

**Draft Minutes: Early Childhood Interagency Coordinating Council  
August 17, 2018, SCC – Jack J. Huck Continuing Education Building, Lincoln, NE**

**Council Members Present:** Laura Arp, Teresa Berube, Sue Borchert, Carol Bowen, Amy Bunnell, Allison Cunningham, Julie Docter, Gwen Easter, Melody Hobson, Stephanie Knust, Krynn Larsen, Karla Lester, Joan Luebbers, Brenda McNiff, Cathy Mohnike, Dawn Murphy, Mary Phillips, Suzanne Schneider, Paula Thompson, Nicole Vint

**Council Members Absent:** Susan Adams, Mary Barry-Magsamen, Janelle Butler, Jamie Hazlett, Emily Kluver, Sen. Kolowski, Missy Timmerman

**Also in Attendance:** Council Facilitator, Eleanor Shirley; Council Staff, Karen Hoffman; Technical Assistants, Amanda Adams, Jennifer Auman, Amy Bornemeier, Lynne Brehm, Lauri Cimino, Pat Frost, Connie Shockley, Kim Texel, Becky Veak, Stacy Zuerlein

**Council Meeting Convenes**

ECICC Facilitator, Eleanor Shirley, convened the meeting at 9:05 a.m., and announced the meeting complies with the Open Meetings Act, a hard copy of which was in the back of the room. Eleanor noted that yellow table tents signify voting members and that Technical Assistants have gold table tents. Guest speakers were acknowledged, as well.

**Approval of May 11th Meeting Minutes**

Council Chair, Dawn Murphy, requested a motion to approve the minutes. After Amy Bunnell motioned and Nicole Vint seconded the motion, there was no discussion and a roll call vote was taken.

Roll call vote: 16-yes, 0-abstain, 0-no; the motion passed.

Yes: Berube, Bowen, Bunnell, Cunningham, Docter, Easter, Hobson, Knust, Larsen, Luebbers, McNiff, Murphy, Phillips, Schneider, Thompson, Vint

Next Dawn Murphy walked the group through the agenda for the day.

**Public Comment**

Upon invitation of public comment by Dawn Murphy, Amy Bornemeier shared about an upcoming event on September 17<sup>th</sup>, entitled “Thriving Children, Families, and Communities: The Role of Early Childhood Programs.” This day-long session in Kearney will connect community leaders with Early Childhood resources and learning. Karen will send out information to the Council via email that will include a link to register.

**Early Childhood Professional Development System in Nebraska**

Katie Miller, NDE Career Development Coordinator, and Jennifer Haggart, Early Learning Connection (ELC) Omaha Region Project Coordinator, shared a power point presentation. The ELCs work in partnership with training entities in Nebraska, and emphasize a focus on reciprocal relationships where teachers and providers communicate about needs and gaps. A handout illustrated Early Childhood Professional Development in Nebraska, with a comprehensive “A to Z” snapshot of ELC Partnerships, efforts, and programs that exist. There are seven ELC regions that, together, cover the state. Each ELC coordinator offices out a different ESU (Educational Service Unit).

While face-to-face trainings are preferred, there are First Connections and School-Aged Connections trainings available online, and a Pre-School Connections training is in development. The Early Childhood Training Center (ECTC) in Omaha is also a resource for questions, and assists individuals in meeting their training goals. Information about available trainings and materials can be found at [www.education.ne.gov/oec](http://www.education.ne.gov/oec) (Office of Early Childhood), by selecting Early Childhood Training Center from the sidebar.

Jennifer shared that from October to December of last year, 8,171 people took part in 486 professional development opportunities. Another way numbers can be found is through NECPRS, the Nebraska Early Childhood Professional Record System, which stores information about users' training history. Lauri Cimino shared that there are over 7,300 records in the NECPRS system. Funding for the ELCs comes from federal child care development block grant funds.

For any questions or more information, Katie and Jennifer can be contacted by the following:

Katie Miller: [Katie.miller@nebraska.gov](mailto:Katie.miller@nebraska.gov), phone: 402-557-6889

Jennifer Haggart: [jhaggart@esu3.org](mailto:jhaggart@esu3.org), phone: 402-597-4991

### **Pyramid Model Evaluation Report**

Teresa Berube, Preschool Special Education Coordinator for NDE, shared highlights from report that was handed out entitled "Pyramid Model Evaluation Report, June 2018," which included information following completion of their second cohort, or group of trainees. She also shared some background about Pyramid, which focuses on positive messages and reinforcing positive behaviors consistently to help children develop positive social-emotional skills. The current focus is implementing the Pyramid model in school settings and Head Starts. Cohorts receive training and coaching, with the goal to teach with fidelity, and have programs continue on their own using a coach from within and using these learned practices. As cohort three is in the beginning stages, Teresa is also working with some other programs to develop a statewide implementation plan. Coach turnover is a challenge, and some districts who are able to afford doing so invest in a full-time coach. Coaching in a video format is also being explored, and Teresa encouraged the Council to share additional ideas they think could strengthen these efforts.

