

**Approved Minutes: Early Childhood Interagency Coordinating Council
August 16, 2019, SCC Jack Huck Continuing Education Center, Lincoln, NE
9:00a.m. – 3:00p.m.**

Council Members Present: Susan Borchner, Amy Bunnell, Allison Cunningham, Julie Docter, Gwen Easter, Karen Haney, Melody Hobson, Steph Knust, Joan Luebbers, Teresa Macias, Brenda McNiff, Cathy Mohnike, Dawn Murphy, Mary Phillips, Suzanne Schneider, Paula Thompson, Nicole Vint, Brittnei Waters

Council Members Absent: Laura Arp, Mary Barry-Magsamen, Carol Bowen, Janelle Butler, Jamie Hazlett, Sen. Kolowski, Krynne Larsen, Karla Lester, Melissa Timmerman, Allison Wilson

Also in Attendance: Council Facilitator, Eleanor Shirley; Council Staff, Karen Hoffman; Technical Assistants, Amy Bornemeier, Lynne Brehm, Lauri Cimino, Pat Frost, Cole Johnson, Connie Shockley, Kim Texel, Staci Zuerlein; guests &/or presenters, Kathleen Gallagher, Susan Sarver, Amy Mart, & Greg Welch from the Buffett Early Childhood Institute, Mindy Wall from DHHS, Margaret Buck from Council member, Sen. Kolowski's office, Ben Baumfalk from First Five Nebraska.

Council Meeting Convenes/May Minutes Approval

Facilitator, Eleanor Shirley welcomed the group by inviting introductions around the room. New parent representatives, Teresa Macias and Brittnei Waters were welcomed. The Open Meetings Act was noted in the back of the room. Chairperson Dawn Murphy formally called the meeting to order at 9:13a.m. The group briefly reviewed the May minutes and there was no discussion. Motion made by Phillips and seconded by Borchner to approve them; roll call vote was taken.

Roll call vote: 14-yes, 4-abstain, 0-no; the motion passed.

Yes: Bunnell, Cunningham, Docter, Easter, Haney, Hobson, Knust, Luebbers, Mohnike, Murphy, Phillips, Schneider, Thomson, Vint

Abstain: Borchner, Macias, McNiff, Wilson

Today's Agenda

The meeting agenda was reviewed. There were no 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.

PDG – Preschool Development Grant Update

The website for the grant is www.nebraskapdg.com. Nebraska's goal for the grant is for families to have quality early childhood options, supported by strong community leadership and a well-aligned state system. The majority of activities have to do with a large, statewide needs assessment and subsequent strategic plan to help guide the preparation of early childhood services across the state. The ECICC, as the advisory entity for state agencies and for the Governor, will receive updates and provide final approval of the strategic plan before it is submitted. As such, two motions were made by Melody:

It was moved that the ECICC establish a time-limited task force to review recommendations for approval and submission of the strategic plan to the federal department of Health and Human Services per grant requirements. The task force would include four Steering Committee members, four members of the Council at large, additional members of the Preschool Development Leadership team, and others as needed. The motion was seconded by Amy Bunnell; a roll call vote was taken and the motion passed.

Roll call vote: 18-yes, 0-abstain, 0-no Yes: Borcher, Bunnell, Cunningham, Docter, Easter, Haney, Hobson, Knust, Luebbers, Macias, McNiff, Mohnike, Murphy, Phillips, Schneider, Thompson, Vint, Waters

A second motion was made by Melody that the Council give authority to the Council Chair to approve submission of the Strategic Plan based on the recommendations of the task force. Sue Borcher seconded the motion; a roll call vote was taken and the motion passed.

