

EARLY INTERVENTION COUNCIL MEETING

September 18, 2007

Members Present: Morita Flynn, Rose Fry, Holly Lebsack via phone, Mike Massie, Kathleen Orton, Debra Smith, Connie Strayer, Lloyd Wilder, Susan Wiley.

Member Applicants Present: Diana Currah, Sara Mofield

Early Intervention and Education Program Staff Present: Christine DeMers, Part C Coordinator; Kari Kongslien, Preschool Secretary; Carol Maliszewski, Part B Coordinator; and Belinda McCluskey, Early Intervention Specialist.

Guests Present: Ann Owen, Executive Director Region 7 and Elise Timlin, Administrative Assistant Region 7.

CALL TO ORDER:

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

ADDITIONS TO AGENDA:

Morita Flynn will speak on the autism initiative.

APPROVAL OF MINUTES:

There were no additions or amendments to the June 19, 2007 minutes. **Mike Massie motioned to accept the minutes as recorded. Lloyd Wilder seconded. Motion carried.**

OLD BUSINESS:

Report Cards & State and Regional Determinations

Sara Mofield stated that Wyoming is one of only four states that hit the level of "Meets All Requirements" on the federal determinations for both Part B and Part C. Sara said that the Early Intervention and Education Program is working toward meeting the next steps for the annual report for the coming year.

Sara pointed out that there are four categories states can fall under with determinations and that right now states are either at the meets requirements or at the needs assistance levels. States will only go into the category of needs intervention if they remain in the needs assistance category for more than two years. She said that if a state falls under the needs intervention level there would be sanctions involved.

Sara stated that something else unique to Wyoming is the fact that not only did we fall under the category of "Meets All Requirements" but all of the regions within Wyoming did as well. Our charge now is to continue to work so that all of the regions stay at that level.

Sara noted that one of the indicators is that data and information is submitted in a timely and accurate reporting. It is one of the biggest issues on the reports from the regions. Currently the EIEP is working with the regions to see what can be done to help them with meeting this indicator.

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Sara stated that another area on the indicators is the transition steps and processes. Sara pointed out that it is not the transition activity itself that is the problem but the lack of properly completed paperwork. She stated that we have an advantage over other states in that our Part B and Part C are housed within the same department and that they are operating together within each region, often times the same person handling both parts, so the transition goes smoothly. Sara pointed out that Christine DeMers, Part C Coordinator, is working on completing new forms for the transition process and will make them available on Citrix as soon as possible.

Sara stated that another issue is the independent audit with a few regions and they need to be completed in a timely and accurate manner. She stated we do not have to be 100% in everything first time around but if there are issues, we address them immediately and accurately and get them corrected as soon as possible. She said that we are on track to making sure that this issue is completed and are working with the CDC's and regions to improve scores and maintain as well.

Sara suggested the EIC look at imposing sanctions and recognizing regions that do well on their determinations in the future, i.e. more grant money. She mentioned that the federal meaning of sanctions is to withhold funds but we want to try to provide help to bring up scores not take more money away. She also mentioned that any grant money would come from federal funds not from state and it would be open for competition every 2 years when the regions renew their contracts.

NECTAC-Strategic Plan & Monitoring Protocol

Sara stated that one of the federal requirements is that we provide general oversight to all of the regional programs. One of the ways that we monitor that requirement is met is through our monitoring system. According to Sara, NECTAC is working with the EIEP to develop a monitoring protocol and self-assessment tool. Self-assessment tools are used by the region to monitor their files and send it back to the EIEP on the Citrix system.

Sara stated that this is the pilot year for self-assessments, Part B only, and currently there are two versions out to the regions. One has more detail for the regions that were on the original rotation schedule and one as a general layout for the other regions. These self-assessments are used to help with the decision of which region to monitor in the future. Visits to each region will still take place every few years so every region is monitored .

Sara stated that the regions should not see the monitoring as negative but as an improvement tool to help make the region/center different and better. There will also be technical assistance on site during the monitoring to help with any questions, problems, or general knowledge issues. Belinda McCluskey noted that once a year the EIEP will go through all the data to help fix any issues seen before the monitoring visit. Mike Massie suggested the date of July 10, which is statehood day, for the data review.

Chapter 7 Rules Update

Sara stated that Chapter 7 rules are rules, from the Department of Education, for services for children with disabilities ages three to twenty one or completion of high school. The governor has signed the Chapter 7 rules. With the completion of the rules, there will be new forms but as of today, the computers are not updated.

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Sara stated that the two biggest changes to the rules for the regions are:

1) Developmental disabilities (DD) category changed to developmental delay and extended age from five to nine years of age and it is up to the individual school district to determine if they will accept that label. DD label is still a category of last resort and that it should be determined if a child falls into a different category.

2) Criteria have changed for speech eligibility and the percentages rose so that it is more difficult for a child to qualify for speech services. It is important to note though that children who already qualify or enrolled in speech therapy do not need to be re-evaluated until their three-year evaluation or upon exit from services.

