



Memo

To: Breckenridge Town Council Members
From: Corrie Burr
Date: July 27, 2021
Subject: July 7, 2021 Child Care Advisory Meeting Report

The Child Care Advisory Committee held a regular meeting on July 7, 2021. Committee members present via GoToMeeting: Greta Shackelford, Laura Amedro, Johanna Gibbs, and Austyn Dineen. Leslie Davis, Jay Homola, Joyce Ruderman and Scott Perlow were unable to attend. Staff from the Town of Breckenridge included Julia Puester and Corrie Burr.

Center Update

Greta let the group know that the centers are all doing well. LRSH actually has a few SPK spots available. Staffing is going up and down as it has been. No recent Covid closures for child care in Summit. Lots of other bugs going around now, but still all good. We briefly spoke about the Delta variant confirmed in Summit.

All large centers in Breckenridge have added an item to their waitlist priority for parents that work for a company located in and serving Summit County.

Applications for 2021-2022

Corrie provided an update on the current application status. Applications closed on July 2nd. We closed with 46 applications with 9 being SPK / TOB families. There are still 3 families that are waiting for their 2020 tax returns, so there will be 49 applications during the open enrollment. There are several families that contacted the Town that are pregnant, on a waiting list or just had a baby. Corrie encouraged some families to wait until they had a spot in a center as the waitlists are moving slowly and they can apply for assistance at any time.

The total number of applications is lower than previous years (65 in 2020 and 76 in 2019) for the open enrollment time. The exact cause is not known, but we expect a few things such as centers slow to get to full capacity after Covid, reduced capacity due to staffing and several families with one child in care are expecting another child, so a spot is being held.

The committee would like to talk about extending support to in-home centers in August when we have more of the committee in attendance. This conversation will review the program goals and how an in-home group would coincide with them.

State and Federal Updates for Child Care Programs

There are several programs being discussed locally, state-wide and nationally for child care assistance (centers and parents). As items come up, we will continue to discuss them at our committee and how they relate to our area, our centers and of course, the tuition assistance program. Here are a few being discussed or already planned.

1. HB21-1304 passed establishing a unified early childhood system in Colorado. [Unified Early Childhood System in Colorado](#), effective July 1, 2022
2. UPK for Colorado due to start in 2023, one year before Kindergarten. (passing of Proposition EE). 2023-2024 start of the school year is 10 hours / week of free UPK. [UPK Link](#)
3. American Families Plan – federal funding (not passed yet) to include 2 years before Kindergarten and 2 years after high school in education. [Fact Sheet: The American Families Plan | The White House](#)
4. Child Tax Credit – starts 7/15/21

Corrie also shared details of the work being done with the SPK reserve funds. The reserve fund has approximately 2 million dollars that is available for additional support. A list of options was presented to the County Commissioners on 6/29/21 and they provided direction on which options they most favored and to build out fully with needs and costs. The group was given approximately 6 weeks to formalize the plan. Corrie is working with the team to support this effort and excited about the potential options that include supporting some children at 3 years old (2 years before Kindergarten), additional funds for staff retention and incentives for hiring, a full-time recruiter housed at Early Childhood Options that would build relationships to create a pipeline of teachers along with more national / international recruiting options and possibly a County-wide tuition assistance program.

Survey Data Review for Current Tuition Assistance Year (2020-2021)

The Committee reviewed parent survey data for the current tuition assistance year (2020-2021).

Highlights include:

~91 children served from 68 families. Total 2020 expenditure was \$625,645 which included \$14,000 in emergency funds for Covid-related situations.

Based on all applications and survey responses

- A. more than 75% of applicants have lived in Summit County for more than 6 years with over 40% living here for more than 11 years.
- B. The businesses with the most applicants are Summit School District, Breckenridge Grand Vacations, Town of Breckenridge, Vail Resorts and Self-Employed parents, but we supported over 60 different businesses in the County.
- C. More families desire child care close to their home as opposed to close to their work. This has been a 50/50 split for many years and this year it was a 64/36 split. (Reminder the survey responses were done in July of 2020).
- D. 21 families were accepting unemployment when they applied (7/2020)
- E. Average and Median family income remains around \$100,000 per year.
- F. Just over 50% of families live in deed-restricted housing.
- G. 40% of families (30 parents) state they would move from Summit County if tuition assistance was not available.
- H. more than 50% of families say they are able to afford child care because they receive assistance.

Survey Question – What does Tuition Assistance mean to you? A few of the many responses:

- ∂ It is critical to our thriving in summit county
- ∂ This program means everything to our family. We wouldn't be able to afford our mortgage and child care without this assistance.
- ∂ Child care enables us to both work full time jobs. Without child care, one of us would have to quit our jobs and then would not be able to maintain our mortgage or continue living in summit county.
- ∂ This program is invaluable to us. We absolutely love sending our two kids to Little Red and the only way we can accomplish this is through this funding program. The communication and ability to qualify is top notch. The program administrators do an incredible job and absolutely understand the dire need in the community for funds and childcare. We are so happy to have qualified and really hope we can accomplish this again this year.
- ∂ This program is critical in being able to live in Breckenridge. If I am unable to receive tuition assistance, I will have no other option but to move outside of Summit County and find a new job. This program is vital to families in Summit County.
- ∂ Without this program I would not be able to afford child care and we would only have a single income stream for our family. This program is a huge weight lifted off our shoulders.
- ∂ The tuition assistance program has enabled our family to live in Summit County and start 2 business which benefit our family and the community
- ∂ Without assistance, we would not be able to afford daycare. One of us would have to stay home, which would have a significant impact on our household income.
- ∂ This is a HUGE help for our family to be able to afford day care. We are so grateful to live and teach in the community!
- ∂ Thank you so much for this program. Without we could not afford childcare. I can't state how much I appreciate our town's value of early childhood care and support of families with young children. It is incredible.
- ∂ Our family is committed to this community. Our daughter needs care in order for us to be able to continue to work and provide for our family. Carriage House has been awesome and we'd love to continue to have to opportunity to go there.
- ∂ This program has given us peace of mind that our children are being cared for by a high quality establishment so that we are able to work in a community that we love but would not be able to afford to live in without tuition assistance.
- ∂ The assistance that we have received the past year has been a tremendous help for our family with both kids in care (was why we waited to have a second). We are truly impressed with Timberline Learning Center, mostly through this time of COVID.
- ∂ Tuition assistance means that we can afford to raise our family in the heart of the Rocky Mountains
- ∂ This program has been a huge help to us. We are making more money now then a couple years ago and without tuition assistance I would not have been able to work and without my income we would have been in trouble.

Next meeting is on August 4, at 10:30 am (in person and GoToMeeting option)
Adjourned at 11:25 am.

Staff will be available at the Town Council meeting for questions.