

Bureau of Child Development and Head Start Collaboration

GSQ Advisory Committee

Meeting Minutes Thursday, April 11, 2024

9:00 AM to 10:30 AM

Location: Virtual via Teams

In Attendance: *Andrea Foster, Sarah Henry, Heidi Hammell, Chris Casserly, Joan Izen, Liz Scruton, Hillary Pincoske, Dee Dee Thurber, Alex Amaral, Annmarie Censullo, Suelaine Poling, Christina D'Allesandro, Jackie Firmin, Shannon Tremblay, Adele Robinson, Heidi Karajcic, Cathy Hazelton*

Meeting Objectives:

- Provide updates and answer questions for transparency on system progress
- Provide a comprehensive overview of ongoing contract work
- Get member input on next steps

Application and award updates. Endorsement updates.

Targeted outcome: Committee is informed of current and future status of awards.

- 1 program awarded in February
- 1 program awarded in March
- 6 applications on deck
 - one is a crosswalk that is applying for step 4
 - the others are regular licensed programs
 - 3 PM programs and the rest are ERS - at least one is Licensed Plus
- 1 program that is an EC program serving OST and one OST awarded that is a New Morning School

Family Engagement Endorsement

The Bureau wants to recognize programs that are currently doing this work

- Andrea is going to award our NAEYC and Head Start programs that are already in GSQ with this endorsement
- Also taking a closer look at the programs that have submitted Strengthening Families materials and see how close they are to reaching the standards for this endorsement

GSQ Capacity Build contract updates

Targeted outcome: Committee is informed about the purpose, process, and deliverables addressed in the GSQ Capacity Build project and have the opportunity to ask questions and provide feedback.

- Update on Tuition Assistance - this contract is working through the CCSNH system - \$500,000
 - Spring 396 grants - ~\$250,000
 - Confident that summer and fall we will spend the other half of these funds
 - Lots of the barriers have been removed for this pot of money
 - CCSNH opened their enrollment ahead so that students could plan ahead and plan for using these dollars
- Update of Toy kits:
 - Sent OST programs in GSQ toys and tools that align with SACERS-U
 - Purchased through Lakeshore Learning
 - 36 eligible sites
 - 54 Kits

- \$51, 097.00 total spent
- Dollars were spent based on capacity - Every 50 students earn one kit ~\$850 kit
- 7 kits on hold to be sent out to onboarding OST programs during this contract

COMMENT: Great! Can you share the list of materials and their connections to SACERS items? I can use that information in my continuous quality improvement training. Thank you! Cathy Hazelton

- Credential Incentive
 - \$100 Amazon e-gift cards - one time incentive for earning a credential during our contract period
 - \$19,800 - spent to date on this pilot

Sarah will send her visual to Shannon for her meeting this afternoon so she can share this information

Abt Associates Report Presentation: Advancing Continuous Quality Improvement through New Hampshire's Granite Steps for Quality

Targeted outcome: Committee understand continuous quality improvement relative to QRIS in Maine and Connecticut and hears recommendations for how that information can inform the future of NH's system.

- What does CQI look like in other states with a QRIS program
- Looked at states in our general area

Adele's slides and notes will be shared after the meeting

- We are here not to redesign NH but to focus on what CQI looks like and what that means in different states
- Lots of businesses are using this term - it is not just an education term - it is for engaging staff, data driven, reflective, ongoing,

In General: New Hampshire's Granite Steps for Quality

- Licensing - QRIS - Accreditation: points of improvement
- NH: Two Standards Learning Environments, Staff Qualifications
 - 4 Steps
 - Two Pathways - ERS and PM
 - Accredited Programs and Head Starts crosswalked

CT: Elevate

Focus is achieving Accreditation

3 levels - Member, Member +, Member Accredited

ME: Rising Stars for Quality

Private public partnership that is funded by the state to do most of the work to support - through the higher ed system

5 levels and a requirement to participate

CONSIDERATIONS for NH (6)

- 1) Create a NH version of Maine's **5 steps why program**

Develop toolkits on self study CQI

Create a Q&A section on the GSQ website for providers to post and see what answers to each other's questions to GSQ

- Q&A: Andrea mentions a live chat as possibly the best way to answer questions with providers
 - This could build a live thread of Q&A to be put on the website
 - It could help with the feeling of isolation that some providers feel

2) Establish a paid GSQ Liaison in each of the regions

Train Liaisons to be ambassadors to resources for GSQ - outreach, basic information on GSQ and connections to ERS and PM and accreditations.

- How can we use these people most effectively?
- Human touch to the support that is provided
- Would this be through the bureau – Child Care Aware - philanthropic
 - Joan really supports this idea as there is Zoom and technology burn out - a go to person for support is always a better resource
- CCA is there to support programs with all things GSQ or other
 - Create a CQI checklist - this way programs see what they are already doing toward CQI and that there may not be much more to do to be part of GSQ
 - Adele will share Maine's Inclusion checklist and Program evaluation because this could be modified to become a checklist that DeeDee is talking about

3) Fund a small statewide recognized Accreditation Facilitation Project (AFP) and grow to having AFP staff in each of the regions

- DeeDee - found mentoring very helpful in her experience - accredited program director to onboarding accredited program director
 - Adele suggest a more formal system so there is control over what is said to programs and how the support is targeted and
- Chris was part of an accreditation cohort in Maine to help programs get accredited - very successful.

4) Fund a cost of care estimation study with different scenarios for the state to understand the cost of quality to providers at different GSQ Steps

- Include in the state CCDF Plan to be submitted this summer to federal Office of Child Care that will use the cost estimate
Can be with or without market rate survey

- Make decisions based on rate as well as professional development
- Adele can share plans from other states with Sarah and Andrea so they can break it down

5) New Hampshire could provide incentives to families who attend programs with higher levels of quality. This could drive more programs in the GSQ to move higher levels or for programs to participate who have not in the past.

- Both a reward and quality tool
- Family member perspective - Number of high quality programs is a potential problem
 - Long waitlists for most programs
 - She would rather see some of the funding go back into centers so they can help continue with their quality care - help with staff turnover
- Some of the centers with the long wait lists are the more expensive higher quality programs so maybe there is a balance

- 7-10% on childcare
 - If you give families an incentive will they actually use it
- 6) Create quality accountability by requiring participation - starting with providers that accept subsidy
- Long list of states that say this is really important and should not be an optional system
In order to receive the subsidy you must participate.
 - A program needs to see how much benefit there is to participation

Reflection, Questions, and Feedback

Targeted outcome: Committee members have the opportunity to share ideas and ask questions about the report.

- We have an opportunity with accreditation
 - Some effort and thought into achieving this
 - Build a bridge to help programs achieve this status to build NH quality
 - Work with Jackie Furman will help gather information about how to build accreditation
- CQI at the forefront of the language we use with providers
- What funding does NH have? Other states have other dollars to help do some of the things they do
CCDF is the only funding source for a lot of NH
- Chris says that staffing, again, is the barrier to most everything - accreditation
- We are in stabilization post-covid
- Tuition assistance is the key to staff credentialing and building quality to stabilizing the field
- Using the data from Adele's research and the focus groups that BHII has done to create evaluation for next steps, both short term goals and long-term goals for how our system moves forward

Next Meetings Scheduled June 13, 2024; August 8, 2024 9:00-10:30 a.m.