

Salt Lake Community College
Student Affairs Program Review: Child Care and Family Services

Final Report

External Program Review, March 4-5. 2024

External Review Team:

Shauna Lower, Student Parent Support Center Director, University of Utah

Patrice Dickson, Chief Operations Officer/Assistant Head Start Director, Utah Community Action

Jacqueline Kemp, Salt Lake Community College Eccles ECD Lab School Director

Salt Lake Community College
Student Affairs Program Review: Child Care and Family Services

Introduction

A Program Review is conducted within Student Affairs for each department on a 5-year cycle. It is implemented to provide a comprehensive review and to identify areas of strengths and also areas of improvement. As stated in the Program Review Instructions, the purpose of a review accomplishes several purposes:

1. Ensure alignment with SLCC mission, vision and goals
2. Encourage process improvement
3. Identify needs for better resource allocation
4. Inform strategic planning

A program review of the Child Care and Family Services highlighted a vital service provided to students for childcare while attending school, increasing student success and completion while educating and nurturing their children. With Utah having the highest number of children of any state in the United States and the challenges of both affordability and lack of availability of childcare, the Childcare Program at SLCC aligns with the mission of SLCC while supporting the needs of children.

Many strengths were found in the program, including a very dedicated staff with a passion for the children they serve. These are highlighted in the report with some recommendations for improvement as a goal for program review is for continuous improvement and ongoing strategic planning.

Site Visit Methodology

Salt Lake Community College requested a review of the Childcare and Family Services Department. Materials were sent to external reviewers prior to an onsite two-day review. Members of the review team were:

Shauna Lower, Student Parent Support Center Director, University of Utah

Patrice Dickson, Chief Operations Officer/Assistant Head Start Director, Utah Community Action

Jacqueline Kemp, Salt Lake Community College Eccles ECD Lab School Director

All reviewers have extensive experience in Early Childhood Education and in monitoring and review of Early Childhood programs and administration.

The final report is a compilation of observations and notes from the two-day onsite visit as well as review of the materials sent to the review team prior to the visit. The review team was able to meet at the end of the visit and discuss their findings and recommendations. Following the visit, the review team collaborated on the final report.

The review team met with initially with Curt Larsen, Acting VP and Holly Garcia, Director to discuss the purpose of the site visit and program review plan. Following that initial visit, a meeting was held with Holly Garcia, Director and the two Assistant Directors, Wendy Blanchard and Megan Powell for an overview and tour of the Tim and Brenda Huval Child Care Center. Additional time was spent the second day at the Jordan Campus Childcare. The review team met with two different student groups and two different staff groups from the childcare program to receive feedback to proposed questions provided by the Department as well as other questions the review team posed to the groups. Other discussions took place with several campus departments and Tech Moms which is business that utilizes the childcare services on Saturdays.

The childcare services at SLCC are accredited by the National Accreditation Commission for Early Care and Education Programs and the Classroom Observation Record was provided to the review team. Classroom observations are included in the review findings and recommendations. The review team was able to spend time in the classrooms in the Jordan Campus but only tour the Tim and Brenda Hubal Child Care Center. Some observations were made during the tour but there was limited time provided in the classrooms. The agenda for the site visits was as follows:

Program Review Site Visit -- Schedule
Child Care & Family Services
March 4th & 5th 2024

Site Team

Jacqueline Kemp- Director, Eccles Early Childhood Development Lab School, Salt Lake Community College

Patrice Dickson- Assistant Head Start Director, Utah Community Action

Sauna Lower-Director, Student Parent Support Center, University of Utah

		March 4th		
Time	Activity	Location	Participants	Reviewers
8:30 AM	Meet for Breakfast	SCM 1-147	Acting VP, Curt Larsen, Holly Garcia Megan Powell	Review Team
9:00	Welcome - Purpose of Site Visit	SCM 1-147	Acting VP Curt Larsen and Holly Garcia	Review Team
9:15	Child Care & Family Services – Self-study Overview AVP, Director, and Assistant Directors	SCM 1-147	Holly Garcia Megan Powell Wendy Blanchard	Review Team
9:45	Tour the Tim & Brenda Huval Child Care	SCC-HCC	Holly Garcia	Review Team
10:15	Classroom Observations	SCC-HCC	Random Classrooms	Review Team
11:00	Student Services Providers (Financial Aid, Accessibility and Disability Services Center for Health & Counseling)	SCM 1-061C SCM 1-061 E-A SCM 1-145	Each Department	Review Team (Split up)
12:00 –1:15	Meet the Students Lunch and Discussion (select parent group from SCC)	SCM 1-147	Holly Garcia Curt Larsen Megan Powell Wendy Student Group	Review Team
1:30	Child Care & Family Services- Staff and Teacher Group	SCM 1-147	Holly Garcia Megan Powell Wendy Blanchard Teachers	Review Team
2:30	Benefit Department, Staff Development (Anjali), and Orientation & Student Success	Teams or SCM 1-147	Each Department	Juniper-TBD
3:00	Check in and Departure	SCM 1-147	Holly Garcia	Review Team

