

IMPLEMENTATION TEAM

October 23, 2023, 11-12:30, Rm 155, City Hall

Present Members: Kameron Perez-Verdia (Assembly), Kevin Cross (Assembly), Anna Brawley (Assembly), Jennifer Veneklasen (Assembly staff), Carl Jacobs (ASD – School Board), Trevor Storrs (Alaska Children’s Trust), Jen Griffis (Alaska Children’s Trust), Kim Rash (Anchorage Health Department), Dawn Skeete (Anchorage Health Department), Melinda Myers (thread), Eric Croft (volunteer; campaign team)

Absent Members: Katrina Ahlfield (Kids’ Corps., Inc.), Ivy Spohnholz (volunteer; campaign team)

Members Not Yet Seated: parent members; provider members; member from JBER; member from business community

Staff: Austin Quinn-Davidson

Guests: No guests

Notes:

- I. Welcome and Introductions
- II. IT Roles and Composition/Timeline
 - a. T Storrs provided overview of Prop 14: its origin (idea by Eric Croft); initial partners (Children’s Funding Project); next steps (formed small team, including Ivy Spohnholz). Worked with Assembly and brought forward to the public for a vote in 2023. Raised \$350,000 to support campaign. All municipal marijuana tax (5% currently) is now dedicated to child care and early education. Tax held at 5% until at least 2028. Tax cannot go above 10% (lowered from 12%). Can use 10% of tax revenue for administration so AHD isn’t burdened by another program with no funds to administer. Important to build trust and transparency with the public and intend to use staff to organize many engagement and listening sessions, in all different forms. Staff will also explore best practices and trends in the sector and produce a white paper. The public is very interested and we’ve had lots of interest! There have been no decisions yet on how to use the funds; that’s what we’re here to do. Funds can be used for capital costs, operations, workforce, etc. We will be exploring matching funds and leveraging where we can. Next major steps are engagement, white paper research and discussion, Assembly ordinance implementing the Accountability Board, drafting of a three-year strategic plan, and seating the Accountability Board.
 - b. Discussion re: parent and provider member applications. Please spread the word!
 - c. Discussion around providers being members of the IT, vs. merely an advisory group. Pros are having the experts at the table, shaping the fund. Cons are possible conflicts if they also eventually apply for funds. All members are essentially sitting in an advisory capacity, since the

budget and Board seats have to be determined by Mayor and full Assembly vote. Group decides all members will sign a conflicts form – if conflicts arise, raise them. The group agrees the benefits of having providers at the table outweigh the complications and identifying conflicts takes care of concerns.

- d. Discussion around having a business representative on the IT: would make sense, given the workforce challenges in the sector and impact to employers. T Storrs and A Quinn-Davidson will invite a business member.

III. Public Nature of Meetings and Notes

- a. IT members agree these meetings should be public and notes should be displayed on our website.

IV. Leadership of IT

- a. Will discuss co-chairs concept at the next meeting, once all members are seated. Would be nice to have one co-chair from this existing group of folks (some discussion around that being an Assembly member or someone from ACT), and one either a parent or provider.

V. Group reviews the new website and the draft communications plan, which will be completed once we discuss channels for each member. Staff will then build a communications calendar. She circulate draft plan for specific feedback.

- a. Suggestion that we add “events” to the “meetings and presentations” category.

VI. Discussion on who we need to ensure to engage

- a. Northlink aviation study discussed.
- b. Staff will redistribute the AAIEYC presentation notes to the IT; last page has a list of entities we need to talk with (just to start; want to many more and currently soliciting feedback).
- c. Make sure to engage with Alaska Resource Families, an organization that works with foster children.
- d. Staff will share white paper with Assembly, once we have it. Perhaps we hold an Assembly (joint w ASD?) work session at that point. Staff will reach out to all Assembly members in the meantime to share status of our work and next steps (as well as share provider and parent application). Full Assembly had requested an Assembly Resolution on ACCEEF status and next steps. J Veneklasen can draft, with A Quinn-Davidson’s support. Also could give a monthly update to Rules committee. One of co-chairs can generally give update.

VII. Discussion around different approaches to spending funds (deep vs. wide impact). Might be useful in strategic plan to categorize different types of funds.

VIII. White paper

- a. A Quinn-Davidson obtain notes from Alaska Humanities Forum recent child care convening. Also can ask United Way to get applications out to potential parent members.
- b. Important to understand not only what other jurisdictions are doing, but how they fund those actions.

IX. Governor’s Task Force on Child Care

- a. A Quinn-Davidson summarizes discussions and work so far
- b. J Griffis regularly attends Governor’s Task Force. Will provide updates to this group going forward. A Quinn-Davidson also attends regularly and can be backup for J Griffis.

X. Future meetings

- a. In person/Teams hybrid.
- b. Perhaps early afternoon is best for providers?
- c. Next meeting: November 28th from 2-4pm

- d. A Quinn-Davidson commits to meeting with new IT members added later to go over background and catch them up before next meeting

IMPLEMENTATION TEAM

November 28, 2023, 2-4pm, Rm 155, City Hall

Present Members: Kameron Perez-Verdia (Assembly), Anna Brawley (Assembly), Jennifer Veneklasen (Assembly staff), Carl Jacobs (ASD – School Board), Trevor Storrs (Alaska Children’s Trust), Jen Griffis (Alaska Children’s Trust), Kim Rash (Anchorage Health Department), Dawn Skeete (Anchorage Health Department), Melinda Myers (thread), Eric Croft (volunteer; campaign team); Katrina Ahlfield (Kids’ Corps., Inc.), Jade Hayden (Hmoob Cultural Center of Alaska), Branwen Collier (Early Learning for Everyone), Ethan Petticrew (Cook Inlet Native Head Start), Nora Matell (parent), Jessica Simonsen (parent), Ellie Ishaya (parent), Heather Weafer (Child and Youth Programs, U.S. Air Force), Kathleen McArdle (Anchorage Chamber)