Roll call vote: 18-yes, 0-abstain, 0-no Yes: Borcher, Bunnell, Cunningham, Docter, Easter, Haney, Hobson, Knust, Luebbers, Macias, McNiff, Mohnike, Murphy, Phillips, Schneider, Thompson, Vint, Waters

Next Nicole Vint introduced Susan Sarver, Kathleen Gallagher, and Amy Marr from the Buffett Early Childhood Institute, which has contracted to provide grant assistance with a Needs Assessment, Strategic Planning Process, and a Program Performance Evaluation. In this largest statewide assessment that's ever occurred in Nebraska, input is being gathered from families regarding their needs including barriers and challenges they face related to childcare. Existing, statewide reports are being referenced, and various surveys being disseminated to families, program leadership, teachers/caregivers/Home Visitors, and key informants. Some preliminary data was shared that included a discussion about vulnerable populations. When reviewing an on-screen list and asked what "vulnerable" means to them, group input included access to medical services, and maternal depression/family mental health. First Five Nebraska provided some criteria and percentages for vulnerable populations, sharing some preliminary results from family responses. The survey, which asks families about where they are getting care, and providers about what type of care they provide, is being distributed through the end of August.

The needs assessment, which reviews availability, types of care, and access of early childcare services, asks families for input about their provider and what is important to them. The top four answers included a warm and kind staff, cleanliness of the facility, exercise or physical activity, and healthy and nutritious food. A comment and recommendation was shared that the strategic plan should include the point that parents need education about what "quality care" is.

Kate Gallagher shared an update about the required Program Performance Evaluation part of the grant. The evaluation asks how the grant is helping with the review and better alignment of state systems. Statewide response has been favorable and is being helped by use of ESUs across the state, as they are large and well established in the regions.

Rooted in Relationships (RR) Evaluation Report

ECICC technical assistant, Lynn Brehm, and Rosie Zweiback, lead evaluator from UNMC, shared some history about the Rooted in Relationships program, an initiative that partners with communities to implement evidence based practices that enhance the social-emotional development of children, birth through age 8. The report included four years of data. The Pyramid Model for Promoting the Social and Emotional Development of Infants and Young Children provides a tiered intervention framework of evidence-based interventions for promoting the social, emotional, and behavioral development of young children. A plan was developed and presented to the Buffett Institute, with subsequent funding provided. Communities that have been identified as having little or no resources are asked to convene their cross-systems stakeholders to determine needs and implement the Pyramid Model. Some strategies include parent engagement, social emotional screeners, promoting of high quality childcare, and increasing community capacity. Outreach occurs following a review of community data and a determination that the program would be beneficial. Funding and time commitment is also considered, since a three-year timeframe is required. Providers are reporting a significant increase in their skills as a result of participation in RR. Coaches are also providing "reflective consultation." Rosie commented that "veteran" providers in the childcare communities especially appreciate the coaching and mentoring that occurs with RR. Many helpful videos can be found at the website – www.rootedinrelationships.org.

Pritzker Grant

Ben Baumfalk with First Five Nebraska, a policy agency that works specifically with Early Childhood, shared this update. The Pritzker Children's Initiative awarded Planning Grants under its "Prenatal-to-Age Three State Grant Competition" to Nebraska, along with 9 other states and the District of Columbia. Recipients were given \$100,000 to develop a PN-3, or Prenatal-to-Age Three, statewide collaborative, policy agenda, and implementation plan to expand access for infants, toddlers and their families to one or more of the following: 1) essential health, development and social emotional support services, and 2) affordable, high quality child care for infants and toddlers. Work is underway on Nebraska's plan, and next steps will be to create a menu of potential policy initiatives and then estimate the impacts they will have on grant goals. Statewide feedback is needed, and must be completed by January 15, 2020, after which applications will be submitted for the Implementation funding.

CCDF update

Nicole Vint shared a recap about some changes that stemming from the reauthorization to the CCDBG (Child Care and Development Block Grant) in 2014. This grant is the primary Federal funding source devoted to providing low-income families that are working or participating in education and training with help paying for child care and improving the quality of care for all children. She also shared about:

- Health and Safety requirements for those entities receiving childcare subsidies, including preservice orientation training called Prepare to Care and pediatric CPR requirements;
- Mandatory fingerprinting update - the Office of Public Health will be distributing a letter regarding this soon;

Nicole mentioned the 2019 Market Rate Survey, to be covered later in the meeting by Greg Welch. The survey is required by state law every odd year, and is broken down by age of the child, license status, and accredited providers.