March 5 th , 2023				
Time	Activity	Location	Participants	Reviewers
9:00 AM	Meet for Breakfast and Discussion (Staff and Select teachers from Jordan)	JSTC-223	Holly Garcia Megan Powell Wendy Blanchard Teachers	Review Team
9:45	Tour Jordan Campus Child Care	JSTC-159	Wendy Blanchard	Review Team
10:15	Classroom Observations	JSTC-159	Each Department	Review Team
11:15	Psychology & Social Work Department Health Sciences (Nursing, Dental Hygiene) and Tech Moms	JSTC-223	Each Department	Review Team
12:00-1:00	Meet the Students Lunch and Discussion (select student group from Jordan)	JSTC-223	Holly Garcia Curt Larsen Megan Powell Wendy Blanchard	Review Team
1:00	Travel to Herriman	Your car		Review Team
1:30	Tour of the Building	Juniper	Taunya Dressler	Review Team
2:00	Preparation of Initial Findings & Recommendations	Juniper-104 C	Review Team	Review Team
3:00	Presentation to VP, AVP of SS, Directors & Assistant Directors (Snacks & Drinks)	Juniper-104 C	Holly Garcia Curt Larsen Megan Powell Wendy Blanchard	Review Team
4:00	Departure	Juniper-104 C	Thank you!	☺

Proposed questions were provided for each interview and are provided in this report. They were similar across the groups but varied somewhat based on the department and their collaboration and knowledge of the Family and Childcare Services. The reviewers were allowed to use the questions as a guide and ask further questions as desired. An example of the questions is provided below and the additional questions are provided in an Appendix.

Questions for Child Care Staff & Teachers:

1. How do you think child care fits into overall goals of the College which is to increase student completion, improve transfer preparation & articulation, align with and respond to workforce needs, achieve equity in student participation & completion, and securing institutional sustainability & capacity?
2. The purpose of Child Care & Family Services is to provide excellent child care to children, and families in a developmentally appropriate setting that promotes learning through play, while preparing children to become lifelong learners. We are here to support Salt Lake Community College efforts to provide accessible, affordable, quality education to a wide range of individuals by offering high-quality child-care services. As an employee of the center how well do you think you are doing overall with delivering this purpose?
3. What is your previous experience working in Early Childhood Education? How long have you been employed with us and what is your role?
4. If we talked to parents about our strengths what do you think parents would say about us?
5. We meet monthly for staff development and review Accreditation Standards frequently. How would you describe level of understanding with those standards?
6. Do you feel connected to the College as an employee?
7. What Professional Development opportunities have you been able to participate in at the College?
8. What Professional development opportunities would you like to have?
9. What could our department do to support college students more holistically?
10. What changes and improvements should be made in our department to improve services and advance the college and department purpose?
11. In our department how do you feel you are dealing with marginalized groups of people and supporting the needs of those families?
12. Do you feel a sense of belonging?
13. What are the benefits that you take advantage of as an employee of the child care?
14. What benefits lack for you as an employee?
15. Why do you think we have a high turnover rate of employees?
16. How do you know you are making a difference in the lives of children?
17. What is the best thing about your job?

At the end of the two-day onsite review, the review team met with Curt Larsen, Holly Garcia, Wendy Blanchard and Megan Powell to deliver initial findings and recommendations for the department.

Recommendations for Methodology and Site Visits

The review team felt that it would have been beneficial to have more classroom observation time at the Tim and Brenda Huval Childcare Center. It would also be advantageous to have time that was unannounced to staff to have the most accurate picture of daily operations.

Most of the departments that were invited to participate did not understand what the review was and why they were invited. A brief overview of the review process and how it relates to other departments would be beneficial.

Interviews

- **Child Care Staff & Teachers—Jordan Campus and Huval Child Care**

Staff and teachers felt that childcare was necessary for student completion. It provides consistency for the family and the children while the parent is in school. As far as their role in delivering on the purpose and mission of the college, they feel they do lesson plans and observations for quality and are accredited so they need to hit performance goals. They complete 3 parent teacher conferences per year. One very notable trend was that they connected their work to the mission. For example, some comments were made like, “It is the most important 5 years of a child’s life.” “I know I am making a difference.” “My job has purpose.”

Those who were full-time thought the benefits were great but there are no benefits for those who are part-time employees. They said there are only 5 full-time staff and the rest are part-time. When a part-time staff is sick or the center is closed, they don’t get paid. Part-time staff are held to 29 hours a

week so they don't qualify for benefits and the college does not want to pay for over-time. Because of the lower wages, many staff are very young, just out of high school, who don't have the experience or training and feel it is babysitting. Some staff have been lost due to burn-out. The schedules change weekly so it is difficult to schedule any appointments they need. The full-time staff stay in the same classroom which is helpful but part-time staff rotate so they don't have the same team or room.

With training, they would like more. They receive 2 hours a month but it is difficult to stay 2 more hours at the end of the day. Sometimes they are there until 9:30 at night and food is not provided. It is difficult to train new staff. In order to do so, strong teachers are paired with new staff and it is difficult to train someone while taking care of a classroom of children. The college offers professional development classes but they can't attend. They usually don't know about them until the day before so they can't juggle schedules and they are scheduled to work at the times of the trainings.

They don't feel they get time to do bulletin boards, lesson plans and often don't get breaks. They would like to go to conference to learn updated ideas and policies.

They provided ideas for improvement:

1. More training for staff and time for class preparation. Providing a CDA (Child Development Associate Certification class was requested.
2. Time with the team to bond. They have one staff retreat a year, 2 Saturday staff meetings to complete requirements and training.
3. A translator for parents and translated parent materials, particularly in Spanish and Arabic.
4. Recognition for good performance. They commented that high performance is rewarded with more work.
5. They feel connected to the college as a student but not as an employee. They would like other college offices to connect and provide more information and feel connected to the

college community. Possibly have administrative staff visit the center at Jordan to see what they do.

6. Resources for parents.

Staff expressed concerns of low pay, high demands and that the position can be mentally, physically and financially demanding. They said they felt under-appreciated and not valued except by the parents. They would like to have been acknowledged on teacher appreciation day. As a society, the job is often treated like babysitting instead of teaching.

