

Commissioners:

SCOTT L. METZGER
Chairman

TONY R. MUSSARE
Vice Chairman

RICHARD MIRABITO
Secretary



MATTHEW A. McDERMOTT
*Director of Administration
and Chief Clerk*

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COUNTY of LYCOMING
48 WEST THIRD STREET
WILLIAMSPORT, PA 17701

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**LYCOMING COUNTY BOARD OF COMMISSIONERS
PUBLIC MEETING MINUTES
THURSDAY, MAY 4, 2023
10:00 A.M.**

**Present: Commissioner Metzger, Commissioner Mussare Commissioner Mirabito,
Director Matthew McDermott, and J. David Smith, via telephone.**

Informational item added to the agenda

1.0 OPERATIONS

- 1.1 Opening Prayer
- 1.2 Pledge of Allegiance
- 1.3 Convene Commissioners' Public Meeting
- 1.4 Approve the Minutes of the Previous Meeting

Mr. Mirabito moved to approve. Mr. Mussare 2nd the motion. Approved 3-0

- 1.5 Public Comment on Agenda Items Only

None

- 1.6 Proclamations
 - National Alliance on Mental Illness & Mental Health Awareness Month – Kelly Gordon

Mr. Mirabito read the proclamation. Mr. Mirabito commented that we need to rethink what we call prisons and jails. When we closed the mental health institutions we didn't have a plan in place. We didn't understand the relationship between the lack of care, the stigma and that this care is voluntary. There is a tremendous burden on us try to get people to understand how to get help and many communities don't have the help available. This board of Commissioners has established a cultural awareness to pass to future boards of Commissioners that paying attention to and providing programs for mental health outside the prison and in the prison is our responsibility. I have learned over the years to look at what mental health issues may be going on when I am dealing with people. We all need to show empathy.

Kelly Gordon President, Board of Directors NAMI, accepted the proclamation. She read a statement thanking the Commissioners for their support and outlining the benefits of community support for the various programs offered. She also encouraged people to volunteer.

Tim Mahoney, Suicide Prevention Team, NAMI, Thanked the Commissioners for their continued support. He outlined events in the community He talked about their work and the need to continue to bring together the different teams and organizations working toward the same cause.

Mr. Metzger stated that proclamations help make people aware of causes. When working in the field he saw the challenges people face, the struggles and the lack of funding. After COVID more people are struggling with mental health issues. He described how his life has been impacted by suicide, what a hole it leaves in peoples lives and how everyone is affected by it. Mr. Metzger encouraged all to reach out, practice empathy, say something, see what you can do to help. Mr. Metzger indicated that in addition to the lack of funding there is also a shortage of qualified Mental Health workers.

Mr. Mussare recounted the story of Kevin Hines who jumped off the Golden Gate Bridge. He stressed the importance of reaching out and practicing acts of kindness. He pointed out that these make a big difference.

Kelly Gordon announced that Kevin Himes will be speaking in Williamsport on September 12th and it will be open to the public.

Mr. Mirabito pointed out that the \$340,000 savings from the lease of the Sharwell building will be allocated to mental health and intellectual disability. He explained that CYS funding is allocated on a needs-based formula. Mental Health funding is a fixed funding formula. He encouraged the public to reach out to their elected officials to have this funding changed to a needs-based formula.

- Institutional Parole and Corrections Employee Week

Mr. Mussare read the proclamation. Mr. Mussare stated that being a member of the prison board has helped him understand the challenges in our community. As we have evolved in our understanding of why they are in prison we realized the issues need to be attacked on all fronts. The employees of the entire prison system have very tough jobs that have been made tougher with the cuts in mental health funding. The Warden's first thoughts are for the safety of the staff as well as the inmates. Mr. Mussare thanked the Warden and his staff for doing a great job and for everything they provide.

Mr. Mirabito reported that they track those within the system that have mental health issues. Rob Read brought it to their attention some of the reasons for repeat offenders. Today's staff must be multi-faceted and it's a very difficult job. The Commissioners must make sure that they have what they need to do their job and provide them with training and good compensation packages. Mr. Mirabito thanked them for the job they do.

Mr. Metzger reported that the Prison Board has had to face many tough challenges. He thanked the prison staff for all they do and recognized what a tough profession it is. Mr. Metzger commented that the prisoners are human beings that have made mistakes and many just need to be steered in the right direction. Seeing the successes is rewarding. He pointed out that it is important to show empathy, talk to them, find out what they need and hear them. Metzger thanked the staff for all they do.

Warden Brad Shoemaker reported that 25% of the are prisoners’ report being on some type of psychotropic medication and approximately 50% report having mental health issues upon entering. He explained that the prison system and mental health systems are intertwined now more than ever. Therapy helps reduce recidivism and can also prevent incarceration. Warden Shoemaker described the prison system as a unique and often misunderstood facility. He described the staff as very dedicated, determined empathetic, professionals who keep everything running regardless of the challenges. Warden Shoemaker also acknowledged the outside partners who support the system. Warden Shoemaker thanked the Commissioners for recognizing the staff with the proclamation and announced that they would be honored with a luncheon.

