

# **Minutes: Early Childhood Interagency Coordinating Council (ECICC)**

**August 22, 2008** – corrected November 14, 2008

**Working sessions: 8:00 a.m. - 11:00 a.m.**

**Council Meeting: 11:00-3:00 p.m.**

**The Cornhusker Hotel, Yankee Hill Suite; Lincoln, Nebraska**

Ruth Miller, chair, opened the meeting of the Early Childhood Interagency Coordinating Council at 11:00 a.m. on August 22, 2008 at the Cornhusker Hotel, Lincoln, Nebraska. Those in attendance made self introductions.

*Members present:* A.Kathryn Anderson, Eric Dunning, Mary Fran Flood, Heather Gill, Laura Good Buffalo, Louise Hall-Mountain, Kathy Halverson-Rigatuso, Jane Happe, Melody Hobson, Barbara Jackson, Sara Johnson, Eleanor Kirkland, Marjorie Kostelnik, Paul Matson, Betty Medinger, Ruth Miller, Tammy Mittelstaedt, Mary Phillips, Mary Alice “Mike” Queen, Carrie Rasmussen, Roger Reikofski, Deb Ross, Barbara Schliesser, Connie Shonka, Janet Staehr, Joni Thomas, Joyce Thomas, Carey Winkler, Linda Zinke.

*Members absent:* Sue Adams, Kim Chase, Sali Lindenberger, Michele Merrill, Nancy Montgomery, Lynn Mruz, Stephanie Rau, Todd Reckling, DiAnna Schimek, John Street, Derek Weimer

*Also in attendance:* *ECICC Staff:* Terry Rohren, facilitator; Susan Dahm, secretary, Martha Gadberry, facilitator-GBC; *Technical Assistants:* Rae Anderson, *National Child Care Information Center;* Connie Shockley, *PTI-Nebraska;* Mark Smith, *Munroe Meyer Institute;* *HHSS:* Lynne Brehm, Amy Bunnell, Shirley Pickens-White; *NDE:* Carol Fichter, Joan Luebbers, Carol Puffer; *Guests:* Sabrina Sumsion, *parent;* Beaky Veak and Jen Hernandez, *Nebraska Children and Families Foundation.*

## **AGENDA:**

The Family Leadership Team, the Gaps and Barriers Committee, the Legislative and Communications Committee, and the Transportation Work Group met in separate sessions from 8:00 a.m. to 11:00 a.m. before the opening of the regular Council meeting.

### **1. Opening and Announcements:**

#### **i. Approval of minutes**

Motion, Barbara Schliesser; seconded, Laura Good Buffalo: To approve the ECICC minutes of May 2, 2008, as submitted and provided to members in the pre-meeting packet. There was no discussion. The motion passed by unanimous voice vote. There were no abstentions.

#### **ii. Review of actions since the last meeting**

- Terry Rohren provided an update on membership, including resignations and terms ending on September 30, 2008. She announced the retirement of Marcia Corr, who will be replaced by Melody Hobson and Carol Fichter as co-administrators of the Office of Early Childhood, Nebraska Department of Education (NDE).
- Correspondence since the last meeting included letters to Governor Heineman; Vivianne Chaumont and Dr. Acierno, DHHS; and Together for Kids and Families. The correspondence was reviewed and explained. There were no questions.
- Governor Heineman identified ECICC as the Head Start State Advisory Council, as required by Head Start Reauthorization, and appointed Eleanor Kirkland, director of the Head Start State Collaboration Office (HSSCO), as a member of the ECICC.
- NDE received word from the federal Office of Special Education Programs (OSEP) that the Nebraska Annual Performance Report for Part C met all determinations.

- Terry Rohren developed a plan at the Governor’s request to reduce ECICC membership from 42 members to 35 members over the next 3 years. A table showing the legislative requirements for membership representation and the members filling those positions was provided to the Council.
- Terry Rohren announced that the regional listening session during the May 8, 2009 Council meeting would be held at the Lifelong Learning Center in Norfolk, Nebraska.

## **2. Reports from Working Sessions**

### **a. Family Leadership Team**

Tammy Mittelstaedt reported Mark Smith had presented an on-line pre-literacy tool for their review. The group also learned more about the Positive Behavior Intervention Supports (PBiS) programs in Nebraska. Amy Bunnell provided an overview of monitoring issues to clarify issues for Part C (infants and toddlers with disabilities). Tammy thanked the Council for their support and information regarding issues concerning the Medicaid premium proposals that would affect families of children with disabilities.

