



GATEWAYS TO OPPORTUNITY

Illinois Professional Development System

PDAC FINANCIAL SUPPORTS COMMITTEE

Tuesday September 5, 2017

Meeting Notes

Attendees:

Alethia Travis
Beth Berendsen
Bob Hughes
Cindy Mahr

Debbie Rogers-Jaye
Gail Nelson
Joni Scritchlow
Joyce Weiner

Julie Lindstrom
Laurie Rhodes
Robert Hitchen
Amanda Cardin

Welcome and Introductions - Debbie Jaye & Laurie Rhodes, co-chairs

Review and Approve Minutes from July meeting

Motion to accept minutes with one correction: add Debbie Rogers-Jaye to list of attendees.
Minutes approved.

Strategic Planning

PDAC Phase VIII Strategic Plan (2019 – 2022) timeline kicks off in January. Strategic plan timeline:

- Jan: PDAC Steering sets over-arching direction and outlines major strategic goals
- February thru April: Committees meet and revise/add to goals; draft objectives
- May: Comprehensive Strategic Plan goes to Steering for Review/Final Edits/Approval
- June: Final Strategic Plan goes to PDAC for Review/Approval
 - Moves to IDHS for implementation approval
- July 1: PDAC Strategic Plan Phase VIII implementation begins

Committee Discussion/input into over-arching goals:

- Need to begin thinking of 2 phases or lenses from which to view compensation:
 - Recruitment and compensation
 - Retention of staff through compensationWe need to get better at retaining staff, *as well as* recruiting staff and compensation impacts both. Both conversations need to happen.
- Should a goal for FS be to identify what level of compensation stabilizes the workforce?
 - There were some initial findings noted in the compensation report that identified \$34,000 as the point at which staff retention stabilized. Can this be further researched and clarified? If so, what message could that translate into when we think about addressing compensation? A potential goal for next year.
- There are multiple career pathways within ECE. Yet an aggregate or average teacher salary is the only point of reference in talking about compensation or wages. Given that there are many individuals who work in the field (e.g. trainers, state agency, advocacy,

coaches/mentors, professional development providers, etc.) - has any work been done to look at what the true potential wages are from having a degree in early childhood?

- There are prospective pros and cons to this approach. However, using this way of thinking might help mitigate or address some of the concerns raised when the average salary is reported as only \$13 or \$15 an hour using teacher wages (only) and ignores the more positive impact if we truly averaged wages for those in the ECE field.
 - Could help us recruit more into the field
 - Might help us address concerns when counselors/college advisors actively steer people away from the field due to low wages
 - Could enhance perspectives or point out multiple career opportunities
 - Could committee identify both potential positive and negative consequences of considering this approach?
- Power to the Profession should be considered in the context of goals/objectives for next phase of strategic plan development
- We could think about messaging “job security”. Robots and mechanized services are the wave of the future. Early childhood is one of the careers least likely to be replaced by mechanized services.
 - ECE cannot be outsourced
 - This is a point few are making – it is a stable/growing career
- How teachers are “categorized” is very challenging when early education and child care are combined. “Teachers” receive more pay than “child care providers”. We need to think about nomenclature.
 - Power to the Profession is using *early childhood educator* as opposed to *teacher*
- How do we think about compensation in light of the fact that program level versus decision makers have very different needs in terms of compensation/wage parity?
 - Until we raise wages to levels of comparability, we will continue to lose staff from centers. We must address this.
- Allocations in some settings are just unable to pay as much. From a policy perspective, we could look at Illinois Department of Economic Opportunity
 - One point we might advocate for is that “child care workers” are defined as “babysitters”
 - Is this a point we could take on in terms of a goal to set public awareness?
 - We need to develop parent infographics and help parents want/demand more educated providers and teachers of young children.
- We inadvertently continue the problem if we continue to think about programs, and hire within programs, using licensing minimums. You don’t get quality from less educated staff. We need to build the case and decide how to build the workforce both educationally as well as in compensation. Maybe we start with minimums of paraprofessionals and go from there.
- What if we used the great work done in credentialing, and assigned a compensation to credential levels? Could we build from where we are?
- What are the top 5 or 6 strategies that other states are using to increase wages? There have been recent reports published that show some states are making progress in this area. Perhaps we could research this and identify a couple of strategies that might work

in Illinois. Using this approach, we could say these are successful strategies that other states are using versus here is an untested idea.

- Compensation efforts require advocacy. Advocacy efforts need documentation and simple messaging.
 - A key role of this committee could be in developing infographics needed related to messaging about compensation

Collectively – these are some great thoughts and direction to embed in the next strategic plan for this committee. As a group, please continue to think about how we want to move forward and what our committee priorities should be.

Review of Existing Strategic Plan

- Review findings and make recommendations to Gateways Scholarship based on reimbursement opportunity findings and soon-to-be-released report
 - Joni will share link on report about institutions releasing micro-debt and the impact that has on college student retention. It is a win-win: colleges get “completers” and students stay in school/complete their degrees
 - Develop an infographic
 - Think about ways to help IHE’s keep existing students in college
- Develop an infographic for parents
- Develop recommendation related to:
 - ISBE – that future RFP’s will address compensation

Loan forgiveness document –

Debbie Jaye volunteered to lead a small group in reviewing/updating the current loan forgiveness document.

The guiding principles of Senate Bill 1829 were reviewed by the Ad Hoc Committee. The committee’s recommendation were brought to the ELC Executive Committee for review and approval. The next steps in the recommendation process are being reviewed.

Great START wage supplement chart was reviewed (Attachment #?). The document will be revised using only the first three columns. Data provided using monthly information is the most useful for the field. A disclaimer should be included on the document stating that you must be eligible to receive Great START. Checks are sent two times a year. Debbie thanked Cindy for collecting information for the document.

Debbie reviewed assignments for the next meeting: Bob and Bob will review information regarding technology and robots, Gail will review information regarding micro debt, Laurie will coordinate an advocacy recommendation, and Debbie will review information on loan forgiveness.

Next Committee Dates:

November 7, 2017 1:00 – 2:30 pm

February 6, 2018 1:00 – 2:30 pm

April 3, 2018 1:00 – 2:30 pm

June 5, 2018 1:00 – 2:30 pm

