

Draft Minutes: Early Childhood Interagency Coordinating Council
May 3, 2019, SCC Main Campus, 8800 "O" Street, Room V103-104, Lincoln, NE
9:00a.m. – 3:00p.m.

Council Members Present: Susan Adams, Laura Arp, Mary Barry-Magsamen, Sue Borchert, Amy Bunnell, Julie Docter, Gwen Easter, Jamie Hazlett, Melody Hobson, Stephanie Knust, Krynne Larsen, Karla Lester, Joan Luebbers, Cathy Mohnike, Dawn Murphy, Mary Phillips, Suzanne Schneider, Paula Thompson, Nicole Vint, Allison Wilson

Council Members Absent: Carol Bowen, Janelle Butler, Allison Cunningham, Sen. Kolowski, Brenda McNiff, Melissa Timmerman

Also in Attendance: Council Facilitator, Eleanor Shirley; Council Staff, Karen Hoffman; Technical Assistants, Amanda Adams, Jennifer Auman, Amy Bornemeier, Cole Johnson, Connie Shockley, Kim Texel, Staci Zuerlein; presenters, Ben Baumfalk, Kathleen Gallagher, Greg Welch; Karen Haney, new NDE Special Education Preschool staff member

Council Meeting Convenes/November Minutes Approval

Chairperson, Dawn Murphy, called the meeting to order at 9:20a.m. ECICC Facilitator, Eleanor Shirley, gave welcome to the group. The Open Meetings Act was noted in the back of the room, and that the meeting was being recorded for the purposes of accurate recording of minutes. Eleanor mentioned a memo that was sent to the Council following the February meeting date. Since quorum had not been met in February, there were no meeting minutes. Dawn lead the group in introductions, and welcome was given to Karen Haney, Preschool Program Specialist with the NDE Special Education Office. The group briefly reviewed the November minutes and there was no discussion. Motion made by Phillips and seconded by Borchert to approve them; roll call vote was taken and the motion passed.

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

Yes: Borchert, Bunnell, Docter, Hazlett, Hobson, Knust, Larsen, Lester, Luebbers, Mohnike, Murphy, Phillips, Schneider, Thompson, Vint, Wilson

Today's Agenda

The meeting agenda was reviewed and Ben Baumfalk was added to present alongside Greg Welch. Ben will also present the Legislative update in Becky Veak's place. There were no other changes and the agenda was approved by consensus.

Public Comment

Dawn Murphy asked if there was any Public Comment or announcements for the good of the group. There were none. Eleanor mentioned the recent weather issues in Nebraska, and invited the Council to take a moment to remember the many people who have, and continue, to be affected across the state.

PDG – Preschool Development Grant Update

Nicole Vint, DHHS Administrator for Children & Family Services, began by sharing a brief overview about the PDG Grant including a powerpoint entitled "Preschool Development Grant Birth Through Five" that detailed the journey through the process of application and following its award. Nebraska's total funding for the project is \$5,318,368, and there is a \$1.7 million match. It began January 1, ends December 31, 2019, and NDHHS is the Lead Agency with NCFE (Nebraska Children and Families Foundation) providing

Project Management. Melody Hobson, NDE Office of Early Childhood Administrator, shared some details about activities and initiatives that will occur within the grant, and introduced Dr. Kathleen Gallagher, Director of Research and Evaluation at the Buffett Early Childhood Institute.

Dr. Gallagher shared a powerpoint entitled “Nebraska Preschool Development Grant: Elevating Nebraska’s Early Care and Education.” The vision for this one-year grant is to create a system where community leaders are working together to provide opportunities for high-quality early care and education starting at birth, and in coordination with the full suite of health, mental health, and social service supports that families may need. She shared that Nebraska’s goal in the Preschool Development Grant is aligning state systems to equip local communities to deliver services, resulting in parents and families choosing options that support their child’s healthy development. BOSR (the Bureau of Sociological Research at UNL) is assisting with perhaps the largest family survey in the history of the state that included 90,000 surveys in English/Spanish being sent out to both rural and high population areas in Nebraska asking about the full suite of Early Childhood opportunities. Summer focus groups will identify under-represented groups. The Council was then taken through the Needs Assessment, Strategic Plan, and Program Performance Evaluations for the Grant.

Dr. Gallagher commented that this work could not be done without collaboration of many partners, some of whom already have their own initiatives in place. Input is also being sought from across the state in which groups will express thoughts about what does and does not work.

