

ELC Executive Committee Meeting

October 6, 2014

1:00 pm- 3:00 pm

ISBE Conference Rooms

Chicago: JRTC, 100 W Randolph St, 14th Floor

Springfield: Alzina Building, 100 N 1st Street

Conference Line: 888-494-4032

Access Code: 7198518485

Minutes

Participants

Chicago – Karen Berman, George Davis, Gaylord Gieseke, Phyllis Glink, Dan Harris, Theresa Hawley, Teresa Kelly, Amber Kirchhoff, Tom Layman (for Maria Whelan), Harriet Meyer, Elliot Regenstein, Vanessa Rich, Sara Slaughter, Julie Smith, Teri Talan, Kay Willmoth

Springfield – Janet Maruna, Cindy Zumwalt

Phone – Beth Mascitti Miller, Jeanna Capito, Josie Yanguas

I. Welcome and Announcement

Julie Smith welcomed everyone and noted the long agenda which the group would discuss. Julie introduced Geoff Nagle from Erikson Institute, who was visiting the council, and expressed her gratitude for his attendance to make that connection with an institution with which the council has been working for some time. Attendance and introductions were taken. Smith noted a new form of communication through Constant Contact and encouraged everyone to check their junk and spam folders to ensure they would receive emails in the future. Smith took a moment to thank Kim Collins, who would be leaving the Governor's Office and moving on to Illinois Action for children.

II. Minutes

Harriet Meyer moved that the minutes from June 2nd, 2014 and September 11th, 2014 be approved. Gaylord Gieseke seconded. The minutes from both meetings were approved unanimously with no changes.

III. Preschool Expansion Grant Update and Final Input

Theresa Hawley provided an overview of the progress on the Preschool Development Grant, which will be sent out shortly to the group for review. Hawley expressed her gratitude for the many people who had worked tirelessly to make this grant so successful. Hawley noted that the comments and suggestions made at the last Special Executive Meeting were taken into consideration, and that comprehensive and consultation services were included in the grant, as

well as determinations of where all preschool slots would go. Hawley noted the pressure this had put on schools to determine a budget in a very short amount of time, and that Illinois was going all-out on this application in a way that responded to differences existing across the state rather than a one-size fits all approach. Hawley noted that the grant process brought up some questions and concerns that merit further consideration now that the application is almost done, so that these sorts of things can be easier in the future.

The first big issue that came from the process was the idea of braiding and blending funds together. Particularly, one issue that was difficult was how to blend together classrooms with kids eligible for CCAP and children who do not receive this funding but will receive funds through the preschool grant, when it is not initially clear how many of these children will be eligible for CCAP. This is especially difficult in a for-profit preschool situation.

- Teri Talan: Did the federal government offer any advice on how to blend these funds?
 - Theresa Hawley: No guidance was given, but I would love to create a small working group which would make rules on what the state will and will not pay for.
- Harriet Meyer: Since this is somewhat self-imposed, can we create our own rules?
 - Kay Wilmoth: We don't want to segregate kids who are eligible for Early Head Start from those other children who are eligible for childcare assistance.
 - Theresa Hawley: The particularities of this grant made things more difficult, as every dime has to be allocated to children who are eligible for this specific funding.
- Phyllis Glink: Can you clarify the issue?
 - Theresa Hawley: For example, if we have 20 at-risk children in a classroom we may expect eight to be eligible for CCAP as well, but will not know the exact number. If 16 end up being eligible for CCAP, we may be double funding or over funding certain children.
- Kay Wilmoth: Does this grant allow for-profit schools to earn profits?
 - Theresa Hawley: No, but the profits would be made off CCAP money, which does allow for profits.
- Gaylord Gieseke: How many, roughly, are for-profit in this new grant?
 - Theresa Hawley: 3 or 4 providers in this grant, but about half of all providers in ExceleRate
 - Joni Scritchlow: at least half, certainly more than 1/3. We don't have an exact number but it is significant.
- Theresa Hawley: These are things we need to be aware of. Lots of these issues will be affected by the coming reauthorization of federal child care block grant.
 - Phyllis Glink: Someone from childcare services should be part of this ad-hoc group we create.

The second issue that came up was how to get children into the correct services. Hawley noted the need to create more intensive and differentiated services, while maintaining concern that everyone will want the most intensive seats. Hawley suggested a group again, which would ensure the most intensive spots are filled by the highest-need children.

- Harriet Meyer: Could one group tackle both issues?