Harry Rodgers Bail Release Officer thanked the officers and Chris for helping put together mental health care for the prison. He spoke of the reputation the department has developed as the “whisperer” throughout the state due to the success rate they have achieved. He thanked the Commissioners for their support.

2.0 BID OPENING:

2.1 Krista Rogers – Open the following bid:

- Williamsport Region Relief Well Rehabilitation and Replacement Project in the Borough of South Williamsport and City of Williamsport (2023 budgeted item).

Williamsport Region Relief Well Rehabilitation and Replacement Project in the Borough of South Williamsport and the City of Williamsport		
Company Name	Submitted Amount	Date Submitted
Linde Corporation	\$11,180,542.00	4/28/2023 1:54 PM

Mr. Mussare commented on the price of the bid and how much it has increased. He is guessing that most of the cost increase is due largely to the increase in liability. He stated that there needs to be legislation to stop this and doesn’t see how people can afford these prices.

Mr. Mirabito requested a breakdown of the bid to see what each item is costing. Mya Toon informed him that a breakdown is available.

3.0 REPORTS

3.1 Kalen Barnes – Presented for ratification are invoices due through May 10, 2023 to be paid on May 03, 2023 in the amount of \$1,102,107.13

Mr. Mirabito moved to approve. Mr. Mussare 2nd the motion. Approved 3-0

Mr. Mirabito pointed out to the public the cost of the drugs dispensed at the prison to reference a point he made earlier that once released their medications are covered by their insurance.

- 3.0 Kalen Barnes – Presented for ratification are payable cash requirement – Jury Panel #8 report to be paid on May 03, 2023 the amount of \$ 3,390.20

Mr. Mirabito moved to approve. Mr. Mussare 2nd the motion. Approved 3-0

- 3.1 Kalen Barnes – Presented for ratification are accounts payable cash requirement –April 2023 Poll Worker Training report through May 03, 2023 in the amount of \$11,312.18 to be paid on

4.0 INFORMATION ITEMS

- 4.1 Mya Toon – Acknowledge the County will be requesting bids for a Lysock Handicap Ramp Replacement Project (2023 budgeted item).
- 4.2 Joy Walls and Judy Olinsky from the Lycoming Arts read a letter written to the Commissioners regarding the benefits of outdoor recreation, the efforts of Lycoming Arts, and tourism. They reviewed the progress that has been made in these areas and outlined the need to bring these all together to benefit the community. They requested \$60,000 a year for a two-year period to be able to hire a director to manage the cultural assets of the county. They emphasized that there are three major portals for the county and the need to connect these in order to create more economic development. They also discussed the growth of First Friday events.

Mr. Mussare shared his experience visiting Jim Thorpe. He agrees that it provides the County with a way to showcase what they have to offer by the Arts. He reported that the Commissioners have discussed this and are looking at ARPA funds.

Mr. Mirabito thanked them for their presentation and their tireless efforts. He commented that the state is realizing that tourism is economically beneficial. Grants are being made available in this area. Tourism brings in people, some of who may choose to stay here. He understands the need to pull all of this together in order to apply for the grant money.

Mr. Metzger advised them to contact Mya Toon, Purchasing Department to apply for Act 13 funds. He also thanked them for their presentation.

5.0 PERSONNEL ACTIONS

- 5.1 Jessica Segraves – Approve the following Personnel Actions as conditional offers of employment, subject to the successful completion of a background check and all other employment conditions: *see* Attachment (A)

Mr. Mirabito moved to approve. Mr. Mussare 2nd the motion. Approved 3-0

6.0 ACTION ITEMS

- 6.1 Matthew McDermott – Vote to Intergovernmental Agreement with River Valley Transit Authority in the amount of \$100,000.00 (2023 budgeted item).

Mr. Mirabito moved to approve. Mr. Mussare 2nd the motion. Approved 3-0

6.2 Matthew McDermott – Vote to approve Amendment to Agreement with DNA Diagnostic Center, Inc. (2023 budgeted item).

Mr. Mirabito moved to approve. Mr. Mussare 2nd the motion. Approved 3-0

6.3 Maleick Fleming – Vote to approve Grant & Monitoring Agreement with STEP, Inc. in the amount of \$10,000.00 (Act 13 funded).

Mr. Mirabito moved to approve. Mr. Mussare 2nd the motion. Approved 3-0

6.4 Beth Baylor – Vote to approve License Agreement with Muncy Borough Municipal Authority (2023 budgeted item).

Mr. Mirabito moved to approve. Mr. Mussare 2nd the motion. Approved 3-0

6.5 Gary Staggett – Vote to approve the purchase of piping material from Core and Main in the amount of \$23,788.80 (2023 budgeted item).

