

EARLY INTERVENTION COUNCIL MEETING June 19, 2007

Members Present: Melissa Deming, Morita Flynn, Holly Lebsack, Mike Massie, Lori Morrow, Betsy Schmick, Debra Smith, Connie Strayer, Laurie Westlake, Lloyd Wilder.

Member Applicants Present: Liz Mikesell

Early Intervention and Education Program Staff Present: Christine DeMers, Part C Coordinator; Kari Kongslie, Preschool Secretary; and Belinda McCluskey, Interim Manager and Early Intervention Specialist.

Guests Present: Ed Hawkinson, via phone conference; Nancy Pajack, EHDI Coordinator; Sarah Fitzgerald, EHDI Follow-up Coordinator;

Call To Order:

Morita Flynn, EIC President, recognized a quorum and the meeting called to order at 9:45 a.m.

Additions to Agenda:

Senator Mike Massie will report on the Early Childhood Developmental Council (ECDC) and on the issue of referrals by DFS.

Approval of March 22, 2007 Minutes:

There were no additions or amendments to the minutes. **Morita Flynn motioned to accept the minutes as recorded. Laurie Westlake moved to accept the motion and Lloyd Wilder seconded. Motion carried.**

OLD BUSINESS:

By-laws and Membership

Belinda McCluskey stated that steps have been taken to have the Council re-applicants and new applicants appointed within the next few weeks. The following three council members' terms expire June 30, 2007: Morita Flynn, Lloyd Wilder, and Susan Wiley. Each submitted applications to continue their term.

Belinda asked if the Office of the Coordinator of Education of Homeless Children and Youth was under the Department of Family Services (DFS). Consensus was it was the Department of Education's area not DFS. Lori Morrow will provide a contact name to obtain a recommendation to fill this position.

Rick Robb was suggested as a contact to secure recommendations to fill the positions of Child Care Agency and the State Foster Care Representative.

Belinda informed the Council that Kathleen Orton submitted an application to serve in a parent position. She is the parent of an autistic child and has been a lobbyist for the Child Development Services in Wyoming. A question was raised whether Debra Smith is still a Shoshone Tribal representative. Belinda stated a letter was received from the Eastern Shoshone Tribe that Debra continues to be their tribal representative.

Determinations and Report Cards

Belinda McCluskey stated the Early Intervention and Education Program should receive a Letter of Determination from the Office of Special Education Programs (OSEP) in response to the State Performance Plan (SPP) submitted February 1, 2007. The letter should be received by July 1, 2007, at which time a letter will be sent out to each region with their determination based on each Region's report card. The State and the Regions could receive any of the following determinations: Meets Requirements, Needs Assistance, Needs Interventions, or Needs Substantial Intervention.

Morita stated that on the bottom of the report cards is an explanation of each indicator that is used in determining each Region's compliance or non-compliance. She also stated that Geri Smith indicated in the last meeting that there is a possibility that the EIC should stay tuned to the report cards and to the determinations as a way to monitor each region to look at systemic problems. She also mentioned that the reports cards are just a few indicators that OSEP tracks and not a totality of what is actually captured. Morita stated that the report cards are provided to OSEP and are available on the preschool website.

Belinda stated that next year a History indicator will be added which will track systemic issues within a Region. Mike Massie suggested that since one purpose is to look at any systemic problems, the Council should add the report cards to the next agenda.

NECTAC – Strategic Plan & Monitoring Protocol

Lori Morrow stated that NECTAC is an acronym for National Early Childhood Technical Assistance Center and they are very helpful in providing technical assistance to the early childhood programs.

Lori stated that states must have in place a General Supervision System that monitors implementation of IDEA by early intervention programs. Through a contract with the Wyoming Department of Health, Developmental Disabilities Division, NECTAC is providing guidance for Wyoming's General Supervision System. This system includes methods to identify and correct noncompliance, facilitate improvement, and support practices that improve results and functional outcomes for children and families. A stakeholders' workgroup was formed to assist with developing Wyoming's General Supervision System. The workgroup included: Marnie Camp, Region 9; Becky Curless, Region 10; Shauna Lockwood, Region 5; Lori Morrow, Region 6; Sandi O'Dell, Region 2; and State staff: Geri Smith, Belinda McCluskey, and Cliff Mikesell. The group brainstormed what works in monitoring now and what could be improved. The State is looking at the protocols and tools to make the process more stable and predictable. One strategy discussed is having a more focused monitoring process.

Belinda stated the new system should be ready to pilot Fall 2007 in Region 9, continuing with Regions 11, 2, and 8 Spring 2008. NECTAC has indicated the system should be completed by March 2008. Belinda stated focused monitoring selects Regions with the most critical issues of noncompliance for a more thorough onsite review focusing on their specific issues. In addition, a Region will be selected each year for onsite review which will be selected by State staff. The process is still in the planning stages.

Social-Emotional Update

Mike Massie explained 13 out of 14 of the Regional Child Development Centers are non-profit. One Region, Campbell County, is part of county government. The main source of funding is provided by contracts with the State and Federal governments. The State exercises programmatic oversight which includes monitoring.

Mike stated that Social-Emotional services, also called Mental Health services, are one key component determining the child's development later in life. The child should grow socially and emotionally in their natural environment. If not, quick intervention should be administered by the teacher, child care giver, or parent. A system for addressing children with social-emotional issues was missing in Wyoming and most other states. As a result, problems were showing up later in life and backtracked to preschool. If left untreated until the third or fourth grade, it is usually too late to fix or do anything for the child.

