

Delaware Early Childhood Council

Meeting Notes

December 17, 2010

DelDOT Building, Dover, DE

Attending Members: Jeff Benatti, Cheryl Clendaniel, Debbie Gottschalk, Paul Harrell, April Hill-Addison, Beth Inter, Julie Johnson, MaryKate McLaughlin, Dan Rich, Doug Tynan

Absent Members: Carlina Hall, Stephanie Johnson, Mary Gavin, Tony Marchio, Terri Murphy, Leslie Newman, Terry Schooley, Connie Bond Stuart, Michelle Taylor

Attending Ex Officio: Martha Buell, Karen DeRasmo, Ed Freel, Jim Lesko, Ann Wick

Others Attending: Janet Carter, Helen Arthur, Sherlynn Aurelio, Bill Carl, Janet Cornwell, Jim Donahue, Rosanne Griff-Cabelli, Rena Hallam, Leah Jones, Barbara McCaffery, Mary Moor, Chad Robinson, Debbie Taylor, Janet Umble, Kathy Wilson, Maryann Younger

1. Review and approval of 2011 work plan – Action Item

A proposed 2011 work plan was presented to the Council by the Chair. Following discussion, the ECC approved the work plan. *[Approved Work Plan Attached]*

2. Report from the first meeting of the Higher Education Committee

The Higher Education Committee met for the first time on December 15, 2010. The Higher Education Committee will focus on the objectives outlined in the ECC's application - "by 2014, early childhood higher education degree programs, both 2 year and 4 year programs will be fully aligned to the Delaware Early Childhood Learning Foundations and the Delaware Competencies for Early Childhood Professionals." Specifically, the Higher Education Sub-committee will make a recommendation to the P20 Council that the institutions of higher education agree to: 1) assess courses for current level of alignment; 2) each Higher Education Institution will establish a plan to bring early childhood courses into alignment with Delaware standards; and 3) assess implementation of their plans.

3. Professional Development Committee work plan for 2011

Beth Inter, Chair of Professional Development Committee, presented the Committee's work plan. The 2011 activities include:

- 1) Review of the information provided by the quality assured professional development system at the Institute for Excellence in Early Childhood regarding the availability, scope and utilization of professional development offerings
- 2) Review participant evaluation data and sector assessment data provided by the Institute for Excellence in Early Childhood
- 3) Make recommendations on the needs for professional development content and delivery for 2012

- 4) Make recommendations to the ECC for the scope of the workforce and compensation analysis

4. Sharing of DECEL report

Janet Umble shared a memo from the Delaware Coalition for Early Learning with the ECC. DECEL is pleased with the level of alignment between the goals of the ECC and those of the DECEL. DECEL strives to represent the child care provider community's interests.

5. Sharing of DHSS proposed regulation change

Given the discussions related to the proposed changes to the child care subsidy program's regulations, the ECC invited the Department of Health and Social Services (DHSS) to provide information to the ECC. Debbie Gottschalk, ECC member representing DHSS, explained the issues leading to the proposed changes and process for making formal comment. The changes are proposed to address a budget short fall in this fiscal year due to a reduction in federal funding. Members and attendees had an opportunity to have their questions answered. Members and attendees were encouraged to offer alternatives to address the short fall.

6. Initial data integration efforts

Janet Carter shared an overview of the development of the Delaware Stars database. Noteworthy is the collaboration and sharing of data from the Office of Child Care Licensing for this database. The development of this database is one of the first steps in the development of an integrated early childhood data system.

7. Chair's Report

The Chair will be attending the Interagency Resource Management Committee meeting on 1/5/11. At that time the ECC's work plan will be shared with the Department Secretaries, Budget Office and Controller General. It was also noted that early childhood has become a regular agenda item for Vision 2015 Board Meetings representing recognition of the importance of early childhood in school reform.

8. 2011 Meeting schedule

The 2011 ECC meeting schedule was shared. The schedule is also posted on the ECC website.