Mike stated the school boards make the final decisions not the school districts themselves. Mike also suggested the EIC put together a draft letter for the developmental delay for parents to the school districts about the ramifications for non-acceptance of the label. **Mike motioned that the chair of the EIC and Sara Mofield to make a letter for parents, in draft form for members to revise, with no time frame of completing it. Kathleen Orton seconded. Lloyd Wilder said that a fact sheet and/or research added as well. Motion carried.**

Part C Rules Development Process Update

Sara stated that the Part C rules are in the beginning steps with Ed and Joan Hawkinson. They are drafting the Part C state rules along the federal requirements because they do not want to go much beyond what the federal government requires. They want to include at risk, which is defined as children living in abusive home, low birth weight, etc., infants & toddlers in the notes even though Wyoming already does a good job of serving those children.

Sara noted that there is no set timeline for completion of the rules because Wyoming does not want to complete the state rules before the federal rules are finished. Wyoming does want to be at a point that when the federal rules are signed, all Wyoming has to do is make just minimum adjustments to their rules. Sara also noted that this is the time to make light of any concerns about or requests to the rules. Sara said that the Hawkinson's would also make the forms that need to be filled out after the rule changes.

Child Outcome Summary Forms

Christine DeMers stated that the Child Outcome Summary Form (COSF) is from the Office of Special Education Programs (OSEP). It is up to the different states to implement this tool and Wyoming is ahead of the game for this data collection form. Wyoming is the only state using the COSF statewide and for both Part B and Part C programs.

Christine mentioned that there many states that do not use exit data and again Wyoming is using it and it is improving. The biggest concern is the wide variety of tools used with the COSF, a lot of which are not approved for use at the state level. The COSF supports the EIEP's federal requirement for reporting on the APR.

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Social-Emotional Update

Mike Massie stated that the early childhood social-emotional program is getting ready to start its third year. It is taking a big step forward because the legislature approved a 1.1 million dollar a year on a per child basis to the developmental preschools to help support the pilot program that was put into place. A result of the additional money is that all 14 regional preschool programs have retained a social-emotional developmental coordinator.

Mike stated that the responsibilities of the social-emotional developmental coordinator are:

1) They will offer training in social-emotional developmental to all the early childhood service providers within each of their regions. This way anyone serving young children, i.e. Headstart, day care centers, will have an opportunity to receive training through a developmental preschool. It is not a mandatory training for those groups; it is available to them if they would like to take advantage. The developmental preschools determined the definition of training will be the 11 modules in early childhood social-emotional developmental that is offered by the youth consultation services.

2) They will then follow up with technical assistance. The developmental preschools will also offer reflective supervision to all the early childhood people that took the training. Another part of this is the coordinator will work within the developmental preschools to insure that social-emotional services or needs are identified and services are provided through the IEP/IFSP.

3) They will serve as a point of contact for the community for parents or agencies that need information on social-emotional services or referred for similar services elsewhere in the community.

The other key participants besides the social-emotional coordinator are the other region program staff, whom assists the coordinator, and other community mental health clinicians, licensed in the state of Wyoming to provide professional mental health services. Each developmental preschool has developed at least one cooperative agreement with the professional mental health provider in their region, i.e. Peak Wellness Center.

Mike stated that we have retained YCS of New Jersey to come to Wyoming to continue their training not only in regards to the 11 modules but some advanced training for the coordinators and for the mental health clinicians. They will also be conducting monthly conference calls with clinicians and coordinators and doing some regional workshops in the winter as well. We are also working with the University of Wyoming to continue the effort in developing a certificate program that is geared for developmental preschool professionals and clinicians to give them the postgraduate work that YCS is currently providing. It is our hope that those certificate programs will be online by the fall of 2009 so that YCS can pull and we can drop their contract and we can move on with the University of Wyoming program.

Early Childhood Development Council (ECDC) Update

They are currently talking about the next step in the program. Another informal group that has started, which includes EIC members Mike Massie and Sara Mofield, is the early childhood work group and it is all about the Quality Early Childhood Care and Education System bill.

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Sweetwater County Child Development Center Presentation and Tour

Ann Owen showed a slide of pictures and information on the two preschool centers in Sweetwater county and then gave a tour of the Rock Springs facility.

WDE and DFS Memorandum of Understanding (MOU)

Sara stated that we do have a MOU with the Department of Education for the provision of services for children, ages 3-5, with disabilities. The MOU is five or six years old, it as been addressed several times, and a revision has never gone through the approval process as it is a long process but the EIEP is in that very process.

Sara stated that we are also beginning working on a MOU with DFS and it is a requirement for identifying and screening referrals for children that are possibly abused or neglected. These will be two separate MOU's, one with the DDD/WDE and another with the DDD/DFS. These two MOU's are both works in progress.

Vision Screening Update

Christine DeMers stated that at the last EIC meeting we were letting people decide if they wanted to use the vision tool that we had designed or to contract with WIND. All 14 regions have contracted with WIND for one year. This issue will be reviewed at the end of the year.

August 2007 Annual Conference Update

Belinda McCluskey stated that the August conference was very successful and that the comments sent in to Susan Wagner have not yet been tallied. There were close to 200 participants and several trainers. Some of the trainers included John Roope, Robert Lynch, Ed and Joan Hawkinson, Christina Kasprzak, Anne Lucas, and Kathy Whaley. All of the comments heard verbally were very positive.

NEXT MEETING: Dates and locations were set for the 2008 EIC meetings.

January 15, 2008 in Casper, possibly at the preschool center.

April 8, 2008 in Lander, possibly at the preschool center.

July 15, 2008 in Buffalo possibly at the preschool center.

Morita Flynn stated that unless there was a major problem with scheduling these would be dates and locations.

Meeting Adjourned at 1:45 p.m.