Mr. Mirabito moved to approve. Mr. Mussare 2nd the motion. Approved 3-0

6.6 Nancy Ackley – Vote to approve Purchase of Services Agreement with the County of Chester (2023 budgeted item).

Mr. Mirabito moved to approve. Mr. Mussare 2nd the motion. Approved 3-0

6.7 Nancy Ackley – Vote to approve Agreement with Justice Works, Youth care, Inc. (2023 budgeted item).

Mr. Mirabito moved to approve. Mr. Mussare 2nd the motion. Approved 3-0

6.8 Austin Daily – Vote to approve and award bid for Bridge Bundle 4 Construction to Kevin E. Raker Construction LLC, contingent upon Solicitor review and successful execution of the Agreement, in the amount of \$1,987,262.86 (2023 budgeted item).

Mr. Mirabito moved to approve. Mr. Mussare 2nd the motion. Approved 3-0

Mr. Mussare commented that it is important to continue this program with the new commissioners. A discussion is needed to look at how to continue funding it in light of the rising costs of materials.

Mr. Mirabito agreed with Mr. Mussare that this needs to be addressed. He talked about a plan that is being developed to repair bridges in early need of repair rather than waiting until they need to be replaced. Mr. Mirabito also commented on a program he heard about at a recent meeting with PennDOT that involves swapping services. He asked Austin to check into this program and to bring the information on both programs to the next planning meeting.

6.9 Shannon Rossman – Vote to approve Agreement with Larson Design Group, Inc. in the amount of \$16,675.00 (ARPA funds).

Mr. Mirabito moved to approve. Mr. Mussare 2nd the motion. Approved 3-0

Mr. Metzger explained that a portion of the ARPA funds has been set aside to assist with Agricultural. He commented on the improvements they are making at this site, what a beautiful area it is and the many ways this site can be used.

- 6.10** Shannon Rossman – Vote to approve the submittal of the Appalachian Regional Commission’s Area Development Program grant application for the Williamsport Sewer Authority Industrial Corridor Utility Modernization Project in the amount of \$500,000.

Mr. Mirabito moved to approve. Mr. Mussare 2nd the motion. Approved 3-0

- 6.11** Shannon Rossman - Vote to approve the PADEP Consent Order and Agreement for the Five County Municipal Waste Management Plan Revision. Agreement to extend the due date for the adoption of the Municipal Waste Plan from February 26, 2023 to February 26, 2024.

Mr. Mirabito moved to approve. Mr. Mussare 2nd the motion. Approved 3-0

7.0 COMMISSIONER COMMENT

None

8.0 GENERAL PUBLIC COMMENT

Speakers who wish to address the Board of Commissioners will be limited for no more than three (3) minutes on any particular item. The speaker must state his/her name and address for the record. Any deviation from this rule must be approved by the Board

Rachelle Abbott, Chief Operations & Planning Officer, Step Inc: ERAP update- will be getting the additional \$500, 000 for the ERAP 2 funds very soon. We will have enough applications to complete that within the time frame of 2025. Things are going well. Have paid out approximately \$14, 000, 000.00 so far and have approximately \$500,000 left. We are looking t receiving an additional \$500,000 from the fund that other counties didn’t spend. Rachelle gave the C’s a copy of the payee list.

Rachelle also presented the Commissioners with a report on the childcare struggles that the community faces. She reported that they have a one-year extension to continue to run the ELRC program. The five-year extension is being looked at. The application to continue this program was completed. She outlined the negative impact it would have on the Community if the ELRC program was moved to a different locality.

Mr. Mirabito suggested that she send the reports to the state representatives. Rachelle replied that they planned to. She reviewed the contents of the report. She also reported that next weekend they are offering training to assist people in getting the some of the certifications and training they need.

Mr. Mirabito also informed her of a proposed program through Firetree to assist with the costs of training to enable more worker s to get trained as childcare workers.

Scott Miller – Williamsport. Topics covered include: the need to offer free parking for public meetings, the need to keep the roads in good repair and when this doesn't happen someone taking responsibility for not doing their job, the legalities of not issuing SS checks, the interest rate SS makes on the money in trust funds, Janet Yellen scaring people.

Tom Adams - Williamsport. Stated that the national government is Godless. He reported that there is an easy fix to the debt by decreasing spending and increasing production. Tom reminded everyone that today is the National Day of prayers and there are several events being held in the community.

9.0 NEXT SCHEDULED MEETING

The next Commissioners Public Meeting will be held on Thursday, May 11, 2023, at 10:00 A.M. in the Commissioner's Board Room, 1st Floor, Executive Plaza, 330 Pine Street, Williamsport, PA 17701.

YouTube Public Comments:

KeystoneChiefGod bless our MH / ID citizens.



