

**Minutes: Early Childhood Interagency Coordinating Council (ECICC)
May 13, 2005 9:00 a.m. - 3:00 p.m.
The Cornhusker Hotel, Lancaster Room 1-2-3
Lincoln, Nebraska**

Lea Ann Johnson, chair, opened the meeting of the Early Childhood Interagency Coordinating Council on May 13, 2005 at 9:00 a.m. at the Cornhusker Hotel, Lincoln, Nebraska.

Members present: Lea Ann Johnson, chair; Sue Adams, Mary Afrank, Kathy Anderson, Marcia Corr, Patrick Donaldson, Eric Dunning, Carolyn Edwards, Kris Elmshaeuser, Ali Hettenbaugh, Barbara Jackson, Susan Kringle, Kim Madsen, Paul Matson, Betty Medinger, Ruth Miller, Tammy Mittelstaedt, Suzan Obermiller, Kim Peterson, Marian Price, Barbara Schliesser, Connie Shonka, Derek Weimer, Sandy Willett, Carey Winkler, Carolyn Witte,

Members absent: Dora Chen, Christine Carr, Jolaine Edwards, Tom Fortune, Sally Hansen, Mark Hald, Mary Jo Iwan, Chris Kline, Pat Nauroth, Cindy Prater, Mary Beth Rathe, Todd Reckling, Patti Waltman, Christine Weber, Denise Wright.

Also in attendance:

ECICC Staff: Terry Rohren, facilitator; Susan Dahm, secretary.

Technical assistants: Rae Anderson, National Child Care Information Center, Nina Baker, PTI-Nebraska; Betty Lammle, Administration for Children and Families, Region VII Child Care Specialist; Mark Smith, Monroe-Meyer Institute; *HHS:* Charlie Lewis, Pat Urzedowski; *NDE:* Melody Hobson, Eleanor Kirkland, Linda Meyers.

Guests: Kim Breyer, student, Southeast Community College; Cindy Squire, Chadron State College.

AGENDA:

1. Opening and Announcements:

- i. Lea Ann introduced two new members: Sue Adams and Connie Shonka. Members made self-introductions.
- ii. Approval of minutes
Action:
Motion, seconded: To approve the ECICC minutes of February 18, 2005, as submitted and provided to members in the pre-meeting packet. There was no discussion. The motion to approve the minutes passed by unanimous voice vote. There were no abstentions.
- iii. Proposed meeting dates for 2006
Action:
Motion, seconded: To approve the proposed meeting dates for 2006—February 10, May 19, August 25, and November 17. The motion passed by unanimous voice vote. There were no abstentions.
- iv. Family story procedures
Terry Rohren discussed the “Council Member Guidelines for Family Stories” and Nina Baker informed the group about revisions to the “Family Story Procedures.” Revisions to the procedures, which were included in the pre-meeting packet, involved minor changes in wording. Nina also provided handouts and information about “Power of Family Stories.” Families will receive the two documents when they are asked to present their stories to the ECICC. The procedures are intended to give support and information about how to present

family stories. The Council facilitator and family partner technical assistance staff will also assist families in their preparations.

Action:

Motion, seconded: To accept the family story documents as presented. The motion passed by unanimous voice vote. There were no abstentions.

v. December 2004 Self Assessment

Terry Rohren called attention to the Follow Up Report of the ECICC Steering Committee to recommendations made in the self-assessment discussion of the December 3, 2004 meeting, which was included in members' meeting packets. She encouraged members to read the report and inform the Steering Committee about any concerns.

vi. Action taken since the last meeting (February 18, 2005)

