Meeting Objectives:

- Equity, Diversity and Inclusion
- Higher Education Grant Opportunity
- Preschool Development Grant Updates
- Allow an opportunity for updates, new business and public comment

**Attendees:** Bret Allen, Rosemarie Allen, Rebecca Armentrout, Rashida Banarjee, Robin Baurkenecht, Angela Ben-Zekry, Stephanie Bivins, Kelly Bowes, Beth Cole, Heather Craiglow, Kathleen Dewer, Lindsey Dorneman, Lissianna Follari, Genie Grimes, Scott Groginsky, Kristin Habicht, Shannon Hall, Pamela Harris, Nazia Hasan, Mary Heffernan, Kristina Heyl, Elsa Holguin, Stacey Howard, Janet Humphries, Kelly Hurtado, Catherine Jackson, Rebecca Kantor, Jenny Koch, Brittany Lane, Kristen Lang, Aiden Leonard, Robin Levy, Phyllis Lucas, Marina Mendoza, Chris Miller, Bridgitt Mitchell, Tricia Nelson, Jennifer O’Brien, Amy Oliver, Colleen O’Neill, Stacey Petty, Katie Poston, Crystal Redner, Diana Schaack, Steve Shepard, Dorothy Shepherd, Michael Taylor, Martha Tienen, Heather Tritten, Heidi White

**Link to Event Recording**

**Approval of June 2020 Minutes**

Pamela motioned to approve, Heather Tritten seconded, minutes approved.

**Equity, Diversity, and Inclusion: Genie Grimes and Rosemarie Allen**

- Genie Grimes – Hope Center

If recruitment and retention of diverse candidates is the goal, another component you need to consider is environment. You can recruit someone but if the environment is not inclusive for that person, then the retention rates will suffer. If you don’t grow staff from within and have diverse leadership, diversity goals won’t work. For example, are you going to use traditional recruitment tactics for your outreach? If nothing changes, then your staff won’t change. To bring in a more diverse population, you need to change things. Your Management Team/Leadership need to be diverse too. If you want to speak about equity, it needs to be reflective from the top to the bottom, including the Board of Directors. The early childhood field serves a large population of children and families of color, and the professionals in the field do not look the same. We need to address equity in the community as well. Black Lives Matter has opened people’s eyes to this conversation. You need to look within your own structure before telling others what they need to do to recruit and retain people.

We all have our biases. The systemic racism that has occurred is much deeper. Growing up, the school system didn’t prepare her well. They told her she would be good at one thing – a secretary. She went back to school eight years ago for my PhD, and the system still looked the same and she was disappointed. She also
recommends that we look at what barriers keep us from moving forward. There has been an uneven playing ground for people of color, so until we recognize that, that will be the only way we can move forward.

- Rosemarie Allen – Professor at MSU

When we look at the teacher workforce, we see a clear path of challenges for teachers of color. For many children of color they often do not have a teacher that looks like them for their entire school career from early childhood to high school. Dr. Allen became a teacher because she had a teacher that she loved. But if students only see people that look like them in positions like janitors, and other positions, that’s what they will do.

There are financial barriers. Many students of color are first generation college students that don’t have role models that went to college or experience to navigate the college process. Dr. Allen helped her brother enroll at Metro, and it was brutal. From the application to financial aid, to being charged for health care and having to go to the health department to get that charge taken off. After he enrolled, he was the only African American male in the early childhood department, he was profiled on campus and asked for his ID. Students have to give up their jobs and work for free for a semester or a year. If all of us in higher education look at who can and who cannot do this, it is clear. For people of color who are born into poverty, they are behind. Our institutions makes sure that pipeline exists. Even if they get through all of that and are hired as a teacher, when you look at leaders in our field. At the top are always white women. We have Black, Indigenous, and People of Color on the ground doing the work with limited opportunities to advance. She read an article in Forbes that asked, what do you think your white coworkers should know? It’s so important to have people that will be an ally and stand up for people. If you look at a leadership track, it has a disproportionate number of white women. The leadership track is a challenge. We have to ask ourselves why our leaders of color are important. We know why it is important for children. Invisibility is real. It hurts when a woman of color makes suggestions and the ideas and they fall flat, and then someone next to you says the same thing and it’s the best. Support is key to retaining people of color in leadership roles. Also, women of color have to think, do I have to change my hair or earrings for fear of people labeling me the black woman? Do I have to shrink for everyone around me to accept me? Are you going to send all the black and brown children to me for discipline? The burden put on people of color will cause burnout.

Once we get people in the workforce, we have to support them to stay.

Questions

- Do you have any recommendations for where to post jobs to reach more diverse candidates?
  - Refugee office, Spring Institute and other organizations that work with refugees, Chambers of Commerce for minority populations, sororities and fraternities are a good place. La Voz newspaper.

