

STATE OF COLORADO



Colorado Department of Human Services

people who help people



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September 23, 2009

Dear Early Childhood System Stakeholders:

The Colorado Department of Human Services' Division of Child Care convened two stakeholder meetings about the proposed redesign of the Child Care Resource and Referral system. The meetings were held on September 2 and September 16 at the Colorado Children's Campaign offices in Denver.

At the first meeting on September 2, Qualistar Early Learning shared a new vision for the Child Care Resource and Referral (CCR&R) network and its regional boundaries. This vision was developed over the last 18 months in concert with the Division of Child Care and early childhood stakeholders from across Colorado. Following Qualistar's presentation, I facilitated a discussion to gather feedback from participants. CDHS took that feedback and held internal meetings to determine the best next steps.

At the September 16 meeting, CDHS announced its decision to postpone the implementation of the proposed changes to the regional CCR&R network boundaries. CDHS's rationale for this decision was based on the recognition that changing the CCR&R network without a full examination of all the early childhood services it funds would be neither prudent nor consistent with the development of an early childhood system. To that end, the Department will be looking at everything it funds, how those initiatives interact and complement each other to determine the changes that will best serve Colorado's children and families.

CDHS emphasized the following in its decision:

- CDHS fully supports the effective and efficient delivery of CCR&R services.
- CDHS embraces the development of an early childhood system as the framework for the delivery of quality early learning services and supports, including the allocation of funds to build the internal capacity of local Early Childhood Councils, to support Child Care Resource and Referral services, as well as to ensure the availability of other critical services of the system such as quality improvement and professional development.
- CDHS is committed to ensuring that all of its funded services are non-duplicative.

CDHS and Qualistar Early Learning continue to agree that CCR&R services and supports are an integral and critical piece of Colorado's early childhood system. We remain committed to an open and collaborative dialog that is inclusive of all stakeholders as we build a more effective, efficient and equitable early childhood system. We recognize that sufficient time needs to be allowed for dialog and planning among state and local partners in order to achieve this vision.

So what does this mean for the short term? Qualistar will maintain the existing regional boundaries of the CCR&R network until we all have had an opportunity to look at such a redesign within the broader system context. CDHS is re-examining its early childhood expenditures within the context of all CDHS programs to ensure full integration of its programs at both the state and local levels. This integration will be a primary factor in determining how programs and services will be structured in the future. CDHS ultimately desires to increase the effectiveness and efficiencies of its programs while eliminating duplication.

Finally, CDHS commends Qualistar for their willingness to envision a different way to accomplish the goals of a strong CCR&R network and share that with the many early childhood stakeholders in Colorado.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in cursive script that reads "R. Allen".

Rosemarie Allen
Director, Division of Child Care