A couple positive developments include passage of LB460, which authorizes DHHS to require FBI fingerprint and background checks for all licensed child care providers, staff, and adult household members in family child care home settings. LB460 also has a component that is designed to help meet a family's financial needs with a graduated pay increase. This will go into affect Sept. 1st; once a family has met eligibility, if income level increases, families can still be eligible the remainder of their eligibility period up to 85% State Median Income. At redetermination, families can remain eligible if their income remains under 185% Federal Poverty Level. The time limit of this was removed with LB460.

Following this update, kudos were given to Nicole for her steadfast work on these many policies.

Working lunch: Member Terms and State Interagency Coordinating Council meeting recap

Eleanor shared that several Council members' first terms will be ending 9/30/19, and the process for requesting reappointment for a second term and notifying the Governor's office. It was agreed that those interested would email the Council secretary, who will compile the responses and send them to the Governor's assistant.

Council Chair, Dawn Murphy, Co-Chair, Mary Phillips, Technical Assistant, Connie Shockley, and Facilitator, Eleanor Shirley, all travelled to Washington D.C. in July. The State Interagency Coordinating Council (SICC) had a one-day meeting, followed by the Office of Special Education Programs (OSEP) annual conference. Gratitude was expressed to Amy Bunnell and Julie Docter for providing the funding for the trip. The travelers felt connecting with members of other state ICCs was very valuable, providing a national context, and an opportunity to hear about other ICCs' activities. Discussions included parent engagement, recruitment-orientation-retention, working relationships, resources, and the importance of an Acronyms listing. Copies of both the Nebraska ECICC Biennial Report to the Governor and the one-page summary report were taken and shared, and were very well-received.

They shared that many states have issues with Child Find, which covers birth to age 21, and is the legal requirement that schools find all children who have disabilities and who may be entitled to special education services.

A tool was shared that has been developed by the DaSy Center (The Center for IDEA Early Childhood Data Systems). The “Child Find Funnel Chart” tool is an Excel template for displaying data about infants and toddlers at each step of the Part C process, from referral through exit, for a set of infants and toddlers referred within a specific time span. The purpose is to make sure children are served and fewer are lost as they move through the process. The tool can be found at: <https://dasycenter.org/part-c-child-find-funnel-chart-tool/>

Governor’s Report next steps

Eleanor distributed some talking points to each table and time was given for discussion before each table reported out their thoughts. Comments included: the one-page summary and talking points are well-liked; would be especially helpful to new Council members and people looking at things for the first time; may be helpful in recruiting new members and engaging the public; suggested adding some information as possible assistance in completing the Governor’s application, as it is thought to be fairly rigorous.

Eleanor encouraged Council members and technical assistants to get started sharing the Summary and/or the entire Report. She urged the Council to find opportunities to engage their respective constituents in becoming better informed regarding Nebraska’s early childhood landscape and scope of programs and services, to recruit new members, and serve as a resource to the wider community. Some additional suggestions of where to share the report was with regional and state parent organizations, and with community action agencies. In November, the group will be asked to report out about whom they talked with and where they distributed this information.

Market Rate Survey

Kathleen Gallagher, Elizabeth Svoboda, and Greg Welch, from the Buffett Early Child Institute this update, including a quick overview and background. The goal is to provide DHHS information to use for setting the reimbursement. Data collection was done through UNL BOSR (Bureau of Sociological Research) and through a three-phase data collection process, their overall return rate was 53% or 1695 providers, broken down by age, type of care, and the mode of charge for care. They are finding that trends are consistent, and the report will be available on the DHHS website. The Council was encouraged to contact Greg or Nicole with any questions.

ECIDS – Early Childhood Integrated Data System

Ben Baumfalk shared about the “E-KIDS” implementation study that was included in the PDG Needs Assessment. Data systems are not typically structured to share information. From a policy and evaluation/improvement standpoint, it is challenging to link information together and answer important questions. There is a need to integrate the data. The ECICC’s Report to the Governor recommended support of the integration of data from multiple Early Childhood (EC) data systems to create meaningful tools to better inform EC systems, services & policies in NE. Ben shared a slide with PDG key definitions and indicators. There is currently an implementation study underway.