Absent Members: Ivy Spohnholz (volunteer; campaign team), Kevin Cross (Assembly), Kirsten Scott (Little Sprouts Child Care)

Staff: Austin Quinn-Davidson

Guests: Two members of the public

Notes:

- I. Welcome and Introductions
 - a. The IT welcomed its newest members: Ethan, Branwen, Jade, Nora, Jessica, and Ellie. All present members and staff introduced themselves.
- II. Overview of Prop 14 & ACCEE Fund
 - a. T. Storrs provided an overview including Prop 14’s origin (idea by E. Croft), initial partners, and next steps. All municipal marijuana tax (5% currently) is now dedicated to child care and early education. Tax held at 5% until at least 2028. Tax cannot go above 10% (lowered from 12%). Can use 10% of tax revenue for administration. Important to build trust and transparency with the public and intend to use staff to organize many engagement and listening sessions. Staff will also explore best practices and trends in the sector and produce a white paper. Funds can be used for capital costs, operations, workforce, etc. We will be exploring matching funds and leveraging where we can. Next major steps are engagement, white paper research and discussion, Assembly ordinance implementing the Accountability Board, drafting of a three-year strategic plan and first budget, and seating the Accountability Board.
- III. Finalize Agenda
 - a. Nothing additional added to agenda
- IV. Select IT Co-Chairs
 - a. Members engaged in a discussion around the purpose of the co-chairs (primarily running the meetings, but some pre-work, whether meetings or reviewing drafts agendas, etc. may occur).

- b. K. McArdle moved to make T. Storrs and J. Simonsen co-chairs. K. Perez-Verdia seconded. Members voted unanimously for T. Storrs and J. Simonsen as co-chairs.
- V. Update on Governor’s Task Force
 - a. J. Griffis provided an update on work done so far. J. Griffis, A. Quinn-Davidson, and H. Weafer described the relationship of this work to ours and answered questions about the Task Force.
- VI. Engagement Plan and Schedule
 - a. Engagement events
 - i. A. Quinn-Davidson presented a draft engagement schedule. Members engaged in a discussion around the importance of engaging the public, including community members who might be difficult to reach based on language or other barriers. Members recommended the events be fun for kids to draw in families and that we make efforts to reach unlicensed providers, churches, and residents in specific geographic areas. Members discussed piggybacking on other community events, in addition to the specific events suggested by staff, to maximize engagement in our community. Multiple members suggested attendance at specific events and committed to following up with staff with dates and additional details. A. Brawley suggested members might volunteer to attend an event, as staff wouldn't be able to do them all. Staff is working to secure space, child care, food, and take care of other details for the events described.
 - ii. Staff is working on a survey that will be included in all communications regarding the events, so if folks cannot participate in person or via Zoom for the Zoom events, they can still complete the survey so their feedback is captured. There will be prizes for submitting the survey to encourage participation.
 - b. Possible panels
 - i. Staff suggested possible panels we could host at IT meetings. Members were particularly interested in the following issues/panels: workforce, including gaps and other technical information as well as a discussion of the career pipeline/track for this sector; hearing from the City of Juneau about their program.
- VII. Communications
 - a. Staff reviewed upcoming communications and outreach she did to individual IT members. She hopes to have more communications coming soon in the form of newsletters, social media posts, website blurbs, etc. Staff can assist with reviewing communications and members have the Communications Plan as a guide.
 - b. Members discussed our use of the terms “child care” versus “early education.” These terms can be confusing and sometimes mean different things to different people. Members agreed that when we discuss “child care” in this group, we mean all forms of child care and early education, including traditional child care during the typical work day, before school care, after school care, pre-k, summer care, early education programs, etc.
- VIII. White paper
 - a. Staff reviewed ongoing research she has done, including:
 - i. Meetings with experts and those in the sector, including Commissioner Hedberg and policy expert Leah VanKirk, providers, consultants working on substantive reports on child care topics, such as Agnew::Beck, school-aged providers and representatives, and parents
 - ii. Research into what other jurisdictions are doing, whether in Alaska (Juneau) or outside of Alaska (KY, TN, WA, NM, etc.)

- b. Staff raised potential ideas for inclusion in the upcoming white paper (expected to be discussed at the next IT meeting), including:
 - i. Setting aside funds for capital expenses, including renovations
 - ii. Using funds to support technical assistance for businesses who want to establish on-site or adjacent child care
 - iii. Funding wage increases for providers
 - iv. Funding the cost of providers' kids care, thus drawing in more child care employees, resulting in more overall care being available to the community
 - v. Incentivizing retention through support of programs like ROOTS (Retaining Our Outstanding Teachers)
 - vi. Funding training for providers
 - vii. Partnering with organizations that could provide mental health supports to children and providers
 - viii. Evaluating the Muni licensing program and exploring possible improvements, if needed
 - ix. Exploring a health care co-operative model so that providers could more easily provide benefits to their employees
 - x. Exploring a substitute pool for providers, including in-home providers
 - xi. Exploring a mobile child care unit and drop-in child care services

IX. Conflicts Form

- a. Brief discussion around the purpose of the form. All IT members are advisory; ultimate funding decisions will be made by the Mayor and Assembly, based on recommendations by the Board.
- b. Members signed and delivered forms to staff. Staff will collect signed forms from members not physically present.

X. Future Meetings

- a. In person/Teams hybrid option will be available for each meeting
- b. All meetings will be held from 2:30-4:30pm in Rm. 155 at City Hall, unless it's not available, in which case the meetings will be held at the Anchorage Health Department. Staff will send out calendar invites for all meetings.
- c. Meeting dates selected through June 2024: January 16th, February 15th, March 20th, April 17th, May 15th, and June 18th

XI. Public participation

- a. K. Rash moves to ensure we post notes from every meeting on the ACCEE Fund website, and invite members of the public to join the meetings in person as well. K. McArdle seconds. Members unanimously support.