KeystoneChiefSay it Commissioner Marabito! Say it loud! But who is listening?



ErinThank you to everyone for supporting mental health in our community.



kalenjaidI'd like to share briefly about my own personal advocacy for mental health importance.



ErinHow do we volunteer for NAMI?

11.0 NEXT SCHEDULED MEETING

The next Commissioners Public Meeting will be held on Thursday, May 11, 2023, at 10:00 A.M. in the Commissioner's Board Room, 1st Floor, Executive Plaza, 330 Pine Street, Williamsport, PA 17701.

To view this meeting follow the link below:

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=wncM9hGnQOI>

ATTACHMENT (A)

PERSONNEL ACTIONS:

Jessica Segraves – Approve the following Personnel Actions as conditional offers of employment, subject to the successful completion of a background check and all other employment conditions:

- Prothonotary's Office – Ruth Diaz, Civil Processing Clerk, Full-Time Replacement, \$18.58 per hour, 75 hours per Pay Period, Anticipated Transfer Date: May 14, 2023.



Mental Health Awareness Month May 2023

WHEREAS, Mental health includes our emotional psychological, and social well-being; it affects people in our communities, how we think, feel, and act; it also affects how we handle stress, relate to others, and make choices; and

WHEREAS, Mental health allows us to maintain relationships, build strong communities, take care of ourselves, and our families, take care of our physical bodies, and respond and adapt to daily life changes; and

WHEREAS, The Centers for Disease Control (CDC) and National Institute of Mental Health (NIMH) among other organizations report that fifty percent (50%) of all lifetime Mental health disorders commonly begin at the age of 14 in adolescence and seventy five percent (75%) by the age of 24; Suicide is the 2nd leading cause of death among people aged 10-14 and the 3rd leading cause of death among those aged 15-24 in the U.S; and

WHEREAS, A lack of mental health awareness leads to devastating impacts on the wellbeing of individuals and communities; Suicide is the 12th leading cause of death overall in the U.S.; and 46% of people who die by suicide had a diagnosed mental health condition; and

WHEREAS, Mental illness, unlike physical illness, cannot be diagnosed with a blood test; while each mental illness condition has a unique set of symptoms, those symptoms often overlap between different conditions which makes exact diagnosing difficult; treatment for mental illness is voluntary and takes time and persistence to see results; and often an individual suffering with a mental illness is not aware they are ill; and

WHEREAS, Early warning signs often emerge at the onset or worsening of mental illness symptoms; and these warning signs include thoughts, feelings, or behaviors that significantly impair day-to-day functioning (i.e., feeling excessively sad or low); and early identification and treatment can make a profound difference in successful management of mental illness and recovery; and

WHEREAS, People with mental illness are overrepresented in our nation's jails and prisons; and About 2 in 5 people who are incarcerated have a history of mental illness; and seventy percent (70%) of youth in the juvenile justice system have a diagnosable mental health condition; and approximately 3 in 5 people with a history of mental illness do not receive mental health treatment while incarcerated in state and federal prisons; and

WHEREAS, Individuals in rural communities often face unique challenges when receiving and managing their mental health care; and rural Americans may travel two times as far to their nearest hospital or provider to receive treatment; and rural individuals are two times more likely to have limited access to broadband internet, limiting access to virtual care; and are more likely to reside in a Mental Health Professional shortage area, where there are too few providers to meet mental health demands; and

WHEREAS, Greater public awareness, education, and civic activities in our communities, can address the challenges facing people with mental illness; and can support, empower and assist in improving the lives of individuals, family, and communities affected by mental illness; and

WHEREAS, Mental Health Awareness Month is an opportunity to increase public understanding of the importance of mental health and to promote the identification and treatment of mental illness.

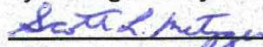
WHEREAS, The Lycoming County Commissioners do hereby proclaim May 2023 as

Mental Health Awareness Month

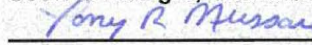
in Lycoming County and call observance to the attention of all our citizens.

In witness thereof, we hereunto set our hand and caused the Seal of Executive Department to be affixed this 4th day of May in the year of Two Thousand and Twenty-Three.

