## STAFF REPORT

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| **Agenda Item:** | 7 | **Name:** | Erica Newman |
| **Proposed No**.: | 2019-0336 | **Date:** | August 20, 2019 |

**SUBJECT**

A MOTION to establish the King County children and families strategy taskforce.

**SUMMARY**

The Executive transmitted Proposed Motion 2019-0336 (to be introduced on August 21, 2019) which would establish the King County Children and Families Strategy Taskforce to explore policy recommendations related to childcare affordability and access in King County based on recommendations from work done by the King County Women’s Advisory Board. The motion requires the Executive to appoint the members of the taskforce for Council confirmation by September 2019 to prepare a report that outlines the recommendations to address access and affordability issues related to child care in King County. Furthermore, the motion requires the Executive to establish a staff work group that will assist the taskforce, including lead staff from the Executive's office. The Committee will be briefed today on the plans for this Taskforce.

**BACKGROUND**

The Women’s Advisory Board (WAB) was established under ordinance 3631 in 1978. The board was created to foster programs, legislation and policies for the benefit of women throughout King County. The board acts in an advisory capacity, making recommendations to the King County Executive and the King County Council on matters concerning women. Additionally, the board works with the public to provide information regarding the status of women and policies and programs that may affect the status and well-being of women.

Per County Code[[1]](#footnote-1), the board comprises fifteen members including a representative from each council district (per Council nomination), and six members representing at-large positions (two per Executive nomination, and four per Council nomination). Board composition must represent the diversity of women in King County, including diversity in age, area of residence, profession and race or ethnicity, and shall not include employees or board members of agencies receiving funding from the women’s program. Nominees are appointed by the County Executive and confirmed by the County Council by motion.

In 2017, the King County Women’s Advisory Board adopted the topic of improving child care access and affordability in King County. Since January 2017, WAB meetings have focused on educating members about child care in King County and on analyzing successful strategies for adoption and implementation of policies that may help improve the affordability and accessibility of child care in King County.

The WAB’s examination revealed that the lack of access to quality child care is a stark problem that affects not only King County’s families, but also its employers and economy. The Board concluded that King County’s supply of child care fails to meet demand, and the supply is unevenly distributed.[[2]](#footnote-2)

In February 2019, the WAB provided a list of recommendations to the Executive and the Council on how to improve accessible and affordable childcare in King County. The list included the following:

1. Establish a King County Childcare Assistance Program;

2. Support the creation of new childcare facilities;

3. Create a Child Care Task Force to promote all recommendations;

4. Adopt an Infants at Work Program and flexible telecommute policies; and,

5. Inspire and incentivize employers to support families who need childcare.

In August 2019, the Executive transmitted Proposed Motion 2019-0336 which would establish the King County Children and Families Strategy Taskforce to explore policy recommendations related to childcare affordability and access in King County. The motion requires the Executive to appoint the members of the taskforce for Council confirmation by September 2019 to prepare a report that outlines the recommendations to address access and affordability issues related to child care in King County. Furthermore, the motion requires the Executive to establish a staff work group that will assist the taskforce, including lead staff from the Executive's office.

The Motion states that the taskforce should convene a roundtable with businesses and other stakeholders to raise awareness of the challenges King County employees and providers face when accessing and providing childcare. The Motion also suggest that the taskforce consider the idea of consulting with members of the public, King County employees, members of the WAB, and experts on early learning and child care access and affordability as it works to develop recommendations. The Motion suggests that the taskforce membership include one representative from the following:

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| **NO.** | **REPRESENTATION** |
| 1. | Organization representing the interest of licensed child care centers |
| 2. | Organization representing the interest of licensed in-home child care providers |
| 3. | An organization providing childcare services as a family, friend, and/or neighbor child care provider in King County |
| 4. | An organization or individual representing parents who utilize child care on a regular basis |
| 5. | An organization representing the interests of philanthropy |
| 6. | An organization representing the interests of labor |
| 7. | An organization providing child care services in rural or unincorporated King County |
| 8. | An organization providing multicultural, bilingual curriculum in either the preschool care program setting or the after-school care program setting, or both, in King County |
| 9. | An organization representing the interests of immigrant or refugee communities in King County |
| 10. | A nonprofit organization providing training and professional development for family child care providers and family, friend and neighbor child care providers in King County |
| 11. | An organization representing the needs of children with developmental delays or disabilities |
| 12. | A representative from the King County best starts for kids team in the department of community and human services or the department of public health |
| 13. | An advocacy organization representing parents, early learning, foster care youth and expanded learning opportunity interests in King County |
| 14. | An organization whose mission is to stem the level of child care expulsions in King County |
| 15. | The King County department of human resources |
| 16. | The King County women's advisory board |
| 17. | The Seattle Department of Education and Early Learning |

The motion suggests that the taskforce's analysis include research that can be used for a potential childcare assistance program, such as the following:

* A voucher program for King County employees;
* Opportunities for increasing the number of available child care facilities, including in home care facilities, and employer partnerships related to those facilities; and
* Identify potential opportunities within county policies, such as telecommuting and the infants at work pilot program, to address the shortage of infant care.

The motion requires the taskforce to provide a report with recommendations to the Executive and the Council by June 30, 2020, at which point the taskforce will expire.

The analysis for this proposed Motion is ongoing.

**INVITED**

* Natalie Lente, Family Services Manager, Child Care Resources
* Lois Martin, Community Day School
* Lauren Hipp, Parent and Washington & National States Early Learning Campaign Director at Mom’s Rising
* Sarah Reyneveld, Chair, King County Women's Advisory Board

**ATTACHMENTS**

1. Proposed Motion 2019-0336

2. Transmittal Letter

1. K.C.C. 2.30.060. [↑](#footnote-ref-1)
2. Jeffrey Beck et al., *Affordable Child Care for all in King County* (2013-2017), 32. [↑](#footnote-ref-2)