### **b. Gaps and Barriers Committee (GBC)**

Carey Winkler reviewed the discussion in the GBC meeting, which included an updates on Head Start; early childhood transportation issues; changes in NDE’s Office of Early Childhood and the Early Childhood Training Center; early childhood professional development; PBiS for early childhood, Helping Babies from the Bench, a program to explore development issues for children in the courts system; the Part C Annual Performance Report (APR); and the Results Matter fidelity process for child outcomes. The GBC also learned about the progress analyzing current data and upcoming changes in the family survey process for Part C.

### **c. Legislative and Communications Committee (LCC)**

Terry Rohren reported for Kim Chase, committee chair. The LCC reviewed a draft outline for the biennial report to the Governor due in 2009. The proposed timeline for the report identified the February ECICC meeting for approval of the draft and April 2009 for sending the report to the Governor and State Legislators. The group also reviewed the policy on Medicaid reimbursement for inconsistencies regarding mental health issues. Other issues discussed included addressing social-emotional development needs in Child Find; kindergarten/transition issues; development of recommendations regarding before and after school-age care; incongruity in communicating what best practice should look like in assessing young children; community support for families and children regarding school readiness; and supporting early childhood through professional development, tuition forgiveness and wage incentives as addressed in the Higher Education Act. The LCC also discussed ways to gather input on changes needed in the child care regulations and how to best engage Dr. Acierno in seeking solutions.

### **d. Transportation Task Force**

Eleanor Kirkland reported on a retreat held by the task force in May and called attention to the minutes and recommendations provided in the meeting packet. The task force looked at how best to educate public and stakeholders about the issues and how to address communication across systems. The task force decided to initially focus on pupil transport and Head Start requirements/regulations including issues such as partnerships, transportation across district boundaries, and unfunded mandates. Eleanor recognized the ECICC members participating in the task force and noted that while the task force is not an “official” work group of the ECICC, there will be regular reporting to the Gaps and Barriers Committee. Eleanor further briefed the Council on other issues related to transportation of young children. Next steps for the task force include connecting with the new DHHS person on transportation, holding a conference call in October, defining/mapping authorization for agencies/providers, and further defining the four

key areas (see handout). Other tasks include obtaining data on children birth-to-age-8 transported in public venues, aligning public [school] transportation and Head Start regulations, and disseminating a meaningful plan in a document to all stakeholders.

### **3. Family Story**

During the lunch period Sabrina Sumsion, a parent from Lincoln, provided a PowerPoint presentation and story about her family's experiences with their young son, who has autism, and the support provided to them by the Early Intervention system through Lincoln Public Schools.

### **4. Public Comment:**

- a. Martha Gadberry described the interests in early childhood issues of the downtown Rotary Club and suggested that ECICC get someone on their program to talk about children ages birth-to-8. Martha also provided information about the Lincoln Literacy Council's "lap readers" program for reading to children.
- b. Ruth Miller talked about preparing as a family for a medical emergency. She suggested that this be addressed during the IFSP conference to promote family communication on what to do if the primary caregiver is absent or unable to continue providing care for a child.

### **5. Legislature Interim Study**

Jen Hernandez, Nebraska Children and Families Foundation (NCFE), presented background information and an update on Legislative Resolution 292, the Legislature Interim Study. She noted that Nebraska is well invested in funding and partnerships for early childhood education across the state and needs to continue the momentum, which seems to be waning in the Legislature. NCFE and others are trying to get legislators "ready" to support more funding. They have held press conferences across the state regarding the Early Childhood Education Endowment and involved state legislators while seeking to inform them. The Resolution is in the second tier of action. NCFE plans to work with the committee members to inform them about the issues and then to educate all of the senators in November after the election about the strengths and gaps regarding early childhood in Nebraska. NCFE also will continue to seek good press coverage on the importance of early childhood.

### **6. Economic Impact Study**

Jen Hernandez, NCFE, described the efforts to disseminate information about the Economic Impact Study, which ECICC sponsored. She provided handouts of a story and opinion piece in the *Lincoln Journal Star* and a summary sheet of other NCFE outreach efforts surrounding the study.

### **7. Birth-3 Endowment Grants**

Becky Veak, NCFE, described the Foundation's management and administration of the \$60 million endowment to support grants for birth-to-3 programs across the state. She provided a handout on the current awards for continuation or access expansion grants. She noted that the grants go through school districts in partnership with community providers (e.g., Head Start, center-based and home visitation programs). The Endowment Board of Trustees intends to release another RFP in December 2008, which will be due April 15, 2009. In the first round, \$1.7 million went out to communities. The endowment money is constitutionally protected, but grant awards may fluctuate depending on investment earnings of the Endowment. Becky encouraged Council members to access the endowment website, <http://www.earlychildhoodendowment.org/> for more information.

