

## Closing Session: *Closing Remarks by ACF Leadership*

Thursday, April 18, 2019

4:00 p.m. – 5:00 p.m. | *Constitution CDE*

### 1. Descriptive Information

<p><b>Closing Session: <i>Closing Remarks by ACF Leadership</i></b></p> <p>The closing plenary will feature ACF’s leadership reflecting on critical questions and key information needs in light of current agency priorities for supporting low-income and vulnerable children and families through child care and early education programs and policies.</p>	<p><b>Presenter</b></p> <p><b>Lynn Johnson</b>, Assistant Secretary, Administration for Children and Families, HHS</p> <p><b>Shannon Christian</b>, Director of the Office of Child Care (OCC)</p> <p><b>Dr. Deborah Bergeron</b>, Director of the Office of Head Start (OHS) and Early Childhood Development</p> <p><b>Scribe</b></p> <p><b>Katie Caldwell</b>, ICF</p>
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### 2. Documents Available on Website

N/A

### 3. Brief Summary of Presentations

- **Summary of Presentation #1: Shannon Christian**
  - The Child Care and Development Fund program, overseen by the Office of Child Care, has a dual focus on supporting vulnerable families who need a safe place for their children while they work, but also in fitting in to the general child care market and ensuring that child care subsidies provide access to quality care in the market. The Office of Child Care also recently inherited the Preschool Development Birth to Five Grants and as such are thinking about systems building. The Tribal MIECHV program also reminds us of the importance of early development starting in infancy.
  - My priorities:
    - Focusing more on family child care and how it can meet the needs of families needing nontraditional hour care.
      - The research around nontraditional hours and subsidies has shown that it is more complicated than previously thought
    - Quality of supply and access for different age groups. How can we help people understand the need of families with children through age 12?
    - Parent choice- what does it mean to have parent choice? What rates should we be holding states to and how do we determine what percentage of the market they are serving?
    - Role of cost vs. price in rate setting and how it may be impacting the market in ways that aren’t understood yet
    - What is QRIS impact on market, and how is use of incentives affecting the market?
    - Family child care fighting a bias for centers in professional circles
    - Challenges:
      - Getting the research out to the policymakers
      - Attracting and retaining a workforce – not just provider workforce, but workforce at every level (administrators at county, state and federal level)
    - Explore the link between economic stability and affordability and access to child care
      - How does this influence parents choices in careers?

- What can families afford? How does that fit with the tax code? Why don't eligible families apply?
    - Office of Child Care is always trying to help states determine how to allocate their dollars for the most important things
  - Biggest takeaway: low income children with parents working nontraditional hours are not an anomaly and we can not move toward solutions that exclude them. We need to improve quality across settings
- **Summary of Presentation #2: Dr. Deborah Bergeron**
  - Priorities:
    - Fall into two categories of "wildly important goals"
      - Collaboration:
        - Creating better relationships between Head Start and the public school system
          - There is a need for more research
          - Universal enrollment (Grand Rapids, Michigan has done this very well)
          - Better data sharing
          - Aligning curriculum
      - Leadership:
        - Early care and education leadership research is scant
        - Hard to identify Head Start leadership at the local level
  - In the upcoming budget we will be able to fund 12 school systems with Head Start to create plans for better streamlining of programs and outcomes and look forward to learning from and sharing the results of those projects
- **Summary of Presentation #3: Lynn Johnson**
  - ACF values these meeting as it's such a valuable opportunity to exchange ideas and research
  - Evaluation and research is critical to knowing how to spend time on things that matter
  - A question ACF leadership asked ourselves each day: are families better off because they have come into contact with our programs?
  - We have a professional requirement to step out of our silos to better serve people
  - Rigorous and relevant research is the way to move forward

#### 4. Brief Summary of Discussion

- Head Start, Child Care, State PreK program- 3 funding streams- how do you see them working together at the Federal level?
  - We are open to suggestions. There should be a way to do so without changing laws. In addition, it is important to remember that Head Start is not an early child care program; it is a poverty alleviation program. We don't want to lose all the adult services that are offered through it.
  - As part of the Preschool Development Birth-to-Five grants there is an opportunity to report to Congress on this issue. Which alignment strategies should we be supporting?
  - Seeing it work as the school system and local providers work together, need to get out of our own way to work together
- It would be excellent to have more opportunities like this meeting for researchers and evaluators to convene.
- Is there any efforts to partner with the Department of Labor to offer child care for parents who are engaged in education and training (versus paid work)?
  - Yes, we are looking forward to working with our partners at DOL on this issue.