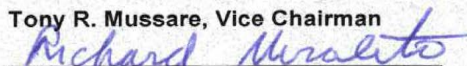
Lycoming County Commissioners



Scott L. Metzger, Chairman



Tony R. Mussare, Vice Chairman



Richard Mirabito, Secretary





PROCLAMATION
INSTITUTIONAL PAROLE
AND
CORRECTIONS EMPLOYEE WEEK



May 7-13, 2023

WHEREAS, Pennsylvania's correctional system is the oldest in the nation, evolving from the establishment of Philadelphia's Walnut Street Jail in 1773 and the Eastern Penitentiary in 1829; and

WHEREAS, the "Pennsylvania System," as it became known, was the leading influence in the development of penology throughout the 19th Century and the forerunner of modern corrections; and

WHEREAS, today, Pennsylvania faces continued difficult challenges in corrections. With twenty-three state correctional institutions, one motivational boot camp, one training academy, two central office buildings, ten community corrections centers, twenty-three contract facilities, sixty-three county prisons and jails, and ten federal facilities and offices, our correctional facilities house approximately 70,639 inmates; and

WHEREAS, the secure and safe operation and management of those facilities rests in the hands of nearly 31,500 trained, skilled, and dedicated corrections professionals. They are corrections administrators, corrections officers, counselors, treatment specialists, educators, clerical support staff, business administrators and purchasing agents, personnel and labor relations specialists, reentry specialists, social workers, clergy, medical professionals, food service specialists, computer technicians, parole agents, parole supervisors and administrative positions, planners and research analysts, and skilled craftspeople upon whose skills, efficiency, and professionalism allows the Pennsylvania correctional system functions; and

WHEREAS, although each of these dedicated professionals works in a different-field and specializes in a specific area, all are committed to a common goal: the secure, safe, and humane operation of our Commonwealth's correctional facilities where employees work to reduce future crime through the delivery of programs to change an individual's criminal behavior.

*NOW THEREFORE, the Commissioners of Lycoming County hereby proclaim the week of May 1st -7th, 2023 as **"INSTITUTIONAL PAROLE AND CORRECTIONS EMPLOYEE WEEK"** in Lycoming County. We encourage all citizens to recognize the crucial role these dedicated professionals play in ensuring the effective operation of our Pennsylvania correctional system in the interest of public safety.*

Lycoming County Commissioners

Scott L. Metzger

Scott L. Metzger, Chairman

Tony R. Mussare

Tony R. Mussare, Vice Chairman

Richard Mirabito

Richard Mirabito, Secretary





May 4, 2023

Lycoming County Commissioners
330 Pine Street
Williamsport, PA 17701

Dear County Commissioners:

Lycoming Arts ARP Proposal Update/Request:
An Art Town is a Rivertown is a Trailtown

We all know that Williamsport is a great place to live. This was reinforced recently when Nathan Reigner, State Director of the new Office of Outdoor Recreation (DCNR) was here to talk about the lifestyle and economic benefits of outdoor activities. Health, mental health, lifestyle, environmental concerns all are improved by outdoor recreation. According to the Sun-Gazette article on April 13, "It also improves quality of life that attracts residents and businesses and community prosperity that is built on sustainable use of natural assets. As for the economic punch, outdoor recreation added \$14 Billion to the state economy in 2021." The Sun-Gazette also points out the relationship between outdoor recreation and the arts and humanities, or as we at Lycoming Arts say it, "An Art Town is a Rivertown is a Trailtown."

Williamsport-Lycoming County is in a unique position to take advantage of the opportunity offered by PA's developing Outdoor Recreation sector. Our arts, specifically Lycoming Arts, have been preparing our city and our county for this moment for the past 25 years.

Williamsport in the early 90's had reached a critical stage in a process of urban decay. Lycoming Arts saw that our cultural assets, our arts and our history positioned us to develop the National Cultural Tourism brand "Art Town." With support from the county's Our Town: 2010, the city's Main Street Program and the Williamsport Business Association, Lycoming Arts designed, managed and promoted programs such as First Friday and PublicARTWORKS. These are programs that definitely enhance and market our cultural assets. Our relationship to Our Towns involved us in the Riverwalk development and the origin of the Susquehanna Greenways Partnership(SGP). A representative Lycoming Arts Board member attended the meeting where the county planner introduced the Susquehanna Greenway Concept. The Art Town that was being built was a SGP Rivertown.

"An Art Town is a Rivertown" is a major cultural tourism market. At a recent Trailtown meeting sponsored by the SGP the presenter from the Allegheny Trail Alliance said the trail was an outdoor project but then noticed the rise in economic development in the towns along the

trail. The night life in Williamsport enhances the outdoor enthusiasts visit. Our Lycoming Arts Board then realized an Art Town is a Rivertown is a Trailtown.

The 2016 County Comprehensive Plan acknowledged the depth and the potential economic development effect of the arts and cultural assets of our area. However, cautioned the County Comprehensive Plan, this asset is based on volunteer work. Without planning the state made \$14 Billion in Outdoor Recreation in 2021. The State wanting to safeguard and develop this asset has created an Office of Outdoor Recreation and appointed a director. The volunteers of Lycoming Arts have built an Art Town and the County Plan says we need a director to safeguard and to enhance this asset. **Remember an Art Town Is a Rivertown is a Trailtown.** The state of Pa is committed to the development of Outdoor Recreation. As the Riverwalk is extended and trails developed, Lycoming Arts has worked for over 25 years to position our county and our city to present the cultural tourism that will enable us to take advantage of this opportunity as a Rivertown.