- Elliot Regenstein: These are individualized issues but All Families Served is already working on some of these issues, so maybe we don't need a separate group.
- Tom Layman: Maybe that group simply needs additional people
- Karen Berman: This is slightly different, but we do have a Blending and Braiding group that could take this up.
- Elliot Regenstein: The second question has a lot to do with what the data committee is already working on.
- Tom Layman: We are going to need to be a bit more strategic and ensure that we are digging as deeply as we can into the data.
- Sara Slaughter: One thing to consider is the public's consideration and understanding of what we do, vs what we are really doing. We have been saying for a long time that our goal is to serve the hardest to serve, but we haven't done that.
- Harriet Meyer: Whoever handles this will have to make difficult decisions about who gets slots. These will be very popular spots
- Elliot Regenstein: We need clarity of roles and clear expectations.
- George Davis: We need to focus on how local communities address these issues. Elliot Regenstein and Gaylord Gieseke concurred.
- Theresa Hawley: One great thing which we will discuss more later is that about half of the communities in the Preschool Expansion Grant opted to take us up on funding to include a local systems coordinator person.
- Julie Smith: We are envisioning a smaller working group on this. We can take volunteers, but Theresa will also reach out to people.

Hawley noted that the grant's deadline has been extended a day, but Illinois plans to submit the final copy of its application on Friday, October 10th .

IV. **MIECHVP Grant Update**

Teresa Kelly provided an update on the MIECHVP grants. She noted that a formula and competitive grant were each released within a day of each other and are due around the same time as the annual data report. The Competitive Grant was the first opportunity to re-apply for that particular grant, which would cover two years and seven months beginning in March 2015. She is unsure of the rationale, but knows that we can apply for up to \$9.4 million to expand new projects, but not to create new projects. With guidance from the Home Visiting Task Force, the group decided to expand three current research projects: randomized control trials from Doula Expansion Services, Doula Expansion work with Ounce of Prevention, and the Fussy Baby Project. Kelly noted that this time around the group would use John Korfmacher's quality rating tools. This grant is due October 17th. It has gone through DHS pre-clearance and is on its way to full clearance.

Kelly noted that the Annual Data Analysis is also due between October 15th and October 30th , and that the group is working to ensure that data is included from all programs. At first glance ,it appears that Illinois is seeing a good trend on collection data tools. The White House is trying to decide whether to push for only one year of MIECHVP and an additional five years next year, or to go for five years right now. Congress is struggling with what to do on this front.

Finally, the Formula E Grant is due November 3rd, which will continue to fund providers that are currently being funded. This will include infant mental health services, mothers and babies, and other groups. The expectation is to be eligible for \$4 million, which is more than the current \$3.6 million but less than the previous pre-sequestered \$4.2 million received. Kelly opened the floor for discussion and questions, listed below.

- Harriet Meyer: Perhaps it is time for us to have a few hours of a session dedicated to research updates and presentations, including the research from John Korfmacher's system, because these are very interesting projects.
 - Teresa Kelly: Illinois has had some of the highest rigor in the nation with our research projects, of which we are very proud.
- Gaylord Gieseke: Keep in mind that these are all national level projects, and we do not want to lose the state focus.
- Julie Smith: The program is expanding, correct?
 - Teresa Kelly: The three new communities are Aurora, DeKalb, and Stevenson Counties.
- Gaylord Gieseke, Teresa Kelly, and others noted that Illinois is at the forefront in research and other states are very interested in our ideas.

V. Community Systems Consortia Plan Update

Kathy Stohr noted that Illinois has made great strides in the area of comprehensive services since the Race to the Top grant application in 2011. As a subgrantee for the Consortium for Early Childhood Development grant, Illinois has the charge of developing a vision and framework for the community systems approach within the early childhood system. Stohr noted that after about a year of work with BUILD and others, a Thought Leadership Team has been convened of stakeholders who are interested in community systems. This group came up with a plan whose executive summary was provided to the group. The basic highlights of this plan regarded visions and goals for local systems and how those align with what is happening at the state level. The big idea, according to Stohr, was the need for collaboration through a regional hub structure of cross-system leadership. This is something that needs more study, and communities need to be mapped into some sort of regions to be able to better communicate and coordinate. Stohr explained that next steps are to deal with a shortlist of priorities including how to create local pipelines and re-map the state.

- Julie Smith: There are many groups within the state studying local collaborations, many of which are at the higher-ed level. These are conversations in which we need to stay engaged.
- Phyllis Glink: We are also looking at the intersection of mental health and early learning, in collaboration with BUILD.
- Tom Layman: We need to look at opportunities for system building in concrete ways. This is a boring topic but as we see each time we try to work across systems, this is so necessary. There is a lot of energy in communities and we want to remove obstacles to that energy.
- Theresa Hawley: It was difficult to get people to engage in services. It was easier in high-functioning collaborative communities, but was difficult to get the whole picture together.

VI. Discussion of ELC and Committee Strategic Action Plan and Grand Victoria Funding

Elliot Regenstein explained that the Grand Victoria Foundation has been staffing many of our committees including FYCE, SIAC, PSQ, and DAA. This grant is now up, the reapplication is determining how important it is for this committee to reflect on the overarching priorities of the council, what progress needs to be made, and specific benchmarks. Regenstein explained that the Foundation is looking for two elements, which are highlighted in the proposal. The first is the leveraging and sustaining impact of the limited federal grants; as these run out of funding, Regenstein noted that the Council should find new ways to sustain their work's progress in the future. Second is an action plan for the effectiveness and sustainability of the council and its committees over the long term. At the end, each committee will have a sustainability plan and an action plan. The grant, if received, will be on March 1, 2015.