Overall, they felt they made a difference, loving and caring for children. They felt rewarded in the small moments when a child hits a milestone or made little steps in the right direction, learns a new word or name. They enjoyed seeing a child coming to school excited where they could trust their teachers.

- **Parent Interview—Jordan and Huval Childcare**

All staff interviewed had current vouchers to help pay for their childcare and said having them was vital to them completing school. They felt they could not have continued in school without them. The vouchers gave them an incentive to take more classes so they are a motivation but sometimes taking 9 credits for the voucher was too much with work and kids. One student said that having childcare “allowed my family to do school and have a future.” In addition to the financial component, they said they had built a community within the families and having other parents to connect with was very helpful. There are monthly events provided which they liked including a cultural experience where families were able to highlight their culture. Some had family members for support but the family members work so are not available to help with childcare. The flexibility was very important as it allowed them to participate in clinical labs, group meets for studying and open labs beyond class time. Enrolling was fairly easy and most said they heard about the program by word of mouth.

Affordability was almost free as long as they were enrolled in the appropriate number of classes. There was some confusion on how many hours they needed to take. Parents are included in performance reviews, see lesson plans that are posted and are told of developmental milestones their child achieves. At the end of the semester, they receive a binder with pictures and milestones for their child.

When asked what changes could be made to improve the Childcare Services they gave several suggestions:

1. Split older children from the younger children. They currently can have children ages 5-10 and the needs are much different.
 2. There is a childcare cliff, meaning that the childcare stops the minute you graduate. At that point, you usually won't have a job yet. Student grants stop at the same time. They expressed a desire for a transition period.
 3. Need more funding as they are understaffed.
 4. Need training for children who need additional support or help.
 5. Moms aren't educated on ChildFind which might help the shortage of childcare.
 6. Need to bridge services to other supports (food, clothing, WIC). There is not help for families to find needed resources or posted resources when available.
 7. Have centers open during school breaks to provide study time.
- **Interview with Phillip Holland, Nurse Practitioner and Medical Director, Center for Health and Counseling.**

Phillip felt that the Family and Childcare Services program fits the goal for student success, particularly for the many non-traditional students on campus. With single mothers, minorities and older students, they either would not complete school or would take much longer without childcare. His department conducts the TB testing for the childcare staff which is the primary collaboration that takes

place between the two departments. As far as other collaboration, he felt that his department could provide some outward facing events on topics such as stress, mental health, and exercise that part time staff could attend as well as QPR training (Question, Persuade, Refer) suicide training. They currently do have some virtual training that staff could access. His perception of childcare services is that there is a high demand and so it is difficult to enroll a child.

- **Interview with Accessibility and Disability Services Center**

During the Child Care and Family Services Program Review we interviewed one staff member affiliated with Accessibility and Disability Services: Julie Smith, Interpreting Manager. Julie noted her experience with the Tim and Brenda Huval Child Care as a parent whose child attend the center on the South City Campus.

As an employee and parent, Julie emphasized the immense support the service offers to both SLCC students and employees. The availability of child care, flexibility of scheduling, operations during semester breaks, and affordability for students and employees were all noted as great assets to Child Care and Family Services. As an employee, she felt the service was of immense value for retention of employees, and a great relief to her as a parent to have childcare on campus. Moreover, the proximity to her office allowed for her to continue her preferred parenting practice of breastfeeding, and receive child care from a teaching staff who “matched her parenting expectations for sleep and eating”. Julie appreciated the center’s invitations to participate in the classroom and that the center held family events in the evenings and on Saturdays when she can attend. She highlighted that the new center on South City campus is wonderful to have a dedicated space for children, but reflected that the child care is now not as visible to the broader campus community, and perhaps leads to less accessibility or awareness of the service on campus.

As a department, Julie reflected that Accessibility and Disability Services aims to inform student parents of the Child Care and Family Services if a student inquires, but overall could do a better job at providing information about the service. Julie recommended more information to be able to hand out or pass on to student families with young children.

Overall, Julie described the Child Care and Family services as doing a “phenomenal job,” and Holly Garcia’s extraordinary efforts to secure funding for and expansion of child care on campus. She underscored the importance of child care on campus for retaining employees and degree completion of student parents. Julie’s few recommendations include: 1) more infant/toddler care to relieve the long-wait list, 2) more drop-in care available, in particular for student parents, 3) increased visibility on campus and information provided to departments to share with student parents. Julie acknowledged that communication between departments (e.g. Accessibility and Disability Services and Child Care and Family Services) could improve in order to better inform student families of the services provided within Child Care and Family Services.

- **Interview with Financial Aid**

The Financial Aid Director is new to her position as of January 2024 and is not familiar with the mission goals, and vision of the Child Care and Family Services. She indicated that the current method of determining students' eligibility for the voucher program, based on the Expected Family Contribution (EFC), would be replaced by the Student Aid Index beginning fall 2024.

The Financial Aid director acknowledged that her understanding of the existing collaboration between departments was still developing. However, she underscored the critical role of continuous cross-training efforts for the child care voucher program. Recognizing the dynamic nature of financial aid and childcare services, she emphasized the necessity for cross-training among staff members to adapt to evolving needs and policies as well as staff turnover.

Moreover, she emphasized the importance of a partnership between her office and the child care programs. With the help of the child care program, she believed that financial aid counselors could better grasp the multifaceted needs of student parents.

- **Interview with Orientation and Student Success, Staff Development, Benefits**

An annual student orientation takes place where all students are given a handbook that has an advertisement for Childcare Services; however, they stated the Orientation is 3 hours and so time constraints won't allow additional information. Students in need of childcare are referred to the center but admissions does not track students who have children in that age group. There has been newspaper posts, social media and SLCC Today emails about the program. Holly was just invited to a staff meeting to help educate on services available. There is a fair where Childcare Services participates and the students can learn how to access the services as well as food pantries and other available campus programs. In this way, there is collaboration but the comment was made that they only know a little. There is also a Peers Program and Childcare is part of that where there is a monthly meeting to problem solve barriers to student success and prevent drop outs.

