

Oversight and Coordination Committee

Early Learning Council

James, R. Thompson Center, 100 W. Randolph, Suite 16-100

November 30, 2011

1:00 pm- 3:00 pm

Participants

Chicago- Shannon Christian, Kim Collins, Marsha Engquist, Gloria Harris, Dan Harris, Tom Laymen, Lauri Morrison-Frichtl, Gail Nelson, Ellen Schumer, Teri Talan, Judith Walker Kendrick, Cindy Zumwalt

Phone- Theresa Hawley, Cindy Mahr, Janice Moenster, Gina Ruther, Christine Ryan, Linda Saterfield, Laurel Walker

Non-Participating Members- Lindsay Blough, George Davis, Ida Butler, Mary Ellen Caron, Barbara Castellan, Erin Cetera, Ellen Chavez, Rhonda Clark, Paula Cottone, Dina Evans, Karen Freel, Eric Gershenson, Kathy Goetz Wolf, Barbara Grace, Michael Johnson, Jamilah Jor'dan, Carolyn Newberry Schwartz, Marcia Orr, Martha Owens, Kathy Penak, Sylvia Puente, Naomi Samuels, Andrea Sass, Sara Slaughter, Joyce Thomas, Katie Williams

I. Welcome and Introductions

Co-Chair Judith Walker- Kendrick welcomed everyone and wished all a wonderful Thanksgiving holiday. Roll call was taken and the June 29, 2011 minutes were approved.

II. Updates

a. Early Learning Challenge Application

Co-Chair Judith Walker- Kendrick thanked everyone for their work on the Race to the Top-Early Learning Challenge Application. The group was emailed and handed a summary document of the grant and the full application is posted on the OECD website.

b. Quality Rating and Improvement System

Co-Chair Teri Talan explained that the Oversight and Coordination Committee was specifically tasked with advising on funding models combining multiple funding streams and quality supports which according to the grant application is due by June of 2013. The Committee is also tasked with working on completing the Quality Rating and Improvement System quality levels.

The Co-Chairs are currently partnering with Linda Saterfield to form an ad hoc QRIS workgroup. Nine members of the Committee are on the workgroup, including Brenda Arksey, Theresa Hawley, Dan Harris, Tom Layman, Lauri Morrison-Frichtl, Christine Ryan,

Laurie Walker, Linda Saterfield and Cindy Zumwalt. Members with questions about the workgroup should contact Teri, Judith or Kim.

The Committee discussed that there is a short window of time to make changes to the proposed QRIS in the RTT-ELC application. Once the winners are announced and contracts are signed the state will not be able to make changes. By the end of the calendar year the ad hoc workgroup needs to determine the details of all five of the star levels and the evaluation component.

It was suggested that the workgroup utilize outside experts to consult on the completion of the QRIS. If a consultant were to be hired it would be to help DHS and DHS is currently receiving technical assistance from Build.

There is currently a lack of clarity for early learning providers regarding the incentives for the QRIS. The Head Start Association is telling providers that they do not have information on the incentives for the new providers joining the QRIS as an automatic four star. There has been a lot of talk about Head Start and PFA joining the QRIS with a four star ranking but there is a need for more public awareness very soon around the incentives, even if there will no longer be pay incentives.

There was a strategic decision made in the RTT-ELC application to provide increased technical assistance over pay incentives, but this requires the grant funding. The focus should be on changing the system and improving the education for children not on what providers can get. It will also be a challenge to rate all providers if IL does not win the grant. The very positive aspect of the QRIS is that it provides a language to discuss child care. This language will help to make the disparities in care more obvious and this will be useful when talking with stakeholders and decision makers.

III. Hard to Reach Grants

Co-Chair Judith Walker-Kendrick discussed that she is very excited that we received 19 applications for the Hard to Reach grants. The applications were posted in September on the ELC's website as well as questions and answers. Kim logged all of the questions and responded to all of them. COFI partnered with the OECD to host a webinar for prospective applicants. Kim walked through the application and Ellen from COFI discussed some of the hard to reach initiatives that they have found successful. Also Gloria Harris from COFI shared her perspective as a parent. The webinar powerpoint and questions and answers are still posted online if members are interested in reviewing.

Staffer Kim Collins thanked Judith and Teri for their leadership on this project. Kim is confident that there are very strong proposals to fund and evaluate. All of the scorers have turned in their scores and the OECD will now be contacting the top scorers to attempt to negotiate a contract. Once the contracts are negotiated we will share with the Committee which organizations have been selected. Unfortunately we were not able to share the specific proposals since the contracts are not finalized, but we will provide a summary of the proposed ideas.

COFI was extremely helpful and shared the proposed ideas with their parent volunteers. The parents provided valuable insight and their top picks were aligned with the top picks of the scorers.

Kim Collins and Shannon Christian provided summaries of the top 12 proposals. The summaries included the proposed pilot idea, location, budget, and COFI's reaction. Below are overall comments on the ideas.

- There should be a focus on the how each pilot defines hard to reach- are they teen parents, homeless, etc.
- The goal of the grant is to identify hard to reach families in locations where there are currently available high quality slots that are not being utilized.
 - Some members were not in favor of replacing some low income children with hard to reach children
- Administrative barriers were not addressed in these proposals
 - This could be added to the contracts
- The health care model could be very useful with the RTT-ELC and provide a nice model
- There are clear laws and restrictions around transporting children that will not allow for some of the proposals.
- Discussed that CPS and ISBE may have different implementation policies on three year olds in Home Visiting
- There were not very many proposals focused on infants and toddlers.
- There needs to be a focus on funding downstate applications
- This grant was not intended to serve special needs children
- Recommended the contracts to allow for changes if a pilot or the evaluation is not working
- The goal of this project is to create models.

Kim Collins also discussed that the OECD has contracted with the University of Illinois Champaign-Urbana to evaluate the proposals.

They will be looking at 9 goals:

- (1) Specific activities and strategies employed to engage hard-to-reach children and families;
- (2) Number of children from the target group enrolled and served;
- (3) Success of methods used for finding and collecting information on hard-to-reach children and families;
- (4) Average length of families' stay in the program;
- (5) Reasons as identified by families for leaving the program;
- (6) Cost effectiveness of chosen activities;
- (7) Collaborative relationships created that improved services for hard-to-reach children
- (8) Sustainability of the project and if it could be expanded; and
- (9) Lessons learned and modifications required for continued success.

UIUC will also provide recommendations on the expansion of pilots and policy changes that may be necessary. UIUC will report to the OECD monthly for the first three months of the pilots and then quarterly on the data elements listed above. In addition the University will provide the OECD and Oversight and Coordination Committee two reports, one after a year and the second

at the close of the project, that will summarize the data, provide recommendations on expansion of the pilots and any recommended policy changes.

IV. Wrap Up and Next Steps

Co-Chair Judith Walker Kendrick closed the meeting by announcing that the next meeting will be January 10th and at that time we hope to be able to share the Hard to Reach pilot sites.