- How do we learn more?
  - Listening to people of color and then thinking about how that fits into white privilege. Example – teaching children need to act in front of police officers. You need to listen and try to understand people’s experiences. I’m at the table for early childhood, but I’ve always felt isolated. You need to understand the stress levels that people of color feel and think about how they got where they at. I’m followed at the store, it still happens. These are things that many people don’t experience or at least not at this level. We also need to have people of color in professional roles, not just janitors and drivers. People need to be genuine to what the problem really is.
When inducting new teachers into the field, messaging is important. Is there anything that you would recommend when thinking about messaging?

- Workforce centers, concurrent enrollment students (high school), out in the community, etc. When you do your recruitment, do you do outreach to individuals of color? Center for African American Health – they screen individuals for job opportunities, etc. Sometimes just reaching out to those partnerships that do it already is one way to do outreach.

Retention – can you speak about Hope Center’s model, and if you have a mentoring component and what role that can play?

- They had three individuals that were assistants for many years that wanted to move up to a lead teacher role. In order to do that, they required the teachers to receive mentoring from their lead teacher and the agency supported them in looking for scholarship funding to go back to school. That commitment to mentor candidates and support them is important to helping them complete the school process. They have individuals that have sat on policy committees for the state to encourage similar practices.

How do you hold hiring managers accountable for at least having a certain amount of people of color within the candidate pool? Is that a good strategy?

- It could be a potential strategy, but we need to be careful about meeting numbers. The outreach is important, and that will get you a diverse candidate pool.

*Remember, when we look at recruitment and retention strategies – we need to consider that prior learning assessments look at skills, experience and competencies, which helps alleviate education barriers.

How did it feel to get this invitation?

- We’re getting a lot of these invitations right now. They are different because people are trying to learn, understand and then do the work. It’s not like some previous situations to educate white people what racism is. When you are asking what the barriers are so we can act, it feels different. In the 20 years that I’ve worked with people, I’ve never been asked what it feels like to work with you. Many people never think about why there isn’t more representation. It feels good to be asked why so we can do something about it. We need to be at the table, we don’t need spokespeople.

Are there questions we can all be asking to encourage a discussion about equity within our teams? What should we be looking for?

- We can rely on data. We can conduct an equity audit (look at mission, goals, procedures, etc.) to make sure they are aligned. Let’s look at the data and find out where our gaps are. So many organizations say they value equity but the BIPOC are in lower positions. After looking at the data, you need to develop an action plan to address those issues. If you look at the history of inequities from 1619 to today, rules and laws have been put in place – Jim Crow, Redlining, etc. to discriminate against people of color. In 1950 and before, you could exclude people. If you look at the redlining map in Colorado, you could see how laws were explicit. We have to be intentional about how we undo this. When I hire for a position, I want the person to reflect the community.

- Where are you looking? Howard University is turning out Black PhDs. Once you get a diverse pool, you have to really work on your process too. For instance, we interviewed a Black candidate, and someone said a Black candidate didn’t “wow” them. But culturally, it’s not aligned with who we are.
It’s a serious manner – with reactions like that, you’ve already excluded them. You should do an equity audit, identify gaps, and create a plan to address those gaps.

- What are some of the most effective ways to provide support to help retain teachers?
  - Cohorts for support. Many start out together and meet on a regular basis.

- How can we use the momentum of Black Lives Matter to make changes in the ECE field?
  - We don’t need to sugar coat things. We need to speak clearly. What’s possible doesn’t need to take a long time. It used to be involve investigating and talking. Instead let’s just do it. Similarly, are we going to stop officers from killing black people? Now officers are getting fired. So we need to ask, what is important and how do we do this? We need to make sure leaders reflect the children. It doesn’t matter what your mission is and how much you value equity and diversity if you don’t have staff that reflect that. It wasn’t until 1954 that black children could attend school with white children.

- Things to think about
  - We all have individual agencies, the ECWD Subcommittee and ECLC. So we have a lot of resources to think about how we can grow our leaders of color.

**Higher Education Grant Proposal: Rebecca Kantor, Kristie Kauerz, Diana Schaack**

Several Institutions of Higher Education (IHE) are working on a partnership to make the pathway to a bachelor’s in early childhood accessible, affordable and responsive in all the ways that we just talked about. The grant involves CU Denver, University of Colorado at Colorado Springs, University of Northern Colorado and Metro State University, and the Colorado Community College System. On the government side, we had letters of support from every group related to the work.

They want to look at early childhood degrees and innovate on the higher education side to make courses more accessible including stackable credentials, AA/BA partnerships, and workplace programs. They will also look at transfer credit and credit for prior work experience. To do this, they will look at common program experiences and structures, and look at them with an equity lens, an inclusion lens, and a language accessibility lens.

On the government side, the work is about streamlining and identifying barriers, and removing barriers by creating supports and incentives. We’re not talking about creating requirements that bump anyone out of the field. It’s about creating a place that a bachelor’s degree is a real possibility. Let’s build a degree rather than having people earn the degree. We’ll reconfigure the systems rather than build new ones. The funders are specifically looking at access to bachelor’s degrees, but we can use this work to get into other areas.

