New Hampshire Child Care Advisory Council
c/o Administrator, Child Development Bureau
Department of Health and Human Services,
Division of Children, Youth and Families
129 Pleasant Street, Concord NH 03301
603-271-4242
www.dhhs.nh.gov/dcyf/cdb/index.htm

NEW HAMPSHIRE CHILD CARE ADVISORY COUNCIL

2017-2018 ANNUAL PROGRESS REPORT

The Advisory Council on Child Care was created through legislation (RSA 126-A:17) in 1995 to serve as an advisory body to the Commissioner of Health and Human Services and to inform and communicate with the legislature, the Commissioner of Education and the Governor on any issue related to child care in New Hampshire.

The purpose of the NH Child Care Advisory Council is to:

- further the development of quality & affordable child care;
- provide a forum for groups concerned with child care and related services;
- advise the Commissioner of the Department of Health and Human Services on policies and legislation regarding child care;
- communicate with the Governor and the Commissioner of the Department of Education on early childhood initiatives and needs; and
- advise the Bureau of Child Development Bureau and Head Start Collaborative on priorities.

More information can be found through this link: http://www.dhhs.state.nh.us/dcyf/ccac.htm

The CCAC set strategic priorities in February 2014 and uses these as a framework to set the work agenda for the Council. Priorities for action were set as:

- Advising on state child care and early education policy
- Monitoring the state's investment in child care
- Monitoring state planning and expenditures in DHHS and DOE

We have found that the best way to meet these priorities is through extensive collaboration with groups that effect child care statewide, and then report to stakeholders at open bimonthly meetings. This ensures that the child care community always has a voice and access to up to date information. Members of the Child Care Advisory Council collaborate in the following ways (please note this is not an exhaustive list):

- CCAC representatives have participated in monthly meetings with DHHS bureau of Child Development and Head Start Collaborative staff to monitor utilization and expenditure trends for the use of child care subsidy dollars.
- CCAC members work closely with Spark NH, the state's Early Childhood Advisory Council, serving in various capacities on Spark committees. CCAC members are involved to create a coordinated system and increase quality through 11 regional early childhood initiatives statewide, represented by Spark NH's Community of Practice. This effort, which includes a wide variety of stakeholders, promotes awareness of the importance of the first five years.
- CCAC meeting agendas include regular time for reports from DHHS and DOE agency staff on issues related to child care and early education, including state Child Care Licensing. Members are encouraged to actively engage agency staff on how these issues affect those who are in the field.
- CCAC members have monitored legislative activity that may impact the regulation and/or operations of early childhood programs, and report on legislative activities and the state budget process to the membership. As industry experts, CCAC members submit testimony on relevant issues
- CCAC members are actively involved in the State Early Learning Alliance, an effort to consolidate cost and increase quality of child care through economies of scale.

The CCAC Executive Council also invited members of statewide initiatives to come to meetings and report directly to members about their work. Featured guests included:

- The New Hampshire Community Loan Fund reported on the *Business of Child Care*, a program that provides training, technical assistance and support for Early Childhood programs
- The Endowment for Health reported on the *Rand Return on Investment* study, which explains the benefits of investing in early childhood initiatives
- A supervisor from the Division of Family Assistance came to a meeting to answer questions from providers regarding the state child care scholarship system
- Leaders from Child Care Aware reported on *Licensed Plus 2.0.*, a new program that is working to improve quality in licensed child care programs
- Members of the State Child Care Emergency Planning taskforce reported on the plans to ensure continuation of available child care services in the case of a serious emergency or natural disaster

Looking forward, the Child Care Advisory Council will continue to closely monitor issues that may impact child care in New Hampshire. We remain committed to:

- All children having equal access to high quality, developmentally appropriate child care so their parents can work to support their families. The CCAC will closely monitor all rules or policy changes that may increase the cost of child care statewide, so that all families can secure safe and healthy care for their children that is guided and monitored by licensing and regulatory requirement.
- Ensuring that quality child care thrives in New Hampshire, and that the cost of high quality care is not defined in such a way that drives the cost to levels beyond what families can afford.
- Actively encouraging sustainability factors such as increased private and public investment in child care, sources of revenue to keep tuition reasonable, increased wages for teachers, and affordable quality initiatives.
- Recognizing that all members of the child care community need to have a voice on this council, including nonprofit and for-profit centers, family day care homes, after school programs, Head Start, and unlicensed programs.
- Ensuring that we have a dynamic and well-prepared workforce that reflects the NH population. As the population of NH changes and evolves over time, we know that our workforce must represent that diversity.

The Child Care Advisory Committee want child care agencies and workers to have the support and tools they need to best support families statewide and have a voice in policies that effect their operations. We all want to make sure that children are growing and thriving while their parents are working.

Respectfully Submitted,

Anne Grassie

Anne Grassie, Chair
New Hampshire Child Care Advisory Council

Executive Committee, New Hampshire Child Care Advisory Council:

Anne Grassie, Chair
Marti Ilg, Vice Chair
Marianne Barter, Secretary