Mike stated that four or five years ago Wyoming tried to do three things: 1) provide training for all early childhood providers, 2) put in a statewide system of support for the providers, and 3) buildup the capacity of the professional mental health system. The EIC and CDS developed a model of train-the-trainer driven by the preschools to provide enhanced training to early intervention folks with master degrees, and then have them train others. For the past two years, CDS conducted a pilot program to test the worthiness of the model. This was paid for with grants from the Developmental Disabilities Division.

CDS and the DDD will continue to build the system over the next two years with money from the State Legislature. 1.1 million dollars will be provided so that within the next two years every Child Development Center will have the resources and professional personnel to offer training to all early childhood service providers in the state as well as meet the social-emotional needs of children, as detailed in IFSPs and IEPs. Wyoming is now on of a handful of states to have a statewide social-emotional development service system in place. CDS has been asked to send a team to a national summit in October to discuss Wyoming's system.

Connie Strayer, Morita Flynn, Betsy Schmick, Lori Morrow, and Laurie Westlake talked about their mental health providers and how it works for them. It was also stated that Wyoming just passed a bill that will provide 10 additional masters-level mental health positions to the regional mental health centers to work with infants, preschool children and their families. It was decided that the EIC will revisit this subject later.

NEW BUSINESS:

Chapter 7 Rules Update and Part C Development Process

Ed Hawkinson suggested that a sub-committee be established to amend the Part C "1997 Blue Book" to make it more operable for the next dozen years. Volunteers to sit on this committee included: Christine DeMers, Debra Smith, Laurie Westlake, Lori Morrow, and Morita Flynn. They will meet with Ed and Joan Hawkinson via conference call on July 10, 2007 at 1:00 p.m.

Mike Massie suggested the EIC get a handle on the exact time frame for the changes to be made.

EDHI and Late on-set Hearing Loss Screening and Data

Nancy Pajak explained that EDHI stands for Early Hearing Detection and Intervention. She talked about the members of the advisory board and how much support they have been toward EDHI since its implementation in 1994. She also explained the history of EDHI and how it became a reality because of a study done by the National Institute of Health (NIH) in 1992.

Nancy talked about how the study found that if children had screenings done by one month of age, a diagnosis/amplification by three months if needed, and intervention by six months, the child could start school with age appropriate language. She also explained that if left untreated, by the time the child becomes an adult it will affect all aspects of his or her life. In Wyoming 98 percent of all babies have a hearing screening done, the other 2% go to out of state hospitals or use midwives.

Nancy explained that Wyoming's biggest missing links in the hearing screening chain are the lack of diagnostic equipment in centers. The University of Wyoming has stated that they would be proud to staff a center in Casper if Federal money or grants were available to get one started. She gave out statistics on hearing loss and the effect on learning and on new technologies now available to kids with mild to severe hearing loss. Nancy also talked about new computer technology coming available that will link systems across the state to help kids with hearing loss.

Vision Screening Update

Christine DeMers discussed the new vision screening tool that will be used to conduct vision screenings in Wyoming. The tool is to be considered the minimum requirement by the State and used as a functional assessment. Needed referrals should be made to a specialist and tracked by each Region for follow-up. Training was provided to Regional staff on June 13, 2007 via a Tandberg conference and use of the new screening guidelines will begin July 1, 2007. Christine stated each Region will receive in their 2007-2008 Fiscal Year State contract \$2500 as startup funds and \$20 per child based on the 2006 Child Count.

Child Outcome Summaries

Christine DeMers distributed the Child Outcome Summaries covering June – December 2006 developed by Susan Wagner. Discussion surrounded the wide range of scores throughout the Regions which may be attributed to too much subjectivity in assessing the children. Consensus was that more training and a better form is needed. Lori Wagner stated there needs to be more standardized testing, less Federal requirements, and more assessment tools. In order to get assistance with the Child Outcome Summary form, the State will forward a copy of Wyoming's form to Christina Kasprzak and Anne Lucas who are the NECTAC staff that will be training on this issue at the August conference.

Policy and Procedures – Prior Written Consent

Christine Demers discussed what "prior" means in prior written consent and if it should change in the rules. Morita Flynn expressed that putting a timeline on "prior" would put restrictions on informed consent. Lori stated that situations come up where it is not always possible to get prior written consent even 2 days before. Parents, Melissa Deming and Holly Lebsack, would like to

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see “prior notice” be defined as five days. Ed Hawkinson cautioned the EIC on attempting to define “prior notice” as a number of days. He recommended whatever is decided should be placed in the Policies and Procedures, not the Rules. The sub-committee formed to look at the Part C rules can look into this topic in more detail.

August 2007 Annual Conference Update

Belinda McCluskey provided details on the upcoming Early Intervention and Education Program conference to be held August 14, 15, and 16th in Casper.

Additions to Agenda –

Early Childhood Development Council (ECDC) and Referrals by DFS –

Mike Massie talked about the ECDC’s history and a study of early childhood in Wyoming that was recently conducted by the Pederson’s. A copy of the study will be submitted within the next couple of days. It is unknown at this time what is in the study or the impact it could have on the EIC, if any.

Mike Massey also stated that at the last meeting, the Council was to look at the issue of referrals to the Early Intervention Program by the Department of Family Services (DFS). Morita Flynn stated the DFS referral issue needs to come back to the Council, but the work that needs to happen between the DDD/EIEP and DFS has not occurred. A report on where this stands will be made at the next meeting.

Next Quarterly Meeting:

Dates for the next EIC meeting were discussed but nothing decided at present. Some of the dates not good for the next meetings are September 11-13, the week of the 24th and the 18-20th. September 6th works for most members. The first week in October did not work for most members and location wasn’t decided at the time. Mike suggested that we work out a schedule for an entire year next meeting.

Meeting Adjourned