IMPLEMENTATION TEAM

January 16, 2024, Rm 155, City Hall

Present Members: Kameron Perez-Verdia (Assembly), Anna Brawley (Assembly), Kevin Cross (Assembly), Jennifer Veneklasen (Assembly staff), Trevor Storrs (Alaska Children’s Trust), Jen Griffis (Alaska Children’s Trust), Dawn Skeete (Anchorage Health Department), Melinda Myers (thread), Eric Croft (volunteer; campaign team); Katrina Ahlfield (Kids’ Corps., Inc.), Jade Hayden (Hmoob Cultural Center of Alaska), Branwen Collier (Early Learning for Everyone), Nora Matell (parent), Jessica Simonsen (parent), Heather Weafer (Child and Youth Programs, U.S. Air Force), Kathleen McArdle (Anchorage Chamber)

Absent Members: Carl Jacobs (ASD – School Board), Ivy Spohnholz (volunteer; campaign team), Kim Rash (Anchorage Health Department), Ethan Petticrew (Cook Inlet Native Head Start)

Staff: Austin Quinn-Davidson

Guests: none

Notes:

- I. Finalize Agenda
- II. Member Background and Introductions
 - a. Members discussed their backgrounds and reasons for their interest in this work. Some members are foster parents, many are parents, some are providers who know all too well the pressures on the sector, and many highlighted the impacts of lack of child care and early education supports on our community. Topics brought up included: need to support military spouses in finding work while stationed in Anchorage, which depends on available child care; the tie between available child care/education with the economy and outmigration from Alaska; the high cost of care, when it is available, and how unsustainable that is for so many families; the low pay for providers, and how that is damaging the broader economy; the importance of dedicated funding to solve existing systemic challenges; and pride in Anchorage voters for supporting this critical proposition.
- III. Updates
 - a. Governor’s Task Force
 - i. H. Weafer reported that the first report is now available to the public
 - b. Legislative Update
 - i. J. Griffis will keep everyone informed on what happens during this legislative session
- IV. White Paper
 - a. A. Quinn-Davidson presented on the white paper she shared with the IT last week
 - b. The white paper includes three primary sections: current challenges in the child care and early education system; what other jurisdictions are doing to solve these challenges; and what we might consider doing in the Municipality of Anchorage using the ACCEE funds. All ideas

presented were initial and merely meant to begin the conversation; any next steps will be informed and shaped by engagement with the public, discussions with experts, and evaluation by the IT of the most effective and strategic use of the ACCEE funds. Initial ideas presented by staff included raising wages or other compensation for providers, including pursuing a pooled benefits program; providing free care for providers' children to increase available child care spots in the community; partnering with new on-site programs to increase available spots; providing technical assistance for business development, licensing, or other processes; providing incentives and awards to providers; funding paid time off or time spent in trainings, and training itself; and funding mental health supports for providers and children, among others.

- c. IT members asked questions and gave feedback. Members were clear that we need to be strategic in however we make funding recommendations to the Accountability Board. Members shared additional thoughts on what information we might want to collect from providers and the community.
- d. A small group of IT members will work with staff to explore and develop a suggested strategy to determine potential recommendations for the funds.

V. Engagement Plan and Schedule

- a. A. Quinn-Davidson went over the schedule of upcoming events (Make it Monday, community conversations, Zoom meetings, etc.). There is an online survey also available. She will circulate a list of which IT members are attending which events. IT members were asked to reach out to Austin with dates of meetings they plan to attend.

VI. Communications Leading Up to Events

- a. Staff reviewed upcoming communications and outreach materials and asked IT members to please share on their social media platforms, websites, etc. Staff asked IT members to direct folks to the online survey.
- b. ACT staff has done a great job of producing these materials and are also working on outreach to entities IT members have identified, among others.
- c. Op-ed
 - i. Staff asked if IT members N. Matell and J. Simonsen might be willing to submit an op-ed on the ACCEE Fund and upcoming events. They agreed to submit. Austin will work with them to draft and submit in the next week.

VII. Update on Panels at IT Meetings

- a. Staff reviewed the schedule for upcoming IT meetings
 - i. February
 - 1. Initial report on events and engagement
 - 2. Economic impact of child care - Nolan Klouda and Katie Berry
 - 3. Juneau program
 - ii. March
 - 1. Follow-up report on events and engagement
 - 2. Early Childhood Education Workforce in Alaska – Stellar Group
 - 3. CITC program
 - 4. Heather Weafer - JBER incentives for caregivers and associated costs

VIII. Conflicts Form

- a. Still need from some members. Please turn in to A. Quinn-Davidson

IX. Closing Comments by Members

IMPLEMENTATION TEAM

February 15, 2024, Rm 155, City Hall

Present Members: Kameron Perez-Verdia (Assembly), Anna Brawley (Assembly), Jennifer Veneklasen (Assembly staff), Trevor Storrs (Alaska Children's Trust), Jen Griffis (Alaska Children's Trust), Kim Rash (Anchorage Health Department), Dawn Skeete (Anchorage Health Department), Melinda Myers (thread), Jade Hayden (Hmoob Cultural Center of Alaska), Branwen Collier (Early Learning for Everyone), Nora Matell (parent), Jessica Simonsen (parent), Heather Weafer (Child and Youth Programs, U.S. Air Force), Kathleen McArdle (Anchorage Chamber)

Absent Members: Kevin Cross (Assembly), Carl Jacobs (ASD – School Board), Eric Croft (volunteer; campaign team), Ivy Spohnholz (volunteer; campaign team), Katrina Ahlfield (Kids' Corps., Inc.), Ethan Petticrew (Cook Inlet Native Head Start)

Staff: Austin Quinn-Davidson

Guests: Wesley Early, APRN

Notes:

