



## October 2023 Council Meeting

**Date/Time:** October 2, 2023, 9:30-11:30am

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

### Participants (14):

- Christine Brennan
- Patricia Tilley
- Christina Lachance
- Christine Santaniello
- Steve Zadavec
- Athena Cote
- Shawn Jasper
- Jane Bard
- Vicki Blanchard
- Erin Pettengill
- Lori Foster
- DeeAnn Pouliot
- Rebecca Woitkowski
- Christina D’Alessandro

**Guest Presenters:** Lara Quiroga, Pear Associates

**Notes/Support:** Victoria Sullivan (PDG)

### Council Business (Christina Lachance)

- Introductions
- Council Updates
  - Motion to approve June minutes (Tricia Tilley)*
  - Seconded (Christine Brennan)*
  - Motion approved*
- PDG funds used to extend tuition assistance for early childhood education and care workforce (child care, Head Start, family child care, public school paraprofessionals)
  - Opportunity for free courses at UNH and NH’s community college system
  - Expansion of eligible courses
  - DHHS funds available
  - Expected college assistance for courses in early childhood education and care
    - You must currently be working in a early childhood education and care setting (child care, Head Start, family child care, public school)
  - DHHS worked with UNH College of Professional Studies (formerly Granite State College)
- Technical assistance engagements
  - NH is participating in multiple TA engagements relative to EC Governance
  - A key takeaway NH has learned through TA engagement is many states like New Mexico have significant state funds available
  - Capacity building
- Council for Thriving Children report due, please send Chirstina anything you would like us to consider adding.

- Christina Lachance and Council co-chairs will submit the report after the next Council meeting

### **NH's Strategic Plan for Early Childhood Crosswalk & Workplans Analysis (Lara Quiroga, Pear Associates)**

- New Hampshire's Strategic Plan for Early Childhood was approved in November of 2022
- Framework
  - A lot of stakeholder feedback went into the strategic plan
  - There is a lot of work happening across the state
  - There is a need for connectivity across projects/agencies/organizations
- Pear Associates was hired to create a crosswalk and meta-analysis
  - The objective is to connect the work being accomplished across multiple funding streams/initiatives and state plans
  - Working definition of plan was developed
  - Initial analysis has begun
    - Please send along any plans not included as soon as possible
    - Pear shared the crosswalk
      - Identified gaps in plans
      - Joint ECIT identified the plans
        - Increasing workforce
        - Create workforce incentives
      - Some inconsistencies in terms
      - Opportunity for stronger linkages
      - "Equitable access" and "equity approach" mentioned but not defined.
      - Limited plans available publicly
      - ARPA funded contracts are duplicated and/or overlapping
      - Biggest gap in strategic plan theme 5 is the Office of Early Childhood.
    - Initial recommendations
      - Create a clearinghouse of plans
      - Maintain crosswalk
      - Develop and implement as internal departmental coordination plan
        - Joint ECIT would be valuable in this work
      - Develop a glossary for terms
      - Develop a plan for community health worker training
      - Update strategic plan to include quality designations
      - Develop a process for tracking measures of success
      - Monitor Contracts
      - Leverage public/private partnerships
    - Measures of success
      - Increase in number of children enrolled in Family Centered Early Supports and Services (FCESS) (Part C – Early Intervention)
      - Increase in number of children in Pre-K special education (Part B)
        - Christine Brennan questions the wording of this measure

- Should it be worded to clarify that increase would be of eligible students?
      - Stating a desired measure is an increase in special education sends a mixed message.
      - Rebecca Fradette states that they had a conversation regarding that wording. Agrees that the intention would be for eligible students.
      - Lara responds that this meeting is not where the wordsmithing should happen
        - Investing in Part C might bring in more children in need of support
    - Increase in number of children enrolled in center-based child care
    - Increase in number of children public school preschool programs
  - Options for families
    - Might want to consider tracking referral sources
    - Increase in family resource centers needed
    - Increase childcare slots needed
      - Christina Lachance—one proposed measure was a quality improvement rating system, but it was not supported by the legislatively enacted NH Child Care Advisory Council collective
    - Chris Santaniello asks who is establishing the targets and contracts?
      - Christina Lachance responds that the ECIT and departments are.
      - Chris Santaniello states variable based on contracts ending and some coming in
        - Many can be found on the fiscal dashboard
      - Trish Tilley states that we need to have a bigger conversation regarding targets and contracts
      - Christina Lachance suggests going back to the departments to discuss how to measure
      - Lara—might be helpful to revise measures annually to identify priorities for upcoming year
  - Measures continued
    - Increase 3<sup>rd</sup> grade reading scores
    - Increase family resources and supports
  - Questions and discussion
    - Christine D’Alessandro—is there an indicator to measure transition from part B-C?
    - Christina Lachance—not all measures are measurable at this time.
    - Departments should be able to provide data and/or in-depth view when requested
    - Discussion regarding frequency of reporting, Tricia suggest annually.
- Trish Tilley, Christine Brennan and Christina Lachance thank everyone for their work

*Motion for Strategic Plan Crosswalk & Analysis to move forward (Jane Bard)  
Seconded (Tricia Tilley)  
Motion approved.*

**NHED Updates (Deputy Commissioner Christine Brennan)**

- LETRS has been very successful.
- Asks that the information regarding LETRS be shared
- Over 1000 Early Education and Care providers have signed up
- There is a \$500 stipend for the early childhood education and care workforce to participate in the P in LETRS professional development course
- Please share with early childhood education and care programs
- There was a LETRS celebration last week
- The department is finding that many childcare centers were not aware of LETRS
- There is funding available through 2025
- Feedback from administrators
  - Finding the teachers have not previously learned about the foundation of reading

**DHHS Strategic Health Improvement Plan Presentation (Tricia Tilley)**

- What is a health improvement plan?
  - Participants
    - NHLiveswell.org
    - Bipartisan policy makers
    - Departments
    - Experts, medical providers
  - 2023-2028 plan
    - Opportunity
    - Community
    - Health status
    - Social connectedness
  - Partners aligned planning
    - Christina Lachance—likes that families are honored in the plan
    - Community health statues and outcomes
      - Prenatal and post-partum care now available for 12 months
      - Early intervention screenings
        - Rebecca Woitkowski-- New Futures is happy to see childcare as part of health outcomes
    - DHHS Alignment with Council
      - Improve maternal health
      - Improve access to high quality, preventative care
      - Opportunities for healthy families
      - Determine and respond to environmental health threats
    - Shawn Jasper asks about nutrition. States that he has heard a claim that 43K NH children go to bed hungry
      - Asks if anyone knows where that statistic comes from?

- If 1/4 of NH children are not being fed how do they learn?
    - If true why is nothing being done?
    - Commissioner Jasper does not believe that statistic is accurate.
  - Rebecca W-There was a survey and perhaps that is where the statistic comes from?
    - How do we define food insecurity?
- NH EC strategic plan measures of success were incorporated into SHIP – an example of aligning goals across state level initiatives
  - Increase in the number of NH women receiving prenatal care
- Questions about the SHIP?
  - None asked

### **Public Comments**

- Katie Brissette (Early Learning NH)
  - Excited for rep from LETRS to attend a meeting.
- Sarah Fox, (NH Alliance of Early Childhood Coalitions)
  - To Christine Brennan: is LETRS still available to parents?
    - Yes
  - Excited about the state public health plan and it's integration with the Strategic Plan.

*Motion to adjourn (Jane Bard)*

*Seconded (Christine Brennan)*

*Motion approved.*