9. Open Forum

The floor was opened to all present to share ideas, events, and feedback.

10. Next Meeting: February 11, 2011, 9 to noon at the Carvel Building in Georgetown

Delaware Early Childhood Council

2011 Work Plan to Advance Strategic Goals

- Strengthen governance and alignment of early childhood policies, programs, practices, standards, and financing that enhance outcomes and uniform oversight across state agencies, and expand collaborations with private and nonprofit partners and federal agencies.
 - Fully implement the revised governance structure and mandate to the Delaware Early Childhood Council and the IRMC as stipulated in code; include a year-end report on implementation in the Council's annual report
 - Initiate improvements in the system of policy communications, planning, and management among early childhood state agencies, those served by those agencies, private and nonprofit institutions providing early childhood services, and K-12 education.
 - Plan and initiate a statewide early childhood needs assessment that is based on a model that reflects the standards as defined by the ECC's mission statement
 - Plan and initiate a workforce and compensation analysis that includes evaluation of the impact of workforce and compensation conditions on the quality of and access of early childhood services available to all Delaware families
 - Develop and disseminate policy briefs on key early childhood policy alignment and program improvement issues
- Integrate service delivery across agencies and sectors to address the developmental needs of all young children and their families, especially those placed at risk because of developmental delays, poverty, neglect or abuse, and other risk factors.
 - Conduct and scale up the Kindergarten Readiness Assessment so that it provides a comprehensive and reliable measure of developmental outcomes and preparation for school success,
 - Initiate programs to strengthen communication between early childhood providers and agencies on factors impacting service delivery
 - Survey districts, family support organizations, early childhood programs, and county early childhood councils to determine current collaborations to support readiness for and transitions to kindergarten
 - Initiate regular meetings for districts, early childhood programs, and community partners interested in collaborating on strengthening support to young children and their families
- Enhance the State's data and information system to fully incorporate early childhood, and use that system as well as periodic analysis of programs, policies, and outcomes to monitor and improve state services, inform and assist private service providers and schools, and enable policymakers to identify what is working and what is needed.
 - Collaborate with the P-20 Council, the IRMC's Interagency Early Childhood Working Group, and K-12 information systems group to develop a shared vision

- o of an integrated early childhood data system that is linked with the K-12 data system.
 - o Complete initial planning for an integrated data system
- Establish and coordinate a statewide, cross-sector early childhood professional development system that includes partnerships with K-12 education, higher education, business, and community institutions and that enables all early childhood providers to participate in affordable, high quality professional development.
 - o Convene Higher Education Committee to improve alignment of higher education programs with the early learning foundations and early childhood competencies
 - o Develop proposals for strengthening statewide, cross-sector early childhood professional development.
- Enable early childhood providers to achieve and sustain increasing levels of quality as defined by appropriate early childhood standards, including the State's early learning guidelines, child care licensing regulations, Delaware Stars for Early Success, and national accreditation standards.
 - o Review and address impediments to implementing quality standards and propose options for overcoming those impediments, thereby enabling providers to achieve and sustain increasing levels of quality.
- Improve the alignment and efficient use of early childhood funding across agencies and increase public financing to meet the true cost of quality early childhood services for all families across all geographic locations, socio-economic groups, and child ability levels; this includes adequate compensation and tiered reimbursement to all qualified providers, the full financing of Delaware Stars, increasing subsidies to low-income families, and integrated funding of Delaware's early childhood programs with elementary education.
 - o Design and implement a new and improved website for the Early Childhood Council that serves as an on-going, interactive communication tool with the early childhood community
 - o Expand and strengthen the early childhood network including partnerships with the Wilmington Early Care and Education Council, Sussex Early Childhood Council, Delaware Association for the Education of Young Children, Family Support Coordinating Council, Delaware Coalition for Early Learning, United Way of Delaware, Family Support Coordinating Council, Delaware School Districts, Charters and Private Schools, and Vision 2015
 - o Develop Early Childhood Council policy and procedures manual