

Delaware Early Childhood Council Meeting Notes

December 11, 2009

Lillian Lowery, Secretary of Education, met with the Council to share her vision for early childhood. Secretary Lowery shared the following with the Council:

Main Focus of the Department of Education will be:

- Making the IRMC viable organization again to take children to the next level.
- Success begins at birth
- Department of Education is getting ready to reorganize

Current Early Childhood (EC) Work

- Jim Lesko and Paul Harrell went to MD and PA to learn about those states' early childhood governance structure. They also explored Ohio's efforts.

Conclusions:

- EC cannot remain working in silos
- EC Council will be so vital
- EC at DOE will be its own work group
- Jim Lesko will be in charge of EC
- The Departments of Health and Social Services, Services for Children, Youth and Their Families, and Education will need to work collaboratively
- Make sure all families are supported

The Race to the Top application was also discussed:

1. Governor Markell's Blue Print for Education conforms to US DOE's agenda and requirements of Race to the Top (RTTT)
2. The application must be completed by January 19th
3. Major components for Race to the Top
 - a. *Having common core standards*
Delaware is participating in the development of national standards. Gov. Markell co-chairs this committee. The standards will be NAEP compliant. We

must adopt the core standards; our core assessment is already compliant with national standards.

b. *Longitudinal data study* –

Dan Rich and other members of the P-20 Council is responsible for this data system. Delaware is one of 11 states to have these elements. The focus is on ensuring students are career and college ready.

c. *Assessment* –

Teachers will be held accountable for student success. Student performance will be tied to teachers and leaders. Tie evaluation to this - whole school rewarded when low performing schools improve – give signing bonuses for teachers to go into low performing schools, provide incentives for teacher and school leaders with higher compensation.

Elements of highly effective teachers:

highly effective planning
behavior
accountability,
professional development
effective in supporting student growth

d. *Persistent failing schools* -

Need to do something different
Success planning
Transform school by getting new leader
Turnaround model – change leader and teachers

Linking EC to K-12 –

Delaware will be doing this

Gage readiness for students; readiness baseline project currently underway with 15 districts. Random sample of children includes: parents information, Child Find scores, and Kindergarten teachers readiness assessment. The readiness assessment was developed using a nationally recognized readiness guide. This will develop a baseline. DOE will develop professional development to improve.

Questions and Answers:

- Parent Involvement: Race to the Top requires parent involvement
 1. Christina has community schools – JP Morgan Chase is funding the director – Children and Families First is the lead agency in the three schools to implement a plan with the school district
Site director is Sandy Clark – from Office of Prevention - Kids Dept.

2. Triple P - Positive Parenting Program

Nemours is working on this

Program is 25 years old; South Carolina – did study – marked reduction of child mistreatment as a result of Triple P. Triple P provides information for parents when and where they need it. Triple P Basic Plan - Train everyone who works with parents on “How do you engage parents and talk to parents?” NHPS is planning six trainings statewide and a media blitz.

- Compensation for Early Childhood providers: How will resources be available for EC providers? Expectations have increased but salaries are low. Reality needs to stay up front – There is money from federal grants – Agencies will have to work collaboratively to look for funds. We have to get better – We need to get better quality, and work collaboratively. And, we need to pay EC providers better.
 1. Answer (Dan Rich) Driver is need not wealth - We need political will, expectation and leadership. Now is the time to drive – 8 billion from *Race to the Top* and *Challenge Grant* will help
 2. Need advisor to help programs and families – there are so many programs and families that are in need right now money needs to trickle down to programs Hopefully Policy Matters and Fiscal mapping will help –change in policies – need system change – DE Best is helping children with challenging behavior
- Transition from EC to schools –
Some school districts used local money for EC programs.
Christina is one district that did this

Additional comments and discussion:

1. Jim Lesko –Vision 2015 is working with HSS –
Do not want state to develop new programs
Parents rely on present service to be available not just care, also education
2. Through PD - Support and strengthen the system so children come into kindergarten ready
3. Blue Shield Grant – DE comprehensive screening –
Pediatricians do routine screenings and legislation passed so pediatricians are reimbursed by insurance. Currently four pilot sites using PEDS tool, a parent survey. April 28th conference to review the tool – parents have been empowered to ask questions about children’s development helps parents get involved with pediatricians

4. Comment - We need Timelines on things and be held accountable for plan
Council will be asked to write a letter of support
Early Learning Challenge Grant

Dan Rich, incoming Chair was introduced by Ann Wick:

Currently with Center on Public Policy at the University of Delaware. He was Dean of College of Human Services and Public Policy. He was responsible for the following programs: Education Lab Preschool, College School and Early Learning Center. He worked on the P-20 Council and was very involved with Vision 2015, EC became first item on Vision 2015 plan.

Dan shared that he wants to continue with the devotion and commitment that Ann Wick provided as Chair and looks forward to Ann assuming the role of Chair Emeritus. Dan looks forward to working with and learning from the Council members. He sees the next year as transformational. He recognized that early childhood has the commitment from the President, the Governor, and Secretary Lowery. He sees initial efforts in:

Send a proposal to DOE on how to include EC in Race to the Top

Spend more time on partnerships

Reshape way money flows in early childhood

Sustain all things that have already been done

Next year – we need a big push forward

Dan invited everyone to share ideas with him at drich@udel.edu.