- I. Finalize Agenda
- II. Updates
 - a. Governor's Task Force – Heather Weafer
 - i. Task Force has recently been focusing on quality of child care and had a great presentation on Learn & Grow last month.
 - ii. Mostly meeting virtually (monthly), but in April will meet in person
 - b. Legislative Update – Jen Griffis
 - i. The Alaska Early Childhood Advocacy Group was recently advocating in Juneau. They met with legislators, including to discuss HB89 (Rep. Julie Coulombe). This bill could be on the House floor for a vote as soon as next week. It would (1) increase the amount of families that are eligible for child care assistance (from 85% of state median income to 105%), (2) change the cost of care to market rate, and (3) provide tax credits to businesses providing child care. It comes with a \$6.1M fiscal note.
 - ii. Anna Brawley offered that if useful, perhaps the Assembly could consider passing a resolution in support.
- III. Communications & Engagement – Austin Quinn-Davidson
 - a. Austin presented on recent and upcoming engagement, including: six events for parents and providers; Make it Monday presentation; FCC and AECC presentations; survey (over 200 responses already) – deadline is March 8; meetings with individuals and groups of providers; communication with elected officials and others; responses to public inquiries; and more. Communications efforts include radio ads; Facebook and other social media posts; website

content; opinion piece written by parent members of IT; FCC email going out soon; podcast opportunities; fliers distributed to churches, community groups, diaper pantries, elementary schools, providers, hospitals, birth centers, library, Sol de Medianoche, Muni Equity Committee, Ninestar, and others.

b. Reminder to take the survey!

IV. Discussion of Approach to Strategic Implementation of ACCEE Fund – Trevor Storrs

a. Trevor presented a strategic framework document. The document laid out a plan and timeline for creation of IT recommendations for the Accountability Board. Trevor reminded IT members that their role is to produce strategic recommendations and provide a decision-making structure for the Accountability Board. The small strategy group (Anna Brawley, Jessica Simonsen, Jen Griffis, Austin Quinn-Davidson, and Trevor Storrs) will produce a matrix for evaluation of different funding options at the April meeting. Discussion will begin then and carry into the May and June meetings, at which time a product for the Accountability Board will be produced.

b. Trevor shared that the IT will also begin discussing the Accountability Board ordinance at next month's IT meeting, and will finalize it at the April meeting.

V. Presentation by Robert Barr (Deputy City Manager, City and Borough of Juneau) & Blue Shibler (Executive Director, Association for the Education of Young Children - Southeast): City & Borough of Juneau Child Care Program

a. The Juneau program began in 2018. It is available to licenced providers and costs \$2.3M annually (\$1.3M funded by property and sales tax and \$1M Innovation Grant). The program includes subsidies and more recently, an apprenticeship program. It has been a very successful program – even throughout the pandemic, Juneau did not see child care business closures. The program serves 265 children annually, and 70 providers receive stipends. Robert Barr noted that because State-funded child care assistance does not pay the actual market cost of care, the stipends the City & Borough of Juneau (CBJ) provides tend to cover that gap and are needed to keep child care businesses operating. Robert and Blue receive regular feedback from providers stating that without the CBJ program, they'd be closed by now. If awarding subsidies, they don't recommend putting many parameters on what they can be used for (for instance, they don't require a particular level of Learn & Grow, rather just require participation). Their belief is that employers will inevitably use them for wages. Blue Shibler noted that they have had a lot of interest lately from potential new in-home providers. Robert Barr noted that having a third party administer and distribute the funding has been very helpful; AEYC has established relationships that make administration easier and more positive for grantees. Robert Barr recommended keeping our programs and grants as simple as possible, and noted that quality comes naturally when you make meaningful investments.

VI. Presentation by Heather Weafer (Flight Chief, Child and Youth Programs, JBER; Implementation Team member): JBER Program Successes

a. 65% of funding for this program comes from the federal government. The remaining 35% is mostly collected from parents, and they use a sliding scale to determine the monthly payment per child. The most a parent will pay per child is \$700/month. Entry level pay for providers is \$18.67 an hour. Employees also get benefits (paid holidays, annual leave, sick leave, health care, retirement, training, tuition assistance for children, etc.). Providers get free child care for their first child as part of their employment package, with other discounts for additional children. 45% of staff have one or more child in JBER centers. The cost to JBER to operate this program is \$137,000 quarterly. JBER also pays for accreditation and start-up equipment – cribs, etc.

Heather reported that they do everything they can to make the start-up cost nothing, or very close to nothing. They have 11 pending applicants for new programs.

- b. Heather guessed that if they stopped providing free care for providers' kids, they would lose 65 of the 75 staff who use this program. It is incredibly popular. They started this program in 2022 and since then their staff vacancy rate has dropped by 10%.
- c. Jade Hayden noted that her center also provides free child care for providers' children and that it is very popular. Branwen Collier stated that her center provides a 40% discount for care for children of providers. While these programs can be very successful, Branwen noted that there are some logistics to consider, like making sure that there are spots for providers' kids and that they're a good fit for the center.

VII. Closing Comments by Members

- a. Anna Brawley stated that she and Kameron Perez-Verdia would like to meet via Teams ONLY from now on. It is easier for many members and makes it easier to see everyone. There was no objection from members.

