



Memo

To: Breckenridge Town Council Members
From: Corrie Burr
Date: September 14, 2021
Subject: September 1, 2021 Child Care Advisory Meeting Report

The Child Care Advisory Committee held a regular meeting on September 1, 2021. All committee members were present via GoToMeeting and in person: Greta Shackelford, Laura Amedro, Johanna Gibbs, Scott Perlow, Austyn Dineen, Leslie Davis, Jay Homola and Kelly Owens. Staff from the Town of Breckenridge included Laurie Best, Julia Puester and Corrie Burr.

Center Update

Little Red Schoolhouse, Timberline Learning Center and Carriage House have all had some Covid closures over the last month. Some have been just a few days or one room and some have been longer. TLC is just about to open 20 spots to replace the kids that just moved on to Kindergarten. Corrie is seeing more applications as families gain access to child care. Staffing remains an issue and the number of open positions in child care has been increasing through the County.

The County just approved payments to all child care centers and licensed in-home centers to help with retention and recruiting. The centers will receive up to \$5,000 / FTE each year for a guarantee of 2-years that can be extended for another 5 years as needed. The County is exploring a County-wide tuition assistance program as tuition rates will ultimately increase to maintain a higher pay scale for teachers.

Credit for Nanny Care

The Committee had a discussion around offering credit for additional expenses for families unable to get full time care at a center similarly to what we do for those utilizing both center-based care and licensed in-home care to get full time child care. The Committee discussed all components of having a temporary program to assist with this, but in the end decided the parameters were too difficult to process in an equitable way. This is not a program addition the committee would like to consider.

Open Arms Letter to the Committee

The committee further discussed the option to provide tuition assistance to families attending Open Arms Child Care & Preschool. The center sent a letter to the Committee asking to be considered for support from the Town of Breckenridge child care tuition assistance program.

The following questions were answered during the meeting

1. How many children / families are served with the program – 30 children / 28 families
2. What are the daily fees and the schedule – the center charges between \$64 and \$69 per child, per day with discounts for children that attend 5-days per week.
3. How are building and maintenance fees handled for the center – Open Arms does not pay rent to the church, but participates in maintenance and repairs. Repairs and maintenance for center needs are split with 80% covered by the center and 20% covered by the church.
4. Would they be willing to potentially raise rates to cover expenses if needed – rates are reviewed by the board every year and rates were increased 5% in 2021. They are focused on maintaining a high-level of staff and covering all overhead through the center rates.
5. Colorado Shines rating (letter stated a hope of level 3) – They are scheduled for review in November / December.
6. What do they currently do to support teacher training and retention - All teachers and staff are trained in every classroom age so they can help anywhere within the school due to COVID regulations. They utilize PDIS for training, in-staff coaching on pyramid plus, food friends, CLASS and conscious discipline. They have 50% of the staff members taking on-line ECE classes at graduate level or CMC. They attend on-line seminars with paid time to participate. Currently all staff members are registered for the Creative Curriculum online classes through Early Childhood Options. For retention they recruited 2 high school paid interns (who are taking or will be taking the EC course through the high school). Their starting pay is \$14. All other staff members make between \$18 - \$28 per hour. Education is paid for and there are some benefits (everything but healthcare) with flexibility for family needs.

With the above provided details on the center, the committee recommends to allow families from Open Arms to participate in the Town of Breckenridge Tuition Assistance program. The goal is to help workforce pay for the high cost of quality child care and Open Arms has presented their program to be consistent with the policies of the tuition assistance program. The center would need to complete the provider agreement along with providing all necessary documents required in the agreement.

Next meeting is on November 3, at 10:30 am (in person and GoToMeeting option). Adjourned at 11:18 am.

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