areas of focus:
  - Hiring delays for providers
  - Support for parents who work nontraditional hours – should care be provided in-home?
  - Lack of availability of child care
  - Workforce recruitment: looking at reinstating associate's degrees in ECE at high schools
  - Lasting impacts of COVID on child development
  - Legislation due by September
- Comment from Debra Nelson: CCDF scholarships cover nontraditional hours but don't pay a differential so it's very difficult to find providers to work those shifts
- Rep. DeSimone can be contacted by email or cell phone
  - Send any relevant information
- SB 237 went to hearing the morning of 2/15/23

- Proposes an increase to the cap on child care development fund scholarships
- Would disregard children's SSI and family's TANF income
- This was a collaborative effort across departments to maximize the benefits for families

**Department of Education initiatives** (presentation available on Council website)

- Language, literacy and school readiness
  - How do we make sure kids are ready for school with a command over language?
  - LETRS professional development program is being implemented in NH for parents, EC providers, and K-12 teachers and administrators.
  - Focus on pre-writing and pre-reading skills for EC professionals – promoting literacy and language development through play
  - Still enrolling EC professionals for Summer 2023 cohort
  - Possibility of integrating a literacy endorsement into the GSQ
- Desired Results Developmental Profile (DRDP)
  - Measures how programs are impacting children's developmental outcomes
  - Data collected 4 times/year in preschool through observations.
  - New tool is being piloted in select preschools in NH
    - Collects data
    - Provides families with recommendations for activities based on their child's progress and stage.
- NH ED is partnering with Gùd Marketing is launching New Hampshire's Love of Reading campaign statewide on March 1
  - Goal is to provide families with information and resources to support language development and literacy.
- Discussion: Integration with higher education
  - Credits from LETRS training could be made transferable to our state's colleges/universities.
  - Note that existing ECE curricula in higher education include instruction on literacy and language.
  - Existing courses that focus on EC language and literacy could be eligible for tuition reimbursements.
- Discussion: Outreach and promotion suggestions
  - B-8 team: Social media guide for organizations that connect with families (Regional Leads, public libraries, FRCs)
  - Scientific Advisory Panel: include importance of math and patterning in family outreach.
  - Dept. of Corrections: extensive literacy outreach program exists for incarcerated parents.
  - Dept. of Employment Security: existing collaboration with DHHS to integrate eligibility for multiple programs – this informs families of all the economic supports available. Would like to partner with more organizations and initiatives to promote beneficial opportunities.
    - DES has used social media to reach young women who have not returned to the workforce post-COVID.
  - Child support database could be used for surveys and outreach.
  - Grocery stores could be used for outreach.
- Updates on NHED initiatives and progress with outreach will be returned to the agenda for the April meeting.

**NH Early Childhood Finance Plan - Children's Funding Project and New Futures**  
(presentation available on council website)

- Aim to understand where funding for EC in NH comes from
- Developing a fiscal map to synthesize, analyze, visualize sources of funding for child *and* youth programs
- 16 states included in their current analysis – hope to enable easy comparison of differences between states
- Initial scans of federal and state data will be shared with NHED, DHHS, Council for feedback on completeness.
- This is a pilot and only includes state level funding. In the future they would like to integrate local funding sources as well.

**Public Comments**

- Sarah Fox: the NH Alliance of Early Childhood Coalitions, with support from Pear Associates (former Council Member Lara Quiroga as lead), will be applying for a LAUNCH grant