



Family Child Care Task Force Meeting Minutes

Tuesday, June 23, 2020

6:00pm to 9:00pm (CST)

Virtual meeting (WebEx)

Task Force Members present: Ariane Bromberg, Cindy Cunningham, Representative Lisa Demuth, Erin Echternach, Heidi Hagel Braid, Elizabeth Harris, Stephanie Hogenson, Senator Mary Kiffmeyer (Co-Chair), Kim Leipold, Kelly Martini, Scott Marquardt, Ann McCully, Lanay Miller, Hollee Saville, Lauryn Schothorst, Julie Seydel, JoAnn Smith, Reggie Wagner, Representative Ami Wazlawik (Co-Chair), Senator Melissa Wiklund

Task Force Members absent: Samantha Chukuske, Dan Dorman, Erin Johnson-Balstad, Marit Woods

Presenter: Laura Kramer, Minnesota Management and Budget (MMB)-Results First

Task Force Consultants present: Judy Plante, Jessica Burke, Management Analysis and Development (MAD)

Each Task Force member received the following materials:

- Meeting agenda
- Anticipated Task Force meeting dates
- Small group discussion questions
- FCCTF Duties Status
- Open meeting law overview
- Tips for using Webex
- Former Family Child Care Provider Survey results presentation
- Former Family Child Care Provider Survey expanded report

Welcome, call to order, and introductions

Senator Kiffmeyer called the meeting to order at 6:10 pm. The new facilitation and project support team was introduced.

Task force business announcements

Senator Kiffmeyer reviewed ground rules for the task force, as well as open meeting law requirements. She reviewed the upcoming meeting schedule, and asked task force members to submit any meeting items to Jake Granholm within the week.

Updates

Judy gave an overview of the task force duties – the language comes out of the legislation. Duties #2 and #3 on the list were addressed in the interim report.

- Representative Wazlawik noted that some of the Task Force recommendations around variances were passed in both the Senate and House, and if it had not already been signed into law, it would be soon.
- Reggie Wagner noted DHS is consulting with stakeholders to move forward on the variance request form starting in July.
- A member said, regarding duty number two, that they did not believe that the language in the report accurately reflected the Task Force’s recommendation.

Presentation of former provider survey results

Laura Kramer, of Results First in Minnesota Management and Budget (MMB), presented an overview of the Former Child Care Provider Survey Results.

- The survey was conducted in February 2020.
- The purpose of the survey was to better understand barriers, circumstances and reasoning behind providers closing.
- Results First did not survey providers who shut down prior to 2017, because the providers had been closed too long and could have been providing input on things that had changed since they closed.
- Laura noted the survey questions were almost verbatim from what the task force had generated in their discussions about what they wanted to see.

The notable findings highlighted by Laura included:

- Most survey respondents said documentation is burdensome.
- Training is generally affordable, but providers find the time necessary for training to be burdensome.
- There is considerable difficulty finding substitutes, although this is less of an issue in the Twin Cities metropolitan area than in other parts of the state.
- Providers want documentation and other processes streamlined and want to be able to do more electronically.
- Providers struggle with feeling isolated – they said they lack support.

Reflections on survey results

Small groups reflected on the following questions:

1. As you heard the presentation and saw the results, what struck you? (What was new to you; what surprised you; what clarified the issues for you?)
2. What are the key messages from the survey results?
3. In conveying the survey results in a legislative report, what emphasis should be given?
4. How does this survey inform the other tasks of this group?

After the large group reconvened, each small group shared their responses to the reflection questions.

Group A

- Struck by the group of providers going into family child care to raise their own children/avoid child care expenditures. Thought maybe they should be a separate bucket.
- The lack of support or mentoring for providers was also notable for this group. Having that support or mentorship would help those getting into the field, it would help with isolation and business support. It is overwhelming to try to get into the business part of family child care. Potential providers have the actual provision of family child care down, but need support to become a business.
- Would be good to recommend or require that new providers receive training from other providers. Connect with a mentor or someone in DHS – make it a formalized program, professional development. This could also help with the complaint about stale trainings noted in the survey. Motivate providers to use the opportunities available to them.
- Streamlining of paperwork and adding support were their big takeaways.

