

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

**November 18, 2022**

**Meeting was held via zoom and located at the Nebraska Department of Education, 500 S. 84<sup>th</sup> Street, Lincoln, NE**

**9:00a.m.**

**Council members present:** Anthony, Borchert, Bunnell, Hobson, Howard, Jara, Knust, Lester, Marinovich, Nunemaker, Ottoson, Thompson, Vint, Wilson

**Council members excused:** Freeny, Robinson

**Also in attendance:** Council Facilitator, Mary Phillips; Council Secretary, Karen Hoffman; Technical Assistants Auman, Brehm, Cimino, Cromer, Greedy, Johnson, Lopez-Everett, Shockley and Texel; guest presenters: Holly Hattan-Bowers, Sami Bradley, Kelli Hauptman, Shannon Mitchell-Boekstal, Stacy Scholten.

*This quarterly meeting of the Early Childhood Interagency Coordinating Council (ECICC) commenced at 9:00 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 online and onsite at the Department of Education. Meeting Presentation materials may be found in this [GoogleDocs](#) folder.*

### **Council Meeting Convenes**

ECICC Facilitator, Mary Phillips, convened the meeting and a roll call attendance of voting members was taken to confirm quorum, followed by Mary noting that the Open Meetings Act was available in the meeting room at NDE.

### **\*Approval of minutes – August 19, 2022**

Motion made by Bunnell and seconded by Thompson to approve the minutes from the August 19, 2022, meeting; roll-call vote was taken and the motion passed.

Roll call vote: 11-yes, 2-abstain, 0-no

Yes: Anthony, Bunnell, Hobson, Howard, Jara, Knust, Lester, Marinovich, Ottoson, Thompson, Wilson

Abstain: Nunemaker, Vint

### **Election of ECICC Vice-Chair**

After confirming the agenda, it was noted that this would be ECICC Vice-Chairperson, Dr. Paula Thompson's final meeting, and a new Vice-Chair needed to be elected. A vote was taken via a Google Form, and Amber Jara was elected and thanked for her willingness. Mary commented how important it is for ICCs to have parent involvement. A GoogleForm link was put into the chat for voting members to utilize, and Amber Jara was elected. Mary welcomed Amber and also shared everyone's thanks to Paula for her commitment to the Council and serving these past years.

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

Dr. Lester asked for any public comments or announcements, and none were given.

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

Nicole Vint, CCDF Administrator with Children & Family Services at DHHS, introduced Beckie Cromer, Child Care and Development Fund Grant Coordinator with DHHS, who gave some grant and funding updates for child care providers. American Rescue Plan (ARP) Child Care Stabilization grant funding was launched in October 2021, and all of the funds have been spent. Three rounds of payments went out totaling \$37 million with an average award amount of \$20,000. Two more programs are coming: a Workforce Stipend & Loan Repayment program that is open to the child care work force who are residents of Nebraska. Individual applications will be accepted soon and Beckie provided a link to an information video found here:

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=BJ7PwbF595Y>. A second program will focus on Business Partnership Grants and work to add statewide capacity through new or existing programs, and will be a rolling application. Finally, Beckie shared that DHHS has submitted a year four planning grant, working with the lead agency, the Nebraska Children and Families Foundation (NCFF), to expand the PDG with the hope to hear about a requested \$4 million award in December. Beckie can be reached at [Beckie.cromer@nebraska.gov](mailto:Beckie.cromer@nebraska.gov).

At this point a step back occurred to allow the ECICC Technical Assistants to introduce themselves and share their roles.

### **Early Childhood Update**

Melody Hobson, Administrator at the NDE Office of Early Childhood, shared updates about both the Preschool Expansion Grants and Differentiated Monitoring of School District Early Childhood programs. She also shared that, with Federal Pandemic funds, the Office of Early Childhood was able to award funding to Educational Service Units (ESUs) for to dispense as needed within their specific regions, with the plan being they eventually provide for ongoing needs using their own funds. Finally, with CCDF dollars, they were able to increase the amounts providing to the ESUs for Early Learning Connection Coordinators, affecting ESUs 3 and 6, which have a large number of Early Childhood programs. They were also able to add a position to ESU 10 which is hoping to focus attention on cadres of Spanish-speaking staff, to be more inclusive over time of Spanish and other language needs. Melody provided the following link to the NDE Early Childhood page with information about the Rule 11 System of Support:

<https://www.education.ne.gov/oec/birth-to-age-5-programs/#1655487640207-335ce617-f5d3> Melody can be reached at [melody.hobson@nebraska.gov](mailto:melody.hobson@nebraska.gov).

### **Head Start Update**

Head Start State Collaboration Office Director, Steph Knust, shared a powerpoint with Head Start policy, funding, and monitoring updates. Head Start programs are struggling after Covid with workforce and staffing issues and getting back to pre-Pandemic numbers. There has been discussion about Head Start grant recipients needing more flexibility to look at local community needs. Steph said a memorandum was released to address those needs and that it provides some unprecedented flexibility. Nebraska programs are 89% back to their pre-pandemic numbers, and it's hopeful that they will continue to build. This compares to 77% nationwide.

