

## **Draft Minutes: Nebraska Early Childhood Interagency Coordinating Council (ECICC) – May 2, 2025**

The meeting was held in person at the SCC Jack Huck Continuing Education Center, Lincoln, NE.

Council members present: Anthony, Bunnell, Hobson, Knust, Marinovich, Meadors, Packard, Ray, Robinson, Vint.  
Council members excused: Borcher, Jara

Also in attendance: Council Facilitator, Phillips; Council Secretary, Hoffman; Technical Assistants: Auman, Bradley, Clark, Johnson, Shockley

*This quarterly meeting of the Early Childhood Interagency Coordinating Council (ECICC) commenced at 9:09 a.m. Public notification of the meeting was on the Nebraska Department of Education website and in the Omaha World Herald. The Public Meetings Act was available online and onsite in the meeting room. Presentation materials may be found in this [GoogleDocs folder](#).*

### **Council Meeting Convenes**

Acting ECICC Chairperson, Nora Robinson, called the meeting to order and led introductions that included attendees sharing something planned for the summer. The Public Meetings Act was noted as being available in the meeting room.

### **Approval of minutes – February 14, 2025**

Motion made and seconded respectively by Marinovich and Bunnell to approve the minutes from the February 14, 2025, meeting; roll-call vote was taken, the motion passed.

Roll call vote: 7-yes, 3-abstain

Yes: Bunnell, Hobson, Knust, Marinovich, Ray, Robinson, Vint

Abstain: Nunemaker, Meadors, Packard

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

Amy Bunnell shared that the Part C Application has been posted on the NDE website with public comment occurring through May 17<sup>th</sup>, after which it will be sent to the Federal Office. She is awaiting funding award information and will have Karen send it out via email once it is received.

Nora Robinson shared about a June event co-hosted by High Planes Region and the Panhandle in Ogallala featuring Dr. Alexa Yunes-Koch.

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

Nicole Vint, CCDF Administrator with Children & Family Services at DHHS, shared that CCDF regulation updates are still in process and are open for some changes. They will go through the legal process and await feedback. LiveScan fingerprint machines were purchased and will soon have a machine at the Nebraska State Office Building. It will be open three day per week with a number of available slots per day. Nicole can be reached at [nicole.vint@nebraska.gov](mailto:nicole.vint@nebraska.gov).

### **Early Childhood (EC) Update**

Melody Hobson, Administrator for the NDE Office of Early Childhood, shared a powerpoint update about Rule 11 which is up for review. Language is being finalized for eventual sharing with the State Board at its June meeting. She shared the timeline and anticipated process, and details about the three main policy issues. Discussion was had about options and parameters for having Para Educators working in Special Education and that this would fit within the waiver process. Melody can be reached at [melody.hobson@nebraska.gov](mailto:melody.hobson@nebraska.gov).

### **Head Start (HS) Update**

Steph Knust, State Head Start Director, shared a powerpoint with several updates about both Nebraska and national Head Start efforts, including some “late, breaking news” items, including some current State Collaboration office work. Resources are being updated and a resource page was shown with a number of updated links. Head Start will be celebrating its 60<sup>th</sup> birthday in May and several things are being planned around the state. Steph can be reached at [steph.knust@nebraska.gov](mailto:steph.knust@nebraska.gov).

### **Legislative Update**

First Five Nebraska Policy Advisory and ECICC Technical Assistant, Mitch Clark, shared a powerpoint with several updates about Legislative bills that are relevant to the ECICC. A number of social services, child care entitlement, and CCDF funding items are being closely monitored. Mitch provided a link to a Legislative Watch List where specific bills and their progress can be reviewed: <https://www.firstfivebraska.org/legislativewatchlist/>. Mitch can be reached at [mclark@firstfivebraska.org](mailto:mclark@firstfivebraska.org).

### **Governor’s Biennial Report Update**

ECICC Facilitator Mary Phillips shared that she met with the Governor's staff on April 16th to present the Biennial Report and Summary. She made an inquiry about when the Council might look for some new appointments to be made. Following the meeting Mary handed out report copies to the Education Committee Senators. The Council and technical assistants will plan to track to whom the report is shared. Mary can be reached at [dphil2936@gmail.com](mailto:dphil2936@gmail.com).

### **Strategic Planning Engagement**

Jessica Javorsky, NDE Strategic Initiatives Grant Specialist, shared about current activities to gather input for a five-year strategic plan at the Department. Focus groups are occurring with the goal of results and draft recommendations being taken to the State Board in September/October for approval in December. Jessica led the group in a SWOT (strengths, weaknesses, opportunities, threats) analysis exercise for Early Childhood efforts across the state. It was noted that a strength in Nebraska is the ECICC being comprised of system-wide members. Next steps include additional focus groups and a QR code was shown that will list where they are being held. Jessica hopes to return to a future ECICC meeting to continue hearing its voice. Jessica can be reached at [jessica.javorsky@nebraska.gov](mailto:jessica.javorsky@nebraska.gov).

### **August 15th meeting & components**

The August 15<sup>th</sup> meeting will be in-person and held at the NDE, 500 S. 84<sup>th</sup> Street. More information to come. Members are encouraged to send agenda suggestions to Karen to share with the Steering Committee at its July 21<sup>st</sup> meeting.

Gratitude was shown to Nora Robinson for her work and leadership on the ECICC upon her retirement. She shared some positive thoughts and encouraged the members to hang on and continue doing the good work they are doing.

The meeting adjourned with consensus at 11:34am.