- The pre-printed draft of the ECICC 2004 Report to the Governor and supporting materials was delivered to the Governor's Office before his departure to Washington, D.C.
- The Presidents Budget Information Sheet was drafted and distributed to Council members.
- The ECICC 2004 Report to the Governor was printed and distributed to the Governor, members of the Legislature, agency heads, and others.
- The Legislative and Communications Committee met by conference call.
- Nebraska Health and Human Services System issued a RFP (request for proposals) for a public awareness initiative, which is in response to the ECICC Public Awareness Task Force report. Betty Medinger indicated they are screening proposals and will award a contract within the month.
- The Part C 2003-2004 Annual Performance Report was completed; signed by Lea Ann Johnson, chair of ECICC; and submitted to OSEP (U.S. Office of Special Education Programs).
- "Communicating About Early Childhood Issues" web page was created by the Early Childhood Training Center, as suggested by the ECICC Legislative and Communications Committee: URL—<http://www.esu3.org/ECTC/issues/issues.htm>. There is a link to the web page from the ECICC website.
- Lea Ann reported that she had called Dr. Raymond's office to follow up on the letter sent from the ECICC regarding delays in background checks for child care employees. She was told that as of March, there is a 24-28 hour turnaround on background checks, unless there is a "hit" that requires more investigation. Carrie Witte confirmed that the processing is much improved. Lea Ann also noted that licensed child care checks happen through the Licensing Division, which makes over 55,000 checks per year. This number speaks to the turnover in child care personnel. She will make more inquires about a Spanish translation of the form to be made available to applicants.

2. Family Story

ECICC member Tammy Mittelstaedt presented her family's story about four-year old daughter, Marissa, who was born with spina bifida. She described the first diagnosis and the progress Marissa has made in spite of the initial prognosis. Tammy also explained about her daughter's brain condition in which the right and left hemispheres do not "connect" as they should. She said that this neurological disorder is becoming more apparent because of MRI capabilities for diagnosis and that new methods for teaching children with this condition are being developed. Tammy shared photos of her daughter in a PowerPoint presentation. She closed by reading an open letter from a mother to educators to help them understand the parent's perspective and the grieving process of parents of children with disabilities.

3. Committees/Working Groups

Members and technical assistants met from 10:00 a.m. to noon in three breakout groups—the Gaps and Barriers Committee, the Financial work group, and the Legislative and Communications Committee.

4. Public Comment

- Mary Afrank indicated the House version of Head Start reauthorization had passed. She indicated that there will be new roles for the Head Start Collaboration Office as defined in the bill. Mary suggested that people follow this legislation carefully.
- Betty Lammle informed members about a federal grant to give states support centering on childhood obesity. Nebraska will use the funding for training efforts with child care providers. She also gave information about the reauthorization of TANF (Temporary Assistance to Needy Families) and CCDF (Child Care Development Fund).
- Rae Anderson informed members about staff changes in her organization and changes in contact information, which she provided for the Council data base.

5. Report Outs from Working Sessions

5.1 Family Leadership Team

Carey Winkler reported for the Family Leadership Team, which met from 8:00-9:00 a.m. before the Council meeting.

- The Team reviewed the follow up report from the Steering Committee and discussed additional ways to support new families appointed as members of ECICC. They proposed that a pictorial directory with a brief bio of each member be created to help all members identify each other by face/name and representation on the Council.

Action:

There was consensus to create a pictorial directory for ECICC members. Nina Baker will bring a digital camera to the next meeting to begin the process.

- The team also discussed changes in IDEA (Individuals with Disabilities Education Act) reauthorization pertaining to use of the IFSP (Individual Family Service Plan) for ages 3-5, which is of specific interest to this group.

5.2 Gaps and Barriers Committee

Sue Obermiller reported on topics discussed in the Gaps and Barriers Committee (GBC) meeting.

- Initiatives around Early Childhood Outcomes will require Nebraska to collect information from families and providers. A statewide committee is being formed to develop the process. Representatives to this committee from the GBC are Barb Jackson, Tammy Mittelstaedt and Mark Smith.
- New IDEA requirements include a six-year state performance plan, which is due December 2005. The annual performance plan (APR) will be the basis for developing the six-year plan. The Gaps and Barriers Committee will serve in an advisory capacity for Part C. The GBC will meet in a full-day meeting on August 25; a follow up meeting may be held on September 30.
- The GBC reviewed feedback from the survey from Planning Region Teams (PRT) on the pilot gaps and barriers reporting project. In light of the feedback and in consideration of the amount of staff time required to process the reports, the GBC recommended the continuation of the reporting process but to require only one report be submitted annually by October 1 in conjunction with PRT grant applications. This data would be analyzed and

reported in December to the ECICC and PRTs. The GBC is also looking at communication strategies with the PRTs and other organizations.

