



PDAC FINANCIAL SUPPORTS COMMITTEE

Tuesday December 4, 2018

Telnet - 1:00 pm – 2:30 pm

Minutes

In attendance: Alethia Travis, Amanda Cardin, Cindy Mahr, Debbie Rogers-Jaye, Laurie Rhoads, Laura Rios, Medina Bailey, Rebecca Livengood.

Guest: Jill Andrews

Welcome and Introductions

Today is Debbie Jaye's last meeting with Financial Supports. Robert Hitchen is retiring and will no longer serve on Financial Supports. We thank them both for their service on our committee.

Updates from the Governor's Cabinet – Compensation Strategies Work Group

- Cross State Convening
 - Went to sessions on workforce data collection, apprenticeship programs, compensation strategies, communications and messaging.
 - There was ample time for the state teams to work together.
 - We spent time with the state of Washington who has a career and wage ladder. They were sharing all their tools and resources with Illinois' Governor's Office of Early Childhood.
- Literature and Landscape Scan
 - The Children's Cabinet compensation workgroup just completed this scan, and it includes many resources from several different states. It is grouped into categories by program. For example wage scales, tiered reimbursement, compensation regulations, wage stipends, loan forgiveness, etc...
- Communications Plan
 - The Children's Cabinet compensation workgroup is currently working on a communications plan and asking questions like "what questions might we want answered by providers and educators?"

Work of PDAC Financial Supports

- **Goal 2 Objective 1 – Great START & Scholarship**
 - Credentials are not mentioned in GS scale. There was a recommendation to introduce Credentials into GS. The timing was not beneficial to open it up for rule changes.
 - Rebecca has requested a copy of the first recommendation (though it will not be inclusive of all Credentials because new ones have kicked off since this date). The Financial Supports Committee wants to include all credentials into this recommendation and consider making this a new recommendation.
- **Goal 2 Objective 2 – Great START maximum hourly wage**
 - The initial wage maximum was set in 2001. The Committee agrees that a new higher wage maximum needs to be considered.
 - The Committee could consider a higher stipend if you are serving CCAP children, and/or you were an ExceleRate program your earning a higher wage stipend.

- The Committee also discussed setting the higher maximum wage as a percentage of minimum wage so that there would not be a future need to raise the maximum wage.

Committee thoughts:

- Some concern if we just incentivize at the top instead of looking at barriers at the bottom.
- The bachelor's degree becomes a barrier and the time needed to get the degree is not short.
- What incentivizes people to go back to school. Financial support is essential but the flexibility to attend class, hybrid classes, finding classes that work their schedules and the lack of course work. However our priority in this Committee is the financial support. Workforce and Pathways would be committed to the other barriers.
- In Southern Illinois what we are looking for are incentives for entry level people – an incentive in the first two years to stay in the field.
- Let's take the quick step to reward those that have done the work, and then work next on the entry level benefits.
- Discourage us from lowering the bar... we must continue to raise our staff up.

Goal 3 Objective 1 – Student Loan Forgiveness Document

- 96% under this administration not approved for loan forgiveness.
- It is an important piece for our providers. Continue to watch the bills both state and federal around loan forgiveness.
- People are not willing to take on debit if the compensation is not there to repay it.
- Maybe a tip sheet could be posted on the Gateways website.
- Alethia will continue to work on the Loan Forgiveness document.
- Dick Durbin is a contact to reach out to on loan forgiveness, he continues to be a champion for loan forgiveness at the federal level.

Goal 4 Objective 1 – Address work place conditions with program leaders

Tabled this discussion till our next meeting

Jill Andrews –President of CICAT reported the following from Southern Illinois

- Southern Illinois has the lowest CCAP reimbursement rate
- Lost 42 centers in 3 years
- The stress of staffing and financial stress is deteriorating the health of Directors in the Southern Region
- In public schools they have shifted to the evidence-based funding– what is the cost per child to offer quality education. Early childhood needs to look to this in the future.
- Look at what Preschool for All (PFA) pays for 2.5 hours of quality care. That is what early childhood needs but for more hours.

The Committee reviewed the attached document that was presented by Jill.

- The committee discussed solution E & F.
 - E – Allow entry level staff, after 60 days of employment, eligibility to the Great START program so staff can immediately receive a stipend to supplement their pay which will encourage them to remain in early childhood.
 - F – Allow entry level staff, after 60 days of employment, to apply for Gateways Scholarships to support their continuing education immediately upon employment o provide support for staff to become teacher certified and to obtain Gateways Credentials.

- The Committee would suggest 90 days instead of 60 days. But the committee is in support of these solutions.
- The Committee also considered this for ExceleRate Programs at a Gold or Silver to allow additional benefit to programs that obtain a Circle of Quality.
- There was discussion about solution G but concern on how much traction a recommendation around this would retain. The Great START requirements must be above licensing as that is the goal of the program. If an individual increases to teacher and their responsibilities increase as teacher than their education should increase as well. It should be more about supporting aides in professional development to be ready for a promotion to teacher and thus they would move up on the scale as well.
 - G- Allow classroom aides who receive a promotion to classroom teacher to keep their Great START aide stipend if they have not met the educational requirements according to the Great START scale.
- The Committee found Jill's presentation to spark conversation and a greater passion to make changes and work on recommendations where we can.
- Groups will continue to meet over the coming months.

Mark your calendars – upcoming telnet dates

- Tuesday February 5th 1pm – 2:30pm
- Tuesday April 2nd 1pm – 2:30pm
- Tuesday June 4th 1pm – 2:30pm

