

**SWFI Learning Community Meeting Notes**  
**January 8<sup>th</sup> 2018 1:00pm -3:00pm**

**Desired Outcomes of Meeting:**

- Review indicator data to better understand our progress toward reaching our end result that “Colorado families are valued, healthy, and thriving across generations.”
- Understand the “story behind the data” and discuss root causes and barriers that get in the way of achieving our result.
- Generate potential solutions and strategies to address barriers; prioritize strategies through a two-generation approach using our SWFI Learning Community Guiding Principles

**Welcome, Introductions, Updates 1:00pm 1:10pm**

Relevant Updates:

- 2-Gen initiatives figuring heavily in the governor’s state of the state address coming up
- State agencies talking heavily about different multi-agency efforts include data sharing about students who are parents
- Report from 2-Gen conference will be on the Governor’s office page
- SWFI has been nominated as one of 10 finalists for bellwether award – this award wants to lift up best practice so that it can be replicated
- One of two sites nationwide selected for randomized control trial evaluation. RCT will start with students enrolled this coming fall.
- SWFI Student’s Served
  - 236 students at CCA and CCD
  - 74 students complete (some students still in progress) – numbers continue to grow

**Framing & Overview of Learning Community & Today’s Meeting 1:10pm – 1:20pm**

During the last Community Learning meeting, we defined our result and decided on indicators to measure our progress toward our result

**Result:** Colorado families are valued, healthy, and thriving across generations

**Indicators:**

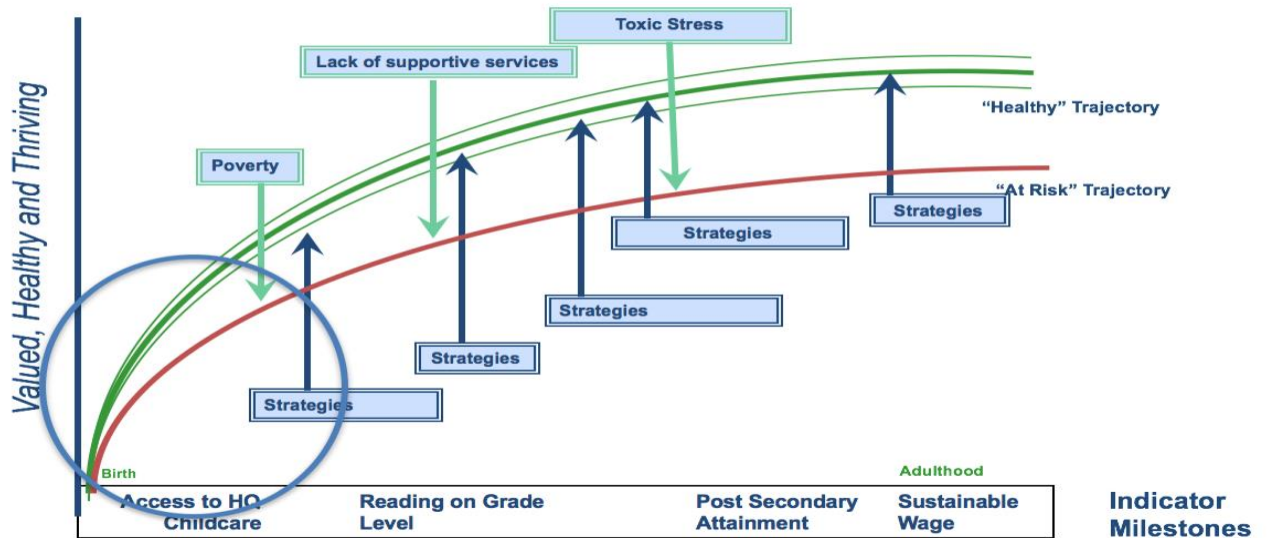
1. Percentage of children in high-quality child-care settings
2. 4th grade reading achievement levels
3. Percentage of families earning a sustainable wage
4. Post-secondary credential attainment

We are looking at these indicators as part of the lifespan, also as encompassing of 2-gen. (see image on next page)

**Data development agenda** (data we would like to see but do not currently have access to)

- High-quality child care to include those beyond CCCAP
- Would like to see broken down by county