**Preschool Development Grant Updates: Angela Ben-Zekry and Kristen Lang**

The Preschool Development Grant has funding to support several strategies that will support the workforce. Check here for details about [2020 Project and Grant Opportunities](#).

- **CDA scholarships**
  - Can support approximately 220 new candidates (up to $600 for training and $425 for the assessment fee), and approximately 70 renewal candidates ($125 renewal fee).
  - Application will be available in August.
• Start-Up and Expansion Micro Grants
  o Will support costs associated with becoming licensed.
  o Application will be available before next meeting
  o Will include a technical assistance document on other funding streams including sustainability grants and how they are different.

• Business Practices
  o Small Business Development Centers will be offering training series to family child care homes and child care centers to support business practices starting in September.
  o They will also offer one-on-one consultation to help businesses with their business questions including budgeting and cash flow.

• Inclusion grants
  o There will be 25 programs (both family child care homes and child care centers) that get to work with the Center for Inclusive Design and Engineering to build more inclusive classrooms.

Membership

The original committee appointments run out this month (August 2020). Now is the time to have people re-commit, especially because the group is now a subcommittee. Please look at the required list from the ECWD Charge statement, and let us know if we have the right required representation.

  • Given our conversations today, how about having a designated official who represents a unit that works around diversity and equity, particularly in Early Childhood Special Education and Early Intervention.

There will be a survey about the membership and timing of the meetings (are the ECWD Subcommittee meetings at a good time for people (second Tuesday every other month from 1-3pm)?

MyColoradoJourney Homework

• Feel free to review and submit feedback at any time: My Colorado Journey
• CareersInColorado
• Spreadsheet for sharing feedback

Closing

• Evaluation Link
• Early Childhood Workforce 2020 Plan mapping
• Upcoming Meetings
  – October 6, 2020 – 1:00-3:00pm, location TBD
  – December 1, 2020 – 1:00-3:00pm, location TBD

Written Updates

• Attached – Early Milestones 2020 Innovation Grants
**PDIS Courses in Development**

- Standard Precautions (Spanish)
- ERS Introduction
- ITERS
- ECERS
- ERS Support for Coaches
- FCCERS Intro
- Supporting Inclusive Care
- Early Intervention
- Overview of FCCERS-3
- Safe Sleep (refresh)
- Injury Prevention for Homes
- Playground Safety for Homes
- Introduction to Child Development

**ECWD Subcommittee Priority Areas for EC Workforce 2020 Plan**

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<tr>
<th>Category</th>
<th>Objective Information</th>
<th>Possible Activities/ Experts to Support the Objective</th>
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| Workforce                     | Obj 1, b. Establish clearly-defined, shared terminology for different roles and credentials that cross settings and sectors | • Head Start terminology  
• Power to the Professional terminology  
• HUD terminology |
| Recruitment and Retention     | Obj. 1, g. Explore relationships with early childhood councils to develop professional learning communities to share effective strategies around recruitment, retention, and improving educator efficacy. | • Consult talent recruitment experts  
• Have members of PDG and ECPD group go to ECC meetings in rural communities to discuss  
• Ensure we have stackable pathways and credentials |
| Compensation                  | Obj 1, f. Explore relationships with early childhood councils to develop professional learning communities to share effective strategies around enhancing compensation, including wages and benefits. | • Bring in experts to talk about cliff effect  
• Consult with health insurance co-ops to understand benefits possibilities  
• Check if any states have addressed compensation successfully |
| Recruitment and Retention     | Obj 4, b. Identify barriers and convene a roundtable to identify solutions to successfully recruit and retain people of color in leadership roles. | • Bell Policy Center  
• Dr. Rosemarie Allen, Institute for Racial Equity & Excellence  
• Niki Gill, Institute for Racial Equity & Excellence  
• Significant need for scholarships for higher education to support Spanish and bilingual cohorts |

**Early Childhood Resources for Operating during the Pandemic**

- **Office of Early Childhood – COVID Information for Early Childhood Programs**
  - Essential baby supplies, including formula, diapers and baby wipes, are being distributed to local Family Resource Centers and food banks throughout Colorado. Click the link above to get more information
- **Healthy Child Care Colorado: COVID-19 Health and Safety Toolkit**
- **Denver’s Early Childhood Council: Should our child care center re-open?**
- **Bellweather Education: COVID-19 Strategic Planning Toolkit for Education and Nonprofit Leaders**
The ED-funded National Center for Pyramid Model Innovations recently published a document designed to guide education program leadership teams on considerations for supporting children, families, and staff as they return to their programs. The Leadership Team’s Guide for Re-Opening Programs includes Pyramid Model practices and encourages people to think about those strategies from a trauma-informed perspective. While the leadership team may not know who among children, families, and staff has had or is experiencing trauma, a trauma-informed approach guides programs in providing a safe and nurturing environment where children, families, and staff can build resilience, feel safe, and recover.