

Special Early Learning Council Executive Committee Meeting

December 15, 2014

11:00 am-1:00 pm

McCormick Foundation

205 N Michigan Avenue, 24th Floor

Conference Line: 888-494-4032 Access Code: 5880611393

Attendance

Chicago: Karen Berman, Jeanna Capito, Gaylord Gieseke, Phyllis Glink, Dan Harris, Theresa Hawley, Harriet Meyer, Elliot Regenstein, Vanessa Rich, Linda Saterfield, Sara Slaughter, Julie Smith, Kathy Villano, Maria Whelan, Kay Wilmoth
Phone: George Davis, Cindy Zumwalt

Minutes

I. Welcome, Introductions, and Approval of Minutes

Co-chair Harriet Meyer called the meeting to order and thanked all participants for making it to the meeting. Introductions were provided in the room and on the phone.

Maria Whelan moved that the minutes from the October meeting be approved. The Committee unanimously approved the minutes as written with no changes.

II. Update on Preschool Expansion Grant

Co-chair Julie Smith expressed the Committee's excitement that Illinois was one of thirteen states who had been selected to win the Preschool Expansion Grant. She noted that this meant the process has become much more real at this moment. She then turned it over to Theresa Hawley to provide more information.

Theresa Hawley provided an overview of the state's application and the subgrantees who would be given funding to provide new preschool slots. She expressed the office's excitement but trepidation regarding the quick start that the funding would have, with many schools starting as early as January and February. She provided an overview of the workings of slots and what the office is currently doing to prepare itself. She then took questions regarding the grant.

- Phyllis Glink: If we are targeting the most at-risk children, won't they all qualify for child care?
 - Theresa Hawley: They would at the income level, but they may not fit the working requirements.
- Julie Smith: We will have many challenges in recruiting eligible teaching staff, which is something the council will need to think about.
 - Theresa Hawley: Additionally, more than half of the slots were in heavily Latino communities, meaning the teachers will also need to be bilingual.
- Kay Wilmoth: It will be interesting to plot where Head Start grantees are in relation to Preschool for All communities. This can be a good opportunity to do some thoughtful planning about how kids are served and how this affects the mix of services.
 - Harriet Meyer: This is a perfect opportunity for a true partnership with Head Start. Head Start has a lot to teach us in this circumstance, and we should let them.

- Theresa Hawley: One thing we included in the grant was an emphasis of a Birth-3rd grade continuum. We put \$300,000 of federal money to get started on implementing a community systems approach and the support to develop it. We have made good progress in thinking that way. We learned through Innovation Zones how much support it takes to put something like this together. We can implement the ABLe Change model from the Michigan State Study.
- Sara Slaughter: Can you describe the ABLe Change model?
 - Theresa Hawley: It's about how you can get people to think about different factors and implementation. This is a collective impact framework with multiple levels of thinking about problems.
- Kay Wilmoth: In terms of the \$20 million per year, how much will go to operations vs administration?
 - Theresa Hawley: The amount per child will vary per slot around the state. However, over the four years of the grant, 5% total can go to state-level activities including administration. We are front loading that in the first year, then planning to use less in the following years.
 - Harriet Meyer: There are family support specialists included in these programs, but they have fairly large case loads.
- Phyllis Glink: How are you developing the application process?
 - Cindy Zumwalt: It's an e-grant built off of the Preschool for All Application, with added questions. This grant doesn't give us time to pull together a committee because the money needs to be out the door by February. We are waiting on the award letter to find a funding source so we can actually release the applications, but at this point it's about getting things moving.
 - Theresa Hawley: We have already received quite a bit of information from the communities through their applications.
- Gaylord Gieseke: Can you talk about the advocacy implications of this grant?
 - Theresa Hawley: I am holding a webinar tomorrow afternoon to walk through the financial model behind this.
 - Gaylord Gieseke: We had a discussion with the advocates who are wondering about the financial model, the commitment each year that's expected to grow, and questions regarding repercussions for failure of the state to make payments.
 - Theresa Hawley: We are working on those details, but we don't want to ask too quickly about the repercussions. This could be more of a communications and framing issue.
 - Cindy Zumwalt: In our messaging, we need to be clear that we are using this to expand services for all kids, not just More at Four.