Regarding questions, the Council was encouraged to contact Nicole Vint about the grant (nicole.vint@nebraska.gov), and Dr. Gallagher about the needs assessment (kgallagher@nebraska.edu).

CCDF update (Child Care & Development Funds)

Nicole Vint provided an update about the Health and Safety requirement, which includes a two-phase approach to getting state childcare providers who utilize CCDF funds into compliance. She reviewed the 12 health and safety topics that CCDF providers must be trained in. Communications have been sent out to the field and Amanda Adams is managing responses and questions. The federal deadline is August of this year with compliance required by September 30.

Nicole also shared about an online, interactive training being developed with a final completion date of August 31, 2019. It will be free, cover many topics, and help individuals meet the Phase II requirements. A one-time, pre-service orientation is required by all new staff. A new training is also being developed for license-exempt providers. It was acknowledged that the Health Department also requires health and safety training which presently means some duplication.

A bill currently being discussed, LB 460, would give the State Patrol authority to assist with obtaining required fingerprinting for CCDF-funded provider compliance. The bill also includes changes regarding transitional childcare and the “Cliff Affect,” and proposes to remove the time limit for eligibility to help providers meet compliance. It is scheduled to go to the Governor’s office next week.

Finally, in response to the recent flooding in Nebraska, Nicole shared about a recently created Emergency Disaster Recovery Grant that can award licensed in-home or center-based providers from five to ten thousand dollars to help get them resume their businesses. The Disaster SNAP Program is for those affected by flooding, and three rounds between March 29th and April 25th at different sites around Nebraska yielded 1500 applications.

***Governor's Biennial Report**

Eleanor Shirley led the group in an activity seeking final Council input for the 2018 Biennial Report to the Governor. The group discussed and provided input to prepared questions. The goal is for this report to be actively used by Council members to advance topics around Early Childhood themes and systems in Nebraska. Eleanor, again, thanked Mike Medwick of First Five Nebraska for doing the layout of the report. Table input was collected by Eleanor.

Next steps, upon Council approval of the Report, will include a public hearing that will be scheduled. This is required by statute and will include a 30-day public notice. The date as well as the Report will be uploaded to both the ECICC and NDE websites.

Upon request from Dawn for a motion to approve the 2018 Biennial Report to the Governor, it was moved by Arp, seconded by Luebbers; a roll call vote was taken.

Roll call vote: 18-yes, 1-abstain, 0-no; the motion passed.

Yes: Adams, Arp, Barry-Magsamen Borchert, Bunnell, Docter, Hazlett, Hobson, Larsen, Lester, Luebbers, Mohnike, Murphy, Phillips, Schneider, Thompson, Vint, Wilson

Abstain: Easter; No: 0

Working lunch presentation: Member Development

Shauna Crane, Associate Director of TAESE (Technical Assistance for Excellence in Special Education), provided a Member Development presentation via Zoom from her office in Utah. Following an introduction and background about her work, Shauna took the Council through an informative powerpoint that included both history and information about the laws that assist state ICCs' (Interagency Coordinating Councils) work, and the roles that members have and how they are to go about fulfilling them. Shauna said that each state ICC should establish priorities with a focus on the greatest needs, followed by advice to the Lead Agency Director. A possibility could be providing a one-page summary of advice and recommendations made during each ICC meeting. Authority regarding policy and procedures ultimately lies with the Lead Agency, and Shauna reminded the group that these responsibilities are great, and include satisfying both state and federal requirements.

Update: Market Rate Survey & ECIDS (Early Childhood Integrated Data System)

Greg Welch, Associate Director of Research and Evaluation at the Buffett Early Childhood Institute, shared a powerpoint regarding the Market Rate Survey, a federally required survey of CCDF-funded childcare provider rates. The survey occurs every two years and looks at provider types, geographic setting, age groups, and quality of care. The most recent survey, all by mail, was conducted by BOSR using a three-phase approach, and utilized a listing of those licensed as of January 7, 2019. Greg shared a chart with a breakdown of respondents by county. A future goal is to involve ECIDS with the survey.

Next, Ben Baumfalk, Policy Director at First Five Nebraska, gave an update about ECIDS (Early Childhood Integrated Data System) that includes collaboration with a number of entities and individuals, with a goal to determine how to best use data to improve systems of care for Nebraska's children. Ben discussed the current status of system development and some other opportunities that have arisen. The group is planning to reconvene soon and Ben encouraged interested people to contact him to be involved.