McKinney-Vento Homeless Assistance Act

ECICC Technical Assistant Cathy Mohnike shared a powerpoint with the group. The McKinney–Vento Homeless Assistance Act of 1987 is a United States federal law that ensures educational rights and protections for children and youth experiencing homelessness. Every state must have a McKinney-Vento liaison. The focus of Cathy’s presentation was on preschool and early childhood education. Some facts included: the age a child is most likely to be in a HUD shelter is infancy; national data from 2016 included that one in 19 children experienced homelessness. Eligibility includes children and youth who lack a fixed, regular, or adequate nighttime residence: “fixed” meaning a house or apartment but not a car or tent; “regular” meaning it is a place the child or youth can go every night; “adequate” being not only meeting the physical needs of the child or youth, but the psychological needs, as well. A slide was shared that listed a number of variables. A question was asked about how parents hear about McKinney-Vento? Cathy shared that the school, by law, is to have information posted for the public to access. Regarding transportation, if requested by the parent, guardian, or liaison, it is the responsibility of the local educational agency (LEA) to arrange transportation to the school of origin. Another fact was that a lack of a high school diploma or GED means a person is 346% more likely to become a homeless young adult.

A listing of statewide McKinney Vento homeless liaisons for all the districts can be found at this link: <https://www.education.ne.gov/federalprograms/title-vii-b/>. Cathy encouraged the group to reach out to their respective liaisons. The ultimate goal is to break the cycle of homelessness. Cathy Mohnike can be reached at 402-471-1419; cathy.mohnike@nebraska.gov. Nicole Vint mentioned that DHHS is adding “homeless” as one of the reasons for three months of paid childcare. This was well-received.

Part C Updates

In the interest of time, Amy Bunnell stated that their powerpoint would be made available on the ECICC’s GoogleDrive. Two brief announcements were made: the May application has been submitted and was approved which involved IDEA funding for the period of 7/1/19 to 6/30/20. In addition, following a February review by the Federal government of Nebraska’s Part C Annual Performance report, it was determined that Nebraska met requirements for Part C services.

Head Start Update

Joan Luebbers shared a brief powerpoint and resource page with the group. Head Start programs promote school readiness of children ages birth to five from low-income families by supporting the development of the whole child. She shared the news that Congress has proposed an increase in funding for fiscal year 2020 by more than \$1.5 billion, which increased funding for a number of Head Start and Early Head Start programs.

Steph Knust followed and shared about Head Start Service Duration Requirement, saying there was no announcement from the Office of Head Start about proposed changes. Comments and considerations are still being reviewed. This addresses Head Start hours of service during the school day, and what best meets a community’s needs. Information about the Notice of Proposed Rule Making (NPRM) can be found at the following web address: <https://www.federalregister.gov/documents/2019/03/26/2019-05363/head-start-service-duration-requirements>

Finally, Dawn Murphy mentioned that Santee Sioux Head Start received a grant and will now be offering Early Head Start, which includes infants - two year-olds. They are fully enrolled with a wait list.

November Meeting Components were discussed including the following:

- The group was reminded to communicate with Karen about renewing an appointment for a second term;
- Reminder to plan on sharing who the Governor’s Report summary has been shared with;
- Let Karen know if interested in serving on the Task Force for PDG strategic plan. This is the biggest needs assessment Nebraska has ever done.

Other/Adjourn

Chairperson, Dawn Murphy, asked for a motion to adjourn. It was moved and seconded respectively by Gwen Easter and Joan Luebbers; the meeting was adjourned at 2:52pm, after a special note and thanks being given to Dawn Murphy for her role as Chair and her time on the ECICC. Her second term ends 9/30/19.

Next meeting date: November 15, 2019, at SCC Jack J. Huck Continuing Education Center, Lincoln, NE

2020 ECICC meeting dates: all at Jack Huck Center - February 28, May 1, August 21, November 13

**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.*