



## June 2023 Council Meeting

**Date/Time:** June 5, 2023 10:00am-12:00pm

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

### Participants (12):

- Deputy Commissioner Christine Brennan
- Christina Lachance
- Deputy Commissioner Rich Lavers
- Laurie Foster
- Vicki Blanchard
- Kimberly Nesbitt
- Tricia Tilley
- Senator Rebecca Whitley
- Michelle Lewis
- Stephen Zdravec
- DeeAnn Pouliot
- Christina D'Allesandro

### Council Business (Christina Lachance)

- Vote to approve meeting minutes
  - *Motion to approve (Tricia Tilley)*
  - *Seconded (Christina D'Allesandro)*
  - *All in favor, approved unanimously*
- This meeting is being recording to post to the Council website to provide an opportunity for parents, at the request of the B-8 Community and Parent Advisors, and other early childhood stakeholders to view the meeting after typical business hours.
- Abt Associates is the external evaluator for the Preschool Development Grant
  - They will be emailing Council members a survey around July 10<sup>th</sup>, due back by end of July (email will be from Abt, reply to them with any questions)
  - Anyone with objections to email addresses being shared, please contact Christina Lachance
  - Survey will gather perspectives on:
    - Your participation in EC governance
    - Changes in EC system in NH over the past 3 years

### Legislative Updates (Sen. Whitley)

- Omnibus Bill (postpartum maternal health, FRC funding) - success
  - all elements made it into the budget except for workplace protections, however these are covered by federal law
- SB 237 (child care supports) - success
  - \$15 million for the child care workforce
  - Changes to the child care scholarship program
- Pre-k pilot program (and mirror bill in the House) - did not passed but was retained
  - This will come back up in the fall, Senator Whitley will need support of experts and members of the Council to refine this bill
- Remaining legislative work this session:

- Senate Finance is done with the budget – full body vote is on Wednesday
- Floor amendments will be made after the vote – a lot of work is needed to get it through the house
- Comment from Tricia Tilley:
  - This session was very hopeful: FRCs received more funding than we asked for, additional funding was included for home visiting, child care is clearly on the mind of the Senate Finance Committee
- Question from Christine Brennan:
  - For pilot program (which was retained), what are the next steps?
    - Senator Whitley will work with the Education Committee to ask them to take up the bill. Others could reach out to the Committee and encourage them to work on it? Perhaps over the summer interested folks could convene to discuss it.
- Comment from Christina Lachance:
  - Spoke with Senator Jeanne Shaheen recently
    - Supporting the workforce behind the workforce seems to be top of mind
    - They asked about usage of ARPA D funding for child care
  - Follow-up question for Christina: what is the status of ARPA D?
    - All monies have been obligated (through RFPs mentioned at the last meeting), but haven't been spent. Contracts will last through the fall of 2024, then there may be a cliff when this funding runs out.
  - Follow up question: is a pre-k pilot in ARPA funding?
    - Yes, it was part of a larger RFP.
- Question for Sen. Whitley:
  - Was there any progress on RSA 91-A - the “public meeting” requirement in Right to Know?
    - There were several targeted bills, but no progress. This will most likely continue to be debated between bodies until the end of June.

### **NH Paid Family Medical Leave (Rich Lavers, NHES)**

- Website: <https://www.paidfamilymedicalleave.nh.gov/>
- All NH employers and NH employees are eligible
- Outreach occurring across New Hampshire
  - In-person meetings with business owners
  - Social media, radio, TV outreach to individuals – will be increased as Dec-January open enrollment period approaches
- Individuals with W-2's and any employers can buy in (some self-employed individuals are not eligible)
- Metlife is the vendor for the plan
- Incentive for employers: BET tax credit of 50% of premium paid by the employer
- Plan options, qualifying events, covered family members covered, enrollment details, etc. can be found in presentation [here](#)
- Individuals pay no more than \$5/month
- 7-month waiting period for individual plan
- Employers (even those who are not providing a group plan) are required to report on any employees enrolled in individual plans
- Employers are finding that the group plans are more affordable than expected
- Frist quarter highlights:
  - 5,400 works across NH are covered (does not include State employees)
  - Nearly 70% of employers are fully covering the PFML premium for their workers