III. Update on Early Head Start-Child Care Partnerships

Co-chair Meyer noted that the Committee was thrilled to learn that they had received money for the Early Head Start-Child Care Partnerships. She turned the floor to Theresa Hawley to discuss further.

Theresa Hawley explained the RFP structure for these grants, which involved an allocation for each state. Illinois had aimed to receive more than they had been allocated, at which they succeeded. The federal department has announced four grantees in Illinois, but none had been officially signed off.

Kay Wilmoth explained the process of negotiating specific deals and subgrantees of these partnerships. She also explained that funding would be rolled out on a rolling basis starting

January 1st. The importance of enrolling the highest need families was very important, and Theresa Hawley explained that ExceleRate would help with this. She also noted that the Office of Early Childhood Development is working on linking up data systems to figure out who is being funded through multiple funding streams.

- Phyllis Glink: What does technical assistant look like in this grant?
 - Kay Wilmoth: Right now, there are two new national centers for technical assistance which will be working on a large boot camp to convene grantees, followed by one on one conversations with state agencies and more intensive trainings.
- George Davis: Could this data go beyond the training of staff?
 - Kay Wilmoth: At the beginning, 2.5 percent of the funds will be for training and technical assistance. We are looking to focus more on qualifications, professional developments, and supports.

IV. New CCDBG Law (SB 1086)

The council took a brief break for lunch, then co-chair Smith introduced the Child Care Development Block Grant information, referring to handouts. She noted that this grant had not been reauthorized since the Clinton administration, so it would certainly change how things operate in the state. She invited Linda Saterfield to give an overview.

Linda Saterfield explained the changes as noted on the fact sheet provided in the packet. She explained that the biggest change would be the requirement to move to twelve months of eligibility, as well as requirements of training and on-site health and safety inspections for those providers who are license-exempt. She noted that because of this type of provider's turnover, about 6,000 per year would have to comply with these new requirements. She noted that a series of webinars would begin as states plan to move every three years and implement the twelve month eligibility period. She noted that DCFS has the Sunshine website that gives site-specific information, but that this website is not very user-friendly. The estimated cost for changing from 6 to 12 month eligibility would be about \$110 million. Linda Saterfield explained the breakdown of types of care and how much funding is license exempt. She noted that we do not currently have enough staff in our licensing program for this type of change, so this is something we will have to figure out.

- Theresa Hawley: Another note in the packet is the report of DCFS showing how we are doing on annual monitoring visits, which needs more attention
- Maria Whelan: We need to look at this in the context of the \$295 million shortfall in the budget for child care programs for this fiscal year.

The committee discussed the possibility of creating a resolution or news story to express the potential business and human services repercussions of this child care gap. They instead decided to create a report of recommendations for the transition committee as noted below.

V. Regular Business

a. Data, Research, and Evaluation Committee: Resolution

Elliot Regenstein explained the DRE Committee's idea of a resolution to ensure state agencies were to have the capacity and resources to share and manage data systems. He noted that he would also be open to simply including this resolution in a larger set of recommendations in a transition memo for the new administration. Theresa Hawley noted that Karen, the OECD's newest staffer, could help put this together quickly.

Harriet Meyer noted the importance of resurrecting communications with a real vision.

VI. Reflections and Celebration of Accomplishments

Theresa Hawley began by expressing thanks and appreciation for co-chairs Harriet Meyer and Julie Smith. The group provided reflections and thanks for the progress and work of this Committee over its years of service.

VII. Adjournment

The Executive Committee stood adjourned at 2:05 pm.