

**Minutes: Early Childhood Interagency Coordinating Council
May 10, 2013
Niobrara Lodge
Valentine, Nebraska**

Council Members Present: Mike Adams, Carol Benson, Rebecca Bimler, Lois Butler, Pam Dobrovolny, Barb Esch, Jane Happe, Melody Hobson, Amy LaPointe, Dawn Mollenkopf, Christina Pelton, Roger Reikofski, Julie Rother, Susan Strahm, Carolyn Thiele, Cristen Witte

Council Members Absent: Sue Adams, Annie Bruns, Teri Chasten, Eric Dunning, Melinda Graham, J.P. Holys, Sian Jones-Jobst, Eleanor Kirkland, Heather Krieger, Carol McClain, Julie Mizner, Senator Pete Pirsch, Salene Ulrich

Also in attendance: *ECICC Staff:* Terry Rohren, facilitator, Holly Erickson, secretary; *Technical Assistants:* NDE – Amy Bornemeier, Joan Luebbers; NDHHS – Paula Eurek, Diane Lewis; Other Entities – Connie Shockley, Mark Smith.

The Family Leadership Team met in a working session beginning at 8:00 a.m. The Committees then met from 9:00 a.m. – 10:30 a.m. before the opening of the Council meeting.

A. Welcome

Pam Dobrovolny, chair, convened the meeting of the Early Childhood Interagency Coordinating Council at 10:45 a.m. A copy of the Open Meetings Act was available at the front table. Pam welcomed everyone and had all Council members introduce themselves.

B. Consent Agenda

Approval of Minutes of February, 2013

- * Pam asked for a motion from the Council to accept the minutes of the February 15, 2013 meeting. Roger Reikofski made the motion to approve the minutes. Melody Hobson seconded the motion.

There was no discussion. The motion passed by roll call vote: yes – 15, no – 0, abstain – 1

Voting yes: Mike Adams, Carol Benson, Rebecca Bimler, Lois Butler, Pam Dobrovolny, Barb Esch, Jane Happe, Melody Hobson, Amy LaPointe, Dawn Mollenkopf, Christina Pelton, Roger Reikofski, Susan Strahm, Carolyn Thiele, Cristen Witte

Abstain: Julie Rother

The minutes were approved as presented.

Approval of 2012 Report to the Governor on the Status of Early Childhood

- * Pam asked for a motion from the Council to approve the 2012 Report to the Governor on the Status of Early Childhood. Jane Happe made the motion to approve. Mike Adams seconded the motion.

There was discussion regarding the Steering Committees input on the final draft. Terry Rohren explained what had been changed, what had been moved and/or removed. Terry advised that no one from the public appeared at the public hearing that was held at the State Board room. The motion passed by roll call vote: yes – 16, no – 0, abstain – 0

Voting yes: Mike Adams, Carol Benson, Rebecca Bimler, Lois Butler, Pam Dobrovolny, Barb Esch, Jane Happe, Melody Hobson, Amy LaPointe, Dawn Mollenkopf, Christina Pelton, Roger Reikofski, Julie Rother, Susan Strahm, Carolyn Thiele, Cristen Witte

The 2012 Report to the Governor on the Status of Early Childhood was approved as presented.

Action Item

Form Ad Hoc Committee to plan format for 2014 Report to the Governor

- * Pam asked for a motion from the Council to form an ad hoc committee to plan the format for 2014 Report to the Governor. Julie Rother made the motion to approve. Roger Reikofski seconded the motion.

Mike Adams has agreed to chair the committee. Other volunteers are Becky Veak, Melody Hobson, Barb Esch, and Susan Strahm. The motion passed by roll call vote: yes – 16, no – 0, abstain – 0

Voting yes: Mike Adams, Carol Benson, Rebecca Bimler, Lois Butler, Pam Dobrovolny, Barb Esch, Jane Happe, Melody Hobson, Amy LaPointe, Dawn Mollenkopf, Christina Pelton, Roger Reikofski, Julie Rother, Susan Strahm, Carolyn Thiele, Cristen Witte

The action to form the Ad Hoc Committee to plan the format for the 2014 Report to the Governor was approved.

iii. Committee Report Outs

The ECICC committees each made reports on their work at their committee meetings held on May 10, 2013.

Regulations and Standards:

Melody Hobson presented the work the Regulations and Standards committee discussed during today's meeting. The committee reports that the child care licensing regulations passed with a new effective date of May 20, 2013. Some training sessions have been cancelled because all information is not available at this time. LB 495 was passed and signed by the Governor. LB 495 allocated one million dollars to the Age 3-5 grant program. Additionally the Sixpence (Ages birth to three) program will be provided lottery funds. LB 507, which is the Early Childhood Step Up to Quality Act (Quality Rating Improvement System (QRIS) bill, has moved to select file. The bill would create a voluntary QRIS for Nebraska, but require those early childhood programs receiving more than \$250,000 in child care subsidy to participate in the program. The proposed appropriation is less than one million for the first year.