- Sue Obermiller provided a letter from Donna Veatch on behalf of the Region VII Head Start Association Board of Directors. The letter contained response and comment regarding the legislation reauthorizing Head Start. (*See attached.*)

5.3 Financing Task Force

- Ruth Miller, leader of the task force, reported that the group was examining economic impact studies, websites, other resources and contacting states within the region for the purpose of gathering information on doing economic impact studies. The group will participate in a conference call on May 24 at 2:00 p.m. to determine next steps.
- The group had reviewed the draft charter and made three revisions: under “Scope” changed Mildred Warner to Rose Ridero; under “Membership” added Kris Elmshaeuser and Senator Marian Price. Ruth submitted the draft for approval by the Council.

Action:

Motion, seconded: To approve the charter of the Financing Task Force as provided to Council members in their pre-meeting and meeting packets and with the above revisions. The motion carried by unanimous voice vote. There were no abstentions.

5.4 Legislative and Communications Standing Committee

- Derek Weimer, chair, informed the Council that the committee had reviewed the draft charter on a conference call prior to the meeting. He asked the Council to approve the charter as provided to Council members in their pre-meeting and meeting packets.

Action:

Motion, seconded: To approve the charter of the Legislative and Communications Committee. The motion carried by unanimous voice vote. There were no abstentions.

- Derek reported that the committee had discussed ways to build relationships with the Governor’s Office, the Legislature, and state agencies. The committee will try to meet three times per year with the Governor to keep his office informed about regular meetings and groups. They are looking at best ways to maintain a relationship with the Legislature and asked Council members for names and contacts of legislators and aides to use as a personal conduit. They also hope to involve parents in dissemination of information and have provided a linkage with Nebraska Children and Families Foundation as a mechanism for parents to voice concerns.
- Terry Rohren provided information about web sites, etc. to ECICC members.
- Legislative updates—the committee had compiled a packet of information of bills of interest with a brief description. Derek called attention to several bills and their status and discussed bills in process that may have issues of interest attached. Derek emphasized the huge impacts coming in Medicaid changes and encouraged members to follow news coverage and study the packet of information the committee provided.

6. Nebraska Early Childhood Coalition

Terry welcomed Mary Collacurci, Kelly Medwick, and Kylie Jensen from the Nebraska Children and Families Foundation to provide information about the Nebraska Early Childhood Coalition, which advocates for early childhood issues. They informed the Council about the impetus for the group and gave information about activities and legislative actions and provided brochures with information about the organization. They invited Council members to sign up for their data base to get information and asked them to provide contacts and information that would be helpful to them. They invited comments and responded to questions from the group.

Terry also suggested websites of Families USA, and Center for People in Need for Council members who want to advocate as individuals.

7. Special Quest

Mark Smith presented information about Special Quest, a four-year project in which local teams come together at regional sites for annual training leading to systems change for inclusion of children with disabilities. Teams are comprised of representatives from Early Head Start, Migrant and Seasonal Head Start, Early Intervention, child care and parents. He provided a summation video from the first round of training and some of the things that have happened since then.

Mary Afrank spoke of her personal experience in Special Quest training and program involvement and told how “graduates” become “ambassadors” for continuing involvement. Several in the group gave input about other aspects of the program. The Early Childhood Training Center has a set of videos for more information.

8. Agency Updates

8.1 Part C Updates

Barb Schliesser called attention to the Part C 2003-2004 Annual Performance Report (APR), which was furnished to Council members in their meeting packet. Barb pointed out ECICC’s “sponsorship” of the report, which was submitted the end of March to OSEP. She highlighted some aspects of the report and explained the content of various sections. Joan Luebbers explained the structure of the report and the components of reporting within each cluster and called attention to some of the data used. Barb noted that a new six-year State Performance Plan, which is due in December 2005, may eventually replace the APR.