In 2016 the County Plan recognized cultural tourism and Lycoming Arts as major economic development assets. The County Plan counseled the need for a paid director for Lycoming Arts to sustain the management needed to protect our cultural tourism assets. The current Pa state commitment to Outdoor Recreation reinforces the findings of the County Plan. **An Art Town is a Rivertown is a Trailtown.**

Please consider supporting Lycoming Arts as promoting cultural tourism which will bring further economic development to our area. Specifically, we ask for \$60,000 per year for a two-year period to hire a paid Professional Lycoming Arts Director.

Thank you for your consideration.

Sincerely,

Debi Burch, President
Joy Walls
Judy Olinsky
Lycoming Arts Board
46 W Fourth Street
Williamsport, PA 17701
570-419-1770

Cc: Jason Fink

2138 Lincoln Street
Williamsport, PA 17701
1-800-346-3020
(570) 326-0587
FAX: (570) 322-2197



124 East Walnut Street
Lock Haven, PA 17745
1-800-346-3020
(570) 858-5800
FAX: (570) 858-5808

James D. Plankenhorn, President & CEO

Lycoming-Clinton Counties Commission for Community Action (STEP), Inc.

May 4, 2023

CONTACT: Jamey Williams
Executive Assistant

570-601-9546
jbwilliams@stepcorp.org

MEDIA RELEASE

Early Learning Resource Center 7 Responds to “Day without Child Care”

The Early Learning Resource Center for Region 7 (ELRC 7), serving Lycoming, Clinton, and Tioga counties, knows that when it comes to children, it still takes a village. ELRC 7 has put together a resource that highlights issues faced by caregivers, providers, and employers struggling to raise children, provide high quality early learning experiences, and attract and keep employees.

The publication is available for free download www.stepcorp.org/daywithoutchildcare. A printed copy can also be requested at the same address.

“The early care and education field, parents and caregivers, and employers are all in crisis right now,” said Melissa Kerschner, Director of ELRC 7. “The true cost of child care is not being acknowledged. Workers flee to careers where they are compensated for their certifications and classrooms disappear. Caregivers are left scrambling to find a place for their children so they can attend work or school. Just as important, children miss out on development during a critical window, putting them behind when they start school.”

A Day without Child Care aims to create an equitable child care system, thriving wages for child care providers, and affordable child care for all families. Anyone interested in participating or finding an event can do so here: <http://cca.is/childcare>.

About ELRC 7 and STEP, Inc.

ELRC 7 is part of the Early Learning Pathway to Success and serves Lycoming, Clinton, and Tioga counties in partnership with STEP, Inc. Pennsylvania’s ELRCs provide a single point-of-contact for families, early childhood education professionals, and communities to get information and access services that support high-quality child care and early learning programs.

STEP, Inc. is one of 1,100 Community Action Agencies nationwide, and a member of the Community Action Association of Pennsylvania. Founded in 1966, the mission of STEP, Inc. is

Pathways to Success

Early Learning Housing Options Workforce Development Community Collaboration Independent Living



Early Learning Resource Center - Region 7
In partnership with STEP, Inc. serving
Lycoming, Clinton, and Tioga counties.
2138 Lincoln Street | Williamsport, PA 17701

DAY WITHOUT CHILD CARE: FAMILIES & COMMUNITIES IN CRISIS

Let's talk about the state of Early Care & Education | May 8, 2023

"As a former early care educator with twenty years of dedication to a career I love, I had to choose between a passion for my career and being able to financially survive."

Former Early Care & Education Professional,
Lycoming County

"We currently do not have a way to meet the regular, ongoing early care and education needs of working families."

Early Care & Education Professional,
Tioga County

"I drive a half hour to another town to my child's daycare. Then I drive a half hour back to the town where I live and work. This is my only option to stay employed at my job."

Parent, Lycoming County



WHY IS THERE AN EARLY CARE & EDUCATION CRISIS?

- » Early Care and Education (ECE) is experiencing a shortage of qualified professionals that are keeping programs from operating at full certified capacity. ECE professionals are leaving programs for higher wages, better benefits, and a less demanding occupation.
- » ECE programs are essential to the infrastructure of communities they serve. ECE professionals are serving the needs of children, families, and the community all at once.
- » Pennsylvania Department of Human Services (DHS) certified ECE programs, Child Care Centers, Group Child Care Homes, and Family Child Care Homes provide the majority of the available care in the community.
- » Before the recent health crisis, Lycoming, Clinton, and Tioga counties were enrolled to full capacity and fully staffed. During this period, these counties needed growth in capacity beyond existing certified ECE programs.
- » Currently Lycoming, Clinton, and Tioga counties' ECE programs are experiencing closed classrooms and are unable to use existing capacity to enroll children.
- » Lycoming, Clinton, and Tioga counties are permanently losing capacity with ECE programs choosing to close.



