

## **Special Education Subcommittee Meeting**

August 6th, 2014 - 10AM – 1PM

Conference Line: 877-273-4202

Room Code: 7456826

The Center

2626 S. Clearbrook Drive

Arlington Heights, Illinois 60005-4626

**Members Participating:** Karen Berman, Kyrsten Brown, Cerathel Burnett, Nichole Cato, Amy Tarr, Kathy Slattery, Ann Kremer, Kim Nelson, Pam Reising Rechner, Donna Nylander, Emily Dorsey, Jeanette McCollum, Edna Vidaurre, Trisha Olson, Chelsea Guillen, Sergio Hernandez.

### **I. Welcome and Announcements**

#### **a. Introductions**

Karen Berman, Ounce of Prevention Fund, welcomed participants. Participants introduced themselves to the room.

### **II. Award of Excellence Pilots Report and Discussion**

Jeanette McCollum presented the results of the Inclusion Award of Excellence Pilot, including lessons learned and recommendations for improvement.

#### **Jeanette McCollum:**

Step 1:

The first step was a phone conference to let folks know how to implement the pilot, with follow-up directions. Emphasized watching ICP video and sent information to teachers to watch the ICP video.

Recommendation for the future: Cohorts of administrators with face to face training on how to apply for the Award.

Step 2:

The next step was developing of portfolios. Each one did it differently and provided different documentation, which is important for flexibility and examples in the future. More training would have helped them and helped in the review process.

Step 3:

The third step was the portfolio review. There were three reviewers using the same rubric with guidelines. Reviewers talked about whether the pilot was a fair process, if it worked, what kind of evidence would have helped.

Lessons learned: 3-person teams worked well, rubric for follow-up visit made it easy to form questions, reader's guide was helpful.

Recommendations for the future:

- Need to determine who is going to process applications. The group discussed whether the applications should be copied multiple times and determined that there should be a way for programs to upload their applications online.
- One program did a review guide at the beginning, including a checklist and location of evidence in the document. It would be helpful to require this in the future.

- Specific items that helped to comply with evidence: photographs with adaptations, notes/assessment forms with IEP highlighted mini-case study from time of entry throughout time in program.
- The group suggested providing an outline of the portfolio with tabs and a list of evidence that should be included. The group also discussed the need for examples during the face-to-face training and training on developing the portfolio.
- Have a community of practice that provides access to coaching during the application process.

#### Step 4:

The next step was site visits. Went to each program and talked with administrator and staff. They all indicated that they had learned from the process of doing the portfolio, and teachers learned from the ICP.

Lessons learned: Evening before and then full day visit is plenty.

#### Recommendation for future:

- The process was different for each site, but they may need guidance for what will work for different sites.
- With one program, met with the administrator after. Much better to meet with administrator first. No big issues with the site visit.

#### ICP Observations:

- The reason the full ICP was done was to figure out if it was a useful tool for self-assessment. Definitely needed more training. Need all teachers to watch the video so we could have the team supported by administrators. Found that self-assessments were way too high. They understood items, but did not understand that they were looking at it from the eyes of a child with disabilities. That requires training.
- It made a difference who supported the programs that did the pilot. One had a middle manager who also did the ICP, which helped in their discussions. One program really was not sure why they did it.

#### Recommendations Discussion:

- 1) If you have multiple sites, do you have to apply from each site separately or do you need to have the whole program apply? Need to have a clear, consistent policy for this across all awards.
- 2) Have programs do a screening to determine if they are ready to apply.
- 3) Determine a structure for the award: have this subcommittee serve as an advisor to the implementation work, 3-member peer review could be a standing committee of the subcommittee with a one-year staggered membership.

### **III. Update on MOUs and Screening Resource Document**

DHS legal has approved the CFC and ECE MOU and is in the process of finalizing its format.

**Tricia Olson:** LEA and ECE MOU is still under legal review.

The Subcommittee agreed that it is critical for the MOUs and the screening resource document to be embedded in the trainings, and that the resources be available and used by the quality specialists and coaches deployed to support programs throughout the state.

**IV. Updates on Work Happening in Other Places**

Health Subcommittee is developing recommendations on best practices for early childhood programs related to developmental and social emotional screening to the Early Learning Council. That subcommittee is referencing the recommendations and resources developed by the Special Education Subcommittee.

**V. Next Steps and Subcommittee Purpose**

The group discussed aligning the subcommittee meetings with the full committee meetings when possible to increase connections to the broader work, and continuing to schedule some subcommittee meetings in locations outside of Chicago, including Naperville and Arlington Heights. The group also discussed possible new areas of work including: 1) creating a map of where children with special needs are currently being provided early childhood services and barriers and opportunities to access, and 2) providing recommendations on how to support early childhood programs in providing instructional excellence for children with special needs, and ensure that these children can be successful. A survey will be sent out to subcommittee members to assess commitment to participation on the subcommittee, and to identify potential priorities for future work.