Professional Development and Workforce:

Terry Rohren presented the work the Professional Development and Workforce committee discussed during today's meeting. She updated the Council about the Professional Shortages Survey. Looking at the data from the survey, it appears that mental health and nutrition are two areas that could be a focus for the Council. From the survey data, it appears that there needs to be more specialization and professional development for early childhood special education. The committee will continue their work with the survey, sending it out to others who have not completed the survey. They will also analyze specific areas of the state's strengths and weaknesses.

Early Childhood Services & Systems:

Julie Rother presented the work the Early Childhood Services and Systems committee discussed during today's meeting. The committee let the Council know about the "Early Childhood Systems of Care" assessment that is available on the Together for Kids and Families website. The committee discussed CAPTA referrals and ways to improve the numbers who make it to evaluation. Currently 2,000 children are referred and only a small percentage of those referrals actually make it to evaluation and then an even smaller number end up verified for services. The Ages and Stages (ASQ) assessment instrument is being used, but not necessarily the Social/Emotional section of the ASQ. Access to dental care in rural areas continues to be an issue. The committee discussed ways to get word out about the importance of dental care.

Family Action Matter Everyday (FAME):

Amy Bornemeier presented the work the FAME committee discussed during today's meeting. The committee will be asking the Steering committee to be able to bring in a panel to the August meeting. The committee is looking for information on Insurance Exchanges and their impact for those families on Medicaid. They would like to see a panel who can better explain what changes are coming to the Medicaid program. The committee would like to bring in a panel to discuss children's access to dental care.

Family Leadership Team (FLT):

Mike Adams presented the work the Family Leadership Team discussed during today's meeting. Planning Region Team's were the main focus of the team's discussion. There

is a concern that the PRTs are losing parent representation. The team is brainstorming how to get parents more involved with PRTs and possibly mentoring new parents on PRTs. There is a conference coming up in Washington D.C. that will be beneficial to talk with other states about ways they get parents involved in local PRTs. The team discussed possible barriers for families and PRTs and possible strategies for overcoming those barriers. There were concerns regard Child Abuse and Prevention Treatment Act (CAPTA) referrals. The team discussed ways to increase the involvement of foster parents on ECICC/PRTs. The Family Leadership Team plans to create a PRT Family Representative ListServ at PTI Nebraska. The team would also like to create a leadership website with content on PRTs at PTI Nebraska.

Local Panel of Providers

A panel of local providers from the Valentine and North Central region of the state presented to the Early Childhood Interagency Coordinating Council. The panelists responded to a set of questions that had been sent to them prior to today's meeting.

The first question the panelists were asked to address was what was their greatest accomplishment in early care and education. Some accomplishments were being able to service more than one county when the resources were available, provide a passion and love for their children, and getting to be involved in the foundation of children's lives.

The second question was panelists addressed was what has been their greatest challenge in early care and education. One answered that it is a challenge to get parents to understand all resources available to them. Another challenge is to provide services in natural environments and that it is harder to provide in rural areas because it takes longer to travel to various locations. In the rural areas service providers spend so much time travelling to get to children and families, then the providers have to scramble for time to get their work done. The panelists explained challenges in building relationships with families and how hard it is to find an appropriate place to provide these services. Mental health is a big issue for everyone and many parents have misinformation. One panelist mentioned how difficult it is to get more education and professional development in rural areas. Providers may have to travel 200 miles or more to get to training events. Providers also may have to close their centers for the day in order to get to training.

The third question was what policy changes at the state level could improve Birth- 8 services. A home provider said it would be helpful to know what is expected of her to help prepare children for kindergarten. Early Development and DHHS employees must drive so far in some areas of the state in order to access a children and families. . Panelists also mentioned that the income eligibility guidelines for child care are way too low.

The forth question was what are one or two barriers to serving children birth through eight. One barrier was how to ensure referrals are made between programs because medical professionals don't always know what services are available. Another barrier

is parent training and parents having time to spend with their children. It's also difficult for all families to access services because transportation is a huge issue.

The last question was how have you tried to resolve gaps and barriers at the local level. The panelist stated that the grants available have helped a lot and the partnerships with the schools. Increased presentation to the public and getting more information has helped resolve some barriers. They are grateful for webinars and happy the families can access them.

Family Story

Amber Happold and her daughter, Haley, shared their story.

****Working Lunch - Data Summit Follow-up Repost and Recommendations for Developing a Unified Early Childhood Data System and SAC Update.**

Moh Yin Chang gave an overview of the Recommendation for Developing a Unified Early Childhood Data System. The PowerPoint covered the recommendations found in the handout provided in the meeting packet. There was some discussion from the council about looking at other states and how they are moving forward with a data system. The first step is to approve the recommendations, then as Nebraska moves forward it will contact other states regarding their early childhood data system development process.

- * Pam asked for a motion from the Council to approve the Recommendations for Developing a Unified Early Childhood Data System. Jane Happe made the motion to approve. Melody Hobson seconded the motion.