### **8. Age Three-to-Five Grants**

The report on the Age Three-to-Five Grants was postponed.

### **9. Positive Behavior Intervention Supports (PBIS)**

Eleanor Kirkland used a PowerPoint presentation to update the Council on progress of the PBiS program in Nebraska. She explained the training and technical assistance that will be provided in Nebraska through the Center for Social and Emotional Foundations for Early Learning (CSEFEL). Currently, there are four demonstration sites: Plattsmouth Community Schools, Kids Squad-Omaha, Cedar Youth Services-Lincoln, and Hastings. "Nurturing Healthy Behaviors" funding is being provided by Nebraska DHHS. Barb Jackson will evaluate the project. The group discussed the training of trainers, which is in progress and moving toward implementation. Eleanor noted that this is a time-consuming, long-term effort. Louise Hall-Mountain related some of the challenges faced by the Omaha program, which includes staff turnover, the difficult role of front-line staff, and finding ways to support and finance staff.

#### **10. Head Start Act**

Eleanor Kirkland provided a handout and PowerPoint presentation on the recent Head Start Act especially noting its impact for the ECICC, which has been identified by Governor Heineman to fulfill the Head Start Act requirement of a State Advisory Council (SAC). Eleanor outlined the duties of the Head Start SAC, which include reporting requirements, outreach, a data collection system and other tasks related to professional development, learning standards, and strategic planning. Some initiatives already in progress, such as Together for Kids and Families and the ECICC Report to the Governor, may partially fulfill some of the SAC requirements. There are no appropriations to support the SAC. Betty Medinger noted that ECICC might need to establish a sub-group to work on the requirements.

*Action:*

- Motion by Deb Ross, seconded by Linda Zinke: That an ad hoc committee be formed to look at planning and preparation needed to meet the Head Start Act requirements. The motion carried unanimously by voice vote.
- Eleanor asked that persons interested in participating in the ad hoc committee contact her.

#### **11. Learning from Day One**

Betty Medinger and Jen Hernandez showed media clips and played a radio spot from the public awareness campaign for the Learning from Day One initiative. The spots, which have been running since March 2009, touch on socio-emotional development, the need for support from fathers, and the medical home. Jen asked members to contact NCFE for more information about airings on local stations or to e-mail her at: [jhernandez@nebraskachildren.org](mailto:jhernandez@nebraskachildren.org)

With no other items to be discussed, the Council adjourned at 2:45 p.m.

**Next meeting:** November 14, 2008, 9:00 a.m.-3:00 p.m.

**MEETING HANDOUTS:**

- ✓ ECICC Updates, August 22, 2008
- ✓ Representation of membership on the Nebraska ECICC as state in Federal and State Statute
- ✓ Correspondence: Governor Dave Heineman, June 24, 2008
- ✓ Correspondence: Vivianne M. Chaumont, June 24, 2008
- ✓ Correspondence: Dr. Joseph Acierno, June 25, 2008
- ✓ Correspondence: Lynne Brehm/Together for Kids and Families, July 14, 2008
- ✓ Minutes: Gaps and Barriers Committee-May 2, 2008
- ✓ Minutes: ECICC Steering Committee-July 17, 2008
- ✓ Correspondence from Governor Dave Heineman to Eleanor Shirley Kirkland, June 25, 2008

- ✓ PowerPoint presentation: Head Start Act: Improving Head Start for School Readiness – PL 110-134; The State Advisory Council Sec. 642B (F) (B) (1) (A)
- ✓ Report: Head Start State Collaboration Office (HSSCO, July-August 2008
- ✓ Meeting Notes & Recommendations: Early Childhood Transportation Task Force, May 5, 2008, Grand Island, NE.
- ✓ Nebraska Early Childhood Education 2008 Endowment Grants
- ✓ Correspondence: To ECICC from Amanda Rucker, Nebraska Children and Families Foundation re the Economic Impact Study
- ✓ Opinion: JournalStar.com, February 18, 2008 re child care industry produces \$640 million a year
- ✓ Opinion: JournalStar.com, March 3, 2008 re Quality Child Care Important
- ✓ Legislative Resolution 292–One Hundredth Legislature-Second Session
- ✓ Tentative agenda: Nebraska Child Abuse Prevention Conference, September 23-24, 2008