

Mayor's Commission for Children Meeting Minutes

September 13, 2022, 8:00 AM

Commission members and Advisory Council members present: Dr. Elizabeth Andrews, Alexis Brown, Amy Chenoweth, Bria Coale, Christy Davis, Rinda Davis, Denise Fredrick, Brandy Harris, Chris Jarratt, Gerry Lee, Kayleen Long, Jennifer McClure, Dr. Kayce Morton, Dr. Douglas McNeal, Kimberly Shinn-Brown, Mike White.

Members Absent:

Staff Members Absent: MCC Executive Director: Brigitte Marrs

Meeting Minutes: The meeting was called to order at 8:03 AM by Christy Davis. Ms. Davis reported that MCC Executive Director Brigitte Marrs was not present this date we would proceed without the certain meeting logistics. Minutes from August 2022 will be postponed until the October meeting for approval.

Ms. Kimberly Shinn-Brown, executive director for OACAC Head Start program was introduced as this month's speaker. She provided a slide show-supported discussion of the Early Head Start and Head Start program. Ms. Shinn-Brown described the history of its work on a national and regional scale and talked about how the programs look now compared to before the onset of the COVID pandemic.

Ms. Shinn-Brown discussed the increase in children's mental health referrals in the local Head Start program, noting changes ranging from a 27.5% referral rate to a 44.8% referral rate for mental health care services. Access to care within the program includes four on-staff mental health providers, and referrals to contracted community-based mental health clinicians.

Changes in staffing, ability to maintain teaching staff over the long term, and the need to provide competitive salaries for all staff remain serious challenges for early childhood education programs, including Head Start, as Ms. Shinn-Brown explained. She discussed the Foundation Funding Formula, and its ongoing impact on the Head Start program, most specifically on teacher salaries. This translates to outcomes for children, she explained.

After listening to Ms. Shinn-Brown's presentation, the membership engaged in a discussion related to her points regarding the connection between fully funding teacher salaries and outcomes for children. It was agreed that the significant impact of this needs to be discussed further, and with more time and focus as a membership. The membership thanked Ms. Shinn-Brown for her informative presentation.

Meeting was adjourned at 9:05AM