Scan to view
all PA DHS
Child Care
Regulations

Effects of the crisis on capacity as of January 2023:

COUNTY	NON-ENROLLABLE SLOTS DUE TO LACK OF STAFF	SLOTS LOST DUE TO FACILITY CLOSURE
Lycoming	343	12
Clinton	22	6
Tioga	112	24

"Due to staffing, we've only been able to bring a few new children into our program and have long waitlists for all our age groups."
ECE Program Director, Lycoming County

"The waitlist is long and provides no timeframe for when a child can start. Child care providers have mentioned they are struggling with staffing, which has caused closed classrooms and fewer enrollments."
Parent, Lycoming County

- » The table below shows the relationships between requirements, costs, and the consequences for the ECE field.

ECE PROGRAM REQUIREMENTS	COST OF COMPENSATION ISSUES	HOW THIS AFFECTS ECE PROFESSIONALS
<i>ECE programs must maintain yearly certification to remain in operation, giving ECE a high overhead to function.</i>	➔ <i>Due to the cost of daily operations, providers make minimal to no profit from tuition fees.</i>	➔ <i>Daily operations fees do not allow for wage increases equivalent to the highly skilled ECE professionals providing the services.</i>
<i>ECE programs' new employees are required to obtain 4 clearances and 10 hours of health and safety training before entering the classroom.</i>	➔ <i>ECE programs take on the expense and time investment to place new employees in classroom.</i>	➔ <i>ECE professionals are making a commitment to provide quality care for the children and families they serve.</i>
<i>ECE professionals are required to have various levels of education based on position and type of setting where the professional is employed.</i>	➔ <i>ECE providers must be educated and/or licensed, but they are paid less than many professions that require neither.</i>	➔ <i>ECE professionals fill high-skill positions that consistently earn below a living wage.</i>
<i>ECE programs and professionals are required to commit to yearly training (12 hours per employee) to be in compliance with DHS Certification.</i>	➔ <i>ECE programs take on the expense and investment of keeping programs and providers in compliance with DHS Certification.</i>	➔ <i>ECE professionals commit to lifelong learning and continuous program improvement. They do so with the understanding they will not see a significant wage increase.</i>

- » The commitment qualified ECE professionals make for consistently low wages does not attract new professionals to ECE programs.
- » With ECE programs unable to employ qualified professionals, programs are struggling financially due to loss of tuition because of empty classrooms.
- » ECE is an underfunded industry that impacts ECE professionals, families, and the communities.

“It is frustrating to me that it is so difficult to find quality staff. The wage scale for Early Childhood Education is not nearly what it should be for the type of staff that need to be educating our children.”

ECE Program Director, Lycoming County



Scan Here!

Learn more about the high cost of working in Early Childhood Education



WHY ARE FAMILIES IN CRISIS?

Families are in crisis when:

- » Families are left with only potentially dangerous options for their ECE needs.
- » Families are experiencing a financial burden with tuition cost; this burden is greater for families that are not eligible for Child Care Works Subsidy.
- » Families are unable to obtain employment due to long waitlists with ECE programs.
- » Families' concerns over lack of ECE availability impact work attendance, performance, and productivity.
- » Families are without connections to additional services and referrals to agencies that suit their needs.

"Finding child care has been nearly impossible and the cost of child care is astronomical if you earn a middle-class wage."

Parent, Tioga County

"My husband and I made the decision to be a one child family due the expense of child care."

Parent, Lycoming County

"There are not enough options for child care. I have not been able to seek employment due to lack of child care."

Parent, Lycoming County

Children are in crisis when they do not have:

- » Opportunity for consistent positive relationships with their caregivers.
- » Opportunity to explore and learn in developmentally appropriate environments alongside their peer group.
- » Opportunity to develop school readiness skills.
- » Opportunity for age-appropriate assessment and referrals for developmental support.



Learn more
about PA Early
Learning
Standards

"A critical period of brain development occurs from birth to 8 years of age. Children need access to quality programs."

ECE Partner, Lycoming County



WHY ARE COMMUNITIES IN CRISIS?

- » Communities are in crisis when families have inadequate ECE options.
- » Working parents must leave the workforce completely to provide care for their children.
- » Businesses experience lost revenue due to a smaller or inconsistent workforce.
- » Communities obtain less revenue from federal, state, and local taxes.
- » Communities are experiencing slower economic growth due to lost revenue.



"I am working with 3 clients to obtain employment. They have tried multiple child care providers and every single one has a waitlist that could take months to get enrolled. The lack of child care availability in the area greatly affects my clients' ability to obtain and maintain a job due to unreliable childcare."

Social Service Agency, Lycoming County

"Not having quality child care is highly detrimental to the workforce and makes being a working mother that much harder."

