

**Draft Minutes: Nebraska Early Childhood Interagency Coordinating Council (ECICC)**  
**May 6, 2022 - 9:00a.m.**  
**SCC Jack Huck Continuing Education Center, 301 So. 68<sup>th</sup> St. Pl., Lincoln, Nebraska**

**Council members present:** Anthony, Borchner, Easter, Howard, Jara, Knust, Lester, Marinovich, Nunemaker, Robinson, Vint

**Council members excused:** Bowen, Bunnell, Freeny, Hobson, Larsen, Ottoson, Thompson, Wilson

**Also in attendance:** Council Facilitator, Eleanor Shirley; Co-Facilitator, Mary Phillips; Council Secretary, Karen Hoffman; Technical Assistants, Auman, Braddock, Brehm, Cimino, Cromer, Feser, Greedy, Johnson, Shockley and Texel; guest presenters: Shannon Mitchell-Boekstal, Hallie Duke (via zoom), Brian Wojcik

*This quarterly meeting of the Early Childhood Interagency Coordinating Council (ECICC) commenced at 9:07 a.m. Public notification of the meeting was on the Nebraska Department of Education website and in the Omaha World Herald. The Public Meetings Notice was available in hard copy form. Presentation materials may be found in this GoogleDocs folder. ([link found here](#))*

**Council Meeting Convenes**

ECICC Chair, Dr. Karla Lester, convened the meeting and members were asked to share name, role with the ECICC, and their favorite flower.

**\*Approval of minutes – February 11, 2022**

Motion made by Marinovich and seconded by Vint to approve the minutes from the February 11, 2022, meeting; roll-call vote was taken, the motion passed.

Roll call vote: 7-yes, 4-abstain, 0-no

Yes: Anthony, Knust, Lester, Marinovich, Nunemaker, Robinson, Vint

Abstain: Borchner, Easter, Howard, Jara

**\*\* Public Comment, Announcements, Upcoming Events**

ECICC Technical Assistant, Lynne Brehm, brought copies of the Annual Rooted in Relationships Report and Executive Summary, and encouraged anyone with questions to reach out to her. It was also shared that in-person registration for the Nebraska Young Child Institute, occurring in late June at the Younes Conference Center in Kearney, was full. Some ECICC members will be attending and have made arrangements either with Karen or through their own agencies.

**Part C Update**

Cole Johnson shared about the process for updating the Early Development Network logo, saying that stakeholder input has guided a decision to maintain a similar look. Two options were shown onscreen, the group was asked to vote either by scanning a QR code or going to a menti website. Once a final design is chosen, EDN resources and materials will begin being rebranded.

**Early Childhood Update**

Kim Texel, Early Childhood Educational Specialist in the Office of Early Childhood at NDE, shared a powerpoint and update about the Nebraska Tiered System of Support for Public Pre-K. This pilot program focuses on providing more and improved supports and resources from NDE to public school district Pre-K programs based on determined needs. Kim described the program's three tiers of supports and shared the timeline that begins with a question-and-answer webinar being recorded in June of 2022, and tiered supports beginning in August of 2022. The pilot will be evaluated on an ongoing basis with changes and improvements able to be made in Realtime. Kim can be reached at [kim.texel@nebraska.gov](mailto:kim.texel@nebraska.gov).

### **Preschool Development Grant (PDG) Update**

Shannon Mitchell-Boekstal, Assistant Vice President at Nebraska Children & Families Foundation, and Early Childhood/PDG Program Manager, shared a quick update of the accomplishments at the end of Year 2 of the PDG, followed by highlights from Year 3 goals. Shannon also mentioned the upcoming virtual “Conference for Families and Parents of Young Children” on Oct. 22, 2022, an event being planned for families by families. More information can be found at <https://bit.ly/familyleadership>; the group was encouraged to save the date and to reach out to Shannon if interested. Her email is [sboekstal@nebraskchildren.org](mailto:sboekstal@nebraskchildren.org).

Next, Shannon introduced Hallie Duke, strategic consultant to the Buffett Early Childhood Institute, who provided an update on the ongoing development of the Nebraska Early Childhood Strategic Plan. This dynamic plan, created by and for all Nebraskans, seeks to ensure that all children have access to quality early childhood services. It includes a vision and goals for improving the early childhood experiences of the more than 235,000 children, birth through age 8, who live in Nebraska today, with special emphasis on addressing significant disparities that exist across the state. Hallie shared the plan’s four goals of Access, Quality, Collaboration, and Alignment.

With Preschool Development Grant funding, another round of stakeholder engagement is underway. “SPEAQ Up! Nebraska” is a series of community-based conversations designed to ensure the Nebraska Early Childhood Strategic Plan adequately addresses the opportunities and needs of diverse communities and stakeholders across the state. The teams working on the strategic plan are committed to ensuring that the voices of previously unrepresented communities are included throughout the assessment and strategic planning processes. Each SPEAQ Up! Nebraska meeting is hosted by a member of the local community, who facilitates a conversation. Feedback from these conversations will inform further development of the Nebraska Early Childhood Strategic Plan. In the current efforts, a top priority is reaching people in communities across the state – including rural areas of the state, people of color, indigenous people, families of children with disabilities, and more – to ensure their perspectives and priorities are included in the 2023 Nebraska Early Childhood Strategic Plan. Hallie emphasized that ECICC members and others attending the meeting are invited to help the strategic planning team reach more Nebraskans by recruiting people from their constituencies who would be interested in helping identify strategies to increase equitable access to quality early care and education, either by participating in or by facilitating a SPEAQ Up! Nebraska meeting. (Facilitators receive training prior to the meetings, support during the meetings, and can receive a stipend for their efforts. Participants will receive a gift card.)