They stated that Childcare and Facilities programs are problematic for training. They are trying to build training tracks. The trainings are more general for college needs and there will need to be some analysis to see if the trainings meets the needs of the Family and Childcare Services department. They also felt that if there is high turnover that they can't address needs if they don't understand them. There is no knowledge of issues or strategies and a need for better communication.

- **Interview with Tech Moms and Department of Health Sciences**

Tech Moms provide Saturday classes where SLCC provides the childcare for their students. They find it very beneficial to their program. The Department of Health Sciences felt that their students aren't aware of the program. Their own knowledge was limited to seeing staff pushing strollers on

campus. The Dental Hygiene program would like to have someone come in May at the orientation and provide information and possibly flyers. They mentioned that they used to have flyers to pass out but hadn't for some time. The Nursing Program also felt someone attending May orientation would be beneficial and suggested QR codes on the flyers. On the May Orientation day, it was suggested that Childcare provide an option to tour the facility. The Dental program had the Childcare Services and children tour their facility and used puppets to help children see the services and help them to feel at ease in the dental environment. The Nursing program felt that they could also do some preschool tours with students providing some education as well.

Strengths

1. Dedicated Staff

- a. The dedication and enthusiasm displayed by the staff at both the South City and Jordan campuses were truly commendable. From their diligent efforts to their commitment, it was evident that they approached their roles with genuine passion and dedication. Whether assisting children, managing administrative tasks, or fostering a supportive learning environment, the staff demonstrated their investment in their work and the well-being of the children they served. Their passion not only enhanced the educational experience but also contributed to the overall sense of community and support with the center.
- b. Numerous members of the South City staff exhibited a profound understanding and expertise in the Early Childhood Care (ECC) field. Their discussions reflected not only a depth of knowledge but also a genuine passion for their work. Through insightful conversations and informed perspectives, they conveyed a rich understanding of the complexities and nuances within the ECC field.
- c. Despite talking of occasionally leaving and finding other work, the South City staff's profound love for their work and dedication to the children compel them to return to their work at South City time and again.

- d. A considerable number of staff members expressed their commitment to pursuing additional training beyond the mandatory requirements. This was expressed to be driven by their own desire to enhance their capabilities and better fulfill their roles as early childhood educators.
- 2. Strong support from Child Care and Family Services Administration.
 - a. The teachers at both the South City and Jordan campuses feel exceptionally supported by Holly and her team. They are grateful for the new Assistant Directors and the support they are receiving from them. Staff also felt that Holly Garcia has been a great advocate for the program and has devoted time to outreach and marketing for the program.
- 3. Supporting the Mission and Vision of Salt Lake Community College and Supporting Student Parents
 - a. Repeatedly, we heard from numerous student-parents that their ability to enroll and persist to graduation was facilitated by the child care and voucher program.
 - b. Without the opportunity to enroll their children in the child care program at either South City or Jordan campus, student-parents would not have been able to continue their studies to gradations across different programs.
 - c. The voucher program played a crucial role in enabling numerous parents to afford child care, allowing them to attend school and continue until graduation. Throughout the review, it was consistently evident that the Child and Family Services Department supports student success and the mission of Salt Lake Community College. Providing consistent and affordable childcare to students allows them to continue their classes knowing their children are safe and nurtured in a learning environment. It also promotes employment as students are able to complete their college courses and move into the workforce.
 - d. As an integral aspect of fostering student success and a sense of belonging at Salt Lake Community College, Child Care and Family Services has facilitated connections among student-parents through monthly activities involving their children. Parents expressed that these activities have resulted in lasting

friendships extending beyond graduation and have fostered a sense of belonging throughout their academic journey.

Recommendations

To support the mission and vision of Salt Lake Community College to increase student completion, improve transfer preparation and articulation, align with and respond to workforce needs, achieve equity in student participation and completion, and securing institutional sustainability and capacity as well as fulfill the purpose of Child Care and Family Services, the following are recommendations:

1. Deliver High Quality Child Care Services – The purpose of Child Care & Family Services is to provide excellent child care to children and families in a developmentally appropriate setting that promotes learning through play, while preparing children to become lifelong learners. These recommendations support SLCC efforts to provide accessible, affordable quality education to wide range of individuals by offering high quality child care services.

- a. Staffing

- i. Hire full-time staff for each classroom

Young children need consistent care with trusting relationships. Extensive research underscores the significance of young children feeling safe and well-cared for to foster a strong sense of self and well-being. Particularly for those spending prolonged hours in child care, especially very young ones, forging robust bonds with their caregivers is paramount. However, during our discussions, we found that many teachers, working part-time for only 20 or 25 hours per week, felt a disconnection with both the children and parents. This fragmented approach also posed challenges for children to form lasting bonds

with their caregivers and receive consistent quality care amidst frequent teacher turnovers throughout the day and week.

Furthermore, teachers expressed frustration at the lack of access to essential benefits like health care and paid days off, exacerbating caregiver turnover rates and disrupting the continuity of care for the children. To uphold the institutional goals of enhancing student achievement and supporting parenting students, we propose that the college allocate resources to employ full-time teachers for each classroom at both the South City and Jordan campuses. This investment would not only address the concerns raised by the teachers but also contribute to a more stable and nurturing environment for the children under their care.

ii. Implement on-boarding and mentoring system

Recruiting and retaining qualified staff remains an ongoing challenge in the child care industry, characterized by high turnover rates and burdensome workloads for administrators and caregivers alike. While some staff members at South City have remained for several years, others have noted frequent turnover in many positions, resulting in experienced teachers taking on additional responsibilities to train new caregivers. Typically, new hires are given minimal guidance and support, often shadowing experienced teachers for just one day while juggling their regular duties of caring for and teaching children. This haphazard approach to onboarding leaves new trainees ill-prepared for their roles and does not compensate experienced teachers for their extra efforts. Experienced teachers expressed concerns about the difficulty of training new staff while still trying to maintain their own job responsibilities and care for children.