In response to a question about Pre-school suspensions and data collecting, Teresa said a process is in development to monitor behavior incidents that will better track them and their outcomes. Paper and pencil recording is not always captured, so the hope is a new, more formal process will be more accurate. This type of reporting will be required beginning in 2020.

Teresa also responded to a question about whether Pyramid connects with parenting, saying that parent involvement is a big part of the Pyramid model. Children bring learned skills home and it's important for those skills to be affirmed and supported. There are also some parent modules that can be done as a group presentation, or individually at home.

### **NE Childcare Licensing Update**

Diane Kvasnicka, Program Manager, Division of Public Health, Licensure Unit, shared a power point and an update from the Nebraska Child Care Licensing Office, which is responsible for licensing of child care programs in the state, as well as licensing of Residential Child Caring and Placing agencies in Nebraska. The office has been focusing on the Governor's state agency directive to improve processes and use data to show improvement. At end of 2016, with stakeholder input, Diane said her office chose to focus on the speed at which Center-Based programs are licensed. They reviewed their process to find where delays may be occurring and, following an effort to streamline and make things parallel where possible, saw their licensing process go from 124 to 75 days, and even as low as 48 days in July, 2018. Diane gave kudos to her staff and partners who worked diligently to

achieve this, saying it took a lot of effort. They continue to constantly review processes for improvement, and are seeking to mirror this process with family child care centers.

Asked if whether a quicker, more streamlined process has resulted in a higher number of licensed programs, Diane responded there has been an increase of licensed center-based programs, but that she was unsure if it was due to the timeline change. They have seen a significant decrease in licensed Family Child Care homes. DHHS is working to compile a map with 4-year trend data per county to show where reductions have been. They've seen a 11% drop in Family Child Care homes, and are looking at the whole picture around closures. Anecdotally, there is an aging profession with a number of retirees, and not enough staff replacement. Center-Based programs appear to be growing more than School-Aged, and new centers are being licensed for larger numbers of children.

Concern was shared that school district programs sometimes have a detrimental effect on neighboring, licensed childcare programs. This may have a negative impact on some smaller child care businesses. Additionally, a concern was shared, based on inaccurate information, that Step Up To Quality requires coaching. The concern was that accessing coaching is not always necessary to improve quality.

Diane shared information about 2017 inspections that included unlicensed investigations and emergency closures. Sometimes an unlicensed entity will become licensed following an investigation, since the process for getting licensed may not have been understood. She said her staff averaged over 500 inspections per person.

Information was also shared about two legislative bills that were passed this year and affect childcare in Nebraska:

LB1034 – In order for school-age programs to operate in an accredited or approved school, they must meet health and safety requirements. Will still look at background checks, trainings, and materials. But buildings must be approved and the school accredited.

LB717 – This bill made changes to pre-service orientation, requiring that DHHS add information on Sudden Infant Death Syndrome for providers of child care and school-age care programs.

In conclusion Diane shared that their next project will be to update regulations, in response to a Governor order regarding redundancy and reduction of regulatory burden. Diane has assembled a team that, with stakeholder involvement and public input, will seek to reduce the number of regulations. Plans are for it to happen yet this year. That said, Diane encouraged the Council to provide general input about possible changes to regulations. She may attend a future ECICC meeting for more focused conversation.

### **Governor's Report Continued**

Eleanor walked the group through the process that has brought the latest Report to where it is. The content for review today was compiled during this process and was emailed to the Council August 9<sup>th</sup> with encouragement to review and come prepared for today's meeting. Eleanor also noted that First Five Nebraska has generously offered to, once again, provide assistance and formatting for the Report. Council members broke into small groups among members and technical assistants and examined the following key areas for ongoing Report development; responses were shared and will be disseminated within the Report.