- 60% of employers did not have any comparable coverage prior to PFML
- Individual plans:
  - 644 individuals enrolled during open enrollment period
  - 78% are female
  - 64% are under 45 years old
- Hopefully this will draw some people out of gig work as more employers offer paid leave
- Question for Rich:
  - Is there any targeted outreach to employers that might be less likely to think about family leave for employees?
    - Yes, groups like skilled labor organizations who are trying to recruit younger males have been targeted
    - Any sector dealing with labor shortages can benefit from offering PFML
- Comment for Rich from Athena Cote:
  - This could be advertised on NH Connections website and with NH Family Voices
    - They are open to any and all outreach – contact Rich with ideas
- General comment from Michelle Lewis
  - NH Family Voices enrolled in the plan and covers 100% of the premium – it was more affordable than they anticipated
  - Marketing materials for individuals should include costs to highlight how affordable this is

### **Strategic Plan Next Steps Conversation (Christina Lachance)**

- Two areas for continued discussion
  - State plan alignment
    - Objective: understand existing efforts, find gaps
  - Measures of success
    - Objective: quantify progress
- Proposal that the Strategic Plan Subcommittee be reconvened in late summer/fall to dig deeper into this work
- Pear Associates has been contracted to assist with the analysis of State level plans
- **State Plans** – what’s out there that we don’t have listed?
  - NH State Health Assessment
  - State Health Improvement Plan
  - Benefit Cliff Report
  - Child Development Bureau – is there a legislative plan?
  - NHED After School Program (is this described in a plan?)
  - Dept. of Corrections Family Resource Centers (not in a plan, but related to SP)
  - Emergency Medical Services for Children (a program/plan through Dartmouth)
  - Paid Medical Family Leave Plan
  - TANF Plan
  - Child Fatality Plan
- Question from Kim Nesbitt: how do we capture programs that don’t have a plan? And local initiatives?
  - This may need to be determined at the subcommittee reconvening. For now, we will stay at the State level. Our recommendations will describe Statewide gaps/needs.
- **Measures of Success** – are these comprehensive?
  - Consider both available and currently unavailable data (PowerPoint slides show the metrics proposed in the strategic plan)
  - **SP Priority Outcome 1:** Increase families’ partnership in, knowledge of, and choices for their child’s development

- Comment: Missing overall number to summarize “access” to ECCE
  - Comment: The outcome has 3 components, the metrics don’t address all 3
- **SP Priority Outcome 2:** Increase families’ access to integrated quality early childhood opportunities and services
  - Comment: Missing data from NHED (5-8 year-olds)
  - Comment: How is quality defined?
  - Comment: Are library play groups included? What about nonprofits or FRCs? How can we capture all of these?
    - We are keeping this analysis at State-level efforts for now
  - Comment: use Quickbase to capture some FRC data
  - Comment: If school districts capture family participation in community activities outside of school time, that data could support this outcome.
- **SP Priority Outcome 3:** Increase comprehensive wellness of young children
  - The wording of these metrics may need some tweaking to capture more relevant data – DHHS/Public Health can help with this
    - Rather than “Women receiving prenatal care,” the statistic would be “women with late entry to prenatal care”
- **SP Priority Outcome 4:** Ensure children achieve early childhood developmental and educational goals
- **SP Priority Outcome 5:** Increase providers’ and educators’ knowledge and access to resources for quality programs and services
- Council members are asked to look closely at the proposed measures of success for the priority outcomes and email feedback to Christina Lachance, and/or engage in the subcommittee reconvening
- If there are useful metrics we don’t currently track, include those suggestions – we can discuss what it would take to gather that information

**Public Comments:**

- Sarah Fox (NH Alliance of Early Childhood Coalitions)
  - Where does the closed loop referral system fit into the systems integration goals of the SP?
- Virginia Jones (DHHS)
  - Pyramid Model State Leadership Team plans useful for SP alignment?
    - Response (Christina L.): Their work is being integrated
- Katie Brissette (Early Learning NH)
  - Will SP subcommittee meetings be open to the public?
    - Response (Christina L.): yes, we’ll share this through the B-8 leadership and on Council website
  - If public schools enroll in PFML, will that pull even more employees away from private child care providers? Could subsidies be provided to certain sectors who struggle with staffing to make the PFML plans more affordable?
    - Response (Rich L.): The hope is that the plan is so affordable already that if employers can’t cover it, they can market the individual plans to their employees. There are no incentives/subsidies for certain sectors.

*Motion to adjourn (Rich Lavers)*

*Seconded (Tricia Tilley)*

*Motion approved.*