- Phyllis Glink: Have the conversations with Grand Victoria been positive?
 - Elliot Regenstein: Yes, they are very encouraging and want to ensure that their investments are going to a good cause. We want to focus on achieving outcomes and ensure that the council does not lose focus.
- Sara Slaughter: Is there an external audience to these leveraging and sustaining opportunities?
 - Elliot Regenstein: This is very externally focused regarding how to make the council more effective, how to sustain the system in general, and how we are ensuring that the Early Learning Challenge and other grants have a permanent impact.
- Karen Berman: This is prompting us as a committee to look at what it means to be an executive committee. We need to focus on what is best for the communities and regularly look at our structure at a state level
- Sara Slaughter: To sustain ourselves, we can't just have the same people doing the same work every year; we need cross-fertilization and work with young people to engage differently.
- Harriet Meyer: We are not very good at plunging to the depths of data, and we need to work on getting that information to the public. Communication has to be key
- George Davis: This is what local policymakers are talking about; they need to understand our data.
- Elliot Regenstein: The Grand Victoria is concerned about being on the hook for this group for a very long time, but they are also concerned about creating the appetite for investment.
- Sara Slaughter: We should make sure we are being intentional
- Teri Talan: There should be two levels of communication. The first is simply telling a story, the second is having cross-fertilizing committees that communicate with each other.
 - Harriet Meyer: That is correct, but we have to have the first before we can move to the second.
- Gaylord Gieseke: The process here is extremely important for us, because it makes us put the time in to think about how we identify our top level outcomes and how we think about the work. Since we have been so focused on federal initiatives, we have allowed these guidelines to be imposed upon our state.
- Vanessa Rich: How will we continue to refine and sustain this?

a. **Blending, Braiding, and Sustainable Funding Report & Next Steps**

Karen Berman provided an overview of the Blending, Braiding, and Sustainable Funding report which had been put together through several round tables. This was a report focused on how much the committee needs to dive in deeply and figure out highest priorities and goals. There needs to be more clarity and hopefully a working group to discuss this issue. Many agencies feel unclear about what they can braid and blend as far as funds. Berman noted that this plan was used in the community systems consortia. The major theme was that at the local level, it is very hard to access the necessary information and coordinate resources.

VII. **Agenda Development for Early Learning Council Meeting**

Julie Smith provided some ideas of what could appear on the agenda at the full Early Learning Council meeting on October 20th.

a. **Workforce Development Presentation**

Smith suggested Christi Chadwick could present on elements of workforce development, data regarding the workforce, teacher licensing, higher education, and teacher preparation.

b. **ISBE/CPS Update on Budget and Expenditures for FY14 and Project FY15**

Smith noted that ISBE and Beth Mascotti-Miller of Chicago Public Schools could provide updates on FY15 as has usually been done in the Fall.

c. **PreK Expansion Grant/EHS-CC Partnership Grant**

Smith explained that Theresa Hawley can give an update on the Preschool Expansion Grant, the Early Head Start Expansion Proposal, and an update on MIECHVP.

- Kay Wilmoth: What will the update regard?
 - Theresa Hawley: We will discuss outreach and a general snapshot of the application
- Harriet Meyer: I am concerned about having too many boring talking heads. People want to feel engaged on these topics and meetings
 - Elliot Regenstein: If the second few topics can be relatively brief, we can make the presentations interactive
 - Vanessa Rich: We don't know, other than giving numbers, what the processes on these grants will be until we are accepted.
 - Theresa Hawley: But we can talk about what this grant means and our experiences, lessons learned, and a discussion about how to get people to think about expansion mode.
 - Vanessa Rich: Maybe instead we can have a separate conversation about the big questions and just put these updates on a one-pager.

- The group discussed the idea of instead talking about the big questions, having small-group discussions, or presenting on research. Gaylord Gieseke recommended thinking through a few key questions. Sara Slaughter recommended we find some sort of headline that will draw people in, and then include these facts and data in the presentation.

VIII. Other Business

Gail Nourse provided an update on a Build national conference on infants and toddlers, in which it was determined that several other states and groups within the state were working on maternal and child health, but there was very little information regarding what each moving part was doing. Hawley and Nourse are creating a forum to bring together office and departments to work on infant and toddler issues, so that each group can understand each others' progress.

- Theresa Hawley: Things occurring particularly with the Affordable Care Act need to be discussed.
- Cindy Zumwalt: Will the state board's work on Birth-3 be involved?
 - Theresa Hawley: Yes. DHS folks only knew what was happening in DHS and not in ISBE.
- Gaylord Gieseke: We should also include public health.

Smith noted that there are other issues brought up in committees' updates, which are included in the meeting packet.

Teri Talan noted that credentials for directors in the state systems have finally been enacted, and by 2017 a director will have to at least have an Associate's Degree in Early Childhood and at least one course or credential in Program Administration.

Smith thanked everyone for their time. The meeting was adjourned.