We recommend initiating a collaborative effort with the college's Human Resources department to develop a comprehensive onboarding system tailored to meet the diverse needs of child care centers. This system should encompass preservice training requirements, including familiarization with policies, procedures, and licensing standards. Additionally, it should offer thorough guidance on classroom management techniques, curriculum planning strategies, and adherence to accreditation standards. Ensuring adequate onboarding and quality training increases staff retention and ensures better supervision and quality care for the children.

Moreover, we would propose allocating resources towards establishing a paid mentoring program. This program would enable experienced teachers to temporarily step away from their regular caregiving duties to provide hands-on guidance and support to new hires. Through mentorship, new teachers can benefit from the wealth of expertise and practical insights offered by their more seasoned counterparts. Furthermore, this mentoring initiative could be enhanced through collaboration with the college's lab school, leveraging its resources and facilities to facilitate effective training sessions and workshops. By implementing these initiatives, new hires are ensured to receive the necessary support and guidance to thrive in their roles, while also fostering a culture of continuous learning and professional development within the child care community.

iii. Implement professional development system

Ensuring a high-quality child care program entails not only recruiting but also retaining a skilled and dedicated staff. It's widely acknowledged among HR

professionals that retaining quality staff is more cost-effective and beneficial than constantly recruiting and training new members. As part of a comprehensive strategy to retain professional staff, it's crucial to establish a robust professional development training system.

During our discussions with staff at the South City and Jordan campuses, it became apparent that there was a lack of consistency in ongoing training opportunities. While some staff members received training exclusively through Holly and her administrative team, (every staff member we spoke to praised the staff meetings, especially the yearly staff retreat) others were unaware of external training sources or had limited access to them due to scheduling conflicts during working hours. Additionally, some teachers were aware of professional development courses offered by the college through the HR system but were unable to participate due to timing constraints.

To address these challenges and meet the requirements set by the state licensing entity and accreditation standards, we propose the development of a structured professional development system. This system should outline a clear pathway for staff members to enhance their skills as early childhood educators, catering to individuals at various stages of their careers, from newcomers to seasoned caregivers. It should delineate both the minimum yearly required training hours and opportunities for those who wish to exceed these requirements. Furthermore, the system should incorporate mechanisms for recognizing and rewarding staff members who actively participate in professional development activities, whether through monetary incentives or certificates of achievement.

By implementing a comprehensive professional development system, skills and knowledge of staff is enhanced but it also demonstrates the college's commitment to supporting their professional growth and success within the child care industry and the college structure. A professional development system shows the college is dedicated to staff and recognizes the value of early childhood educators.

iv. Teacher recognition system

Despite experiencing a brief surge of recognition and appreciation during the early stages of the COVID-19 pandemic, the child care industry continues to be undervalued and marginalized, evidenced by low wages and insufficient recognition. It's essential for administrators and governing boards overseeing child care programs to acknowledge and appreciate the caregivers who provide daily services to families and children.

In our conversations with teachers at the South City and Jordan Campuses, while some felt partially supported by Holly and her team, especially during the staff retreat, many expressed a sense of undervaluation within the broader college community. Although they were aware of yearly events in the teaching field like Teacher Appreciation Week, they felt overlooked and unappreciated during such occasions. The level of support varied among teachers, with some feeling well-supported while others felt completely neglected. The cumulative stress and burnout experienced by many of the teachers were exacerbated by the perceived lack of support and recognition for their demanding roles. Moreover, the absence of holiday pay for all the part-time staff further compounded their financial challenges and lack of recognition. To address these issues and foster a

culture of appreciation, we recommend implementing a comprehensive Teacher Recognition System with two key components:

1. Annual Celebrations: Organize a yearly celebration during Teacher Appreciation Week in May. If student enrollment is low in May due to summer semester, alternative months such as April, in conjunction with the Week of the Young Child; or October, for Campus Child Center Celebration, could be considered. Encourage involvement from Student Services and parents in organizing appreciation activities, fostering a sense of community appreciation for teachers' hard work.

2. Ongoing Recognition: Implement a fun and meaningful recognition program, such as recognizing a "Staff of the Month," or awarding charms or badges for years of service, or acknowledging completion of training programs. These initiatives not only recognize individual achievements but also reinforce the value and contributions of all staff members.

By instituting a Teacher Recognition Systems that celebrate and acknowledge the dedication of child care educators, you can create a supportive and rewarding work environment that encourages retention and promotes overall well-being.

v. Develop Sense of Belonging to greater SLCC community

b. Learning Environment

i. Lesson Planning

While our time was primarily spent in the classrooms at the Jordan campus, we did have the opportunity to review lesson plans for classrooms at both centers. On the day of observation, intermittent rain and temperatures in the low 40s

were noted. At South City, I observed that classes scheduled for outdoor activities adhered to their assigned time slots. However, at Jordan, only the preschool room followed the outdoor schedule, albeit with extended time outdoors beyond the allotted period. In two out of four classrooms, there was a noticeable deviation from the schedule.