- Availability of High Quality Services
- Professional Development and Capacity of Higher Education
- Comprehensive Early Learning Standards
- Integrated or Unified Data System

- Opportunities for Coordination and Collaboration among State Agencies and Local Programs

Eleanor asked if there should be a policy update section, and/or should something like this be integrated into each content area. Feedback included support for having policy updates highlighted and embedded within the report.

The Council can expect to review a second draft at the November meeting. Joan Luebbers suggested that agency members from Part C, Head Start, and the Early Childhood offices serve as a review group to assist Eleanor in the next stage. This was received with favor as a way to put a “magnifying lens” on the content. A final, formatted version will be presented at the February meeting where a Council vote of approval will be anticipated before delivery to the Governor.

### **Nebraska Young Child Institute (NYCI) Recap**

Amy Bunnell, Early Development Network Coordinator at NDE, shared a power point entitled “Nebraska’s Accomplishments for Our Youngest Citizens.” The presentation was shared at NYCI to show the landscape of Early Childhood Programs in Nebraska. The biennial Nebraska Young Child Institute occurred June 26-27 in Kearney, and was attended by a number of ECICC members.

Following Amy’s presentation, Eleanor asked the group if the listing of programs from the NYCI power point should be included in the Report. Presenting both public and private “Return on Investment”, or ROI was discussed. It was also suggested that the Council intentionally share the landscape of efforts to support children and families every few years, beyond the Biennial Report. A future Council meeting could include education about how funding flows and is blended for the many programs throughout the state. Eleanor thanked the group for its input, and will continue the work she has been charged with.

### **Child Care and Development Fund (CCDF) Update**

Nicole Vint, Child Care and Development Fund (CCDF) Administrator, shared a power point presentation about the Health and Safety Provisions that came out of the Child Care Development Block Grant (CCDBG) Reauthorization. She first gave a brief recap beginning with the CCDBG Act being signed by President Obama in 2013, and the Final Rule and interpretation coming in September, 2016. A May, 2018, public hearing for reactions to the State CCDF Pre-Print Plan went well and Amanda Adams will submit the final version to the federal offices that is due the end of the month. The Nebraska CCDF State Plan will be final on October 1, 2018, and will be administered through September 30, 2021. The Child Care and Development Fund provides resources to State, Territory and Tribal grantees that enable low-income parents to work or pursue education and training so that they may better support their families while at the same time promoting the learning and development of their children. Nicole commented that Nebraska is fortunate to be able to mold this block grant to the demographics of the state.

Nicole also shared information about the Health and Safety Requirements and the two options being offered for licensing. New subsidy agreements with providers will reflect these new requirements and an anticipated timeline includes a 10/1/18 mailing to all CCDF providers, a 12/1/18 follow-up mailing, and the compliance due date of 4/1/19. It was noted that while these new Federal regulations may reduce the number of providers, they may also interest some in becoming a licensed business. Pre-Service is required for everyone who is a Child Care Subsidy provider.

### **Early Childhood Changes in Every Student Succeeds Act (ESSA)**

Joan Luebbers, Head Start State Collaboration Director, and Pat Frost, Education Specialist and Title I Consultant at NDE, shared about updates to the Every Student Succeeds Act that affect early childhood programs. The

amendment requires that public schools receiving Title I funds, regardless of whether they operate a preschool program, develop agreements with Head Start and, if feasible, other early childhood programs in the community. These could include federal Head Start programs, publicly funded preschools, child care centers, family child care homes, or faith-based programs. This will encourage local programs to work together and help create successful transition to public schools.

### **Early Childhood Professional Core Competencies Review**

Kim Texel, Education Specialist in the Office of Early Childhood at NDE, and an ECICC Technical Assistant, shared information about Nebraska's Core Competencies for Early Childhood Professionals. These competencies address the knowledge and skills needed to effectively work with children ages birth to five, and are currently being revised and updated to better align with Nebraska's Early Learning Guidelines, which are what children need to be able to understand and demonstrate in their development. In September Kim will be asking the Council to take part in the review of this document and a link will be sent out with instructions and a timeline. After input is received and reviewed, the State Board of Education will also have an opportunity to review. The goal is completion before the end of the year, and then utilizing both the Core Competencies and the Early Learning Guidelines for training purposes. The child care representatives in the room were especially encouraged to review the language to make sure it was clear and parent-friendly.

### **Part C Update**

Amy Bunnell and Julie Docter, Early Development Network Program Coordinators for NDE and NDHHS respectively, provided Part C updates pertaining to the Early Development Network, which is Nebraska's Early Intervention Program. The federal Part C Application was submitted to the Office of Special Education Programs (OSEP) in April, 2018, and received full approval and funding for the July 1, 2018 to June 30, 2019, period. The Annual Performance Report (APR) will be due Feb. 1, 2019.