## Result: Colorado families are valued, healthy, and thriving across generations.



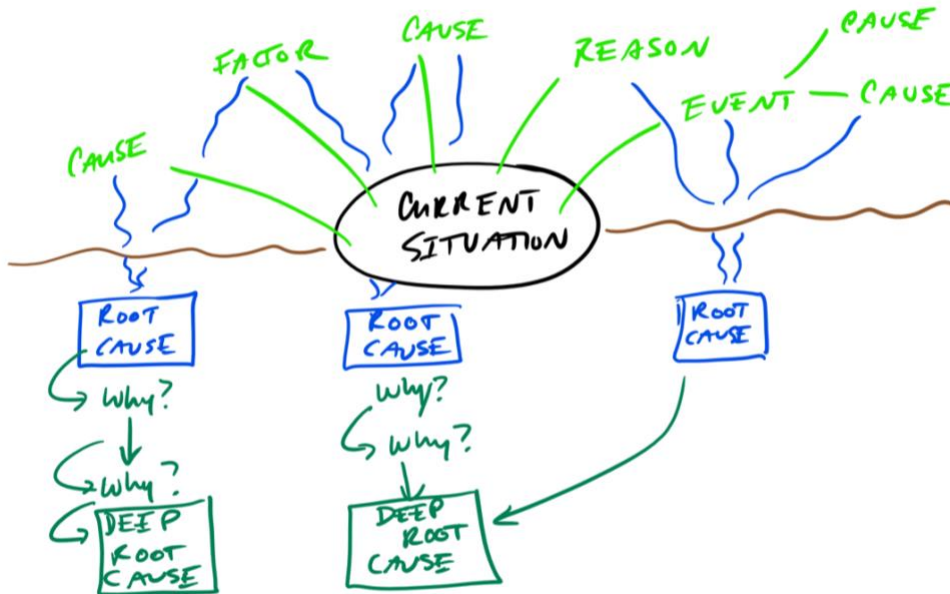
### Turning the Curve 1:20pm-1:50pm

#### Examining the Data

Meeting participants looked at [historical trend graphs](#) for the indicators and made the following observations.

High-quality child care setting	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• There's more children in high-quality care now than in the past, it's growing</li> <li>• The number of children in high-quality care increasing throughout the calendar year</li> <li>• Still though, just over 50%</li> </ul>
Fourth Grade Reading Score	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Stagnant over time</li> <li>• Denver, Arapahoe is lower than state averages shown</li> </ul>
Percentage of families earning a sustainable wage	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Higher than expected</li> <li>• Much high rate at self-sufficiency for families with 2 adults</li> <li>• Self-sufficiency standard is specific to counties, family structure (number of children)</li> <li>• Got this standard by averaging standards for Denver, Arapahoe, and Lakewood and then compared to data</li> </ul>
Post-secondary credential attainment	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Consistently going up.</li> <li>• Statewide certificates are more common, while at CCA and CCD associate statewide going up</li> </ul>

## Story Behind the Data -- Root Cause Analysis



Meeting participants uncovered the following barriers to accessing high quality child care and then looked deeper at the root causes of those barriers. The barriers families face included:

- High costs to families
- Lack of Training
- Low salaries for providers
- Wait Lists
- Lack of transportation
- Limited facility capacity
- Quality concerns
- Lack of funding, subsidies
- Lack of awareness of options

Root causes of the barriers...

### COST:

- CCAP funding not keeping pace with demand. HB1317 impacting not having available funding to match with demand
- Understanding full impact of spectrum (birth to death)
- Difficult choice for families of high quality and high price for families
- Mobility (need the support of the community) – “cliff affect having a child”
- Lack of incentives to private providers to take CCCAP dollars
- Difficulty of getting approved for CCCAP from self-employed families -- paperwork (1099) is a barrier
- Families who are self-employed have a very hard time figuring out how to get CCAP because of paperwork (1099). This is a barrier
- Agreement on true cost of care. Not fully understanding full cost of providing child care.