IMPLEMENTATION TEAM

March 20, 2024

Virtual via Microsoft Teams

Present Members: Kameron Perez-Verdia (Assembly), Anna Brawley (Assembly), Allie Hartman (Assembly staff), Trevor Storrs (Alaska Children's Trust), Jen Griffis (Alaska Children's Trust), Kim Rash (Anchorage Health Department), Dawn Skeete (Anchorage Health Department), Melinda Myers (thread), Jade Hayden (Hmoob Cultural Center of Alaska), Branwen Collier (Early Learning for Everyone), Nora Matell (parent), Jessica Simonsen (parent), Heather Weafer (Child and Youth Programs, U.S. Air Force), Katrina Ahlfield (Kids' Corps., Inc.), Eric Croft (volunteer; campaign team)

Absent Members: Kevin Cross (Assembly), Carl Jacobs (ASD – School Board), Jennifer Veneklasen (Assembly staff), Ivy Spohnholz (volunteer; campaign team), Ethan Petticrew (Cook Inlet Native Head Start); Kathleen McArdle (Anchorage Chamber)

Staff: Austin Quinn-Davidson

Guests: Antoinette Horn & Sun Smith (CITC), Iris Matthews (Stellar Group)

Notes:

1. Finalize Agenda
 - a. Introduced and welcomed Allie Hartman, filling in for Jenn Veneklasen. Allie is the Communications Director for the Anchorage Assembly
 - b. Trevor Storrs reminded us that it was a year ago that we were approaching the vote on Proposition 14. What a productive year it's been!
2. Updates
 - a. Legislative update: Jen Griffis
 - i. HB 89 passed the Alaska House and is now in Senate committee. Would increase assistance eligibility from 85% to 105% of state median income and would come with a corresponding \$6.1M fiscal note. It would also reduce the percentage of a family's income allowed for the assistance co-payment from 9% to 7%. And it would require a cost of care study. The bill is expected to pass in the Senate.
 - ii. Thread has a fly-in scheduled for next week in Juneau. It will be a big week for child care and early education advocacy.

- b. Governor's Task Force: Heather Weafer
 - i. Heard from Ambra at the State Health Department at their last meeting. Meeting again next week.
- c. Members share any other relevant updates
 - i. None
- 3. Communications & Engagement: Austin Quinn-Davidson
 - a. Report out re events and communications
 - i. Completed a number of public events. Lots of feedback received. Austin sent a summary to all IT members. Austin went through top themes of ideas received from the public.
 - b. Summary of survey responses
 - i. 425 respondents. Austin went through demographic information for respondents and main takeaways/feedback. The two most commonly recommended uses of ACCEE Funds from the survey were increasing provider pay and providing benefits to providers. Results are summarized in the survey summary shared with the IT.
- 4. Presentation by Iris Matthews (President, Stellar Group): Early Childhood Education Workforce in Anchorage
 - a. People who provide child care services love the work. They leave because they have to, not because they want to. Workers mostly leave because of low wages (65%), lack of benefits (36%), and challenging working conditions (33%). With respect to lack of benefits, 74% don't like the lack of paid holidays and 60% would prioritize PTO.
 - b. There has been a 45% decrease in child care workers. 5 new child care businesses opened in 2023 in Anchorage, but 20 closed. Many early educators feel their jobs have gotten harder post-COVID. Caregivers need consistent wellness supports, especially positive workplace cultures and a sense of belonging.
 - c. Top priorities for improving the sector
 - i. Increase wages
 - 1. Having a union-negotiated minimum wage would be great, but it would have to happen at the state level
 - 2. Increase subsidies
 - ii. Increase access to benefits
 - 1. Establish pooled/group benefits
 - 2. Require that subsidies be used for health care
 - iii. Increase retention (quality)
 - 1. Fund leadership development courses to enhance team management skills
 - 2. Awards and public recognition
 - 3. Professional development
 - 4. Increase access to coaching and mental health supports
 - iv. Add supports for in-home providers
 - 1. Substitute pools and other supports

5. Presentation by Antoinette Horn (Eligibility Manager, Cook Inlet Tribal Council) and Sun Smith (Child Care Assistance Quality Manager, Cook Inlet Tribal Council): CITC Child Care Program Funding
 - a. CITC using its ARPA funding over the next 10 years; \$2.4M per year will be awarded to the child care/early education sector.
 - b. Lots of room for overlap/working together to improve the sector.
6. Initial discussion of Accountability Board ordinance: Trevor Storrs and Anna Brawley
 - a. The IT's role is to brainstorm ideas and give the strategy group content to include in a draft ordinance. Between now and the next IT meeting, Assembly staff will draft the ordinance, and the IT will review and edit it in April.
 - b. Focused mostly on brainstorming what types of designated (or not) AB seats might be appropriate. Re number of seats, somewhere between 9-12 was acceptable to the IT.
 - c. At the next IT meeting, the IT will review the draft ordinance and also discuss roles and responsibilities.
7. Conflicts Form: Turn in to Jenn
8. Closing Comments: All
 - a. Ran out of time. Will endeavor to allow more time for next time!

IMPLEMENTATION TEAM

April 17, 2024

Virtual via Microsoft Teams

Present Members: Anna Brawley (Assembly), Jennifer Veneklasen (Assembly staff), Trevor Storrs (Alaska Children’s Trust), Jen Griffis (Alaska Children’s Trust), Kim Rash (Anchorage Health Department), Dawn Skeete (Anchorage Health Department), Melinda Myers (thread), Jade Hayden (Hmoob Cultural Center of Alaska), Branwen Collier (Early Learning for Everyone), Nora Matell (parent), Jessica Simonsen (parent), Heather Weafer (Child and Youth Programs, U.S. Air Force), Katrina Ahlfield (Kids’ Corps., Inc.), Eric Croft (volunteer; campaign team); Carl Jacobs (ASD – School Board); Kathleen McArdle (Anchorage Chamber)

Absent Members: Kameron Perez-Verdia (Assembly); Ivy Spohnholz (volunteer; campaign team), Ethan Petticrew (Cook Inlet Native Head Start)

Staff: Austin Quinn-Davidson

Guests: n/a

Notes:

1. Finalize Agenda
 - a. Trevor moved to accept as drafted, Kathleen seconded. No changes made.
2. Updates
 - a. Legislative update: Jen Griffis
 - i. HB 89 passed out of HSS committee last week with some minor changes. Goes to Senate Finance next. The House budget includes the bill’s fiscal note, but not funding for additional grants.
 - b. Governor’s Task Force: Heather Weafer
 - i. The Task Force received a cost of care presentation from McKinley Research Group. They are in the process of creating a tool to calculate the true cost of care, which will be helpful for folks who want to be child care providers and those evaluating the sector. The tool will be completed by June.
 - ii. The Task Force also received a briefing from the UAA Institute of Social and Economic Research (ISER) on a recent market rate study. About half of licensed providers responded to ISER’s survey.

