

Coordinator's report

January 2023

Program updates: Programs are still having issues with enrollment. Four programs are at capacity, 3 are between 75-100% full, and four are below 75% capacity. This is a statewide issue. Since many families have not returned to the workforce post Covid or are working hybrid and remotely. Programs have all had their site visits for the Fall completed with the children's files review and more. All programs are in good standing.

Jennifer Pane and I attended the NAEYC conference in Washington DC. We saw many great presenters and are reaching out to some for our August PD day.

The SRC submitted two Infant Toddler grant applications on behalf of First Step Preschool and Little People Learning Center. If approved, this will increase our Infant and Toddler funded spaces by 20 slots. Currently only Head Start and Action have subsidized I/T spaces. Vote was taken by email in December to participate in this grant. **Formal vote to be taken today.**

Administrative supplement grant has been approved by the OEC and is being used to cover professional development funds for the liaison, fund two positions to support Council work, stipend for liaison, financial staff, and parents on the Council. **Formal vote to be taken today.**

Professional Development: We hosted two additional fall workshops: 11/21/22- Diversity with Elsa Jones. 12/1/22- Autism awareness and strategies for Preschool children. We started this year off on 1/11/23 with a zoom training- Pyramid workshop- social/emotional development- using the pyramid pages for classroom strategies. Spring calendar is being worked on. Topics include- more Pyramid training, DOTs training, Narrative evaluations -getting your point across, Outdoor classroom ideas, Jump Frog Jump! -teaching Positional words and other vocabulary strategies.

Staff events: Cookie decorating night (December) and Pizza for the teachers event (January). We plan to host a Barnes and Noble provider day when the new store opens. Any program that attended our Fall workshops will be invited to attend.

Advocacy: Please contact your local legislators to help us. We need to advocate for our programs for an increase in per child reimbursements. The current funding for each full day/full year is \$8,924. The cost of care calculated by the OEC is approximately \$16K for a full day/year 10 hours a day slot. The programs have not had a rate increase since 2015. The cost for a minimum wage new hire in 2015 was \$19,032. With the minimum wage increase coming in June, a minimum wage new hire will be \$ 31,200. Without an increase in reimbursement rates, programs cannot continue to provide quality programs and cover staffing costs. The OEC has provided band aid through federal funding throughout the past two years, but many of these initiatives are set to expire in 2023. (see below)

New funding streams to support programs:

- 20-21 Stabilization Grants-programs have until 6/23 to spend. Direct payments to programs from OEC. Programs received an additional 25% if they agreed to give the funds to staff for bonuses/stipends. The remaining 75% of the funds must be used on the funded program site only. They cannot be used for agency expenses and non-program costs.
Update: most programs have spent their funds. Some have a percentage remaining for staff bonuses in FY23 and emergency situations. The programs used the funding for updates to their buildings, refurbishing classrooms, major renovations, such as roofing and paving, updating alarm and security systems, staff bonuses, salaries, medical benefits, and classroom upgrades- ie smart boards, ipads, and more.
- COLA – announced in late June 2022, distributed to programs in July 22, retroactive through July 1, 2021. Funds will come through fiduciary (BOE). Public school programs excluded. Assumption was that public school programs would receive the funds through school's Covid relief funds.
Update: all funds expended.
- COLA -given in Fall for July 22- Dec 22, another payment will be made in February covering Jan-June 23. Funds will come through fiduciary (BOE). Public school programs excluded. Assumption was that public school programs would receive the funds through school's Covid relief funds.
Update: First payment was completed. Second payment documentation being collecting and will be submitted next week.
- September- Premium pay bonus - up to \$1000 per person, directly given to applicant. All staff were encouraged to apply.
Update: bonus will be on a sliding fee scale for those earning under 50K.
- Wage enhancement grant- \$1000 per full time teacher/\$400 per part time teacher. Programs applied for their staff and will receive funds directly from OEC.
Update: Programs received funds in December.
- Enrollment grant- additional funds for programs serving more than 50% of funded children below 300% of Federal poverty level. These are quarterly payments to programs.
Update: The first quarter payments have been submitted for funding. Programs need to apply directly to the OEC, and not all programs applied for the first quarter. Reminders were sent to all programs about Quarter 2 applications (October to December), which are due by January 12th. Once submitted to the OEC they will release the funds to be distributed to the sites.