

The Child Care Advisory Committee held their monthly meeting on October 7, 2015. Committee members present included Jennifer McAtamney, Lucinda Burns, Mike Connelly, Carla Koch, Greta Shackelford, and Elisabeth Lawrence. Laurie Blackwell was absent. Laurie Best, Mike Barney, Jenise Jensen, and Emily Oberheide also attended. The following agenda items were covered:

Update on Preschool Workgroup (Lucinda Burns)

Lucinda explained how Early Childhood Options and the Summit School District are working together along with community Childcare Centers on the common goal of greater access to high quality PreK experiences in Summit County. They have researched potential models nationwide and data about the need in Summit County. There are more questions than answers at this point, but the group does have two main agreements so far: 1) whatever model they choose would focus on the year before kindergarten and 2) both school district and private childcare centers would be utilized. It has not been determined if increased funding toward early childhood education will join technology and roofing project as a priority for the District as they look at upcoming ballot measures.

Internal Policies

Paying in Arrears:

Emily shared that we are in progress of moving to a more efficient system of paying the centers Tuition Assistance on behalf of families in arrears. The plan is to make the switch starting November. The centers will receive a one-time, Transitional Payment in order to make this transition. Emily will be talking with Center Directors in the next week to clarify details about the transition.

Tuition Copay Schedule:

Committee agreed to the name of "Tuition Copay Schedule" for the charts we use to determine the portion of childcare costs a family is responsible for based on their income, residency, number of children in care, and amount of childcare needed.

Eligibility- Only Work in Breckenridge:

The question raised was whether someone who does not live in the Upper Blue Basin, but works seasonally in Breckenridge could be eligible for Tuition Assistance. The current wording states that a parent must work an "average of 30 hours per week annually in Breckenridge". The Committee clarified that this could mean a person who works 50-60 hours per week in the winter, if it averages out to 30 hours per week annually.

Kindergarten Move in August:

The question raised was what the Town of Breckenridge will pay on behalf of families for Tuition in August when their child moves to Kindergarten during the month. In the past, centers appreciated that Town of Breckenridge still paid the full monthly award which was an incentive for the family to stay and helped the centers keep enrollment which historically had dropped in August. Committee did not decide today. Next steps: Emily will gather specifics about how each center bills families in August to bring back to Committee at a later date.

Special Circumstances:

The Committee decided that Tuition Assistance funds should not be used toward special circumstance help. At this time, Town of Breckenridge Child Care Fund will only be used for monthly Tuition Assistance. If families are in need beyond that, we can put them in touch with other possible help (FIRC) but will not open the door to additional money to families on top of their discounted Tuition Copay. It was mentioned that possibly in the future, we could discuss other options for emergency funds that would be separate from Tuition Assistance.

Audit/Quality Improvement Program:

Committee discussed how to design an audit process for the Tuition Assistance Program. Emily shared how the Denver Preschool Program audits within a greater “Quality Assurance Program” that does financial audits as well as a greater check of the program procedures. We know we have a specific need to look at applicants who are self-employed to check how they are reporting their income. Committee discussed a two-prong approach of both financial audits to verify the application processing and, later, a program quality check. We will use an outside, third-party (not Emily, nor a Town of Breckenridge employee) to conduct the audits. Next steps: Emily to talk with Elizabeth Lowe about the Head Start audit system as another example. Emily will draft checklist of items we would use audit applications.

Next meeting: Wednesday, November 4th at 3:00