Upon reviewing the lesson plans, it appears that they are largely copied and pasted from the broader curriculum. The two-year-old room at the Jordan campus seemed to be executing their lesson plans as outlined, with children actively engaged and participating; however, there was no indication of completion for the preschool science or animal lessons scheduled for Monday or Tuesday of the current week.

In the infant room, a reviewer observed a mix of age-appropriate and inappropriate activities outlined in the lesson plans. Upon inquiry, the teacher confirmed that they were indeed conducting established activities suitable for infants, such as singing, dancing, playing peek-a-boo, and reading books.

However, there were also activities listed that were deemed inappropriate for this age group, including circle or group time and teaching letters or numbers. Furthermore, it was evident that the lesson plans lacked individualization for infants and toddlers.

It is strongly suggested to have a personalized approach to infant planning that considers each child's age and developmental stage, rather than strictly adhering to a standardized curriculum. It's essential to tailor activities to meet the individual needs and milestones of each infant.

Furthermore, we highly recommend eliminating group activities for children

under the age of three and significantly limiting them thereafter. Young children thrive on one-on-one interactions and benefit most from activities that cater to their individual interests and abilities.

Additionally, it is proposed that support is provided for teachers to effectively implement their lesson plans and demonstrate evidence of learning or activity completion. For instance, the example provided in the lesson plan:

implementing activities like graphing the types of pets children have at home is an excellent idea. However, it's crucial to go a step further by posting the resulting graph to showcase the children's learning progress to parents. This method not only provides tangible evidence of learning but also fosters transparency and communication between teachers and parents.

ii. Equipment/Room Arrangement

The environment in which children spend their days plays a crucial role in shaping their overall well-being, encompassing both their interactions and the physical spaces they inhabit. At both the South City and Jordan campuses, the physical layout varied significantly, with some areas feeling spacious while others felt cramped. While altering the physical structure may not be feasible, there are recommendations that can enhance the functionality and comfort within these spaces.

Many of the rooms appeared overcrowded, filled with an excess of furniture and equipment. This can overwhelm children with too many materials or leave them feeling bored and restless with too little. Striking the right balance is key. It is essential to ensure that there is ample room for infants, toddlers, and twos to move, crawl, and explore as they learn and grow.

We would propose removing excess equipment from every room at the Jordan campus, particularly in the infant and toddler areas. Additionally, relocating the quiet book area from behind the door to a safer and more conducive space for reading is advisable.

Similarly, at the South City campus, we recommend removing the dividing shelving in the toddler room. If necessary for group size restrictions, we suggest reallocating resources to install a more permanent structure with a gate in between. This would not only provide a sound barrier but also create a better aesthetic for both children and caregivers. Moreover, it would afford each space the flexibility to arrange the room in a manner that optimizes the learning environment for toddlers. Additionally, the infant room is very small and with furniture, allows little space for movement for infants or interaction with parents. Although square footage may be within requirements, any attached furniture would be subtracted making it a very small space for staff and children.

iii. Teacher/Parent and Child Interactions

Parents felt connected to the teachers and services but the connection is through personal cell phones. Teachers reach out to parents by email, text and provide notes home of classroom activities and child observations, including photos of children in the classroom. This is a concerning practice both for safety and confidentiality. Teacher interactions should be through a college email or an approved app that provides security for the staff and confidentiality for families and children. We recommend the college provide a higher security level of communication between staff and parents. Photos of children should never be on personal devices or shared.

Teacher were engaged with children and had positive interactions. They were sitting with the children as they participated in centers and asking open-ended questions and were responsive to child needs.

2. Communication and Collaboration

Across all interviews, it was evident that there are opportunities to increase communication and collaboration between departments and within the Family Services and Childcare program. There was little knowledge in the other departments as to what services were provided and how they fit into any collaboration. To increase the communication and collaboration, we recommend:

- a. Identify students at enrollment that have childcare needs in the age groups served.
- b. Cross training of services available throughout the college programs
- c. Increased internal communication of childcare services, how to access, the wait list, benefits and requirements.
- d. Identify training needs and what training can be provided to meet the needs of the department.
- e. Include Childcare Services in May Orientations for Dental Hygiene and Nursing. Look at collaboration possibilities for tours or education for the preschool students and/or parents.

Summary

As a review team, it was an honor to spend time with the staff and management at Salt Lake Community College. There were many strengths, with the most evident being the commitment of the teaching staff to the children and families that they serve. It was also evident that Holly is dedicated to the success of the program, the staff and the families.

Working within the early childhood area, we recognize many of the challenges of hiring, training and retaining staff along with the need to recognize them as educators rather than daycare staff. There is some movement nationally to increase wages, qualifications and recognition in this area. The recommendations in this review are shared to increase high quality childcare services for the children who will be the leaders of the future. We appreciate the college's commitment to student success and providing childcare services that not only support the college student in achieving but also supports the growth and learning of their children.

Appendix

Interview Questions Provided

Questions for Child Care Staff & Teachers:

1. How do you think child care fits into overall goals of the College which is to increase student completion, improve transfer preparation & articulation, align with and respond to workforce needs, achieve equity in student participation & completion, and securing institutional sustainability & capacity?
2. The purpose of Child Care & Family Services is to provide excellent child care to children, and families in a developmentally appropriate setting that promotes learning through play, while preparing children to become lifelong learners. We are here to support Salt Lake Community College efforts to provide accessible, affordable, quality education to a wide range of individuals by offering high-quality child-care services. As an employee of the center how well do you think you are doing overall with delivering this purpose?
3. What is your previous experience working in Early Childhood Education? How long have you been employed with us and what is your role?
4. If we talked to parents about our strengths what do you think parents would say about us?
5. We meet monthly for staff development and review Accreditation Standards frequently. How would you describe level of understanding with those standards?
6. Do you feel connected to the College as an employee?
7. What Professional Development opportunities have you been able to participate in at the College?
8. What Professional development opportunities would you like to have?
9. What could our department do to support college students more holistically?
10. What changes and improvements should be made in our department to improve services and advance the college and department purpose?
11. In our department how do you feel you are dealing with marginalized groups of people and supporting the needs of those families?
12. Do you feel a sense of belonging?
13. What are the benefits that you take advantage of as an employee of the child care?
14. What benefits lack for you as an employee?
15. Why do you think we have a high turnover rate of employees?
16. How do you know you are making a difference in the lives of children?
17. What is the best thing about your job?