### CHILD CARE DESERTS:

- Cost of living going up in Metro area means that more low-income families are being pushed out to areas where there’s limited availability of child care

- CCCAP repayment scale lower in these areas
- Families unable to pay higher rates
- Market economics at play – businesses unable to make it work
- Infant and toddler spots are more limited because they require higher staffing rates
- No other investment strategies to address this

#### LACK OF AWARENESS (about care and tax credits/employee benefits)

- county differences in how programs and resources are structured (TANF, CCAP, etc.) -- and limited knowledge about how they all work together and how to best serve clients
- parents may not have awareness of resources to find people in their locations
- business investment limited – lack of awareness of tax credit
- limited understanding of how to approach as benefit

#### LACK OF QUALIFIED STAFF/PROVIDERS

- Hard to get quality staff to be able to pay them at rates that parents are able to pay
- Can't keep qualified staff because salaries are too low. High turnover as a result
- Value of childcare workers is lower, professionalism lagging
- Lots of providers left because of credentialing requirements

#### AVAILABILITY / PROXIMITY

- Transportation is limited for students in ½ day programs to get from school to child care centers
- Lower availability in lower-income areas due to poor business model/funding
  - CCCAP reimbursement rate
  - lower families ability to pay
  - no alternative investments
- To sustain funding, centers often choose to locate in areas where parents are more likely to be able to pay outright as other funding decreases
- Infant/toddler slot shortage due to high teacher ratio disincentives and exacerbates business model challenges
- Population of working/low-income family increasingly moving to areas without child care (and other resources!)
- Parents may not have awareness of resources to be able to find providers nearby to them.

#### FLEXIBLE SCHEDULE

- costs more for flexible schedules and not as many providers available
- Lack of availability for care for people working at night – if it is available it's much more expensive. One reason it's not available is because centers get same rate so why would they be motivated to provide care at night, during off hours
- Compounding effects of mental health and generational substance abuse, poverty...

### Generating Strategies 1:50 – 3:00pm

The group brainstormed strategies to address the root causes of the barriers that families face when trying to access high quality child care. In smalls groups, they brainstormed many strategies and then selected their most promising strategies based on which strategies aligned with the Learning Community’s Guiding Principles and which strategies were potential high in impact and lower in effort. Small groups shared their top ideas with the entire group and then the collective voted on their favorite strategies. The list of strategies with the number of votes they received is below.

1. Increase public investment for early childhood education on a level similar to K-12 education. Pay teachers on a similar scale as K-12 teachers	14 votes
2. Change reimbursement strategy to better incentivize care that addresses scheduling and location gaps (for both centers and FFNs)	11
3. Pilot employer investment model targeting SWFI students and/or service areas and/or by industry	11
4. De-mystify licensing process for FFNs and identify licensing resources	6
5. Pilot different business models for care providers, including increasing understanding of concept of child care as a business endeavor and co-op structures	4
6. Increase awareness of FFN/informal providers	3
7. Include broader family within the conversation & provide incentives/support for FFN/informal provider	3
8. Universal childcare, full day, kindergarten, greater than 180-day school year	2
9. Identify businesses & celebrate providers supporting working families by a) partnering with EPIC to leverage resources & expand reach, and b) creating public/private partnerships or forums	2
10. P.S.A. – child care maps, engage adult ad. Programs to inform about resources	2
11. Review regulations for child care centers to ID effects on costs. Eliminate those regulations that increase costs but do not increase outcomes. Put savings into wages	1
12. Link childcare efforts with child support efforts	1
13. Employer/educational institutional flexibility w/ schedule	0
14. Increase communication about importance of early childhood education, and availability of services and where to go to get help	0
15. Looking across CDHS program lines for common needs and funding purposes. (no votes)	0

## Meeting Evaluation

### What about this meeting worked well?

- Clear, structured facilitation that was focused towards outcomes, time management, good setting, and food
- The opportunity to work as a group, brainstorm and engage in conversation with others at the table
- Good representation of stakeholders

### How could it have been better?

- More time—there was a lot to cover and the short amount of time prevented going deeper into conversation
- Preparation/information ahead of time such as agenda and data
- Clearer facilitation of table discussions to avoid going down “pot holes”
- Better understanding of key stakeholders

### Recommendations for additional partners?

- Including more decision-makers, or those who can truly initiate and direct change, such as businesses interested in offering child care benefits for employees or support ECE as well as state legislation
- Student voice or focus group data that reflect target population
- FFN representation
- Workforce centers
- Child welfare

### Questions, comments, concerns?

- How to align chosen problem/strategy with what has already been done or attempted. How to avoid repeating already failed efforts.

### Contact information of those interested in action team involvement

- Cathy Fabiano; Work Life Partnership; (303) 350-6593
- Lisa Grant; Mile High Early Learning; [lisag@milehighearlylearning.org](mailto:lisag@milehighearlylearning.org)
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