The motion passed by roll call vote: yes – 16, no – 0, abstain – 0

Voting yes: Mike Adams, Carol Benson, Rebecca Bimler, Lois Butler, Pam Dobrovolny, Barb Esch, Jane Happe, Melody Hobson, Amy LaPointe, Dawn Mollenkopf, Christina Pelton, Roger Reikofski, Julie Rother, Susan Strahm, Carolyn Thiele, Cristen Witte

Amy Bornemeier provided an update of the State Advisory Council (SAC) grant. Nebraska expenditures are at 64% of the total federal share at this juncture. There are currently some budget modifications and projections to ensure these funds are used to support the identified priorities, school readiness and the unified early childhood data systems recommendations. As of June 1st, Ready for Success brochures will now be \$1 each. Over 30,000 brochures have already been dispersed throughout the state.

Public Comment

Lynne Brehm explained that she is no longer employed with DHHS and briefly described her new position with Nebraska Children and Families Foundation. Lynne will be furthering efforts in Nebraska to address young children's mental health and social and emotional development.

Focus of Meeting – Medical and Dental Health Services

iv. Building Bridges Nebraska Initiative – Paula Eurek

Paula Eurek updated the Council regarding the Building Bridges Nebraska Initiative. Building Bridges is a project between DHHS and the Nebraska Chapter of the American Academy of Pediatrics. The project is working with medical professionals to promote the use of medical homes for young children and their families. . The Nebraska Chapter of AAP will be talking with pediatricians and family practitioners about the importance of early childhood development and having good relationships with young children and their families through establishing medical homes. Dr. Coffee, from Boystown Research Hospital, is very committed to helping inform other on the importance early brain development in young children’s lives.

v. Update on Together for Kids and Families Grant/Impact on ECICC Strategic Plan and TFKF Work Groups – Paula Eurek

Paula Eurek updated the Council about the changes being made to the Early Childhood Comprehensive System (ECCS) grant. The ECCS grant will now focus on children from birth to age three. The grant requirements are more narrowly focused than in previous years and the federal funders have opened the grant up for competition. Applicants for the grants were required to identify one of three strategies for focus of their grant. The three strategies for applicants to select from were: 1. Mitigation of toxic stress and trauma in infancy and early childhood; 2. Coordination of the expansion of developmental screening activities in early care and education settings statewide; 3. Improvement of state infant/toddler child care quality initiatives (State licensing standards/Quality Rating and Improvement Systems (QRIS).

Nebraska’s application proposed to do the following:

Outline a process for educating a range of early childhood providers about the critical importance of human development during infancy and early childhood and the impact of adverse childhood experiences and the mitigation of toxic stress.

Enhance the state and local early childhood systems that are currently focused on creating a trauma informed system, screening for domestic violence, strengthening infant mental health, improving attachment and early childhood relationships.

Develop and implement projects to screen and monitor families and young children for adverse childhood experiences, family domestic violence and trauma risk:

During Year one the grant would support the implementation of Circle of Security in the Panhandle with an expansion to other N-MIECHV communities in subsequent years. The grant if funded will start August 1, 2013.

The Council had some questions for Paula after her updates. Paula explained that the grant was only in the Panhandle region for year one. A Council member noted that the Services and Systems committee could be a group to focus on each of the goals of the strategic plan of TFKF.

vi. Teacher Certification changes- Melody Hobson

Two years ago the endorsements for Early Childhood were looked at. At that time an ad hoc group was created. The group kept hearing an increased need for infant/toddler education. The ad hoc group came up with the suite of Early Childhood endorsements. The first is the Early Childhood Inclusive Endorsement which is birth through 3rd grade. The Early Childhood Inclusive Endorsement includes a base level of early childhood education and early childhood special education course content and then includes a specialization in either birth through five, or age three to grade three imbedded in the education which allows the teacher to focus on an area of interest for them. People with the unified endorsement will probably be grandfathered in. The second endorsement is the supplemental endorsement for age 3 through 3rd grade that is added onto the elementary endorsement or other endorsement. This endorsement allows the teacher to hone in on developmental levels. The third endorsement is a graduate endorsement in Early Childhood Special Education.

Discuss Possible Agenda Items for August Meeting

The Council suggested a few agenda items for the August meeting.

- How ECICC could make a strong connection between TFKF and the strategic planning focus groups
- Update on the Sixpence grants
- Panel of providers to address insurance exchanges and impacts on Medicaid suggested by the FAME committee
- Adding a Child Care Food Program representative as Technical Assistance to the Council
- State Advisory Council Grant wrap up
- Circle of security explanation

With no other items to be discussed, Pam thanks Carolyn Thiele and Roger Reikofski for the service and adjourned the meeting at 2:25 p.m.

Next meeting: August 23, 2013, 9:00 a.m. – 3:00 p.m., Lincoln, NE

MEETING HANDOUTS:

- ✓ May 10, 2013 Meeting Agenda
- ✓ May 10, 2013 Meeting Overview of Agenda
- ✓ February 15, 2013 Meeting Minutes
- ✓ April 8, 2013 Steering Committee Conference call minutes
- ✓ March 18, 2013 Steering Committee Conference call minutes
- ✓ 2012 Strategic Report to the Governor on the Status of Early Childhood – DRAFT

- ✓ SAC Grant update
- ✓ Recommendations for Developing a Unified Early Childhood Data System
- ✓ Early Childhood Key Indicators document