If you have questions about the strategic plan or are interested in becoming involved, contact Susan Sarver, Director of Workforce Planning & Development at the Buffett Early Childhood Institute ([ssarver@nebraska.edu](mailto:ssarver@nebraska.edu)) or Hallie Duke ([hallie@drdukeconsulting.com](mailto:hallie@drdukeconsulting.com)). To learn more about the strategic plan, visit [NEarlychildhoodplan.org](http://NEarlychildhoodplan.org).

### **Head Start Update**

Head Start State Collaboration Office Director, Steph Knust, shared a presentation that included 2022 Office of Head Start Priorities, plus policy updates and updates to Head Start eligibility criteria. Nebraska Covid-19 Relief Appropriations were also shared, with some spending timelines still extending through March of 2023. Steph provided links to upcoming events, a Funding Opportunity Announcement Locator, and an Individualized Professional Development Portfolio process available through Head Start. Steph can be reached at [steph.knust@nebraska.gov](mailto:steph.knust@nebraska.gov) or 531-207-9832.

### **Quality Assistive Technology Services for Working with Children with Disabilities, Ages Birth to Three**

NDE Education Program Supervisor, and Assistive Technology Specialist, Brian Wojcik, shared a power point and update about what ATP has to offer, saying ATP is more than resources, it is an education program. The

ATP Education Program's vision and focus help teams working with either Individualized Family Service Plans (IFSP) or Individualized Education Plans (IEP) build capacity that results in quality Assistive Technology (AT) services for every child/student who needs it. A slide showed different capacity types, levels, implementation stages, and outcomes. Brian shared that some webinars have been developed and information about them as well as a short-term technology loan program can be found at [at4all.com](http://at4all.com). A rental program is also in development, with recommended starter sets that schools can utilize. Two handouts were shared with the group. Brian can be reached at [brian.wojcik@nebraska.gov](mailto:brian.wojcik@nebraska.gov) or (402) 547-1340

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

Nicole Vint, CCDF Administrator, Children & Family Services, DHHS, shared a website [www.coronavirus.nebraska.gov](http://www.coronavirus.nebraska.gov) and where Child Care Stabilization Disbursements may be found. A next round of funding is in the application stage and Deloitte is the company providing assistance in reaching out to potential applicants who have yet to submit. A next round of funding will also have two rounds of disbursements. Nicole also shared about two bills passing in the Nebraska Legislature relating to early childhood: LB485 increases the federal poverty level, which will allow parents more access to the child care subsidy; LB1011 increases child care provider rates.

Regarding Covid funding DHHS has received, there has been work with partners, meeting with providers, and listening sessions. A draft plan has 19 total activities and they have met with the Governor to present it. Nicole gave kudos to ECICC Technical Assistant, and colleague, Becky Cromer, who, with her team, have been doing a great deal of work building partnerships. Providers can apply through May 9th for next round of funds. Nicole can be reached at [nicole.vint@nebraska.gov](mailto:nicole.vint@nebraska.gov).

### **Working Lunch – Legislative Updates**

Adam Feser, Policy Advisor at First Five Nebraska, and ECICC Technical Assistant, took the group to the First Five Nebraska website and, specifically, to the "Legislative Tracker" feature where he noted a number of early childhood and related highlights from the 2021 Nebraska Legislative session. He also shared about some of the carryover bills from the last session. Since it was a shorter session, Adam explained that it was challenging to get new things accomplished, even though there was funding available. Some efforts will be revived next year.

### **Governor's Biennial Report (2020-2022)**

ECICC Facilitators, Mary Phillips and Eleanor Shirley, shared an update about the 2018-2021 Governor's Biennial Report that included the group reviewing the five areas of the proposed report and providing input. The previous report was used as a template with the five key areas remaining the same: Quality, Professional Development, Standards, Data, and Collaboration & Coordination. The Appendices also highlight some programmatic information. The Council approved the Biennial Report as presented, and with revisions as were discussed, by consensus. Next steps will include revisions based on member feedback, drafting of one page summary, and development of talking points and a dissemination plan.

Eleanor can be reached at [dialogic.dimensions@gmail.com](mailto:dialogic.dimensions@gmail.com) or 402-981-1071 with questions.

### **End of meeting**

At 1:30pm quorum was lost, and the meeting ended. Discussion from the Ad Hoc Membership/Recruitment Committee will be shared again at the August meeting, as will a presentation entitled "Testing for Lead in Nebraska Schools and Daycares" from Jessica Johnson, an Environmental Specialist with the Monitoring & Compliance-Drinking Water Division of the Nebraska Department of Environment & Energy.