

September 16, 2022

Bold on Early Educator Compensation Learning Community
Session # 12: Build Political Power- Empowering Educators as Advocates

Overview:

Corrine Hendrickson (Wisconsin participant, and FCC owner-educator) and Anissa Eddie (Liminality Policy Consulting) shared powerful stories about what educator activism and working in community can achieve for early childhood policy. We learned that engaging early educators is an equity imperative in the compensation policy conversation, and draws on a long [history](#) of educator- and worker-led activism. Broadly speaking, the stories that shared were about amplifying collective power and expertise of the early education workforce; not only can educators give the most relevant advice on how to adapt policies to actually suit their needs or what's happening in classrooms but they are natural messengers to advocate out to the community as they interact with community stakeholders every day.

As Corrine said: *"Time and money are wasted pursuing ideas that would have been shut down quickly or adapted if we, as professionals, had been included in the process...this needs to change."*

Take-Aways:

Considerations for engaging educators as advocates:

- Dedicate resources for those participating and a lot of time

- Don't be afraid to name the cost of this work
- Leverage communication structures already in place to engage educators (e.g. Facebook groups or community groups)
- Work with others, like trusted community-based organizations, CCR&Rs or businesses, even consider hiring consultants who have experience working with providers
- Develop feedback loops for those who are at the table so the information gets back to others and develop feedback loops for after a 'win' or campaign finishes
- When working directly with educator advocates, come to their spaces, give tangible tools and explain complicated and nontransparent government processes, build on their work that is already happening, encourage confidence and provide people with support in their advocacy
- For those within government: make funding decisions and options transparent so educators know what's really going and what is possible
- Language matters - be mindful
- Stay at it - advocacy is not a one-time event

Resources shared:

- [Legislation](#) that Corrine and WECAN worked on in Wisconsin
- [Gap Analysis](#) from Kent County, MI that Anissa shared
- National Equity Project's resources on [Liberatory Design](#) (currently being used by Child Care Aware of Washington with a group of educator advocates working on compensation policy - Watch this webinar from the Alliance for Early Success [Webinar](#) on human-centered design in early childhood policy to hear more about WA's story
- Learn more about the [Worthy Wage campaign](#) and how it [continues today in NC!](#)
- ACF recent [announcement](#) in investments in the workforce (includes guidance memos and applications to the PDG B-5 funding)
- Century Foundation [Report](#) on "How States used COVID relief funds to engage child care stakeholders"