Questions for Financial Aid Department

1. How do you think child care fits into overall goals of the College which is to increase student completion, improve transfer preparation & articulation, align with and respond to workforce needs, achieve equity in student participation & completion, and securing institutional sustainability & capacity?
2. What is your experience with Child Care & Family Services?
3. What do you know about Child Care & Family Services?
4. When you have students who come to you and have dependents what resources do you provide for them with regards to Child Care & Family Services?
5. What do you know about our Voucher Program?
6. In the past the link for this program was on your page. Would you be willing to add it back on?
7. Is there a way to track who has dependents listed on their financial aid?
8. Would Financial Aid be willing to host an event at the Child Care Center for student-parents to help with FAFSA completion?
9. Are there events that Financial aid does that need child care services?
10. What do you think Child Care & Family Services could do to support students better?
11. What do you think Child Care & Family Services could do to support staff and faculty better?
12. How could Child Care & Family Services help your department support students?

Accessibility and Disability Services

1. How do you think child care fits into overall goals of the College which is to increase student completion, improve transfer preparation & articulation, align with and respond to workforce needs, achieve equity in student participation & completion, and securing institutional sustainability & capacity?
2. What is your experience with Child Care & Family Services?
3. What do you know about Child Care & Family Services?
4. Are you aware that Child Care & Family Services serves students with children who have been identified with special needs if they are able?
5. Are you aware that Child Care & Family Services helps student parents navigate resources to help children receive free and appropriate education with local districts?
6. Are you aware that Child Care & Family Services collaborates with the Children's Center for children in need of therapeutic preschool and also therapy for extreme behavior problems?
7. What pieces of collaboration do you think you would like to see with regards to Child Care & Family Services?
8. When you have students who come to you with dependents what resources do you provide for them with regards to Child Care & Family Services?
9. Are there events/trainings that your department does that could benefit from child care?
10. What do you think Child Care & Family Services could do to support students better?
11. What do you think Child Care & Family Services could do to support staff and faculty better?

12. How could Child Care & Family Services help your department support students?

Center for Health & Counseling

1. How do you think child care fits into overall goals of the College which is to increase student completion, improve transfer preparation & articulation, align with and respond to workforce needs, achieve equity in student participation & completion, and securing institutional sustainability & capacity?
2. What is your experience with Child Care & Family Services?
3. What do you know about Child Care & Family Services?
4. Child care is a very stressful job, are there resources that you have that part-time employees should be aware of in your department?
5. What pieces of collaboration do you think you would like to see with regards to Child Care & Family Services?
6. When you have students who come to you and have dependents what resources do you provide for them with regards to Child Care & Family Services?
7. Are there events/trainings that your department does that could benefit from child care?
8. What do you think Child Care & Family Services could do to support students better?
9. What do you think Child Care & Family Services could do to support staff and faculty better?
10. How could Child Care & Family Services help your department support students?

Parent Questions

1. How do you think child care fits into overall goals of the College which is to increase student completion, improve transfer preparation & articulation, align with and respond to workforce needs, achieve equity in student participation & completion, and securing institutional sustainability & capacity?
2. What are your experiences as students with the affordability of childcare services at this campus location?
3. What is your experience as parents with the quality of education of your children at this child care location?
4. How do you feel that child care has impacted your education?
5. How do you feel that CCAMPIS grants and the SLCC Voucher Program has impacted your education?
6. How would you describe your experience finding and enrolling your child in child care?
7. How would you describe your experience with receiving financial assistance to pay for childcare cost?
8. Annual surveys have been sent out to access our programming. Was this adequate for you to provide feedback about our services?
9. How well do you think Child Care & Family Services is doing at ensuring that all types of people (including those with disabilities, marginalized minority groups, or LGBTQ+) are being served or represented by staffing?
10. Do you feel like you and your child have a sense of belonging?
11. What feedback do you have about the administration of the services you have received?

12. What changes could be made to improve your experience as a student with regards to our services of child care and application of aid toward child care cost?
13. If you could praise one person or experience who/what would it be and why?

Benefits Department

1. How do you think child care fits into overall goals of the College which is to increase student completion, improve transfer preparation & articulation, align with and respond to workforce needs, achieve equity in student participation & completion, and securing institutional sustainability & capacity?
2. What is your experience with Child Care & Family Services?
3. What do you know about Child Care & Family Services?
4. Child Care and Family Services serves children from birth to 12 years of age. We first slot children of students, and then faculty and staff. Do faculty and staff often approach you about our services?
5. If staff and faculty are reaching out to human resources about our services are they aware that they get a discounted rate when compared to community members?
6. We get a lot of feedback about need for infant care at Redwood. Do employees reach out to you about infant care at Redwood Campus?
7. When you have employees who come to you with dependents what resources do you provide for them with regards to Child Care & Family Services?
8. We have a lot of employees who are part time. This really limits their benefits with the College. Has there ever been discussion about sharing the sick leave pool of full-time hours with these employees?
9. Could there be a possibility to share vacation hours that don't carry forward to part time employees from full time employees?
10. Part time employees get the benefit of taking one class per semester after they have worked for 2 full years. Is there a way to allow employees to take Early Ed classes for free prior to hitting the 2-year mark as part of their professional development?
11. We encourage our students to try to get work study when possible so that we can save money and continue to offer discounts to the College and its students. This counts against their eligibility for the free class after 2 years employment. Is there some way to remedy this?
12. Are there events/trainings that your department does that could benefit from child care?
13. What do you think Child Care & Family Services could do to support employees better?
14. What do you think Child Care & Family Services could do to support students better?
15. How could Child Care & Family Services help your department support students or employees better?