Ben also spoke about the ECDataWorks grant, which is funded by the W.K. Kellogg Foundation. The goal of the grant is to create a feasibility plan for a communication assessment tool. Many states, including

Nebraska, are moving towards an integrated data system. He shared a video, "Bridging the Divide: A New Renaissance in Early Childhood Data Use," about a recent ECDataWorks meeting held in Philadelphia that he and NDE Chief Information Officer, Dean Folkers, attended.
(gwelch@nebraska.edu & bbaumfalk@firstfivenebraska.org)

Legislative Update

Next, Ben provided a handout with an update for the Council on Legislative issues and bills that relate to Early Childhood interests in Nebraska.

At this point in the meeting Eleanor reminded the group of its overall role and provided some direction regarding communicating personal-held beliefs as a private citizen, versus those of the ECICC as a whole. Members may share on behalf of the Council only when the Council approves and appoints a member to do so.

Part C Updates

Amy Bunnell, NDE Early Childhood Special Education Supervisor and Early Development Network Coordinator, shared about the Annual Part C Application for FFY19 federal funds, saying the application was due May 23, 2019 and once awarded, will provide funds from July 1, 2019, through June 30, 2020. Nebraska hopes to receive approximately \$2.9 million for the implementation of state early intervention systems. A powerpoint included information about where and how these funds will be used, and Amy pointed out that one of the stated assurances includes the operation of the ECICC and its related expenses. A federal formula based on child count dictates the amount that states receive; Nebraska will know by July 1st about these awarded funds.

Early Childhood Updates

Melody Hobson shared this update, stating that the budget is yet to be determined for this legislative session. Once decided, her office will know what state aid will be, as will School Districts who have also applied for aid.

Melody also mentioned Rule 11, which comes out of the Office of Early Childhood. The Rule is regarding regulations for the approval of prekindergarten programs that are established by school boards or Educational Service Units, and for the Issuance of Early Childhood Education grants. The current revisions include clarifying language around home visitor requirements to ensure they mesh with what Head Start and Sixpence require, and include a waiver process for school districts who are unable to hire a certified teacher. Doing this provides some flexibility to add to a pool of qualified Early Childhood educators with a teaching certificate. A public hearing will be held at 10:00 a.m. on Wednesday, May 22, 2019, in the NDE State Board Room, 6th floor of the State Office Building. Melody will have Council Secretary, Karen Hoffman, email the draft to the Council, who was encouraged to review and provide feedback to Melody.
(melody.hobson@nebraska.gov)

Comments were shared about the possible negative impacts on Early Childhood private sector businesses, and the importance of working with both districts and the private sector to keep quality child care in our communities.

Head Start Update

Joan Luebbers, State Head Start Director, shared a recently updated public awareness brochure, offering additional copies if members would like more to hand out. Joan also shared a letter that went out to Superintendents regarding new requirements in the ESSA (Every Student Succeeds Act) for Title I programs.

School Districts that receive Title I funds must develop agreements with Head Start and, if feasible, with childcare entities in their areas, to provide a smooth transition from Preschool to Kindergarten. Outreach is occurring ahead of time to engage parents and help promote family engagement, with the hope of making transition from one setting to another easier for children.

Steph Knust, Chair of the Head Start State Association, shared some information about Head Start updated performance standards and the extended duration requirement, which refers to the lengthening of services that Head Start offers individual children and their families. In many cases, additional funding and staffing were needed to meet this requirement and a public comment period is underway through May 28, after which comments will be reviewed by the Office of Head Start and followed by an updated policy. Nebraska Head Start is compiling a body of comments and supports decisions being made at the local level and guided by a community assessment. It also supports further research within the Head Start community around duration.

August Meeting Components

Eleanor Shirley requested suggestions for the August 16 agenda. Input was given and will be considered by the Steering Committee at its next meeting on July 22.

Other/Adjourn - Chairperson, Dawn Murphy closed the meeting at 2:45pm.

Next Meeting: August 16, 2019, at SCC Jack J. Huck Continuing Education Center, Lincoln, NE

2019 ECICC meeting dates:

- August 16 – Jack J. Huck Continuing Ed Center
- November 15 – Jack J. Huck Continuing Ed Center

2020 ECICC meeting dates: all at Jack Huck CE Center

- February 21, May 1, August 21, November 13

2021 ECICC meeting dates:

- February 19, May 7, August 20, November 19

**Council vote needed*

*** Public Comment Invited*

****Lunch is pre-ordered and limited to Council members, presenters, personnel and technical assistants, and agency support staff who have been identified prior to the meeting.*