- iii. At its last meeting, the Task force worked on recommendations around quality and subsidies. Nine recommendations were evaluated, including those related to eligibility and graduated benefits supports (ensuring folks don't lose eligibility when they have a small change in income, like when they get a raise at work). They also discussed special populations who could possibly be eligible (including child care workers). Any additional subsidies would have to be funded by the State.
 - iv. They will receive an update on recommendations and what's been implemented soon.
 - c. Members share any other relevant updates
 - i. Melinda Myers: thread received some funding from the State and has been distributing that funding. Most of it will go out this month, with some next month. thread is also about to distribute its last bit of COVID funding.
- 3. Accountability Board ordinance: Anna Brawley
 - a. The plan is to discuss the initial draft today, take comments and create a final draft, share that draft with the IT, incorporate edits, and then bring the updated version to the full Assembly for consideration.
 - b. There are different types of Boards at the Muni level. The drafting team looked at the Trust Fund board as a similar example. Also looked at Naming Commission Board. Will follow up with attorneys to ensure the language is consistent with Muni Code after the discussion today.
 - c. Major discussion topics include who is on the Board (number of seats, what types of designated seats) and their role (what do they do once they get there).
 - i. Section A: comes from Charter language. No feedback.
 - ii. Section B: Types of seats. Drafted as requiring a certain profession or other status at the time of being seated, so board members don't have to leave the Board if their jobs change.
 - iii. Section C: lays out the Board's responsibilities
 - d. After significant discussion, the IT settled on the following edits to the existing draft:
 - i. At the top, include a general statement about diversity on the board. We'd like to see diversity in experiences in the sector as well as backgrounds that reflects the community we're in.
 - ii. Pay for the board: Board members shouldn't be paid a salary, but it would be nice for them to be able to seek reimbursement for any board-related needs, and perhaps a small stipend. Perhaps we add language that leaves payment to per diem and costs? Could include examples, such as if a member needs a cab for transportation to meetings, this should be paid for.
 - iii. We should make it clear that the board can hire its own staff (not just an Executive Director, which is included in the proposition language, but also additional staff as needed). Should clarify that the staff provided by a Muni department provides administrative support, whereas the board's

executive director and any additional staff are there to support the board in executing its substantive mission (putting together a budget, etc.).

- iv. We should also make it clear that the board can do studies as it needs to, or make grants as it deems appropriate, so long as it has the Mayor and Assembly approval for its annual budget. We don't want to limit the board.
 - v. There should be nine seats on the board. Some members advocated for seven, due to the challenges of filling the board and maintaining quorum, but the group felt most comfortable with nine.
 - vi. In terms of who should sit on the board, the board wanted to make it as broad and flexible as possible so that it is not overly cumbersome to fill the seats. We don't want to identify certain organizations or dictate too many categories of folks who should serve on the board.
 - 1. The IT decided to keep a child care and early education category (combine #1 and 2). Minimum of one member and maximum of four (?). The IT would also like to keep a parent category to ensure we have parents on the board who are there to provide the parent perspective (rather than just incidentally also parents). The IT would also like to maintain category #3, except remove the reference to health care specifically. Otherwise, no specific categories.
 - 2. The IT would like to remove maximums, except in the child care and education category.
 - vii. Terms. The next draft needs to make sure to account for staggered terms. Three-year terms, and can serve three terms before needing to be off the board. Can return after a full term period.
 - viii. The IT unanimously supported the edits described above.
4. Recommendation matrix: Austin Quinn-Davidson
- a. Austin reviewed the matrix and described how it was organized. She asked each IT member to budget at least half an hour to fully review the matrix and provide her with feedback, including what they need (more information, numbers, etc.) to make their recommendations by next Wednesday. She asked that everyone come to the May meeting ready to make decisions/rank the recommendations.
 - b. Discussion around our decision-making process for the next couple of months:
 - i. Trevor Storrs asked how the group wants to make its recommendation decisions (i.e., consensus, show of hands, voting, etc.). He asked what would be most helpful to the group – a proposal from the small strategy group, individual proposals from each person, etc. He reminded everyone that the goal is to get this work done in May/June.
 - 1. The IT would like to see a top 3/presented draft funding package from the small strategy group.
 - ii. Anna Brawley reminded everyone that all of the IT's work is moving towards giving recommendations to the Assembly and Mayor. She said it

would be helpful to have a shorter list of recommendations for the decision makers – maybe a top 3.

- iii. Austin offered that whatever the IT puts forward should ideally be turnkey (given timeline constraints, etc.) with specific recommendations and amounts.
 - iv. Trevor stated that he envisions the recommendations will relate to how to spend the money and the “why” behind those recommendations; it will be report of sorts to the Accountability Board. The report from the IT will be turned over to the board with the idea that they’ll build off it in coming years.
 1. He outlined an action plan for the decision-making process: the small strategy group will present a proposal to the IT at the May meeting. Instead of starting from scratch at the May meeting, IT members can use the proposal as a starting point and make changes. This will make time for vibrant discussion, so members don’t feel rushed. IT members were supportive and appreciative of this plan.
5. Conflicts Form: Turn in to Jenn
 6. Closing Comments: All
 - a. Ran out of time. Will endeavor to allow more time for next time!