Each year OSEP gives each state a "determination" rating based upon Compliance Indicators. Amy shared about Nebraska's determination, and reviewed Early Childhood Outcomes and Indicator rudiments. Because Nebraska is the only state that uses Teaching Strategies (TS) GOLD for child outcomes assessment, it cannot be compared to other states, which results in a lower score and, ultimately, a Needs Assistance determination. Because Nebraska is in year two of Needs Assistance, this has triggered a "Specialized Technical Assistance" designation. A question was asked about whether Nebraska could be granted a waiver regarding its use of the GOLD assessment. Amy responded that the possibility of waiver is being taken under consideration. The Council learned how TS GOLD differs from other states, why it is felt to be a more accurate assessment tool, and why Nebraska will continue to have a lower score while TS GOLD is the chosen assessment measure. Nebraska sets its own targets and comes to the Council for input.

OSEP has asked Nebraska to submit new Child Outcome targets in April 2019 with APR submission. Information about the APR can be found on the Public Reporting page of the EDN website. Planning Region Team data is also available.

Amy also shared that she and some colleagues will be attending the Division for Early Childhood Conference in Florida in October, and will present about the "Getting Ready" Home Visiting initiative that has been in development. Dr. Lisa Knoche of the Nebraska Center for Research on Children, Youth, Families and Schools at UNL will also be a co-presenter. Getting Ready is a research-based program that enhances school readiness for children birth to age five, and focuses on strengthening relationships between parents and their children, as well as parents and early childhood professionals.

Next, Connie Shockley, Parent Support Coordinator at PTI (Parent Training & Information) Nebraska, shared details from having attended the “Improving Data, Improving Outcomes” Conference this week in Arlington, VA. The conference was sponsored by DaSy – the Center for Early Childhood Data Systems, and was preceded by a one-day meeting specifically for State Interagency Coordinating Council (ICC) members. Parent recruitment and involvement was discussed, as was how to engage and involve other members such as Legislative and Insurance-related representatives. Council member responsibilities, leadership and training opportunities were also discussed. DaSy has a great tool for stakeholders around data and Connie has some suggestions for the Council.

### November General Meeting Components & Adjourn

Eleanor noted four current Council vacancies that include two parents, and a Service Provider for Developmental Disabilities and for Public Health. Recruitment is underway and members were encouraged to reach out to potential applicants. Eleanor shared that a potential focus for the Council in the next year might be more strategic with intentional engagement in the community and speaking with constituents.

A question was asked about whether the Workforce Commission, headed by Dr. Susan Sarver of the Buffett Early Childhood Institute, considers professional time spent in the Early Childhood field when discussing life and work skills. While the Commission’s focus may be considered at a higher (i.e., academic) level, the work to define core competencies of quality care has become a broader focus *than a degree or time and experience in the field*. It was suggested that a Step Up To Quality presentation about child outcomes and outside measurements for child care programs would be appropriate.

November meeting elements will include continued work on the Biennial Report, a presentation of findings from a Part C/Early Development Network study, and the Part C Annual Performance Report. Karen will email the Council for additional agenda items ahead of the November 16 general meeting. While the day prior has traditionally been a full-day orientation for the Council, it was mentioned that the information may possibly be integrated within meetings throughout the year. For now the November 15<sup>th</sup> date will be kept as a placeholder for a possible orientation. The Steering Committee will meet, discuss, and inform the Council.

Council Chair, Dawn Murphy, adjourned the meeting at 2:43p.m.

**Next meeting: August 17, 2018 at the Jack J. Huck Continuing Education Center, Southeast Community College, 301 South 68<sup>th</sup> Street Place, Lincoln**

Meeting handouts:

August 17, 2018 draft agenda

May 11, 2018 draft minutes for approval

EC Professional Development / “A to Z” Snapshot of ELC Partnerships in Nebraska

Pyramid Model Evaluation Report

Draft content for the 2018 Biennial Report to the Governor

Key discussion points for the Report (need from Eleanor)

ESSA update

#### Upcoming Scheduled ECICC meeting dates:

(Unless noted, all will be at 68<sup>th</sup> & “O” St., Jack J. Huck CEC location)

- November 16, 2018

#### 2019 meeting dates:

- February 22, 2019
- May 3 – SCC at 8800 “O” Street
- August 16
- November 14 (Orientation)
- November 15