Staff Development

1. How do you think child care fits into overall goals of the College which is to increase student completion, improve transfer preparation & articulation, align with and respond to workforce

needs, achieve equity in student participation & completion, and securing institutional sustainability & capacity?

2. What is your experience with Child Care & Family Services?
3. What do you know about Child Care & Family Services?
4. One of the strategic goals of the College is to increase staff retention, staff development seems like a natural way to increase retention. Child Care and Family Services struggles with retention and the ability to participate in development opportunities during the time that children need care. Is there a list of resources that you have that could provide more opportunities than are currently being used?
5. Part time employees get the benefit of taking one class per semester after they have worked 2 full years. Is there a way to partner with the development office to allow employees to take Early Ed classes for free prior to hitting the 2-year mark?
6. Are there events/trainings that your department does that could benefit from child care?
7. What do you think Child Care & Family Services could do to support employees better?
8. What do you think Child Care & Family Services could do to support students better?
9. How could Child Care & Family Services help your department support students or employees better?

Orientation and Student Success

1. How do you think child care fits into overall goals of the College which is to increase student completion, improve transfer preparation & articulation, align with and respond to workforce needs, achieve equity in student participation & completion, and securing institutional sustainability & capacity?
2. What is your experience with Child Care & Family Services?
3. What do you know about Child Care & Family Services?
4. Child Care and Family Services serves children from birth to 12 years of age. We first slot children of students, and then faculty and staff? Do faculty and staff often approach you about our services?
5. Does your department know we offer a discount to all employees of the College?
6. We get a lot of feedback about need for infant care at Redwood. Do you hear about that need?
7. Holly Perry has helped us get familiar with MySuccess, if we were your dream collaborator what would you need from us?
8. Are there events/trainings that your department does that could benefit from child care?
9. What do you think Child Care & Family Services could do to support employees better?
10. What do you think Child Care & Family Services could do to support students better?
11. How could Child Care & Family Services help your department support students or employees better?

Allied Health (Community Health and Leadership, Dental Hygiene, Respiratory Therapy, Surgical Technology).

1. How do you think child care fits into overall goals of the College which is to increase student completion, improve transfer preparation & articulation, align with and respond to workforce

needs, achieve equity in student participation & completion, and securing institutional sustainability & capacity?

2. What is your experience with Child Care & Family Services?
3. What do you know about Child Care & Family Services?
4. Are you aware that Child Care & Family Services supports parents with the cost of child care so that they can attend their classes, and do homework?
5. What pieces of collaboration do you think you would like to see with regards to Child Care & Family Services?
6. When you have students who come to you with dependents what resources do you provide for them with regards to Child Care & Family Services?
7. Are there events/trainings that your department does that could benefit from child care?
8. Dental Health is important and part of our programming. Are there opportunities we should or could be working with your students for hands on experience?
9. Are there opportunities for us to collaborate with students in the Community Health programming for meaningful opportunities with regards to health education for our parents, children or other ideas?
10. What do you think Child Care & Family Services could do to support students better?
11. What do you think Child Care & Family Services could do to support staff and faculty better?
12. Are you continuing operation on Friday's during the summer? IF so do you know what the need of your students is with regard to child care?
13. How could Child Care & Family Services help your department support students?

Nursing

1. How do you think child care fits into overall goals of the College which is to increase student completion, improve transfer preparation & articulation, align with and respond to workforce needs, achieve equity in student participation & completion, and securing institutional sustainability & capacity?
2. What is your experience with Child Care & Family Services?
3. What do you know about Child Care & Family Services?
4. Are you aware that Child Care & Family Services supports parents with the cost of child care so that they can attend their classes, and do homework?
5. What pieces of collaboration do you think you would like to see with regards to Child Care & Family Services?
6. When you have students who come to you with dependents what resources do you provide for them with regards to Child Care & Family Services?
7. Are there events/trainings that your department does that could benefit from child care?
8. Are there opportunities we should or could be working with your students for hands on experience?
9. Are there opportunities for us to collaborate with students for meaningful opportunities with regards to health education for our parents, children or other ideas?
10. What do you think Child Care & Family Services could do to support students better?
11. What do you think Child Care & Family Services could do to support staff and faculty better?
12. Are you continuing operation on Friday's during the summer? IF so do you know what the need of your students is with regard to child care?

13. How could Child Care & Family Services help your department support students?

Tech-moms

1. How do you think child care fits into overall goals of the College which is to increase student completion, improve transfer preparation & articulation, align with and respond to workforce needs, achieve equity in student participation & completion, and securing institutional sustainability & capacity?
2. What is your experience with Child Care & Family Services?
3. What do you know about Child Care & Family Services?
4. Do you think this program is executing its programming and what could they do to improve their services?
5. What pieces of collaboration do you think you would like to see with regards to Child Care & Family Services?
6. When you have students who come to you and have dependents what resources do you provide for them with regards to Child Care & Family Services?
7. Are there events/trainings that your department does that could benefit from child care?
8. What do you think Child Care & Family Services could do to support students better?
9. What do you think Child Care & Family Services could do to support staff and faculty better?
10. How could Child Care & Family Services help you support students?