IMPLEMENTATION TEAM

May 15, 2024

Virtual via Microsoft Teams

Present Members: Anna Brawley (Assembly), Kameron Perez-Verdia (Assembly), Jennifer Veneklasen (Assembly staff), Trevor Storrs (Alaska Children’s Trust), Kim Rash (Anchorage Health Department), Dawn Skeete (Anchorage Health Department), Melinda Myers (thread), Branwen Collier (Early Learning for Everyone), Nora Matell (parent), Jessica Simonsen (parent), Katrina Ahlfield (Kids’ Corps., Inc.), Eric Croft (volunteer; campaign team), Carl Jacobs (ASD – School Board), Kathleen McArdle (Anchorage Chamber)

Absent Members: Ethan Petticrew (Cook Inlet Native Head Start), Jen Griffis (Alaska Children’s Trust), Jade Hayden (Hmoob Cultural Center of Alaska), Heather Weafer (Child and Youth Programs, U.S. Air Force); Ivy Spohnholz (volunteer; campaign team)

Staff: Austin Quinn-Davidson

Guests: Darcie Montalvo (Anchorage Health Department)

Notes:

1. Finalize Agenda
 - a. No changes made to draft agenda
 - b. Darcie Montalvo introduced herself. Members shared in the Teams chat their names and organizations and/or other connections to the ACCEE Fund.
2. Accountability Board ordinance: Anna Brawley
 - a. Anna shared the current, near-final draft and asked for any final feedback.
 - b. Melinda Myers asked about the ability of the Accountability Board to hire contractors (in addition to staff). Anna responded that we don’t explicitly need to mention this in the ordinance itself; this would already be allowed pursuant to Muni Code.
 - c. Carl Jacobs asked whether we should include Eric Croft’s draft funding guiding principles in the ordinance itself, particularly the provision about collaborating with ASD. He reminded us this was part of the proposition language and suggested that including this language would provide guidance to the new Accountability Board, and provide legislative intent to return to later.

IT recommend funding? How long should grants last? How much funding should be one-time or start-up versus multi-year grants? How does the Accountability Board ensure grants don't end abruptly? How can the ACCEE funding be used to achieve our articulated goals? Should the Accountability Board require matching funding? The IT met in small groups to discuss these questions, and then reported out. Thoughts shared by the IT:

- i. The immediate goal of the ACCEE Fund should be to stabilize the sector. Top ideas are to fund wages and perhaps provide stipends to pay for child care for employees' kids.
 - ii. Most of the focus should be on staff – less on capital.
 - iii. Ensure 10% of the Fund, as allowed by the proposition itself, is spent on administration so we can have effective and efficient administration.
 - iv. Make accessing funding as easy as possible.
 - v. Find a balance between not spreading funding too thin and putting all of the available funding toward one thing.
 - vi. How do we balance making some noncompetitive funding available to everyone yet still allow for competition for grants for exceptional programs?
 1. One idea is to provide noncompetitive grants for some things (i.e. background checks, fingerprint costs), but make other grants competitive.
 2. Could the Accountability Board give extra weight to programs that are working on capacity building?
 - vii. The Accountability Board should be focused on understanding the need in the sector rather than focusing on the mechanism for getting funding out. There are experts who can assist with the right mechanism. We don't want to recreate the wheel.
 - viii. Would likely make sense to have a few categories of funding types.
 - ix. The Accountability Board needs to have access to good data and the opportunity to connect with the community so they're informed.
4. Conflicts Forms: Turn in to Jenn
 5. Closing Comments: All
 - a. Members want to focus on stabilizing the strengthening the sector, and on how to make it more sustainable.
 - b. Members appreciate the thoughtfulness, transparency, and intentionality around the implementation of the ACCEE Fund.

IMPLEMENTATION TEAM

June 18, 2024

Virtual via Microsoft Teams

Present Members: Anna Brawley (Assembly), Kameron Perez-Verdia (Assembly), Jennifer Veneklasen (Assembly staff), Trevor Storrs (Alaska Children’s Trust), Jen Griffis (Alaska Children’s Trust), Dawn Skeete (Anchorage Health Department), Melinda Myers (thread), Branwen Collier (Early Learning for Everyone), Nora Matell (parent), Jessica Simonsen (parent), Katrina Ahlfield (Kids’ Corps., Inc.), Eric Croft (volunteer; campaign team), Carl Jacobs (ASD – School Board), Kathleen McArdle (Anchorage Chamber); Heather Weafer (Child and Youth Programs, U.S. Air Force)

Absent Members: Ethan Petticrew (Cook Inlet Native Head Start), Kim Rash (Anchorage Health Department), Jade Hayden (Hmoob Cultural Center of Alaska)

Staff: Austin Quinn-Davidson

Guests: Darcie Montalvo (Anchorage Health Department)

Purpose: *The purpose of this meeting is to revisit and confirm our funding goals and guiding principles and develop recommendations for the Accountability Board on funding **priorities** and **levels**.*

Specific meeting goals:

- Meet and connect with Mayor-elect Suzanne LaFrance
- Revisit and confirm our funding goals and guiding principles
- Discuss and finalize our recommendations for funding **priorities**
- Discuss and begin finalizing (to be continued to July 10th) our recommendations for **funding levels among our priorities**

Notes:

1. Finalize Agenda
 - a. No changes made to draft agenda
2. Introduction and brief discussion with Mayor-elect Suzanne LaFrance
3. Finalize Goals, Guiding Principles, and Approach document