8.2 Together for Kids and Families

Lynne Brehm informed the Council about the status of the strategic plan and noted that a draft plan may be available by August 26 (next ECICC meeting). She provided a handout of goals and strategies with timeline objectives. Eleanor Kirkland gave an update on the progress of the data group and explained the difficulty in collecting data in the early childhood population. They are looking at what has to be done across state agencies and organizations as well as developing a strategy in the plan around the collection of data.

8.3 Early Childhood

– Early Childhood Policy Study

Marcia Corr updated the Council on recommendations of the Policy Study Leadership Team and the input gathered from the State Board of Education Policy Partner forums that were held across the state. The forums had good representation of stakeholders except for business. The next step is to synthesize information gathered at policy forums and add it to the policy study report. The Leadership Team will meet in June and make final revisions to the report draft. The intent is to submit a final report to return to the State Board of Education by their September meeting to inform decisions for early childhood.

– Early Learning Guidelines for Ages 3-5 (ELG 3-5)

Marcia reported that 18,000 *Early Learning Guidelines for Ages 3-5* were printed. About 14,000 have already been distributed. The guidelines will be presented at national and regional conferences.

– LB 577

Marcia announced that the budget amendment of Senator Raikes to expand the Early Childhood Grant Program by \$3.5 million passed and would go into the final reading of the bill. (The bill subsequently was passed by the Unicameral.)

8.4 Changes to the Food Program

There was no presentation. It will be rescheduled for a later meeting.

8.5 Child Care Development Fund State Plan

Betty Medinger informed the Council about the status of the plan and provided a packet of information. She invited members to a public hearing on the plan.

9. Next Meeting/Next Steps

- Eleanor Kirkland asked for time on the next agenda for the Head Start State Collaboration Office (HSSCO) five-year state plan.
- Terry Rohren will send “ how information becomes law” to members via e-mail.
- Nina Baker will bring a digital camera to the next meeting for a photo roster.

Next meeting: Friday, August 26, 2005, 9:00 a.m.-3:00 p.m. Cornhusker Hotel, Lincoln

Attachment to Minutes: Letter from Donna Veatch re Head Start reauthorization

MEETING HANDOUTS:

- ✓ Graphic: Early Childhood Linkages and Relationships–Policy, Funding & Advisory Functions–Nebraska 2005. Revision: May 13, 2005
- ✓ Roster Updates–May 13, 2005
- ✓ ECICC 2004-2005 Roster: updated May 13, 2005
- ✓ IDEA Part C 2003-2004 Annual Performance Report
- ✓ Report Highlights: Part C Annual Performance Report–Status of Program Performance 2003-2004
- ✓ Nebraska Head Start State Collaboration Office Update to ECICC, May 13, 2005
- ✓ Draft: Charter of the Legislative and Communications Standing Committee, March, 28, 2005
- ✓ Draft: Charter of the Early Childhood Financing Task Force, February 18, 2005
- ✓ Draft: ECICC Family Story Purpose/Procedures/Guidelines
- ✓ Draft: Family Story Guidelines for ECICC Members, April 19, 2005
- ✓ “The Power of Family Stories” (for ECICC files)
- ✓ Information Report from the ECICC Legislative Committee, May 9, 2005
 - + ECICC Legislative and Communications Committee report: Nebraska 2005 Legislative Bills Status Report
 - + Synopsis: Methamphetamine Bills: LB 117, 148, 149, 481; May 9, 2005
 - + Fiscal Note: LB 577
 - + Notice: LB 577 advanced
 - + Committee Statement: LB 709
 - + Synopsis: LB 264
- ✓ Brochure: Investing in Futures–Nebraska Children and Families Foundation
- ✓ Overview sheet: Together for Kids and Families–Early Childhood Comprehensive Systems (ECCS)