



UPDATE: Summary of July 21, 2016 Meeting of the Blue Ribbon Commission

In its July meeting, the [Blue Ribbon Commission on Financing High Quality, Affordable Child Care](#) (BRC) listened to a presentation from Public Consulting Group (PCG), which summarized the BRC's goals, provided an outline for the final report and offered a general overview of the child care landscape in Vermont, including capacity of child care providers and availability of high-quality child care.

PCG was contracted to investigate and report on current funding of as well as short- and long-term financing options for high-quality child care. Today's presentation gave the BRC an opportunity to review and revise PCG's methodology for its report in order to ensure the report addressed all desired factors.

BRC Goals

During June's BRC meeting, PCG asked the commissioners specific questions to help define each of the BRC's goals and to determine what further information was needed. The BRC's goals, as outlined by PCG are:

1. Equal access to high-quality care
2. Ensure that any work is done in coordination with ongoing efforts in Vermont
3. Examine and recommend changes to Vermont's Child Care Financial Assistance Program
4. Identify potential funding sources
5. Explore possible funding sources

Following a brief description of the proposed outline for the final report, PCG provided a general overview of the current child care landscape in Vermont including capacity of providers to serve all children under 6 years old as well as infants and toddlers; the supply and demand of licensed and registered providers; the percentage of providers currently enrolled in STARS (STep Ahead Recognition System), Vermont's quality recognition and improvement system; and the availability of high-quality child care in Vermont.

Next Steps

PCG concluded its report by discussing methods for calculating the cost of high-quality child care in Vermont. The BRC was presented with two different models for calculating cost: the Provider Cost of Quality Calculator and the Let's Grow Kids Cost of Care Modeling Project, which PCG recommended. The commissioners agreed to review the methodology for both models and to choose the desired model via email by Wednesday, July 27.

The Commission asked PCG to provide further research on access to child care in Vermont; shared services in Vermont and other states; the current percentage of public, private and nonprofit funding of child care; cost of care for children with special needs; and whether or not public funds currently being expended are serving their intended purpose.

PCG will present its data at the August meeting (using the methodology chosen by the BRC), will submit a first draft of a report at the September meeting and will deliver a final report at the October meeting. The BRC is scheduled to deliver recommendations to the governor and Legislature November 1.

The Commission's next meeting will be Thursday, August 18, 10 AM – 12:30 PM in the Fourth Floor Conference Room of the Pavilion Office Building in Montpelier.