Thanks to those of you who attended the breakfast meeting this morning! Considering the rainy weather, it is especially appreciated. I wanted to write a quick follow up email while I'm on my lunch break before I forget all the details from this morning.  Please note that I have copied Nancy and Cristy on this email, who joined us this morning as well.

As a result of our discussion with Senator Ikley-Freeman, we are considering a community forum on child care.  She had originally proposed a study in the Senate, but the committee chair did not approve it.  She suggested the next step be community forums to garner public interest/support, with the hopes that this would help get a study approved next year (interim studies happen Aug-Oct).  The study would help to clarify the problems and identify viable solutions.

For the forums, these are the people/groups we discussed should be included, though this is by no means a definitive list:

* Senator Ikley-Freeman
* Senator Gary Stanislawski (Chair of Education committee)
* Representative Carol Bush (Tulsa rep)
* Child care resource center
* Other community organizations who are experts on child care

It was also commented that having a forum in midtown would be a good interest booster (as we usually have the best turnout at midtown events) and this could help to spread interest to other areas of town as well.

Other things to follow up on include

* The status of H.R. 2740: Labor, Health and Human Services, Education, Defense, State, Foreign Operations, and Energy and Water Development Appropriations Act, 2020 – This bill is provisionally dead due to a failed vote for cloture on September 18, 2019.  The Senate may try again.  This is the bill referenced in the OK Policy article we read for the meeting, which is supposed to provide another increase in the CCDBG funding for FY20.
* The Oklahoma Watch article mentioned that in summer 2019 DHS was supposed to be considering increasing the income threshold for families to receive the child care subsidy. I did a cursory search to check the status of this, but didn't have any luck.
* Cristy offered to share a white paper she helped author about the unique aspects of this issue to the Tulsa community.
* Kathy asked about continuing this discussion at our next monthly meeting on Oct. 22.

If there are any details I missed, please chime in.

Melissa

On Thu, Sep 19, 2019 at 1:56 PM Melissa Acton <melissasueacton@gmail.com> wrote:

Ivy-I'm assuming you're going to Chicago for work, but I hope you get to do something fun too while you're there!

To all--It occurred to me that a colleague of mine who is a professor in our Instructional Leadership and Academic Curriculum program.has some research that might be relevant to our discussion as well.  I've attached a flyer about the project which shows some stats about early childhood teachers' well being.  If we have time, we can add this to the discussion.

On Tue, Sep 17, 2019 at 5:38 AM Ivy Griffey <ivygriffey@gmail.com> wrote:

Hi all,

I’m sorry I have not done a good job of keeping up with everything going on!

I will be flying to Chicago on the 24th so will miss seeing all of you, but hope to catch up in October.

Hope you all had a wonderful summer.

Ivy

Sent from my iPhone

On Sep 16, 2019, at 9:20 PM, Melissa Acton <melissasueacton@gmail.com> wrote:

Good evening all,

Next week we will be discussing the childcare desert/access to affordable childcare.  I've provided some recommended reading below.  I foresee this being a discussion about what progress has been made so far, and what still needs to be done.  My hope is that Senator Ikley-Freeman will be able to talk about what she wants to accomplish by doing a study in the Senate and what we can do to advocate.  Let me know if you have any other suggestions or resources.

Thanks!

Melissa

Senator Ikley Freeman recommended this website as a data resource:

<https://childcaredeserts.org/?fbclid=IwAR2Gfrsfb8DgctdXmeXoWsPop_VvABopQbpHfBLQYw98k1NfwyBhz-a_XpY&state=OK&urbanicity=All>

This report from OPI lays out the progress that has been made and areas where needs are still not being met:

<https://okpolicy.org/expansion-in-federal-funding-is-improving-access-and-quality-in-oklahomas-child-care-subsidy-program/#ch5>

This Oklahoma Watch article from last summer talks about child care centers closing and the DHS rate changes:

<https://oklahomawatch.org/2018/07/24/child-care-becoming-scarcer-as-costs-closures-take-toll/>