Steph shared that Dr. Paula Thompson was recognized in October at the Region VII Head Start Association Leadership Conference as the Nebraska State Children's Champion for 2022. Her good work is well-known in Nebraska and regionally.

Dr. Larsen asked about advocating for funding that is at the federal level. Steph shared that FY23 budgeting is in good shape, and that there are always opportunities through the associations for advocacy, and that Steph can connect Dr. Karla. Comments were also shared about mixed delivery systems, which are often relationship-based and, often, learned of by word-of-mouth. As a data system continues to be built, there is hope that this information will be more readily available. Steph can be reached at [steph.knust@nebraska.gov](mailto:steph.knust@nebraska.gov).

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

The PDG Update was two-part and PDG Project Manager, Shannon Mitchell-Boekstal, first shared a brief update that included the recent application for the next PDG grant, a Planning Grant, had been made that will expand on work already begun. They are in the third year which ends April 29, 2023. A final year will include focus on performance evaluations to gather measurable data from PDG activities to help build a sustainability plan. Shannon also shared about the Family Conference held on October 22<sup>nd</sup> was a success. It was created for families by families and was diversely attended, and 90% of attendees reported the conference met or exceeded expectations with many participants showing interest in having future leadership. Next, Shannon introduced two additional presenters. Holly Hatton-Bowers, PhD, presented information about Nebraska Extension's 8-week CHIME (Cultivating Healthy Intentional Mindful Educators) Program which was started in

2017 and is delivered to early childhood professionals throughout Nebraska and beyond. Promising evaluation findings were shared as well as how early childhood teachers can get involved in CHIME and how people can become CHIME facilitators. Next, Kelli Hauptman, Project Director with the Center on Children, Families, and the Law at the University of Nebraska-Lincoln, provided a short overview of the Nebraska Center on Reflective Practice, the Facilitating Attuned iNteractions (FAN) model of reflective practice. and what their evaluation work is revealing thus far. A new website is about to launch and will be found at: [nebraskapdg.org](http://nebraskapdg.org) Shannon, Holly, and Kelli can be reached at the following: [sboekstal@nebraskachildren.org](mailto:sboekstal@nebraskachildren.org), [hattonb@unl.edu](mailto:hattonb@unl.edu), and [khauptman2@unl.edu](mailto:khauptman2@unl.edu) respectively.

### **Part C Update**

EDN/Part C Co-leads, Amy Bunnell and Jessica Anthony, presented the FFY 2021 IDEA Part C Annual Performance Report Data. Each State is federally required to submit the APR to the US Department of Education, Office of Special Education Programs, by Feb. 1, 2023. The ECICC Chair, Karla Lester, will sign the final APR as federally required, confirming that the ECICC has reviewed the Nebraska Part C APR for accuracy and completeness. A copy of the report will also be provided to the Governor. Amy and Jessica can be reached at the following: [amy.bunnell@nebraska.gov](mailto:amy.bunnell@nebraska.gov) and [Jessica.anthony@nebraska.gov](mailto:Jessica.anthony@nebraska.gov) respectively.

### **PDG Social-Emotional Infrastructure Update**

Assistant Vice President at Nebraska Children & Families Foundation (NCFE) and ECICC Technical Assistant, Lynne Brehm introduced two presenters from NCFE for this update detailing one of many PDG projects. Stacy Scholten, from the Rooted in Relationships team, and Sami Bradley, Associate Vice President, shared a powerpoint about a project that is building a social-emotional infrastructure for providers. Initially this project focused on building infrastructure in Omaha, however, as things have progressed, the project focus has changed to include Spanish-speaking providers in South Omaha and expanded to statewide access and capacity for professionalizing the early childhood field. These strategies include the use of the Pyramid Model, Circle of Security, and Infant Mental Health (IMH) Endorsement. Sami shared the website for the Nebraska Association for IMH: [www.neinfantmentalhealth.org](http://www.neinfantmentalhealth.org). Lynne, Stacy, and Sami can be reached at the following: [lbrehm@nebraskachildren.org](mailto:lbrehm@nebraskachildren.org), [sschlten@nebraskachildren.org](mailto:sschlten@nebraskachildren.org), and [sbradley@nebraskachildren.org](mailto:sbradley@nebraskachildren.org) respectively.

### **Governor's Biennial Report Distribution Update**

Mary Phillips reminded the group that the most recent report was a three-year report. To share with whom and how the Report has been distributed, the group was asked to enter information into a GoogleForm. Karen will compile this information and Mary will report back to the group at the February meeting. Efforts continue to share the report with the Governor's office and chairs of the Legislature. It was noted that, with the new Governor coming in January, staff changes may be a variable in Report distribution. A goal remains to meet with the new Governor and share the Report.

### **February Meeting – Length and Components**

It was noted that the next ECICC meeting on February 10, 2023, would be virtual, as decided by the Steering Committee, and members were asked for input about possible presentations.

Before adjourning, Nicole Vint congratulated Dr. Lester about her response and resulting national media coverage regarding restrictive eating by what's come to be known as a "Almond Mom" mentality. Her response called attention to a diet culture that is very harmful to everyone and, especially, to young people.

### **Adjournment**

The meeting was adjourned at 11:43am