



Memo

To: Breckenridge Town Council Members
From: Austyn Dineen
Date: May 24, 2022
Subject: May 4, 2022 Child Care Advisory Meeting Report/Minutes

The Child Care Advisory Committee held a regular meeting on May 4, 2022. Committee members present: Greta Shackelford, Laura Amedro, Scott Perlow, Leslie Davis, Jay Homola, Britton Fossett, Diana Morain, Johanna Gibbs, and Jay Beckerman. Staff from the Town of Breckenridge included Austyn Dineen, Julia Puester, and Corrie Burr. Martha Meier from Carriage House was also present.

Review and Recommend EUA Capacity Study vetted by Directors

Town Staff presented the findings of a childcare capacity work session that was recently hosted between the Timberline Learning Center, Little Red and Carriage House Director's and Town Staff. Taking into consideration that there are potentially 900 more housing units in the works in Breckenridge in the next five years and currently no prospects for additional child care capacity, staffing the "new" rooms/expansions was taken off the table when discussing future capacity projects. If staffing continues to be an issue in the future, these expansions would be delayed in opening, but Staff and the Committee agree that we need to do something to address the growing needs of our community. During the work session, Town Staff also focused on infant and toddler care over other age groups due to the most recent data from Early Childhood Options/Leg Up – deduped waitlist data, to determine the true child care need in the community.

As of 5/4/22, Breckenridge has 436 children on a waitlist for care – 60 unborn, 115 children between 0-12 months, 95 children between 12-24 months, 137 children between 2-4 years, 20 kids between 4-5 year olds, and 9 kids over 5 years old. Infant and Toddler is the most expensive age group to provide care for due to smaller ratios, but it is the largest need throughout the County and specifically in Breckenridge.

In 2015, Town Staff presented to Town Council that there was 32 unduplicated children on their collective waitlists. In 2018, that number was 154 – a 381% increase in just three years.

Staff has confirmed that there is preschool capacity currently and more in the works so there is not a major concern at this time that creating infant/toddler spaces would create an issue for the students as they get older and go into Preschool classrooms.

Below are potential added infant/toddler capacity and ROM estimate is attached.

Capacity Work Session – average infant/toddler spots, cost per center

Center	Infant/Toddler Spots	Cost	Cost per new space
Carriage House	12	\$3,066,755	\$255,562 per new space
Little Red	30	\$3,172,057	\$105,735 per new space
TLC	10	\$450,925	\$45,092 per new space
BM	10	\$858,287	\$85,828 per new space
TOTAL	62	\$7,548,025	\$121,742 per space

Staff Recommendation

While Staff agrees with BCCAC that all opportunities should be considered, Staff recommends moving forward with Little Red Schoolhouse and Timberline Learning Center projects in addition to an RFP for a center at the Alta Verde housing project.

Proceed with RFP on potential Alta Verde child care center

In addition to capacity options at the current Breckenridge centers, the committee discussed and recommends that Town Council move forward with a design RFP to be “shovel ready” for a child care center located at the new non-profit campus near the Alta Verde housing development. Having designs will allow staff to proactively go after grants to increase access to early child care.

The Smith Ranch Center in Silverthorne is budgeted at \$8-10M for 65 spots and there isn’t any reportable information on the new, but smaller center that is being built in Keystone near the workforce housing project.

Status on potential tuition rate increase/impact to TA Program/Invest in Teachers

Little Red Schoolhouse has been spearheading a fast-track tuition increase by potentially 15-20% at the start of the new tuition assistance cycle in September to get all ECE teachers at a base pay of \$50,000-\$55,000 annually. Per our last update to Council on 4/12, Town staff thought a tuition rate increase would happen over time, like it did when TA started in 2007, but conversations are underway to make this transition sooner than expected to align with many other changes that are taking place around the county and to retain and gain employees as soon as possible. The centers have been in touch with TOF and Summit County as it would affect their present (and future) programs as well.

Taking into account the shifts in SPK, the newly approved 22/23 tuition assistance sliding scale, and more families being eligible for the program, the financial impact is pretty minimal and, by our best estimate, would result in about a \$20k increase above the current operating budget of \$650k. This also

means that the \$150k investment in Invest in Teachers would be phased out or discontinued as the Centers are aware that the Town would not be able to do both. With this shift, the Town's child care investment would be more aligned with the 'needs based' approach principle that it was founded on. If you take into account Invest in Teachers dollars going away, the budget would decrease by approximately \$100-130k in this new shift and the funding would all be direct to families in need. The Committee was supportive.

Since this meeting, Little Red Schoolhouse, Timberline Learning Center, Carriage House and Breckenridge Montessori have approved a 15% increase in teacher salaries to take effect immediately. The Centers will withhold passing the cost to families until September 2022 when the new 2022/2023 tuition assistance (Breckenridge and SPK) go into effect. The Invest in Teachers investment that was issued for 2022 will allow the Centers to stay financially viable during this time. With so many changes to child care funding taking place, Staff recommends a phased out approach based on actual data for the Invest in Teachers investment for 2023 and ultimately an elimination in 2024.

Discounts and Tuition Assistance Families (re: Stabilization Grants)

During high-pandemic times, BCCAC approved centers doing center-wide discounts without reprocessing daily co-pays and continued to pay when centers were closed. The Committee discussed and agreed on a recommendation that a discount or reduction of tuition assistance by 10% requires a reprocess of tuition assistance as it affects the foundation of the program.

This issue was highlighted by a percentage of the recently issued Stabilization Grants by The State of Colorado requiring childcare centers to pass along financial relief to families. Financial relief to families can include new reduction of tuition, continuation of existing tuition reduction, forgiveness of unpaid parent fees or tuition for children still in care, and/or other financial relief, such as waiving fees, offering free services.

Since the recent BCCAC meeting, Town of Breckenridge Leadership requested that Town Staff take a deeper dive into this issue and how it affects the funds that the Town pays toward childcare. Town Council can expect an update in the 6/1 BCCAC meeting minutes.

Next meeting is on Wednesday, June 1, at 10:30 am in person and via Zoom.

Adjourned at 12:12 p.m.

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