- a. Austin Quinn-Davidson raised a question about one of the guiding principles in the draft document. The group provided feedback. She will now finalize this document so that it can be shared with the Accountability Board as part of the final report package.
4. Funding recommendations discussion
 - a. Setting the stage: Jen Griffis gave an introduction about the challenges of making funding recommendations in a chronically underfunded and low data system.
 - b. After an introduction to working in small groups by Kameron Perez-Verdia, the IT broke into small groups to discuss funding priorities/categories. Kameron invited IT members to classify funding priorities into three categories: access, affordability, and quality. The groups had robust individual discussions about funding priorities and made notes in a joint document.
 - i. The consistently-identified top priority among the groups was increasing wages. Members worried that if we spread out funding too far, the increases wouldn't be effective (some members even suggested *only* funding wages).
 - ii. There was some disagreement as to whether funding should be spent on capital projects. One group thought it was a good idea given the high need for capital improvements, whereas another group suggested it was not a great use of the limited ACCEE funding.
 - iii. The groups coalesced around the idea of focusing on improving access. We improve access by ensuring there are enough providers, which is directly correlated to offering better provider wages. Members suggested that if we can improve access, quality will follow.
 - c. The larger group reconvened to discuss and highlight their small group conversations. Anna Brawley shared updated information about expected annual revenue and administrative costs.
 - d. The IT broke into small groups again, this time to begin discussing how funding should be split up, and into what amounts.
 - i. Members again highlighted concerns that if we try to spread the funding too far, it won't be impactful.
 - ii. The top priority for all groups was wages, with some groups saying 50% or more of the annual funding should be spent on supplementing provider wages.
 - iii. Other top ideas were to fund the cost of free child care for providers' children and to potentially carve some funding out for pilot/test projects.
 - e. The IT again reconvened as a large group and members shared their thoughts on how we might approach splitting up the funding. This discussion will be continued at the final IT meeting on July 10th.
5. Members shared closing comments and thoughts.

IMPLEMENTATION TEAM

July 10, 2024

Virtual via Microsoft Teams

Present Members: Anna Brawley (Assembly), Kameron Perez-Verdia (Assembly), Jennifer Veneklasen (Assembly staff), Trevor Storrs (Alaska Children’s Trust), Jen Griffis (Alaska Children’s Trust), Kim Rash (Anchorage Health Department), Dawn Skeete (Anchorage Health Department), Melinda Myers (thread), Branwen Collier (Early Learning for Everyone), Nora Matell (parent), Jessica Simonsen (parent), Carl Jacobs (ASD – School Board), Kathleen McArdle (Anchorage Chamber)

Absent Members: Ethan Petticrew (Cook Inlet Native Head Start), Jade Hayden (Hmoob Cultural Center of Alaska), Katrina Ahlfield (Kids’ Corps., Inc.), Eric Croft (volunteer; campaign team), Heather Weafer (Child and Youth Programs, U.S. Air Force)

Staff: Austin Quinn-Davidson

Guests: Penny Gage, parent

Purpose: *To finalize IT FY2025 funding priorities, including levels of recommended funding for those priorities. These priorities and funding levels will be included as part of the IT final report to the Accountability Board.*

Notes

1. Begin meeting and finalize agenda
 - a. No changes made to draft agenda
2. Anna Brawley gave an update on the ACCEE Fund ordinance. The Assembly is expected to vote on the ordinance at its meeting next Tuesday.
3. Funding recommendations discussion: Trevor Storrs
 - a. Trevor described possible components of the final report we will submit to the Board, Mayor, and Assembly; identified funding priorities; and explained our goal for today: to come up with a FY2025 proposed budget to incorporate into our recommendations for the Board. Trevor shared foundational data, including expected revenue and cost of administration, and noted again that any funding we recommend should be impactful and sustainable. Trevor then led a discussion on the definitions of these priorities: wage subsidies, providing early educator

child care and early education subsidies, and operational grants. The IT engaged in discussion about these definitions. Using this discussion, Austin will create and send around proposed final drafts of the definitions.

b. Priorities

- 1) Wage subsidies: If the Board were to invest all funding into *only* wage subsidies, the hourly average wage would be expected to rise only by \$1.27/hour. Given that, the IT concluded that investing in wage subsidies in this manner would not be a strategic use of ACCEE funding. Instead, the IT supported investing these funds into a pilot project, or only funding certain programs (longevity-based, SEED ranking-based, or as designed to recruit new employees were all discussed). The IT favored, instead of direct wage subsidies, awarding operational grants that could be spent however the operators wanted to spend them, with the ultimate goal being to raise wages and provide more access for families. But if we're going to give wage subsidies, whether through operational grants or otherwise, there needs to be some certainty to employers that these aren't just one-time grants. One member stated about possibly funding pilot projects: "targeted funding that drives innovation and spurs further confidence and investment is a win."
- 2) Paid child care and early education for early educators' children: The group discussed whether the Board should focus on certain types of care, like infant care, and whether it should focus on providing full subsidies versus partial. Because State assistance takes into account who is receiving care, and we want to align our system with the State's since the eventual hope is that this program would be adopted and fully funded by the State, we don't want to carve out specific requirements or rules that aren't consistent with State assistance. The State provides assistance for school-aged care as well, so we should too. That said, the IT wanted to broaden eligibility beyond who is eligible for State assistance. The IT decided to recommend that the Board allocate \$2M of the FY2025 funding toward this benefit.
- 3) Operational grants: The IT discussed whether it made sense to propose that the Board put the remaining \$2.4M ish of 2025 revenue toward operational grants. The IT discussed a consistent theme: how do we balance a need from providers for consistent funding with ensuring ACCEE funding can be used for new, innovative projects or programs? Grantees of operational grants could be asked for foundational data as a requirement of their grant, ensuring that the ACCEE Fund Board can collect needed data to make even better and more focused awards in future years. The group generally agreed that operational grants should be for existing businesses, although the group also supported a small amount of funding being put toward standing up and supporting new in-home programs, since these are the easiest to stand up with relatively

little investment, the result being the ACCEE Fund could facilitate the creation of additional access using limited funding.

- c. 2024 Funds: a small amount of funding (\$500,000) should be available for capital expenses, but this funding should only be used for small scale, minor improvements at existing businesses, with perhaps some exceptions.
4. Discussion of next steps, including IT recommendations and final report: Austin/Trevor
 - a. Austin gave a quick overview of the timeline and eventual product we expect to share with the Board, Mayor, and Assembly, and welcomed any feedback.
5. Closing comments