Parent, Lycoming County

"From a Human Resources perspective, we have experienced challenges related to availability of childcare. We had a staff member who was not able to return to work after having a child due to no available child care. Another staff member found out on a Friday that her child's center would no longer have a slot for her child effective the following Monday. In addition, there were two potential employees that accepted job offers, but ultimately had to turn down the jobs because they were unable to find childcare."

Human Resources Director, Lycoming County



Scan here to learn more about The Growing Cost of PA's Child Care Crisis

HOW TO IMPROVE THE STATE OF EARLY CARE & EDUCATION?

As an ECE Professional

- » ECE programs can join their local Chamber of Commerce.
- » Request ECE be added to the PA Department of Labor & Industry's High Priority Occupations (HPO) list in your county.
- » Explore groups such as Pennsylvania Association for the Education of Young Children (PennAEYC), Start Strong PA, the PA Early Learning Investment Commission, and PA Child Care Association.
- » Share your personal experiences (positive or negative) about ECE and encourage families and community members to do the same.



Scan this QR code to view the HPO list!



Scan here to visit the PennAEYC website!



Scan this QR code to share your story!

As a Family

- » Become a registered voter.
- » Contact local, state, and federal leaders to let them know how the state of child care has affected your family or families you know.
- » Recognize and celebrate Early Care & Education during NAEYC's Week of the Young Child and Child Care Aware of America's Provider Appreciation Day.
- » Learn more about A Day Without Child Care!



Learn more about Day Without Child Care!

As a Community

- » Share your special talent with ECE programs! Community helpers, musicians, artists, and first responders can provide meaningful experiences for young children.
- » Businesses can explore ways to become a resource to their employees who struggle with the ECE crisis.



HOW DO I FIND A QUALITY EARLY CARE & EDUCATION PROVIDER NEAR ME?



Contact your area Early Learning Resource Center (ELRC)

- » An ELRC is a partner with the PA Office of Child Development and Early Learning. ELRCs provide quality supports for early learning programs and help families access high quality early learning programs.
- » ELRC Region 7 serves Lycoming, Clinton, and Tioga counties.
 - **Lycoming** | 570.601.9707
 - **Clinton** | 570.858.5872
 - **Tioga** | 570.724.4649



Use PA COMPASS to search for ECE programs & apply for services

- » <https://www.compass.state.pa.us/>
- » The COMPASS tool provides detailed information on providers – their Keystone STARS ratings, inspection results, capacity information, and more!



WHAT OTHER EARLY LEARNING PROGRAMS ARE IN OUR COMMUNITIES?*

EARLY LEARNING PROGRAMS	EARLY INTERVENTION	HOME VISITING PROGRAMS	EARLY HEAD START & HEAD START
PA Pre-K Counts Nursery School Programs Library Programs Mothers of Preschoolers (MOPS)	Pennsylvania's Early Intervention program, which serves children with developmental delays or disabilities ages birth to five, provides individualized support and assistance for both child and family. Intermediate Units Wrap Around Services	Parent-Child Home Partnership Nurse-Family Partnership Healthy Family America Parents as Teachers Maternal, Infant, and Early Childhood Home Visiting Head Start Home Visiting Program	Early Head Start and Head Start provides services such as child development, health/nutrition, parent involvement, and family activities to families and children from ages birth to five.

*These programs may follow other governmental regulations and serve different needs.

ONLINE RESOURCES



**Early Learning
Resource Center
Region 7**
www.stepcorp.org/ELRC



COMPASS
www.compass.state.pa.us



Interactive Resource Map
<https://lyco.maps.arcgis.com/apps/instant/interactivelegend/index.html?appid=eed88b73b1b44579811b8be4c5abcc1e>



Child Care Regulations
www.dhs.pa.gov/providers/Child-Care/Pages/Child-Care-Regulations.aspx



Keystone Stars
www.education.pa.gov/early%20learning/keystone%20stars/pages/default.aspx



STEP Head Start
www.stepcorp.org/HeadStart



**Infant, Toddler, and Pre-K
Learning Standards**
www.education.pa.gov/Early%20Learning/Early%20Learning%20Standards/Pages/Infant-Toddler-Pre-K-Learning-Standards.aspx



The Pennsylvania Key
www.pakeys.org



**National Association for the
Education of Young Children**
www.naeyc.org



**To view an interactive
PDF of this publication
with live links visit:**
[www.stepcorp.org/
DayWithoutChildCare](http://www.stepcorp.org/DayWithoutChildCare)

*This information is
brought to you by
ELRC Region 7 Local
Leadership Council
in collaboration with
community partners.*



**EARLY LEARNING
RESOURCE CENTER**

PA OFFICE OF CHILD DEVELOPMENT AND EARLY LEARNING

In partnership with **STEP**  serving Lycoming, Clinton, and Tioga counties.

Lycoming
570.601.9707

Clinton
570.858.5872

Tioga
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