

**QUAD COUNTY CHILDCARE COALITION
MEETING NOTES
THURSDAY, FEBRUARY 29, 2024**

Attendance:

Jamie Cain, Melissa Chambers, Francis Ommani, Christopher Martin, Manuela Kress, Jamie Carruthers-Sobleski (Online), Pam O’Laughlin, Clara Sherman, Penny Payea, Chandra Olmstead, Rich VanTol, Helen Shastel, Lisa Bolen, Gloria Brooks

Guest: Kathy Szenda-Wilson, Co-Director, Pulse at the WE Upjohn Institute, Kalamazoo

Meeting called to order at 3:05 pm.

Meeting Notes:

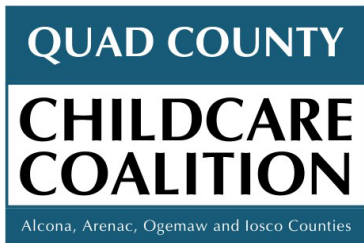
Member introductions included three new members: Jamie Cain, IRESA; Chandra Olmstead from Plainfield Township; and Helen Shastel from GSTQ Resource Center, Iosco County representative.

Grant Updates: Manuela gave an update on grants that have been applied to and DI’s vision of creating an MSO. She assisted a DI member PKL Enterprises on a \$2.5-million-dollar grant submission. Manuela shared updates on the grant writing workshops with 60 participants as well as a recent grant award of \$750,000 grant to create a trailhead with a farmers’ market in AuSable Township.

Innovation Report recommendations: Fran gave an update on the Expanding Childcare Capacity project. She asked if there was anyone that is interested in starting a childcare center to please reach out for additional information on the funding application. Pre-applications are sent to Melissa Chambers at NEMCOG for screening and then sent over to NEMCSA for final evaluation. 14 people have inquired about the grants and 4 that have made it through the entire process. NEMCOG and NEMCSA haven’t officially selected awardees yet. Gloria has had some inquiries that she passed onto the proper counties.

CEO Roundtable: Gloria gave an update on the strategy for the CEO roundtable in Iosco County to be held later today. There are 28 people from 22 organizations that have RSVP to attend. Kathy suggested sending out a survey or doing some person-to-person outreach to get feedback from the event in the next few weeks. She also suggests using workforce talent retention language rather than childcare scarcity to get employers onboard.

State of Michigan Pre-K for all initiative: Lisa gave an update on Pre-K for all. She is unsure that our region can keep the governor’s deadline because we lack the people to support the effort. Rich explained that there are other potential unintended consequences for infant and toddler care. Helen also agreed that conceptually Pre-K for all is a good thing, but it could have implications for in-home care providers. It has the potential to take the choice away from the providers and families.



ECIC Pre-K for all survey: Gloria facilitated discussion on the survey questions and asked for feedback from the group to report back to the ECIC. She will submit the responses to ECIC by the March 14 deadline.

Next Steps:

Gloria discussed the ECIC conference in Lansing and we are well represented at the event. Each individual will report back to their coalition. No parents were able to make it from the region.

The next meeting will be held at night on Tuesday, May 28, 2024 from 5:00 pm – 7:00 pm at the Whittemore Community Center. Dinner will be provided. Outlook and Zoom meeting notices to follow.

Develop Iosco will continue the coalition meetings after the grant is completed. Waiting to hear from ECIC if the grant period will be extended (no additional funding, but longer period to spend current funding).

Clara gave an update and suggested getting DHS involved to create a bridge between getting off assistance and back into the workforce. Individuals can't find daycare and have trouble affording the cost for the care. Clara will provide contacts to start the conversation. Penny said that she has a member from DHHS, and she expresses frustration with being able to help individuals.

Meeting Evaluation:

Today's meeting was very constructive. Suggested that the tables and chairs be facing each other at the next meeting.

The meeting adjourned at 4:30 pm.

Respectfully submitted

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Chris Martin".

Christopher Martin, Executive Director