Group B

- Surprised to learn providers thought the time required for training was more of a burden than the cost.
- Grants, etc. are helping drive businesses in COVID times; helping them try to succeed.
- Streamline trainings and make them available online; make the process easier: training, business requirements, variances.
- The survey is a very good starting place to help the Task Force prioritize issues.

Group C

- The issue of the lack of substitutes generated discussion – providers are familiar with the issue, but the group members who are not providers were not familiar.
- Regulations and related issues are not the problem. Need to streamline, make access easier, have better communication.
- Family/in-home providers are child care providers first, businesses second. Need to right-size regulations with this in mind.
- Need documentation and licensing support, especially for new providers.
- What can the survey results do to support providers? What can the private sector do? Some things the legislature cannot do anything about, like long hours. Can the legislature incentivize the private sector, for example, by having family child care in a commercial building?
- The survey results inform the duties around business development and technical assistance. Need to make sure training is relevant and determine who can fix things. Is it the legislature, or is it regulators?

Group D

- Disappointed in the number of respondents, and in the fact that the group with the highest response rate was those in business for less than five years.
- Struck by the issue of a lack of substitutes – the group had not heard much about it.
- Huge, critical piece – comparison of licensing regulations and paperwork because they are two different things.
- Realized capacity variances were not an issue.
- More support for recordkeeping, staying in business, food programs. There’s only one person doing that support work currently.
- Regarding the lack of benefits, maybe there could be cooperatives or provider groups that regulate themselves and band together to get health care benefits?
- Want to make sure when looking at survey results and issues that it remains broken down by regions. Needs are different in different parts of the state.
- There has been a slow and steady decline in the number of providers since the early 2000s, no major jumps.
- Mentoring and helping new providers realize what is out there and available for support is huge.

Full group discussion

There was general consensus among the full group that there is a strong need to focus on duties #4 (recommend business development and technical assistance resources) and #7 (review how trainings are offered, provided, coordinated and approved).

Senator Kiffmeyer noted the Task Force’s duties are in statute.

- She asked the task force to consider having subcommittees so that they can translate discussions into action.
- She also asked if the task force leadership group would look at what the subcommittees could look like and what work they would do.

A task force member suggested that a survey-type mechanism be used for gauging interest areas of passion for subcommittees. Another member suggested that there should be at least one family child care provider on each subcommittee.

Task force members were asked to send their subcommittee ideas to Jake Granholm with the guidance that the ideas should be relevant to task force duties.

Discussion of future meetings

Judy presented the tentative meeting schedule and an overview of the arc of how the work would be spread across the rest of the meetings.

- Tuesday, July 21
- Tuesday, August 18
- Tuesday, September 22
- Tuesday, October 20
- Possible additional meeting date, if necessary: Tuesday, October 27
- Tuesday, November 17

- Tuesday, December 8
- Thursday, January 28

A member suggested that the order of duties #5 and #8 be switched to discuss existing systems and then new systems.

Judy covered how she plans to build the legislative report. Rather than waiting until the end of the process, she will be creating the report shell and populate as the discussions occur.

There was a question whether the Task Force will cover other regulatory reforms under duty #2. **The leadership group would discuss this question.**

The virtual meeting technology was also discussed.

- Concerns were raised about not being able to see everyone during the meeting and during the breakout sessions.
- It would also be helpful if all meeting documents and necessary information were sent (or re-sent) together the day before the meeting so all of the attachments can be found in one place.

Next steps

- As the meeting adjourned, members were asked to fill out the meeting feedback survey.
- The next Task Force meeting is scheduled for Tuesday, July 21.